DIARY OF N. A. CAGWIN
Journey to California, April 4, 1850 - June 26, 1850

Preface

In keeping a journal of a tour from any one point or place about to another, through a new, wild and almost unknown country, made not to return home by a [illegible] of pleasure and things that might otherwise be [illegible]

[This is a record of the journey of N. A. Cagwin from Joliet, Will County, Illinois, to Utah, April 1850 to June 26, 1850]

[illegible]

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Thursday April [illegible] 1858

[illegible] **Preface**

In keeping a Journal of a rout from any one point or given place to another, through a new, wild and almost untroden country, much may be noted down by a strict observer of matters and things that would otherwise be unnoticed and perhaps entirely lost. A Daily Diary of events may seem to some a monotonous affair but should the events and History of each day of any one man's life be duly noted down, the thrilling incidents thereof would afford matter of instruction and example for real or for no. to any person who might come across the same written or printed, as it might be. Our history and in fact, the history of the world is made up of what may be termed Common incidents of life. Men have become noted more or less, as the sphere of action was enlarged or circumscribed. Cesar, conquered and robbed nations, so Bonaparte. Their names live as great generals and magnificent Conquerors. Washington spoiled not, but built up a beautiful Temple, dedicating the same to Liberty, for the use and benifit of our common race. His name will live untarnished by a stain of wrong or cruelty, when all others, Conquerors, and Meteoric (?) Bravadoes shall be remembered only in horror and Shame.

Saturday April [illegible] 1858

Conical way, (pinched?) by siege thirst and Starvation, the last remnant of a

Thursday April 4th 1850. Passing through Peru we went on about ten miles

Five Individuals of us, viz, O. D. Cagwin C. S. Bladman George W. Agard U. S. Hill and N. A. Cagwin being no other person other than my own self, left Joliet, Will Co. Ills. bound for California all being in good health and fine flow of spirits. Three of the above named individuals were men of families and to such the parting scene is always attended with feelings of peculiar Solemnity and deep interest. The husband and Wife part, perhaps never again to meet each other on the shores of time. He kisses his little ones, and with a heart too full for utterance tears himself away. Thus were our final adieus taken leaving Joliet at noon, being accompanied by Brother Abijah and Jas T. McDougall Esq. some three miles on the way. We put up that night at old Mr. Ellis. Eighteen miles from Joliet,

Friday 5th

Left this morning early calling at Mr. Ellis as we passed through Ottawa, where most of the Co were revaccinated. Having one of Jobs comforters on my stomach, and it proving very painful, had it lanced and found relief. Arrived at Ottawa before ten o'clock. Crossing our own water. Having taken of our own bacon and fried the first time prepared to camp in our own wagons, a la Mormon Style. Down at Lafayette passing through. Encamped one mile West at L. Barlow's

Saturday April 6th 1850

Last he made a great fire because we waded our Cross from our wagon births all well and found that the breaking in of our new modes of rest and living was no great thing after becoming used to it. We had warm coffee and cold lunch for breakfast—rigged up our team and were off betimes. Passed through Utica and Peru. Near Utica, are the celebrated (or ought to be) white Sulpher Springs. Some beautiful moss Petrifactions are here to be found. After drinking freely we passed on down the Illinois bottom to the Starred Rock. It is situated on the opposite side of the River. It is a curiosity & on its

Miller

conical top, (pinshed?) by siege thirst and Starvation, the last remnant of a once powerful tribe of Indians. Passing through Peru we went on about ten miles and camped in a farmers yard, good hay & Stabling. 26 Miles

Sunday 7th [illegible] On awaking this beautiful Sabbath morning found all in order, which is no small desideratum to the moving emigrant Starting at 5 A. M. we traveled through a beautiful section of country and arrived about noon at Princeton Co. seat of Bureau. Wrote my first letter home to Brothers, passed on, crossed Bureau creek, through Indian Town village in a deep valley and onwards five miles and encamped for the night. 21 Miles

Monday April 8th 1850

Providence being the name of the Town wherein we stopped, by an early move [illegible] through Providence, providentially we were enabled to get through the first ten miles unmattered. The land low, swampy, roads, bad and a match at any time for the justly celebrated roads of Iroquois Co. I would not forget to mention that our landlord an old grey headed worthy, hooked to a bill with about items, one of 5 cents for chips used in cooking chips. Cheap of course. After crossing the east branch of Spoon river, the country is fine and well cultivated also that of Indian creek a few miles further onward. Arrived near sun down at Lafayette passing through. encamped one mile West at H. Barlows a small pattern indeed for a landlord, so small that he made a great fuss because we headed our horses with old hay from the manger, surely he deserved to be whiped by some one mean as himself if the like could be found. of this great river from its [illegible] 25 Miles

Tuesday 9th into the gulph of [illegible] This was a cold rainy morning and Left our crabbed Landlords at early dawn passing through a lovely section of country. Halted a short time in the neat little village of Victoria, where I mailed a short letter to my wife. Passed on through eight miles of hilly, hickory barrens, then on to Knoxville fine land and in a high state of cultivation.

26 Miles

Wednesday April 10th 1850 half stony [illegible] presenting an appearance Knoxville the Co. seat of Knox, is pleasant, a village with a business like appearance. The Court being in session many people were in Town and some [illegible] antics were being played. The face of the country gently undulating with alternate grove and prairie making it most convenient for the agriculturist. Passed through the village of Mamouth Co. seat of Warren. Near this place a Presbyterian cut his throat last week. No cause was given save an excitiment beginning to be felt of a protracted meeting soon to be held in the village. From this place prairie more rolling. As you near the Mi River. Turned off main road [illegible] a mile and put up with Hoosier Hannah [illegible] 27 Miles

Thursday [illegible] 11th [illegible] prairie [illegible] This days travel was through Henderson Co. the last one we were to pass in Ills on our route. As you approach the Mi bottoms, country hilly, soil light, and sandy, the scrub oaks being the principle timber. The bottoms were quite [illegible], passable, the road winding through the tall & Magestic forest at last brought us onto the banks of the great Mississippi opposite Burlington our 8th day from Joliet 192 miles. Crossed over on a horse powered boat $2.00 ferriage for the train. We passed, on putting up one mile out Sonk River. 24 Miles

Friday April 12th 1850

Country around Burlington very hilly, High and commanding bluffs skirting the River on a multitude of broken hills is situated the thriving town of Burlington said to possess a population of six thousand souls. The River here is 1/4 of a mile wide and current rapid, a peculiarity of this great river from its source to its out let into the gulph of Mexico. This was a cold rainy morning and before noon it turned into hail & snow. We traveled on, passing "Augusta" a dirty looking village on Skunk River which is near 100 yards wide and now 17 feet in depth, current rapid. Ferried over. Three miles onward came to the village of Denmark. The country around was settled by a colony, from New

England--Houses neat one and a half story structures presenting an appearance of neatness & convenience bespeaking a people of enterprise and taste combined. Five and one half miles further brought us to West Point, but a short time since an extreme frontier point garrisoned by United States troops to watch the movements of the Indians and hold them in check. The land is fertile and fine farms, highly cultivated lay all around. Went on a mile and put up with a hospitable Dutchman. 20 Miles

Saturday April 13th 1850 The night changed from West to North and we left our German premises at an early hour our faces set towards the West against Wind cold and piercing. Ice never thawed all day. Even exposed to the sun's rays. Passed over a twelve mile prairie one third of which was low clayey wet ground and road almost impassable. At noon we stopped at a small farm house and the winds were so high and cold, so intense that we went in by invitation and partook of our noon day lunch--beside a blazing fire and tried to be merry. The face of the country in general fine soil, rich and the public lands all to be taken up. Hay & grain scarce and hard to be got at any time. Descending to the valley of the Des Moines River--through gentle slopes of oak openings. We reached Bonaparte, Situated on the east Bank of the River, 20 Miles. Sunday half a hitch and an our follow to boat was all in our favor. The The Des Moines River runs a south easterly course is very rapid, and only navigable a short distance above its mouth for small Steam Boats. By slack water dams & locking round the rapids it can be much improved & the Country benefited thereby. Coal of a superior quality abounds in the vicinity. Lands fine--timber good, Oak, Maple, (Lynn?) &c beautiful country, indeed. Monday April 15th 1850 "(I'll try) has accomplished wonders" I can't. About 8 O'clock A. M. crossed the ferry and traveled up the river through a heavy timbered country some what hilly and roads rather bad. Soil tinctured with clay, but a fine, farming section. Some fine barns, but few finished or

framed houses. The air freezing cold coming Westerly from the mountainous regions. Passed about noon the road coming up from Keyescoqua where we witnessed the parting scene of friends parting with friends. A Co from that town just starting out for golden lands. Some were quite noisy having drank freely, other sedate and thoughtful with firm resolve stamped upon their features--Feed becoming every day more scarce. 20 Miles

Tuesday " 16th

This was a day of trial. Wind in the night changed from West to North east-- At widow McCormics near village of Troy Bot [bought] 8 bushels of corn good measure for 2/ per bushel. Generous widow she, could just as well have taken 3/ but she wished to do something for the Emigrants. Surely the young widow, when again she marries deserves a generous husband. Soon after leaving Troy it set in snowing and such a guster would do honor to any winters day. Bad sloughs and hills steep & slipery were compelled to halt 1 mile east of Bloomfield Davies Co, with a Mr. Lorey Evans snow fell all P. M. and night from 6 to 8 in. deep. Horses bulled up bad & tired out, so the Co by permission 13 Miles

Wednesday April 17th 1850

This day laid by with brother Evans waiting for the snow to go off. Our Worthy host being a hessier and an odd Fellow to boot was all in our favor. The tempest had passed away. Warm southerly winds prevailed, the disappeared as if by the touch of a Magicians Wand. At night the beautiful moon, with a bright galaxy of stars, looked down upon earth beaming countenance. We passed the time away in shooting, cooking Beans, Baking bread and playing Dominos. A set of fine ones. We had made in imitation of those of Joliet memory, N. A. C. was the baker and succeeded to a charm. "(I'l try) has accomplished Wonders" I can't never a single thing sour nothing. No miles

Thursday " 18th

Sky overcast with clouds again, roads verry slipery and bad traveling, poor

chance indeed for making head way. Geo. W. Agard sick abed with the mumps. Caught cold in the storm. Mumps struck down and the prospect ahead is that the roads will become settler before we shall be able to get away. Game in the vicinity being plenty. We were in for soups and other good dishes. This afforded us fine pastime. Deer & wild turkies were occasionally come in contact with, though trying quite hard we got neither venision nor turkey soup at all & tall. Finally saw the Parties put to bed in true hoosier style. Was no [illegible] Mo miles

[illegible] Friday Apl 19th 1850 [illegible] the entertainment. Mo Miles

This is the third day we have laid over on account of bad roads and Agards sickness. Wrote a letter to Brother Frank informing him of matters and things in general—of the causes of our detention &c. The weather is again cold, wind [illegible] in the north with occasional rains. Agard is no better, worries much and is quite flighty at times. Our situation on him is uncertain. [illegible] Mo Miles

[illegible] Saturday, April 20th [illegible] laid by on a/c of bad going. And we are still here with our sick comrade. Weather more mild, grass beginning to start a little. Got [bought] this day 16 bushels corn by performing a retrograde movement of some seven miles, over very bad going, the sloughs being almost impassable. We had to hack it out and then pay 33 cents per bushel for it besides, and very glad were we to obtain it at that, for reports from ahead were no grain to be had at any price, what ever. While out on a foraging expedition this day, started up three splendid deer. I gave them a final salute with my shot gun, the and the way they raised their white colors and bounded in Majestic leaps away over the hill sides was a spectable worth beholding. Agard being some better, we think, by Monday or Tuesday he will be able to ride and go ahead again—

our Motto— [illegible] Mo miles

[illegible] Sunday Apl 21st 1850 [illegible] at the wedding. I quite [illegible] This day rain and sunshine alternate. Our sick man is gaining finely and begins to cheer up at the prospect of an early start and a rumored wedding to come off

this P. M. the parties being Evan's Sister and Mr. Stephens, County Clerk and Recorder -- The hour came, the company assembled, the squire was on hand, the Knot duly tied, and they twain were by a few fitly spoken words, made one flesh. Then came off the dinner and we were on hand as honorary guests. All passed off finely--the Skull varnish (New Whiskey & Molasses United) circulated freely, and all felt merrily. At night we gave them a salute in Marshal style, and finally saw the Parties put to bed in true hoosier style. When we retired to our tent highly pleased with the entertainments east edge of a low w[illegible] No Miles be[illegible] Monday, [illegible] 22nd [illegible] River. Teams were quite sharpers and began to make preparations this day for a move. "Westward Ho" resolving to start early on the morrow. Our sick convalescent, our team rested, surplus (recruited?) by feasting and entertainments we think nothing can prevent us from going ahead. The weather cool Sky cleary roads quite dry. Wind in the west, Lockport train passed here today, started two weeks ahead of us--laid by on a/c of bad roads. Gail Fry went found by entrance [illegible] dock (bought down by [illegible] on the No Miles 1 [illegible] Tuesday Apl 23d 1850 [illegible] Battlesnake. and such a sorry as we had was a Visited the Blooufield Lodge of I. O. O. F. last night, at the invitation of Bros. Evans. Found myself without the traveling pass word, all things olea[illegible] bright. Marked myself in and found the lodge in a flourishing condition. The members intelligent and enterprising men. By them I was cordially received and treated as a brother and friend though a stranger in the land. This day completes the week we have lain by. Our tent was taken down and all things in readiness for an early start. Our Bill was now called for. Hay and Stabling for our horses, bed and the trouble of our sick man. Pasturage &c. Nothing to pay replies our Worthy-host, how much does my wife owe you for butter and the use of your Plate (not Silver) at the wedding. I quite modesty replied nothing, but Mr. Evans, this is more than we expected. Your kindness has taken us by surprise; quite Strangers in a storm, you took us in made us willing guests

at your table, and at the Social circle around your fire side. You have cared for our sick and helped to administer to his wants. We expected to pay you liberly and now you say we owe you nothing. Sir you have our good wishes for yourself and family. I made the woman & children some Jewelry presents & we took our leave. Encamping that night on Sheridan Bottom. 21 Miles.

Wednesday Apl 24th 1850 was for the oxers. All things now being ready we Our tent was pitched last night in a beautiful grove of timber to the right of the road, about a quarter of a mile, and on the east edge of a low marshy in bottom land, three miles from Sheridan River. Quails were quite abundant and other game. We got our share surely. Our start this morning was retarded somewhat a/c of making a new singletree to replace a broken one of the day before. The road through the bottom was a winding one as well as miry. We were two hours in making the three miles but finally reached the River unharmed, The nights are freezing cold. Wind today South & weather mild. Our game list today was 1 rabbit, 3 quails, 1 large black duck (brought down by Eli on the wing.) 1 Fox squirrel and a venomous Rattlesnake. And such a soup as we had was a luxury indeed. The Rattlesnake was the only thing ejected, the crawling, poisonous reptile being blown to atoms. We Forded over the Sheridan and came into a beautiful section of Rolling Prairie country, but very thinly settled. Every year however brings its train of Emigrants and but little land on the route in these parts remains untaken. Iowa is destined to rank high among the grain growing States of the Union. Her Water powers are also abundant. Sovereign people. He could cook his own victuals with as judge & lawyer to the c. 17 miles.

Thursday Apl 25th 1850 was part of a piece of Sweet up and down. We Did not start this morning until eleven we were hunting for squaw pony. She lagged behind in the P. M. and lost sight of the train and strayed off. G. Blackman rode back six miles & returned without finding her. The two Charles & myself then went in search, I taking the stream and highlands to the right,

they the more extended plain to the left. With gun on my shoulder I traveled over hill side through groves and deep ravines for eight miles, shot two Pigeons and had a glimpse of a wild turkey. I returned to camp tired and weary and found the Pony on hand. The boys had been more successful than myself. She we found tied up to the fence, a man having caught her on a lie road, thinking her strayed, done it out of kindness for the owners. All things now being ready we proceeded on our way rejoicing and soon passed the Iowa line into Missouri, in Dodge County. We crossed an eighteen mile prairie with not a single house in view. Face of the country high & rolling, road running midway on divides or ridges from which deep ravines, headed running to the right & left. Camped early and went to baking twelve wash loaves & NO Fishes was the result. Weather more mild wind from the south. 14 Miles.

Friday Apl 26th 1850

Left camping grounds this morning 1/2 past 7. Fine rolling prairie and timber enough for all, all purposes, to a farming community. Small streams of fine flavored water abundant. About 9 O-clock passed through a nameless town (To us) one large log house and another a great way off. Meeting a good many well-people on horse back with bags of provisions & cooking utensils. We had the curiosity to enquire the cause for surely they were headed the wrong way for California. We were told it was court week and they were going to the county seat, the log house we had passed in the morning. And the man we had just passed was their Judge—a man after their own heart and the free choice of the soverign people. He could cook his own victuals sit as Judge & lodge in the same house, with the rest of them, and he was part at a game of Seven up and nine. We passed on thinking we had seen a fine specimen of high life in the great frontier State of Mo. This is a fine grain growing section. The base of the soil clay, a light kind of marl above giving its color to the streams of which there are plenty. At night camped in a woody piece of bottom land, on quite a

large creek in Co. with 20 or more trains, [illegible] 32 Miles

Saturday Apl 27th 1850/ for new axle and it being now near [illegible]

This morning our train were the first of the large cavalcade in motion. As each team wheeled into line, Joy and animation seemed depicted on each countenance. Men Women and children all seemed to vie with each other to see which should be the happiest and most cheerful. Four miles onward we came to the village of Princeton. Buildings mostly of the log cabin architecture. People of the pioneer bank Whacker Gent, smd of Whiskey, rabe hags and Tough and a humble fight. A little out of Town in going up a hill, cracked axle of small wagon to get mended, which detained us until near noon. Took the road to the right, a cut off road and called the State road. Muddy going hard wheeling. Emerged in a lovely [illegible] bottom the wood close by the relics of an 18 Miles Co. Sunday Apl 28th 1850 a roaring camp fire gleamed brightly. Instead of lay [illegible] 10 o'clock. Just [illegible] Boys in the night got alarmed at strange and uncouth sounds and built a roaring camp fire to keep off the Bobcats Lynx and other ravenous beasts quite plentiful in these parts. Hitched up about noon and went on some eight miles carrying [illegible] Grand River found a fine dry camping place. 8 miles

Monday Apl 29th 1850 [illegible] to do. [illegible] Last night was severely cold. Our camp kettle froze over its [illegible] 1/4 of an inch thick. Were on the move at early dawn thinking this day to would perform 25 to 30 miles at least, but our expectations met an early check for upon striking a root our (four mile) axle broke clean off. Here was a dilema, five miles to Bethany County seat of Harrison. We got a pole however and dragged the old wagon into port. Got the village (squir , ?) to make us a new one and for the want of a seasoned stick, cut down a green oak and fitted her into place. The out skirt village Towns of Missouri are some pumpkins sure, celebrated for no doubt.

3 Miles

Thursday May 2nd 1850 -11-

raw Whiskey, Smoked Bacon and linsey Woolsey clad, ignorant, drinking and our weeks silly acting "Pukes" Paid 6/ for new axle and it being now near night weeking hemp, hitched up and went a half mile or so and camped. Thinking it more pro 15 Miles ri sure

Tuesday Morn. 30th 1850 of the country as you near the Missouri is more hilly Country less rolling as you approach the west branch of Grand River. The soil is of a superior quality in fact it is a splendid farming country, but also, scarce the emberent soil remains unbroken, laborers are few a want of enterprise seems to pervade the land. Chariville on west side of Grand River quite a thriving village. People more moral, less whiskey drunk, with less more industrious. Forded the River and 4 miles & camped, the Missouri water qui 25 Miles.

Wednesday May 1st 1850 effects and rises its surcharged waters rapid current Our camping ground last night was in the wood close by the relics of an old the Colopit Chariville and the merry camp fire gleamed brightly. Instead of May flowers, we had this morning carolings beautiful temperature and concealing water 1 1/2 of an inch in thickness. The air was enlivened with cool and bracing like unto December. All characters were represented. 15 Miles

This morning we all remember

No relay as freezing as December where we hung on with hercules grasp, dying hopes burned from every diminished engine. Mr. People, the old Turkey caller did not catch up with us, so went to go. We missed this specimen of originality much, but as good luck would have it, we fell in Co. with an old United States regular who had served in the late mexican war. Not less distinguished in his way. I have founded an incident on each in my notes from the "Shades". We entered upon and crossed a twenty four mile prarie keeping on the Divide through the center, thus avoiding the many deep ravines peculiar to this section of country. Near Sun down we entered the village of Rochester, beautifully situated on the east side of quite a large creek. The people seemed active living by their industry Their place of nativity surely was north of the Mason & Dixon's line. Yankees no doubt. 30 Miles

Thursday May 2nd 1850

Having an early start we arrived in St. Jo. at noon to a minute. Just four weeks to a second after leaving Joliet. This day saw slaves in the fields, breaking hemp, cultivated largely in this section. The farmer thinking it more profitable and sure than that of grain. The face of the country as you near the Missouri is more hilly and broken yet extremely fertile. As we came in sight of the place what a prospect was spread out before us. On every hill side and valley in every nook and corner were pitched the tents and caroled the wagons of the adventerous and daring emigrant. Every avenue to the place was thronged with those just coming in some I [ ] like at the top of their speed. Others in the usual gate of a long journey, Willing to abide their time if not laving the Missouri water quite as soon. Why soon enough to feel its effects and view its surcharged waters rapid current whirling eddies and caving banks. Teams were constantly crossing out into the Indian territory, most of them going out six miles through the heavy bottomed timber to the bluffs & then camping, waiting for warmer weather and the starting of vegetation. Joliet boys mostly gone over it commenced raining at 2 P. M. & kept pouring all night: All characters here represented. 15 Miles

Friday May 3rd 1850

No rain today, but cold and windy winter holds on with herculean grasp, dying like Sampson shaking the pillars of the beautiful temple erected to spring and dedicated to the fair goddess of flowers. The impatient emigrants waits expectant for more genial rays and the bland, balmy, breath of summer. His heart throbs with mixed hope and fear as he casts his eyes away towards the setting Sun. Never knowing what his fate may be in traversing the vast plain--Scaling the cloud caped mountains--the passage of the dessert that lay in his way--and a thousand other things real or imaginary, that may await him. Well may the thoughtful think and the timid shrink back at the prospect for it is a Journey that will try the patience, test the powers of endurance and bring out in indelable colors, the character of any man that dares to venture. Wrote to my wife

and Brother in law Cyrus Adams. Naperville this day--have as yet received no letter from home. Laid in most of our stores at the rate - 1100 flour 3-1/2 ¢ Bacon 3-1/2 to 5 the higher price being sugar cured and verry nice. Sugar 6-1/4 & 7¢. Enjoy great sport in seeing what is to be seen. Indians shooting at a sixpense, edge ways from 3 to 4 rods--with great precision. Everyone going direct to his spent arrows, making no mistakes. No Miles

Saturday May 4th 1850

This day made up our minds to finish our purchases and leave the town making our camping place until final start on the bluffs some 6 miles out. Corn selling today from 8/ to 16/ per bushel; Oats 10/ to 14/; Hay 1.00 per 100 lbs. Received a few lines today from my mother dated 7th April by the hand of Mr. C. B. Hopkins. Wrote Brother a well filled letter when on the mid-night watch. Every hour and day brings forth something new. A tall Kentuck strode into our camp at midnight pretending to have come up the river some 16 miles on a bet to return again before 4 in the morning from the place of starting. Said he once won a wager by walking 450 miles in 49 hours. I have this original fully portrayed in a No. from the "Shades." Grain very scarce and scarcely to be had at any price. The air cold. vegetation backward. No Miles

Sunday " 5th

This morning prepared for crossing over the River. Done so about 1-0'clock P. M. on a Steam ferry Boat. River high waters verry muddy. Found ourselves and train at last crossed the Rubicon in the Indian Territory. Passed through the wooded bottom. Six miles almost every rod of the way being occupied by tents wagons etc. What a rush for the great El Dorado. The passage of this majestic mood I have fully described in book of incidents. 8 Miles

Monday May 6th 1850

This morning went in to St. Joe. to obtain my letters if any there, were or should arrive in the mail due this day at 5 P. M. Arriving early I whiled

away the time as a looker on in venice, marking well the movings of the vast multitudes constantly pouring in from every avenue. Such a Spectacle as seen in and around this place does not often greet the gaze of man. Such an excitement occurs, but seldom a Universal emigration all bent upon one object Mining digging for gold in the deep ravines and Mountain fastnesses of the great El Dorado State. Received a letter from Bro. F. L. C. dated 23 April all well. Wrote the closing letter as I supposed to them and left Town for the camp, but falling in with G. B. Hopkins made up my mind to remain in Town all night this vast moving emigrant world, nice specimens of human nature and shades Mo Miles
Tuesday May 7th 1850 kaleidascope. We are now all ready to leave, the long
Arena early from my Sermon birth and gone across Amer from Joliet, his Company having disbanded and part of them made up their minds to return, Wished us to take him along with us which we agreed to do on certain conditions they his horse and to come, going heavy, much rain having fallen & gone down. All well. took a share in boat [sic] auger & started off with old Pete and Bill to the city. Where We met up and commenced fitting out Anna for an early start on the touch Harness lively and hardening rather on the comic touching at times va- Mo Miles
to thisday May 8th 1850 ating at other but a nice shade from the supremely
Arena early and started Anna & Bill across the River with the entire team. We had got up for the mutual benefit of all. Paid $40. for old Pete to match Anna Big, horse old Mike. We paid two thirds for the horse Anna furnishing harness and his share of the horse feed. Provisions for self to make all things equal for the trip. We on our part agreeing to see him safe through with the rest of us to California. Grain falling in price a little today--Corn 8/ Oats the same. Wrote a seven structure (?) in poetic style on St. Jo & Nev. swindlers and took it myself to the Independent Adventure printing office and told its editor to publish the same if he had the moral courage to do so. Emigrants leaving for the Plains by the thousand daily. Ferried over the River and took

a cut off Indian trail path to the bluff. I was alone, the way was a solitary one, through tall and majestic timber, a fit place truely for sounding the Indian War Whoop and an Indian's mode of traveling in single file in a path trod and deeply worn by their ancestors for ages past beyond our knowledge. In my book of incidents, I dwell more minutely on this excursion to the Bluffs Via the Indian trail. Arrived in camp and found all well. No Miles

Thursday May 9th 1850

Here have we been cavorting in St. Jo one whole week, having seen much of this vast moving emigrant world, nice specimens of human nature and shades of character as many hued as the Kaleidascope. We are now all ready to leave, the long wished for letters have all come to hand, and good news from home as far back as April 16th. Tomorrow we are off luckey or no lucky day. Esc. no letters from my wife, but presume she is well. Sold some trinkets at Auction today got up on the auctioneers post on the corner of the streets for a few moments while the proprietor went to fire up. I suppose with Brandy & Sugar, my design was to make sport rather than to sell. I gave the wondering people a Chicago touch in tune lively and bordering rather on the comic touching at times verry near to the sublime, and approximating at other but a nice shade from the supremely ridiculous. My point was gained, the stand was thronged around whilst others were completely deserted. I had a short sparing in words with a would be, and in his own estimation no doubt a learned and wise man. This time at any rate he came off, as it was thought second best. He should have known better than to have come in contact with the slim tounged Chicago auctioneer. Made a fine profit on my Jewelry etc. Laid in the bal. of our supply of horse feed, and crossed the River, bidding St. Jo a long farewell, "Nolens Volens" No Miles

Friday May 10th 1850

Here we go, a long push, a strong push, a tall rush of pushing Emigrants all together. At early dawn our bluff camping ground was deserted, everything

nicely packed and our train under full head-way, amid a multitude of other for the Wild plains and pictoresque scenery of the West. Not a short West, but the extreme West of the great Western Continent. Our road lay for the first in circuitous bends following divides with deep ravines on either side occasionally descending into one of them a rising again on to another divide. For the first ten or fifteen miles the face of the county is verry uneven and broken and traveling verry difficult, especially if the season be wet, then the clayey hills are slipery and the gorges deep and Miry. The weather being fine we had no difficulty in going ahead. From one point we had a most splendid view of the surrounding country. Away to the right rolled the rapid Missouri over hills and Majestic trees, could we see her waters shining in the suns rays like burnished silver. To the left lay the vast plain as far as the eye could scan a sea of living green, behind us the hilly scenery we had passed and a distant view of St. Jo and environs around. distance 25 Miles

Saturday May 11th 1850

In passing Wolf creek yesterday the banks of which are verry steep. We paid 2/- per wagon for the privilege of crossing on an old log bridge rather than run the risk of fording and straining our team and breaking our wagons in going down & up its abrupt banks. Here we saw some fine looking Indians remnants of Iowas, Sock [Sauk] and Fox tribes. The boys were very expert with the bow & arrow and would hit a sixpence set in a stick edge ways several rods. It was tall fun for us to see their excitement and anxiety to win the prize some twenty or more letting fly their arrows in quick succession until the lucky arrow hit the mark then the victor ran and secured the bounty amid a shout of laughter from White as well as Indian. A foot race too came off, the contestors for the goal of winning the race being an Indian boy & a white lad in the emigrant train. The white boy beat the Indian much to their chagrine. Five miles from Wolf creek is located the Indian Mission and a beautiful Site it is. Farm well fenced, houses cumfortable and neat, a good mill & etc. The land here

is verry fertile and gently rolling. The weather is fine but the nights are still quite cold. Ice forming on our camp Kettles. In passing a bad Slough today got stuck with big wagon, got out again of course. Some mule trains fared the same though more floundringly so, lots of ox teams and one 25 miles

Sunday May 12th 1850 for the night on the farther banks of the Big Blue

We left our almost woodless encampment this morning at 8 O'clock, resolving to pretend on until we would find a place fit for laying over, where man, horses and all could be alike benefited. After passing a small streamlet to dash on in a beautiful prairie of the most prolific soil and traveled on the same until near 9 O'clock P.M. without coming across tree or wood which would serve us for fuel. Being a small grove stay off to the right of the road we resolved to take it, which we came before dark and found a good camping place. At the rate of three miles to the hour we traveled this day. 22 Miles

Monday May 13th 1850

We were off quite early and five miles [illegible] to the [illegible] a [illegible] clear [illegible] pretty better with little [illegible] along the [illegible] of the pretty little [illegible] prairie [illegible] beautiful. Many [illegible] wagons by dead horses and mules of which [illegible] to grass being count [illegible] Sometimes with [illegible] their poor beasts died by [illegible], Consequently [illegible] the graves of last year's emigrants. The [illegible] of the grass with the dust [illegible] they lay [illegible] road [illegible] emigrant and Wild Indian who roams where he liketh, free as the Prairie [illegible] 22 Miles

Tuesday May 14th 1850 [illegible] he pursues. In consequence of the great and almost

Left our lonely encampment at 7. No group could we find nearer than 3/4 of a mile. The Ox trains had been there before us and ate up every green thing. We are now in the midst of, Extensive ox trains and passing them one after another, we pressed on hoping by & by to get in advance of them all and not be annoyed so much by a constant turning out of the road and worrying our teams in getting

past them. This day watering places abundant, and the most fertile soil man or savage ever trod upon, but timber so scarce that it can never be extensively cultivated. Un-harnessed our horses at noon and turned them loose to graze for the first time. At 1 geared up again passed lots of ox teams and one bad slough hole and finally brought up for the night on the farther banks of the Big Blue River fording good. 27 Miles

Wednesday 15th

The scenery around and as you approach the Big Blue is highly pictoresque & romantic. High bluffs deep bottoms extensive views of divide rising on divide until in the distance the clear horizon kissed and mingled with earths soft green. The blue is a clear rapid stream 125 feet wide pebly bottom. Face of the country quite rolling. Road dry and very dusty. Met two teams on the retrigade track. 28 Miles

Thursday May 16th 1850

What a beautiful country. Like the long peaceful swell of an Old Ocean at rest. The soil being a kind of bluish mark, is rich in the extreme as plainly indicative in the luxuriance of the grass and other species of vegetation now by the genial rays of the sun shooting up to maturity. The base of the soil seems to be of a yellowish kind of clayey formation; Well adapted for grain growing, but alas, this vigorous soil must for a long time remain as the free grazing for the deer, elk, buffalo and public hunting park for the adventurous emigrant and Wild Indian who roams where he liketh, free as the Prairie Winds, as untrancled as the game he pursues--In consequence of the great and almost universal scarcity of the timber. Game of all kinds seem quite abundant. Prairie Hens and plover. The wolf and the badger, the The Antelope, Elk and deer, living streams of water are only to be met with, at long intervals. Springs and streamlets by the way side do not often greet the longing eyes of the thirsty way worn, and weary traveler. Passed by six graves today, but two

of which were of this years emigration, one died of disease and one (Malone) by the accidental discharge of a rifle. Country pictoresque winds high— dust annoying and kept in constant agitation by the moving host. 26 Miles

Friday May 17th 1850

Just one week from the bluffs of St. Joseph. Distance in traveling time per hour nett were 3 miles (or 193 miles--This morning all Jovial, musical & well pleased that so far so good. A reverse and damper soon came. In wheeling big wagon round camp ground in starting, the front wheel sunk into an ant hill, cramping round, breaking the axle square off of the fore wheel. We were now in a fix indeed, with no timber better than bur Oak and green at that to replace the broken axle. Charley Hill was driving the team at the time and it was shear carelessness in him. Orville talked to him plainly, to this effect, and Hill retorted back. He was told to (?) to, turn out the team while all hands started off for timber to make a new axletree. One was finally found, and that day, all of us and one emigrant from the Chicago Co. besides who volunteered to aid us in our calamity. The land around was rolling and the burr oak was about the only timber short and scruby at that. (No Miles this day)

Saturday May 18th 1850

Our new axle being finished at 1/2 past 6, we were all ready to start anew on our Journey. We passed over Big & Little Sandy Creek mostly dry now. In going down one of the many quick sand hills, all at once there was the Jaring noise of another Smash. O. D. C. was gently snoring behind C. S. B. was a driving and I guess doing about the same thing when N A C. brot up the rear on foot, there lay a spookless wheel, the rim tire & hub only left. Sais [says] the passing emigrant, by the way of sympathy, Sirs you are indeed in a bad fix, too bad sure. Sais [says] another Jolly man as he passed us by, Sure and you will have to change wheels & go you will. It was one of those delemmas that requires action rather

than sympathy, and we all admitted that Jokes were a much better antidote than tears. Ames & myself were detailed by the Co. to go off some three miles to a cotton wood skirt. We done so--procured a pole backed it to the spot and chained under the wagon and made the little Blue before dark some 9 miles.

This morning [illegible] distance 30 Miles

Sunday May 19th 1850 [illegible] from Lagrange Ia. [illegible]

A busy time this morning N. A. C. was up at 4 O'clock A. M. and walked some 8 miles down the River in search of a Smith, and some dry seasoned oak or hickory to fill our wheel but with out success in either. I became very tired, saw by the way side I. O. O. F. lettered on some wagons. Wearily I made my way up to the camp making myself & casualty known. They were O K (some ?) went with me some two miles in search of material aid, but finding none returned & sat down with the stranger brother to a fine breakfast, which, when finished I arose & bade them God Speed on their long & weary way. Returning to camp, found the boys all busy. A dry seared hickberry had been found on the bottom land. When quartered each of us made a spoke. A Smith happened to be camped just above us and aided us. Every hand was busy and every edge tool in demand, two horse shoes & tin were finally set-the old wheel. moved along again & by sun down we had made 10 Miles. 25 Miles

Monday May 20th 1850

We left our "truly" romantic camping ground this morning at 1/2 past 7. The Indians had evidently used the same spot for that purpose many times before us. The rain had fallen in torrents during the night. Consequently everything around in the Morning looked refreshed. Causing the Emigrant to Smile & the dumb animals to travel on more cheerfully. The no. of people on the rout May well be termed legion go ahead or fall back. Teams upon Teams are all around you. One solid mass of moving animated nature. Our road today diverged from the River Bottoms and we passed some 7 miles of high dry & undulating Prairie, then came

down to the little Blue again. We are now in the land of the Buffalo and other Wild game of the vast Prairies of the great West. Saw to day 1 Buffalo & one Antelope, not near enough however to get a shot--distance28 Miles

Tuesday May 21st 1850

This morning started on our winding way at 7 O'clock. Overtook Chicago friends that went ahead on friday Fell in with four teams from Laporte Ia. All of whom knew N. A. C. as the old Auctioneer that went it going good & strong for the peoples benefit. Saw both antelopes & buffalo today on the plain & dividing ridges. These Missourians on fleet horses started off in hot pursuit and such a dust as they left behind was skery [scary] even to wild beasts. Left the valley of the little Blue and encamped on the high plain off to the left some two miles from the beaten Cala track 22 Miles

Wednesday May 22, 1850

We left our tree clustered camp early and made all haste to cross the high plain or divided between the little blue & the Platte upon which there is no water for man nor beast. Reached the Platte bottom 1/2 past 2 P. M. went 1 1/2 miles to dig out hole for water. Started on again & encamped 1 1/2 miles from Platte. 25 Miles

Thursday May 23rd 1850

At our camping ground last night found the best grass we have met with on the trip. Traveling our bottom lands lovely in prospect and rich in soil. We arrived at 10 O'clock A. M. at Fort Kearney, situated at the head of twenty mile Island in the Platte River. We made a tarry here of an hour or more writing back to friends we had left, viewing the location &c. We now took up our line of march again, having passed one of the land marks of the Way, pressing on to others that lay en-route for the promised land. Fuel being scarce we stopped to gather willows to cook our evening meal, filling our cask with water &c

Diverging from our path some mile or more, we came to our evening halt and out of Buffalo Meat, Flover & Ducks had one of those soups made that takes a Cal-- Emig overland to know how to relish. A man May read but to fully realize he must travel & note for himself. 25 Miles

Friday May 24th 1850

The Platte valley for extent beauty and association stands (unnivate ?) It is one vast extended level plain, with undulating bluffs on the left. As you go up the River full of Riffles & cotton wooded islands, the land on the right bank in the distance seems one vast plain of high table land boundless in extent over which roam the Wild Sioux Buffalo, Elk, Antelope and deer, all free as the wind that blows on the swift waters of the turbid Platte. 32 Miles

Saturday May 25th

This vast valley is now one moving living map of animated nature. The shrill Bugle, the viol., and harp make the valley to re-echo with strains of sweetest melody. To hear the sharp crack of the rifle, the shack of the ox drivers whip & the bark of the dog tells that the rule of the white man is here that the Anglo-Saxon race reigns Supreme, the desert giving way. The waste places made to smile for the time being. 25 Miles

Sunday May 26th 1850

Last night we were late in finding a suitable place for grazing our horses and it was nearly dark when we turned off to the road to the right resolving to look no further, but to run down to the river and camp. All at once the Heavens seemed to be lit up with one sheet of lurid fire. A Windy tempest was upon us. All hands brot too, bracing up the wagons to keep them from capsizing. Subsiding a little we went on down to the River turning our weaned animals out with but little or no grass on which to graze. So this beautiful Sunday Morning we all resolved to travel on a wais until we came to good grass and then turn in for the day, giving our animals a chance to recruit up. Making good too our

distance ahead of the long array of ox teams, so annoying to pass after having once got a head, at 11 A. M. found a spot here. We shortened our wagon Box shod our horses &c [illegible] distance 13 Miles

Monday May 27th 1850 [illegible]
Left camp in the immediate vicinity of which a vast no. of emigrants and their teams were spread abroad. Went on eight miles and came to the south fork of the Platte, turned out to graze and at 11 O'c had a lunch prepared. After which a Co. of us scaled Pawnee Peak a high eminence of the continuous bluffs skirting the Platte. The view is quite extended hill retiring behind hill far away to the south interspersed with vallies & deep gorges. Where the Indian Buffalo, Antelope and deer can roam unmolested away from the fear and haunts of man. [illegible] 30 Miles

Tuesday May 28th [illegible]
Heavy frost this morning last night another (except ?) occured as we were in pursuit of suitable camping ground for the night. C33 was ahead in search of grass, O. S. B. Hill, Ames & Agard were next with the 4 & 2 horse teams. H. A. G. was ahead after orville. The rear all turned to the right on their own hook & left O. D. G. to find them as best he could. When all parties finally met, high and angry words ensued. Charley B. was the boy that had taken the responsibility of turning right wheel when one in the Co. had been on for some time seeking the most suitable spot. He was told in plain terms he had done wrong [illegible] and O. D. G. would not stand it again, would leave the Co. if there could not be unity of action. There was then a calm. Went along then up the River or fork, the plain more barren still, at last came across Col. Platners Camp from Marshall Michigan, in the vicinity of which good grass was found and at 1/2 past 5 turned out for the night 25 Miles

Wednesday May 29th

Our weak horses are now on the gain. Hunt has been out of the harness a week,

Gins neck is also mending. Ames grumbles because he haste put his horses on heavy wagon, which had to be done to favor old Gin. He must be cautious how he give vent to his spleen or fans the spirit of discord for we work and act for the good of the whole. The days are now cool and our teams are getting along first rate. (Bois Devashe ?) is our only fuel now. The bluffs on the south fork of the Platte are scarcely perceptible. Buffalo trails from the plains running down to the River are very frequent and deep tred from the tramp of ages. Crossing over from bluffside to the River we camped at 1/2 past 6. 28 Miles

Thursday May 30th [illegible] Miles. [illegible]

Went up the River better 5 miles and crossed over in safety witnessed many ludicrous as well as daring feats. It was a scene not soon to be forgotten & many thrilling incidents could be related verifying the fact truth is many times stranger than fiction. Our provision wagon being raised on the mules went over safe. Our clothing got wet somewhat & had to be spread out and dried. When we had duly passed over Jourdan & got safely over her quick sands, in doing which our horses were turned loose to graze & we laid over until noon. When we hurried up again and passed over a high rolling and almost barren tract land some 17 miles without in feed, wood, water, or grass to speak of descending some very abrupt and difficult Hills, passing down through a longthened ravine called by travellers ash Hollow. All of which feats we accomplished in safety in the same day. The late heavy rain had so laid the deep sands in this Ash Hollow gorge that we had no difficulty in passing out on to the Main Platte, one mile up which we came to a halt, very much pleased with our days adventure and travel. There now opened to our view new scenery in the shape of big castelated rocks steep and leafty Bluffs. A more extensive valley and more densely crowded emigration. [illegible] distance 25 Miles

May 31st 1850 [illegible]

This day we passed occationally Platts of grass, good grass, which is no small

item on an excursion, where for so great a term our beasts have nothing else to depend upon. Seven miles from the mouth of Ash Hollow we came to a series of abrupt bluffs of all shapes and forms, convex, concave, square, eliptical, pyramidal, hectagon, octagon, parallel, Parrallelogram, Bald headed with century and century post, plainly depicted on the top in fact appearing like a skelaton skull of some ancient aborigenes chief seated thus on his high eminence to guard the grounds--where repose his race from time immemorial. These bluffs range from 50 to 150 feet in height and are laid down on our charts as Castle Bluffs. Our distance this day 25 Miles. Thus are we nearing inch by inch as it were, that distant Western land that in the bright anticipation so cheers us on in our lonely way.

25 Miles

June 1st 1850

Such a rain as ushered in the first day of June was really a welcome to the dry and parched up valley. Yea thrice, welcome to the weary pilgrim Emigrant. Our small caravan made fine progress, grass green verdant and spicy, would in luxuriance on either side of our track, a broad expanse with not a tree, hillow or bush to be seen. The road on the north side of the Platte could be seen in the distance winding its serpentine course through flat and round bluffs and compared with the one on the south side but for emigrants on the move away off to the left loomed up to appearance a most stately Mansion--an old feudal castle with bastions parapets etc, entirely detatched from any range of hills, bluffs or mountains. Pure nature cuts up many a freak that geologist or naturalist can hardly explain. This pointed rock is named the church or court house.

distance by time 30 Miles

June 2d 1850

This day being Sunday we laid by for the respit of man & beast our camping ground is truly romantic. Apparently just over a rising swell of undulating Prairie Stands out in bold relief of one of natures stately edifices. The

"Coart House" or "Church". From base to high dome it is indeed beautiful to be hold. Distance lends charm to the view. Though over ten miles off. Apparently it is not over three, so thought some of our Co. & others who started after breakfast as they thought for an hours stroll to view this, one of the Wonders of the valley of the Platte. Tired and Weary sometime after dark they returned fully satisfied that appearances are indeed very deceptive. This handy work of nature is said to be over half of a mile in circumference, and between 350 & 400 feet in height. An out tower near by of the same height and a limpid brook running at its base adds additional beauty to the scene. No Miles

June 3d

This morning we were all up & off by times. Within the last three days we have passed five Indian Villages or groups of wickiups—constructed mostly of skins attaching to small poles coming together at the top some fifteen feet high with an aperture high up the side for the smoke to issue forth. Some of these tents are quite large & capable of holding fifty savages. They are so nicely constructed as to be proof against storm, wind & weather and quite comfortable to all appearance. These savages are of robust stature of fine physiognomy very importuning, begging bread, flour, sugar etc. Saying no good Indian, we no sted horses etc. About noon we were opposite the chimney rock. In appearance it is like a huge Indian the nubale, rising 250 feet perpendicular, giving ample vent to all the imaginary flames of the village of hills round about. Such rains & hail showers, is a caution. distance 25 Miles

June 4th

Just two months today since we left Joliet. We begin to think Jourdan an a long and hard road to travel but we murmur not. We have enlisted heart & hand for the whole compain. Our nearves & muscles fully braced for any thing that may rise up or seem to oppose our onward march. The roads are getting quite heavy from the constant daily thunder showers prevelent and such sudden gusts

of wind & lurid flamed forked tongued lightning accompanied by thunder so loud that it would seem that all of heavens mighty artillery had broke loose, showering down not leaden but hail stone bullets some as big as ones fist. We were now in full view of Scotts Bluffs and rightly named. Grand towers castles rampart walls, bastions all sentries at their posts the army in reserve, the scrub pine on the tops like so many bristling bayonets. 8 miles brot us through the valley to the left of the Bluffs and on a rising ground, camped full view of Laramies Peak Rocky Mountains. made 20 miles

June 5th 1853 [1850] travel has been highly picturesque indeed. Laramies Arose early to get the start of the numerous trains of ox teams all along the way. A great nuisance to horse & mule trains which travel faster & are obliged to turn out and get past their long string of ho-haw-gee along about they way. The road less sandy & approximating to the gravel Laramies Peak looms up in the distance. A high & dark wall or tower on the Western horizon, one hundred and fifty miles distant. Passed at the West of Scotts Bluffs an Indian Village and a French Trading Post, Blacksmith shop etc. Passed horse creek and came in sight once more of some friendly Willows, cotton wood trees and the sweet briar. As we begin to near the Black Hills laying to the West of Fort Laramie, the soil begins to change hard hard, lay along our path, and the face of nature to clothe herself in granite form. Our spirits onward is our motto. distance 30 miles

June 6th 1850 camping ground. Where we found grass in abundance and a pure Our camp last night was pitched in the immediate vicinity of a village of prairie dogs. The mouth or opening of their burrows is in shape like the big end of brass trumpet. In eye they resemble very much one of our wood chucks sitting on the edge of their holes they will keep up a constant hacking or barking noise, liken to a whippet dog ready to drop into their den the moment you approach or shoot at them. We are rising in altitude also making a more

northern latitude as we near Fort Laramie. Timber lands more frequent and of larger growth. Forded Laramies Fork, just above where it empties into the Platte and turning round to the left came in full view of the fort, most beautifully located on the fork in an extended plain surrounded by high hills and walled bluffs. Whose edges are lined with snow. Stopped only long enough to mail some packages of letters & then pushed on over the hill and camped.

20 Miles.

June 7th 1850

The scenery of this days travel has been highly pictoresque indeed. Laramies loafty peak constantly greets the eye in its Gigantic outlines. Elevating this Snow Caped head high up into the sky serene a giant surrounded by the black hills, all doing obeisance and rendering homage to his most serene highness. Hills and verdant vallies Rivulets of purest water in whose crystal fonts the mountain trout doth so delight to sport. The Antelope, Elk and deer bounding over the vallies and ascending the mountain slope in the distance. The pure air of the Rocky Mountains is most gratefully welcomed, after our long journey up the valley of the high bluffed platte. Our course is now over the black hills. Having left the banks of the Platte away to the right, steering Westerly course until we again strike it near the upper & last Ferry. Company all in fine spirits. Distance--

25 Miles

June 8th 1850

Left our splendid camping ground. Where we found grass in abundance and a pure spring brook issuing from a basin reservoir in a meadow valley, just above our encampment and 26 miles from Fort Laramie. This A M fell in with a chicago train Butler Capt. passed the usual compliment of recognition. were passed on we sped our way to the still far off land of promise. This days travel proved an up and down hill operation, some of them quite precipetous and McAdamized with small cobble stone very hard of ascent especially in a rainy time. The dry runs

are numerous, their dusty courses almost barren of timber, in time of freshet the torrents from the hills and mountains around rushes in these channels with amazing velocity, disgorging themselves into the Platte, leaving a course sandy sediment in their beds, glittering in the Sun like so many diamonds. The horn toad first met our gaze traveling through these Hills--their tails are lizard like and they are small in bulk. This day camped late, finding no grass. Camped after 8 P. M. distance 37 Miles

June 9th 1850

In trying to find a good camping ground last night we traveled on and on until after dark when about 8 OC we reached what is called Labouli [Le Bonte] River hungry and faint and horses completely fagged out. No grass appearing we turned our horses adrift to shift for themselves as best they could and without getting any supper we hastily pitched our tent and all hands turned in leaving our horses to go unstatched where they listed. On awaking this morning nothing but barrenness was visable around. Wild sage indeed a plenty, which only added desolation to the vision. Our horses were found on a distant hill side, where they were picking a few scattered spears of tuft grass. Feeling ourselves much refreshed we were now only anxious to provide for our dumb beasts, so we harnessed up and after going some five miles it being Sunday we turned in on a branch of the River we had passed last night and let our horses graze upon tolerable grass, feeding and resting, to man & beast very acceptable. distance 5 miles

June 10th 1850

This was indeed a lovely morning. The Robin lark and other songsters of the wild West caroled their softest sweetest melody. The air was pure and elastic, all nature seemed to smile in gayest attire. The grass looking more green from the last nights refreshing shower. Lapareel [?] River we passed at 11 A. M. and turned out our horses for a noon graze hiring an emigrant Smith to set five shoes at 1/ each, am thinking ourselves quite fortunate withall. In looking

at the passing trains while thus detained we notice Capt. Wm Jones train of wagons from Naperville Dupage Co. Ills. -- Soon after hitching up I went on ahead to overtake the Cap. In the meantime a thunder shower burst with unusual severity over the hills drenching man and beast. Causing the ravines and Rills to rise and with impetuous sweep bear down everything that obstructed. I over took Jones and Co. soon after which then was general camping for the day in consequence of the overflow of the gulches. Cagwins, Jones and Butlers trains all together. distance 21 miles

June 11th 1850

It was an incident worthy of mention the meeting of so many friends amidst the barren hills in a savage land far away from the haunts of civilisation. There was a general mingling of happy sentiment, words of condolence and encouragement given all taking courage and bidding each other God Speed as we started on our way, at early dawn. Crossed over the Fourche Bois, that so impeded our progress the night before, now reduced to easy fordable dimensions. Passed on some four miles and came once more upon our old stand-by for many a long and weary day, the River Platte, so completely metamorphosed too was he, that we should hardly have recognized our old friend. The current was rapid waters clear and deep and confined to narrower banks. Five miles farther onward we passed Deer Creek quite a stream, abounding in fish, well timbered, but grass scarce. New hills and dales rises and pitches. A chain of Mountain Bluffs on our left whose tops were skirted with snow eternal. Mud creek 9-1/2 miles farther with steep banks was passed. Went on ahead with Jones train and waited for ours to come up.

distance 24 Miles

June 12th 1850

About 10 O'clock last night we were aroused from early slumber by a regular Stampede of horses or mules from below. We all sprang up supposing they were our own. Learning the facts of the case we felt relieved and retired again to rest. We

had not lain long before our Sentries sounded the alarm, that our own horses were on the move and unless secured soon, would be off to parts unknown. We now arose in earnest went out and secured all of our horses. At 2 O'clock in the morning all hands were up breakfast prepared, teams harness and at 4 we were going ahead with a rush to make up the upper ferry of the Plate to secure as early and sure a ferriage over as possible. When we arrived at 1/2 past 8 A. M. and by 1/2 past 10 were all over the other side. The rush was very great though five ferry boats were in motion. One a mormon, over which we crossed paying $4 for each wagon $2 for each horse we moved than short distance and turned our horses out to grase. Taking them after 3 miles to the Platte to water. 5 hours nooning only 14 Miles

June 13th 1850

This morning we passed mineral pong and springs 12 miles from the ferry. The moutains rocks deep ravines etc. all bear indications of volcanic heat and action. The pond and springs are strongly tinctured with alchali-and several cattle lay dead around from having drank the same. The soil is sandy or course gravel. Our road lay along and through deep valleys with high rocky and precipitous bluffs on either side. Fourteen miles from the Mineral Lake we came to the celebrated Willow Springs, the water of which was clear as crystal and cold as zero. Grass was very poor around these springs from being a general camping ground. After our noon grase we went on over a barren, poisonous alchali district and arrived at grease creek at a point where the road touches its verdureless banks. There was no alternative but to camp and so we did, with sage abounded in rich profusion. Our sentinals were posed with strict orders to keep an eye on the animals, but during the night most of them stampeded.

distance 31 Miles

June 14th 1850

This morning was one of the eventful ones with the Co. As early as 9 o'clock P. M. C. Blackman and myself went out to secure the horses. We found on examination

that two of the No. were missing. While in search of them the balance were left under the charge of Blodget of the Chicago train. We gave up the pursuit and on returning to where the others were left we found Blodget Horses and all gone. One had gone to camp for something, the horses stampeded after the two first missing. The search was kept up until after midnight by all hands. When we gave up the chase and returned to our tents to rest. In the morning early the whole Co. were on the alert, two by two with face to every point of the compass. The whole country was searched over without success and the heart became faint and the spirtis of all began to flag. When was seen away off through a mountain George Agard driving before him the whole train of animals. Hare! Hare! rang from every mouth. That day or this reached the sweet water and camped 1/2 mile West of Devils gate. 20 Miles

June 15th 1850

Yesterday when everything was put to rights, the United Chicago and Joliet train moved on with hearts more buoyant than although no accident had happened. From Grease creek to the Saleratus plains 8 miles going heavy and sandy with a fine view of the granite Mountains at whose base run the rapid sweet water rising at the very base of the Rocky Mountains running an Easterly course and emptying into the Platte. Going on some four miles we were refreshed with cooling draughts of the sweet water. Stopping within full view of Independence Rock at noon to graze. This Majestic Pile is one mile long 1/4 of a mile wide from 100 to 150 feet high, one solid bare mass of Granite, 100,000 of names are engraved thereon. passing emigrants. At noon Jones Train passed us and when we passed Ind. Rock they were encamped under its shade and we saw them no more until we met in Cala. Devils Gate is a frightful gap, through a spur of the Mountain through which the St. Water has cut its narrow way. 1 mile long 400 feet high. Well termed the Devils gate. From this camp to next resting ground on bitter cotton wood Creek. 22 Miles

June 16th 1850

Yesterday Morning as we left our camp in close proximity to the Devils Gate, the cool winds of the Mountains reminded us of Winter, overcoats were in demand and Mittens and gloves sought after. Raw Winds from the West all day. Sand flying from desert wastes vast fields or plains of Wild Sage Blocked the way, save one narrow path through which the vast emigrant train had made its way. Granite Boulders rising into hills and these into Mountains. Whose high towering peaks kissed the skies. Take it all in all, the scenery on the Sweet-Water will vie in the sublime with any in the world. This day Sunday spent in camp duties, watching our resting horses as they quietly grazed and in viewing some of the volcanic Rocks and Scorias in the immediate vicinity. Others of the Co. went off on an antelope hunt on a distant mountain and did not return until midnight. Each with a ham of an Antelope on his back as they thought pretty dearly purchased. Timber is scarce but here and there. A bitter cotton wood skirting the creek which gives it its name.

June 17th 1850. [illegible] morning was [illegible]. In a basket of water [illegible]

The two hunters report that they followed up Bitter Cottonwood Creek to its very source in the mountains, that they scaled its highest peak scaring up a monster bear on their way, and as it happened both parties were willing to go on their way with out scaring up a fight. That while in one of their elevated positions they saw an Antelope in a gulch below fired and brought him down. They described the scenery as being very grand and on the North side of the Mountains snow to the depth of ten feet or more, also that dense thickets of pine and tamarack abounded. The road to day is very heavy, in fact so sandy as to warrant us in pronouncing it the worst going on the rout. We are gradually rising to the south pass of the Rocky Mountains. The air is cold, winds piercing and Winter reigns in the midst of summer. Grass for our beast very poor and scarce, while wild sage is every where. distance 25

June 18th 1850 [illegible] to the [illegible] [illegible]

Camped last night in the midst of a sixteen mile stretch, no water to be found and the next thing to no grass at all. We left the sage and sand barrens early without a passing regret, and pushed on to strike the sweet water again. Our horses were quite as anx. as ourselves to participate in its cooling draughts. We taking it pure while theirs was mixed with flour, answering for both food and drink. We forded the River and five miles farther on. Again going only one quarter of a mile before recrossing to the North side again to avoid a[illegible] and [illegible] the bluff so tiring to man and beast. We now have a full view of the Wind River [illegible] chain of mountains to the right of the pass. Their tops tower to the skies [illegible] and are covered with snow eternal, sublime spectacle what an assembly. In the heart of summer while winter reigns supreme. We now commenced ascending a [illegible] series of hills and on the top of the last rocky ledge encamped near an ice [illegible] lake with good grass around. [illegible] dist. 22 Miles

June 19th 1850

This is as beautiful a day winters morning need be. In a bucket of water outside the tent ice made 1/4 of an inch in thickness. The wind came direct off of the Wind River snow capped mountain peaks, some twenty five miles to the Northwest. Blankets and Quilts were among the indispensables. We now begin to witness by the way side and at every camping ground the abandonment of every kind and species of property. Wagons Rifles, axes, chains, neck yokes, kegs, bbls, Powders, lead and Harnesses strew the road. The Motto seems to be to throw [illegible] away lighten up and go ahead and the Dl take the hindmost. Thus perisheth [illegible] thousands of dollars worth of property that had better never left home, it did so clog the onward march to the golden land. Wagons are being coupled up so short that the hind and fore wheels nearly touch, that they may run easier. [illegible] Sold our light Ames Wagon to day to an ox train for 10$ They left a heavy one worth five of ours by the road side. Water and going good, grass but moderate.

We are gently ascending to the South peak. distance 20 Mil

June 20th 1850

This morning how unlike that of yesterdays. The air is now as mild and bland as a young Maidens Smile, on the reception of a boquet of flowers from the one she loves best. Over coats are now thrown aside and the musketoes do keep up such a buzzing about our ears, as to much annoyed, saying nothing about their piercing salutations. To the apex of the south pass 5-1/2 miles from last camping ground. The pass is about 20 Miles in width as level and gently undulating as an Illinois prairie. Were it not for the high snow Jagged peaks to the right and high range of hills away to the left. We should scarce be aware that we were crossing the back bone of the North American Continent. We passed and we are now slaking our thirst from a small trickling rivulet issuing from the Pacific Spring. A Mountain tributary to the Mighty Colorado of the Pacific. How changed is everything around, air, water, grass and prospect. We are descending the Western slope of the Rocky Mountains. distance 23 Miles

June 21st 1850

Had good grass for our horses last night and they were not slow to improve the opportunity. Left camp ground at 6 and arrived at the Junction of California and Oregon roads. Our train taking southlotte out off rout, leaving the Kanzan rout via Fort Bridger to the left. We grazed our horses at noon a short distance only from the little Sandy River. Carried water to the base of a high hill on the left side four miles out from little Sandy. Myself and Ames of our train and Blodget of the Chicago were attacked with the Mountain fever. All taken just before dinner. Burning up with intense heat the mind wandering away into the dreamy land. Oh how cool and refreshing the snow locked upon the Mountains Peaks, that we had passed away to the right of the road and yet it was beyond our reach, so we plodded on through--the sand and sultry heat, panting all the while for the cooling water brook. We arrived on the big Sandy River and camped on the West side. I took to bed taking some of Dr. Hills