

**JAMES S. ABELL**

Diary (portion)

May 19 - September 18, 1849

Transcribed

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# James S. Abell Journal

## 1849

[NOTE- THIS TRANSCRIPT MADE FROM A VERY POOR XEROX COPY]

[pages 1-3 illegible]

4

[May] 19<sup>th</sup>

Traveled moderately[?] to day over \*\*\*\* of the cuntry and encamped for the night at pool Creek had good spring water and plenty of good grass

[May] 20<sup>th</sup> Sunday

Remained in camp until afternoon blew and rained hard all night.

[May] 21<sup>st</sup>

Crossed a small Creek, water legg deep came to the Wakarusa river about 2 Oclock, crossed and encamped in a low and Marshy place about 4 Oclock.

[May] 22<sup>d</sup>

Left our encampment Early and came about two miles in very muddy marshy ground when we came to a high ridge which we assended and followed for about 12 miles and encamped on the same about 6 Oclock, PM we saw quite a number of Prairie Wolves but could not get near enough to kill any.

[May] 23<sup>d</sup>

About One Oclock this[?] morning it commenced raining and blowing cold and disagreeable[?] in the extreme, continued raining until 6[?] this morning.

[May] 24<sup>th</sup>

Cold this morning things all wet and no fire to dry them out of wood start[?] on our way rijou\*\*\*ings[?]

5

and encamped on the bank of the \*\*\*\* Creek commenced raining before we got our camps \*\*\*\* and rained and blew violently all night.

[May] 25<sup>th</sup>

Left our Encampment and went about 3 miles to \*\*\*\* Creek and found it to high to ford and encamped again to wait for the river to fall.

[May] 26<sup>th</sup>

Crossed Mission Creek, and went to the upper crossing of the Kansas we encamped about ½ mile from the river Emigrants are very numerous and anxiously waiting their turn to cross

(There is another Crossing[?] a mile or two down Stream called[?] lower crossing

[May] 27<sup>th</sup> [OK]

ferrys Moved our Encampment to the river for for the[?] purpose of crossing the river. Morning \*\*\*\* it \*\*\*\* Shines bright. Crossed the Kansas in the evening about 9 oclock, we hired[?] the ferry and \*\*\*\* ourselves to prevent the delay of 2 or 3 days \*\*\*\* would have been the \*\*\*\* had we waited for our turn. The Kansas is quite a large Stream current rapid and as muddy as the Missouri.

6

[May] 28<sup>th</sup>

Traveled[?] near the banks of the Kansas and went about 2 miles[?] where we encamped on the open prairie by a fine Spring. This was the most beautiful place we have Seen Since we left home.

[May] 29<sup>th</sup>

We saw a cruious bird with a long bill. We Encamped after crossing a branch of the little Vermilion.

[May] 30<sup>th</sup>

Wind and rain during the morning we moved about 12 miles and encamped for the night.

[May] 31<sup>st</sup>

Crossed \*\*\*\* large branch of \*\*\*\* Vermillion went on a short distance and encamped.

June 1<sup>st</sup>

Traveled about 32 miles on very good roads on a high prairie.

June 2<sup>d</sup>

Left our encampment soon after Sunrise and came in sight of Blue river Soon after we encamped on the side[?] of a beautiful \*\*\*\* where we remained.

[June] 3<sup>d</sup> Sunday[?]

fore noon crossed Walnut or Sandy creek, \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* to water after stopping about 1 hour our teams went on I remained here to attend preaching when preaching was over I pushed[?] on[?] \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* our encampment \*\*\*\* to get in sight

7

of our cumpany[?] before night if possible \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* not help looking back at the beautiful \*\*\*\* and nice groves that I was leaving with no little regret. Came in cumpany with Mr Morse[?] of Poland and one old vermonter who we \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* from Pittsburg to Indapendance with I took supper with them[?] and then moved on after our wagons As the Sun was setting I chanced[?] to observe what I never Saw before. There was not a Tree in Sight not a human being not[?] a drop of water not a cloud in the sky The Sun set and after a few moments spent in meditation \*\*\*\* struck[?] \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* would[?] soon be dark, and \*\*\*\* mager[?] tree \*\*\*\* be following then So I started[?] with \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* energy hoping to come in sight of \*\*\*\* before

dark \*\*\*\* \*\* could take me[?]  
\*\*\*\* with my cumpas. \*\*\*\* \*\* began to[?] show \*\*\*\* in consiterable[?] uneasiness as[?]  
these are the \*\*\*\*

8

where[?] they consider[?] most favorable for an attack, I \*\*\*\* added to my speed and I moved on  
\*\*\*\* plenty fast a few minutes more brought me to the Sumit of a rolling prairie I looked  
anxiously on[?] to my satisfaction I saw our Cumpany Encamped about 4 miles from me I took  
my cumpass from my pocket took[?] their[?] direction carefully and then pushed forward. I  
had gone but a Short distance when I had decended from the rise of ground so that I could not see  
the wagons any longer. it grew dark I pushed on for about 3 miles when the ground began  
gradually to rise again (& would occasionally light a match to look at my cumpas) when \*\*\*\*  
had[?] asended this rise of ground I \*\*\*\* some[?] camp[?] \*\*\*\* \*\* about a mile distant  
which I f\*\*\*\* on \*\*\*\* with all the Energy that I could muster I soon entered Our Camp My[?]  
Companions apparently a quick[?] pleased to see me as I was to see them. It was about 10  
Oclock \*\*\*\* \*\* returned to Camp.

9

June 4<sup>th</sup>

Quite pleasant came to the little blue where we stopped for dinner and a Swim. We \*\*\*\* \*\*  
rattle[?] snakes today. I Shot one with my pistol[?] during the afternoon we followed the little  
Blue up Stream and Encamped on its bank.

[June] 5<sup>th</sup>

Followed the Same Stream all day and Encamped on its Bank.

[June] 6<sup>th</sup>

Overtook the cumpany that left Farmington S\*\*\* Col[?] we had Some rain and Hail to day.

[June] 7<sup>th</sup>

Left Encampment at 4 ½ Oclock AM Saw a drove[?] of prairie wolves. Came to the Platte  
river valley went into the platte river with Baldwin to have a swim had a good time.

[June] 8<sup>th</sup>

Passed fort Kearney to day this fort is situated[?] on the banks of the Platte river it is in a  
beautiful place we traveled about 25 miles along the valley of the Platte river[?]

[June] 9<sup>th</sup>

left the encampment Easy made[?] good \*\*\*\* to day and Stopped in the valley of the Platte[?]

[June] 10<sup>th</sup>

we did not dist[?] to day until after di\*\*\*\* here we commenced using Buffalo Chips (Manure)  
for[?]

10

fuel Prairie Dogs and Antlope are found in abundance \*\*\*\* Indians were quite numbrous and  
somewhat troublesome we organized our Cumpany by appointing Mr Edwards (of Henderson

Ky[?]) Captain, Rained hard in the night

[June] 11<sup>th</sup>

left our Camp about 6 ½ o'clock and moved on about 18 miles and Encamped The Capitan called the Cumpany together and after the transactions of of other preliminary business chose James S Abell Captain of Guard, John Kennedy[?] Inspector of Arms.

[June] 12<sup>th</sup>

Morning cool and pleasant; Hail Storm this afternoon I collected[?] about a quart of Hail we had a nice time drinking Ice Water in the night it rained violent[?]

13<sup>th</sup>

Morning clear Saw 5 Buffalo Edwards, Dagger[?], Ranes[?] and myself gave chase Edwards Succeeded in Killing one We had a fine time Eating Buffalo[?] Meat \*\*\*\* \* the South branch of the Platte and Encamped a few miles from the Crossing. The river was very wide at the crossing and in places[?] up to \*\*\*\* wagons[?] \*\*\*\* \* the current is Swift and the bottom

11

full of quick Sand, we came near capsizing Several times Saw about 100 Buffalo and Seven Antelopes during this afternoon. We Saw Several Thistles in blossom to day the blossoms were nearly white of a a yellowish tinge. We also found a new variety of Evening prim rose Blossom white. \*\*\*\* center Saw many Prairie dogs to day.

[June] 14<sup>th</sup>

Cool[?] Sky clear to day we found a number of Sunflowrs in blossom they grow about 4 feet high also a plant we call Old Man[?] we crossed to the north fork of the platte the cuntry between the two forks or branches of the river is high and wide[?]

[June] 15<sup>th</sup>

During the fore part of the day we found no \*\*\*\* of any Kind. Lizards and a kind of scorpion are in this part of the Cuntry. Of the Bird kind[?] we have Seen the Swallow and the meadow lark, we came[?] to a spring of fine water. About 600 Sioux crossed[?] our path it was a war party they have been fighting with the Pawnees. They buried 10 of their[?] warriors one of which was a chief they bury above

12

ground. Six they rolled in buffalo skins and laid side by side. The Chief they buried on polls alone. 2 they buried on polls next to their chief and farther on they bury one on polls and hung his baggage and armor by his head on polls. The grave of Six was covered by a wigwam of tanned and painted Buffalo Skins within the covering there was a row of Buffalo skulls \*\*\*\* close to each other and Entirely around the dead. The following is a copy[?] of a Sketch taken on the spot by me

### [5 SKETCHES]

Those who were buried on poles were 10 to 12 feet above the ground. The Indians left Eleven

\*\*\*\* dogs and one horse which they shot and left for the use of the warriers in the Spirit land.

[June] 16<sup>th</sup>

\*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* found [a] a wild Poppy and Milk weed By common consent the dogs were all Shot that

13

belonged to the Cumpany they had become foot sore and Could not travel

[June] 17<sup>th</sup>

Verry windy followed the platte North West the river is so Straight that you can follow it both ways \*\*\*\* Horizon Either way.

18<sup>th</sup>

Hot and Windy proceeded on our way about 30[?] Miles when we came in Sight of Court House or[?] (Castle Rock) and Chimney Rock.

[June] 19<sup>th</sup>

I left our camp early this morning in cumpany with Mr Jagger to visit Court House the distance being two great Mr Jagger backed out and returned to the cumpany, I pushed on to the rock, it is above the Sea 3350 feet. I climbed to the top as many others did, I remained there about 2 hours looking at the surrounding scenery and taking Sketches. The Scenery from this place was most beautifull holding[?] your eye over a wide Extended prairie and the valley of the platte bounded by hedges on both sides looking over the bluffs on my right I can see at a distance the tops of the Black Hills and to

14

left I get a glimps of James[?] Peak one of the rocky mountains in looking to the front (Due West) I see Chimney Rock

#### [SKETCH OF CHIMNEY ROCK AND SURROUNDINGS]

view of Chimney Rock, taken on the Summit of Court House rock distance 10 miles  
Near view of "Court House Rock," East North East view the rock

#### [CLOSE UP VIEW OF COURT HOUSE ROCK]

Leaving this place and took a direct line for the wagons after crossing Some Sand hills which were Entirely bare I came to a Sandy chain of hills with here and there a spot of green grass on one of these hills I found the Skeleton of an Indian[?] which had been Shot through the head

15

I got back to the wagons almost tired out Suffering more from fatigue than I had any time since I left home Went 2 miles past Chimney Rock and Encamped in a beautifull place on the bank of the Platt and on the other Side we were fenced in by a chane of hills beautifully divirsified.

[June] 20<sup>th</sup>

Morning Cool our teams started Early and I went to Chimney Rock to take a few Sketches of it

we went about Seventeen Miles and came to a halt. for dinner we remained here about 2 hours  
Scotts Bluffs were close at hand covered here and there with evergreens.

**[CLOSE-UP SKETCH OF CHIMNEY ROCK]**

16

and presented a very romantic and beautiful appearance we went on about 4 miles to a good  
spring near a pine grove we made a short halt and went on ascending a range of hills and after  
traveling about 3 miles we came in Sight of the Rock Mountains.

[June] 21<sup>st</sup>

Made good progress

[June] 22<sup>d</sup>

To day at 5 o'clock we arrived at Fr. Laramie I saw Capt Perry here he was post master at this  
place, he was my Captain in Mexico I had quite a chat with him here I wrote Adam[?]  
Soton[?], Wm. Smith, Ann, M Abelis[?] Encamped about one and one half miles from the fort  
This fort is built of Sun dried brick or Adobe owing to the scarceness of timber.

[June] 23<sup>d</sup>

Left our Encampment Early came to hot spring where we halted a short time and then went on  
a few miles and Encamped on a beautiful hill near Bitter Creek.

17

June 24<sup>th</sup>

Being Sunday we left our camp a little past 12 we had a grand lightening up of our load we  
threw away Evry thing we thought we could dispense with, after traveling among the Black Hills  
for Several miles we camped at Horse Shoe Creek On a rise of ground to our left was Laramie  
peak and to our left it looked Splendid being nearly covered with Pine & Cedar.

[June] 25<sup>th</sup>

Left Camp Early and hurried along over hill and vale (Saw a very pretty gal She was \*\*\*\* the  
we found ourselves to the north of Laramie's peak where we discovered the north side of it  
Covered with Snow Crossed a large creek and camped about 2 miles farther on \*\*\*\* found a  
handfull[?] \*\*\*\* white Leaf Yellow Center with Black mixed gracefully[?]

[June] 26<sup>th</sup>

Left the camp Early being \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* was water and little or no grass we are now among  
the red butes or hills found Several plants in Blossom every thing was desolation \*\*\*\*  
tricky[?] \*\*\*\* a little Camped to day among[?] \*\*\*\*

18

Plant which we knew that were in blossom was Crow foot, Spear mint, Blue Bells, and a  
number of plants which I did not know Camped on a hill in good time.

[June] 27<sup>th</sup>

Started Early. 10 O'clock made a halt at deer Creek a short time and then pushed on in good

\*\*\*\* and camped on the Bank of north fork of Platte river, A fine day.

[June] 28<sup>th</sup>

Came to the mormon ferry at noon where we remained until Evening when we crossed on the ferry. The mormons had a blacksmith Shop and other accommodations at the ferry after crossing our mules &c I went back to rusticale[?] and stay with Soule and Hall who did not go over.

[June] 29<sup>th</sup>

Crossed the river in the morning and we soon went on our way. Steep bank, and very Sandy this day was very warm uncumfortable we saw Fremonts Peak about 2 oclock all covered with Snow Encamped after a long days journey.

[June] 30<sup>th</sup>

Went our way at Sun up in haste for we have had no water Since we left our Stopping Place[?] yesterday morning. Yesterday and to day we passed

19

about 150 Carcasses of Cattle and Horses that had been poisoned[?] by the use of poisinuous water and there were most of them decayed enough to keep \*\*\*\* a continued Stench, Rattle Snakes numerus.

July 1<sup>st</sup> 1849

Left our camp Early and after going about 10 Miles we came to Independance Rock where I placed my name and date with Hundreds of others. This rock is located on the bank of Sweet Water river and and[?] withing 20 feet of it in a beautiful valley Su\*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* very romantic Scenery. We remained here 3 or 4 hours Grass and good Water in abundance. We had a good Swim in the river Current Sinfr[?]

#### [SKETCH OF INDEPENDENCE ROCK]

20

Leaving Independence we proceeded about 5 miles when we came to devils Gate this is certainly a great curiocity. It is an opening in a ridge of rocks which is a connecting link of Wind River mountains through which the Sweet Water flows with tremendous velocity

#### [SKETCH OF DEVILS GATE]

21

I went up the ravine from the East Side and[?] I could go no farther for the foaming dashing water I thought I had better climb up where I thought I could without much trouble continue[?] the attempt and would have been very glad to have crawled[?] if I could. I tried the Experiment on a little but found I could not find foot holds. I returned to the place where I thought of taking the down[?] track where I could rest in perfect safety it being a place where a large projecting rock had[?] fallen leaving quite a notch in the valley[?] had deep and high enough to stand Cried[?] and 2[?] feet to spare. After taking a good rest I again commened[sic] Climbing with

any thing but pleasant feelings, now and then a fragment of rock would loose and go to the bottom with a hollow sound that would make the cold chills run all over me, now and then I would find a place where I could take a respite[?]. I would think of the great fear I was in the not[?]

22

of accomplishing then I would think of My Carcass on a pile of rocks 3 or 4 Hundred feet lower down. On I went through hope and fear until I reached the top where I sank down Exausted. Several persons on a projecting rock had been watching my progress occasionally I would bee out of their Sight and Evry noise they herd they Supposed to be me on a downward Excursion. After recovering from my Excitement and fatigue I crawled out upon a projecting rock to look down and from this it looked impossible for any living thing (Save Birds) to climb up this wall the projecting rocks hid the winding crevious which former feet[?] \*\*\*\* went on to our teams which had halted for the night Some 5 or 6 miles farther on. We had evrything cumfortable here good Grass, Water and fuel I did not reach our camping until late.

[July] 2<sup>d</sup>

Left Camp Early. To day we beheld the Wind river Mountains above the clouds being something new for us. It looks Sublime.

23

I Saw David Allen of Trumbull Co. brother of James S Allen an old acquaintance of mine. Our Team[?] got into a Devil[?] of a muss being all 3 Span in mud all over harness on we halted[?] a\*\*\* cloth[?] went in unharnessed them and \*\*\*\* them out one at a time. Noon halt about 12 miles from starting point this morning.

[July] 3<sup>d</sup>

Left camp Early crossed Sweet Water and Entered the Devils pass (Devils are thick \*\*\*\* here) Stopped to day to lighten up.

The Warren folks went on (To wit Niggie[?] \*\*\*\* Sanu[?] Reives & Sutliff) The night was very cold.

[July] 4<sup>th</sup>

we felt a little lost without our Warren friends with whom we had been traveling so many days A cumpany from Illinois with 3 pretty Girls also[?] camped near us to Spend the 4th of July. one of them Came to our Camp to light her[?] Fathers pipe. Baldwin & I put[?] went to their Camp[?] and had a fine chat. Baldwin \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* a present of Some cheese which we had[?] Saved

24

for this days dinner. I presented another with some dried Peaches and in due time we were invited to dinner (which by the way was the best we had had since we left the Missouri River) After dinner we burnt 25<sup>#</sup> Blasting Powder in honor of the day and to get rid of carrying it. Our men Atwood and Packard Came into camp they took the wrong track yesterday, Crossed Sweet Water again and went 8 miles and Camped for the night. Saw two mountain sheep. Prairie Sage and Sand were the principal[?] things we have had to contend with to day. Water froze in Buckets last night.

[July] 5<sup>th</sup>

Took an Early start went 8 miles and Stopped for Noon on the bank of Sweet water Afternoon went about 12 miles and camped on the bank of Sweet water

[July] 6<sup>th</sup>

Sunrise left Camp road very uneven crossed Several Young mountains very Stony found some wild Camamile A red plant and a Kind of Moss with a yellow Blossom also a Read Thistle like our own in Ohio Camped on the Bank of Sweet Water and on the  
**[TWO LINES EITHER ERASED OR ILLEGIBLE]**

25

July 7<sup>th</sup> 1849

morning of the 7th we crossed it and bid it good by, Sky Clear, Sun hot, Noon halt was on the bank of a creek (or brook), flowing into the Pacific from the Pacific Springs. We have had a very windy day. Sand and dust litterally filling its[?] \*\*\*\* most of the time we camped about 8 miles from Pacific Springs. Our Noon halt was 6 miles this side of (West) the Summit of the South Pass

**[TWO SKETCHES, ONE OF MOUNTAINS 40 MILES EAST OF SOUTH PASS, THE OTHER OF MOUNTAINS AT SOUTH PASS]**

26

July 8<sup>th</sup> 1849

Left Camp at day break. Wind blew almost a hurricane and the wind was litterally filled with sand tried to take some sketches but Could not on account of Sand in my Eyes &c Came to little Sandy Creek where we camped for dinner went on after dinner to big Sandy River where we camped about 3 Oclock PM.

[July] 9<sup>th</sup>

To day we Settled up our accounts and prepared for a long March to Green River 4 Oclock in the afternoon left Sandy river traveled all night, at day break we halted about 2 Hours to feed our

[July] 10<sup>th</sup>

mules and breakfast we pushed on Windy Sand and dust was almost beyond Endurance I never Experienced any thing like it arrived at green river before Sun down after 38 Hours travel over very heavy Sandy roads having stoped only 2 Hours in that time, (Home Sweet home).

[July] 11<sup>th</sup>

Did not leave Camp until Noon Crossed Green River in a Mormon Ferry and Camped on a creek about 3 miles from the river.

27

July 12 1849

Morning Cool left Camp not very Early and halted about one O'clock road hilly.

[July] 13<sup>th</sup>

Left Camp soon after Sunrise and passed over a very hilly road for about 11 Miles where we Stopped for dinner after dinner we went about 5 Miles over 2 very Steep and high hills when we stopped for the night \*\*\*\* Snow on a mountain about  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the way from the base

[SKETCH OF WIND RIVER MOUNTAINS FROM BIG SANDY]

28

July 14<sup>th</sup> 1849

Last night went some distance from camp to feed the mules. Left Camp Early this Morning Climbed to the top of the Mountain on which we Camped and down the other Side Crossed a creek we had a very uneven road to day Flies and musquitoes were very numerous and annoying The weather today was very hot Reached Hams fork of Green River where we Camped.

[July] 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday

went 13 miles to Bear River and stopped for dinner about 3 miles below Thomas fork, which fork we crossed among Several Islands and camped 8

[July] 16<sup>th</sup>

miles below Crossing another fork, and left bear river Crossed a chain of Bear River Mountains Stopped for dinner about 9 miles from Morning[?] creek at an Indian village Afternoon went Several Miles crossed a creek near the foot of the Mountains and camped on the Bank.

{(15<sup>th</sup> we had a fine Shower I never saw musquitoes any thing like as thick or as annoying as {they was to day they would make a \*\*\*\* hat Rear[?] have \*\*\*\* a few[?] had[?] often)

29

Omissions

{[July] 14<sup>th</sup>

{Saw a chip munk have seen Several Since white Lilly, Red Thistle and Parsley seen to day {and got Some Straw Berries

{[July] 15<sup>th</sup>

{Saw a flock wild geese (quite a large[?] one)

July 17<sup>th</sup> 1849

Left Camp Early Soon reached Bear River followed the river down stream and halted by \*\*\*\* Spring about 15 miles from last nights Camp after dinner we went on until Sun down and Camped for the night near bear River. Musquitoes very annoying.

[July] 18<sup>th</sup>

Left Camp Early, passed Soda or \*\*\*\* Springs during the Morning we followed the river until

noon when we Came to the place where the river take a short[?] turn around the End of a chain of mountains and runs South into Salt Lake at this place we leave the river & See it no more, the banks where the river makes round the Mts are 127 feet perpendicular or projecting out of Solid granate rock. Indians were very numerous to day and Sriviasn[?]

30

New Road

July 18<sup>th</sup> 1849

At noon we left Bear River with a party from St Louis under the guidance of Huthcaff an old trapper, who claimed that he could pilot us through to the Cal Road and Save our going to Ft Hall, and making Several days difference in time. Took a direct South course about 10 miles to Bear Mountains (Weather hot and no water). Crossed the 1st[huh?] and camped about 16 miles from Bear River on Goose Creek in a beautiful little valley Surrounded by lofty Mountains we found Snow on the Mountain we crossed for which we made use of to quench our thirst.

[July] 19<sup>th</sup>

Morning Cool wa[i]ting the motion of our pilot Myers (who appeared to be the real pilot when real difficulties presented themselves in our way he is a middle aged man and has been much among the Mountains in this part of the cuntry having trapped here Several years) Left camp late and Stopped for noon about 5 miles from last night camp went on about 2

31

Miles from the noon Stopping place when we came to a large creek on which there was a beaver dam about 20 Rods from the road. I Saw 3 Beavers about the dam and Indians in abundance of the wildest kind many of them Entirely naked. Went about 10 Miles over road tolerable level and camped in the dark of the Evening by a Small Creek.

[July] 20<sup>th</sup>

Left Camp in good Season, Musquitoes not so plenty. direction South about 3 miles when we crossed the Creek on which we camped and nooned went for Seven miles where we took dinner. No water this forenoon Except the Creek we crossed. This afternoon we went about 11 miles over a rolling valley with high mountains on Either Side Camped on a creek road to day was good. General direction to day was S.S.W.

[July] 21<sup>st</sup>

Left Camp Early direction South to a large and clear Spring. Here we Stopped for dinner. Afternoon we went (about 80 men) to cut out a road up a

32

mountain or rather between two and after clearing the way for about 4 miles we came to a place where the rocks were so large and the hill so Steep that we were obliged to abandon the work and seek another rout. Several Scouts were sent to look for a new place. In the evining about 10 oclock a party came into Camp Stating they had found a rout round the mountain.

[July] 22<sup>d</sup>

Eleven miles brought us over Safe which we made by 1 oclock. No water Since morning Afternoon went 16<sup>miles</sup> to a Spring where we arrived at 9 oclock in the Evening and Camped

Grass good

{21<sup>st</sup>

{while out in Search of a path over the mountains myself and party assended an Eminence from  
{which we could distinctly see the great Salt Lake far in the distance to the South.

23<sup>d</sup>

Consiterable trouble getting the Stock together this Morning wound our way through ravines  
and over hills for 20 miles when we came to a beautifull valley where we took dinner and Supper  
together.

33

and Camped for the night direction to day woud[sic] average about S.W. Indians were very  
numerous to day Saw many of them Eating Crickets and lice I noticed in one pile nearly 4  
Bushels of Crickets Spread out in the Sun to dry.

24<sup>th</sup>

Morning Cool hard frost last night. Wild Eagles[?] very thick. Traveled 8 miles and stopped  
for Noon (there being no water for a long distance ahead) we Stopped on a creek this noon  
which ran into the ground a Short distance from where we Stopped on it. This afternoon went 12  
or 13 Miles over tolerable level and very dusty road and camped on a creek in Sight of Ft Hall  
road which was about 12 miles distant. Direction to day W.S.W. Wild Currents were plenty to  
day of 3 colors Red, Yellow and Black all tasted alike which was not[?] pane[?] of the wild  
currents found in the States. Saw 3 Badgers to day large ones and Some[?] Indians. Road to day  
very d\*\*\*\*\*

34

July 25<sup>th</sup>

Crossed the creek on which we camped and two other Soon after went on to raft River where  
we made Noon Halt. Pleanty wild Currants to day. Our morning drive was about 8 miles  
Evening went down raft creek past the St Louis Cumpany about 2 miles and Encamped.

[July] 26<sup>th</sup>

Left Camp at Sunrise we soon reached the Ft Hall road about 60 miles from the fort. This  
morning we traveled about 15 Miles and halted for dinner After noon we went about 10 miles  
and Camped Several miles ahead of the St Louis Company we had no trains to trouble us  
being entirely alone we could travel much further in a day.

(By taking this new Cut off we got ahead of our Warren friends and reached California ahead of  
them).

[July] 27<sup>th</sup>

This Morning I Saw a Bear, left Camp Early Sunrise we passed Several curious Shaped rocks  
called Needles, Noon Halt at a beautiful Spring in a narrow valey.

July 28<sup>th</sup> 1849

Came to goose Creek and followed it up about 8 Miles where we took nooning on of[?] the creek and camped on the bank. A man came to our Camp and informed us of the death of Mr Morse of Poland }Mr Morse died on \*\*\*\* Blacks[?] Fork[?] \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* of Ash[?] Hostand[?] July 20th[?], 1849{

[July] 29<sup>th</sup>

(During last night we had a mule and a horse Taken we followed Some Stray Stalk all day believing that our Strays might be with them, but on overtaking them we found that our Stock was not with them. Collins Atwood went ahead this morning in Search of the Strays but returned no more

Wm Packard went to an Indian village but returned with out any information regarding our strays (Temperature 2 oclock A M 18° above. Sunrise 22° above).

[July] 30<sup>th</sup>

Left camp Early followed the creek about 6 miles when leaving the creek to the right we went on about 13 miles up a ravine to a large Spring of good water though very warm. Finding no grass[?] we went on about 5 miles. we camped \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* and with Grass.

36

July 31<sup>st</sup> 1849

Morning cool and Sun bright. Heard of our Stray animals and got our Horse 2 man[sic] from Rock Iland Co came to our camp from whom we learned much respecting Rev Mrs[?] Purington[?] and Leister King Jr formerly of Warren Ohio Our R.I. friends Stayed with us all night

Wednesday August 1<sup>st</sup> 1849

August 1<sup>st</sup>

Ch\*\* Baldwin[?] and Self left camp Early in search of our Mule and horse and hearing that the mule had been taken by an officer of the U.S.A. to fort Hall we took the back track and arrived at our camp at nooning. Our cumpany had camped about 10 miles from last night. Stopping at a boiling Spring there was another Spring not 3 feet from the boiling Spring that was cold and good water went 5 miles further and Camped for the night Saw a large flock of Antelope.

[August] 2<sup>d</sup>

Left camp Early and Crossed the dividing ridge of Hot Spring valley and the head waters of humboldt or St Marys river and after traveling about 17 miles we stopped for dinner

37

After dinner we went about 10 miles and Camped by a beautiful Spring of Cold Water. these springs are very numerous here and appear to have no bottom. we let down 60 feet of line without finding bottom, they appear to be openings to underground lakes as the ground all around them will Shake and yield to any weight applied above I took a bath in one which was fine only very cold

[Aug] 3<sup>d</sup>

A mountain near by is covered with Snow this Morning which fell last night. It rained where we were Noon Halt was reached after about 12 miles travel from last nights camp. We found plenty of good feed and Some nice Springs of water which helped to form St Marys river. After noon Mooved down the river a Short distance and Camped for the night. Sunflowers plenty to day.

[Aug] 4<sup>th</sup>

We did not go far to day on account of Hilly & Sandy roads

[Aug] 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday.

Went a few miles this morning and camped about 10 oclock A.M.

[Aug] 6<sup>th</sup>

Morning cold and pleasant. left Camp early Crossed Humboldt river four times to day to avoid bluff banks

38

which often project into the water perpendicular from a consiterable high Much of the road to day was Sandy and heavy.

[Aug] 7<sup>th</sup>

left camp in good Season went about 3 miles and Crossed Martins fork and then left the river, to which we returned after traveling about 13 miles over a hilly road. Prairie wolves were numerous have Saw Many to day.

[Aug] 8<sup>th</sup>

The Indians committed deprivations on Several cumpanies who were camped near us Killing their Cattle and doing other acts of violence, which caused Much Excitement not having good feed last night we left Camp Soon after day brake and halted at Eleven oclock AM. having found good feed. I killed a Snake measureing 7 feet 4 Inches in length.

[Aug] 9<sup>th</sup>

Early this morning Meteors flew in all directions which looked very beautiful. we took an Early Start and drove until noon when we found grand feed. Took 2 ½ hours for noon and drove late on account of not finding feed the air was full of dust all day which was very annoying.

[Aug] 10<sup>th</sup>

One mule not to be found this Morning. After about 3 hours Search we found it in a mire most used

39

up and after consiterable labor Succeeded in getting him upon teriferma once more. As feed was poor we pushed on as Soon as we found our Mule and Soon came to a halt haveing found Good Grass which was truly a very uncommon thing in these parts Frogs, Wolves, Crains and other Swamp birds were very numerous to day. we went a Short distance this afternoon and Camped Early on tolerable good grass.

[Aug] 11<sup>th</sup>

Morning cold water that stood in basin over night was froze solid. We stopped for dinner on the bank of Humboldt river and at night we camped on the bank of the same stream where we found good grass.

[Aug] 12<sup>th</sup> Sunday.

We did not leave camp to day but stayed in camp and made hay and packed in sheaves to carry across the [sic] after we finished making hay we took a little too much Brandy so that some of our company got a little corned had a good swim in the river this evening.

[Aug] 13<sup>th</sup>

Left camp early. The morning was very pleasant, we went about twelve miles and made noon halt. the road this morning was hilly and sandy. The bull berry bush was

40

very thick here, it is a bush that grows about 10 feet high and has a small red berry about the size of the wild black cherry and is most delicious fruit for fries or cooking being a little more tart than the current. Evening prim roses were plenty.

[Aug] 14<sup>th</sup>

Last evening I was on guard the first part of the night. Meteors were very plenty. Made a good drive to day.

[Aug] 15<sup>th</sup>

Made a good drive to day, road hilly. Bull berries plenty we bought some peaches (dried) and sugar @50 [cent sign] pr pint.

[Aug] 16<sup>th</sup>

Morning clear and pleasant. Left camp at sun rise. game plenty lizards, snakes, wild geese, prairie hens (or sage hens) cranes, ducks, antelope and frogs in abundance. rained enough to lay the dust a little to day. leaving the river we drove twenty miles and fed our mules hay for dinner and no water, afternoon drove about 5 miles and camped on an isthmus made by the curving of Humboldt river. Here we noticed that the river began to decrease in size. We here took an inventory of the goods belonging to the departed Atwood and found them to consist of 3 doz suspenders. numerous led pencils. Several doz pocket combs &c &c.

41

[Aug] 17<sup>th</sup>

We succeeded in getting Mr Atwoods goods on an ox train subject to his order on paying charges after a short drive we stopped for dinner fed hay thundered very sharp to day and rain enough to partially lay the dust. After noons drive was short on account of bad roads. we camped on bare ground.

[Aug] 18<sup>th</sup>

Started this morning at sunrise, roads middling good and dust very deep but not flying much camped at noon without feed except browse. After noon traveled late and camped on a marshy

piece of ground with plenty of grass at dark. Came over a burnt district to day found ashes knee deep much of the way.

[Aug] 19<sup>th</sup>

This Morning we found when daylight came that we were near the Sink of Humboldts or Marys river and there were 520 wagons Encamped here making hay to feed while Crossing boiling Spring valley which was entirely destitute of all green things until you reach Truckeys or Carson rivers. We Selected a place about 3 miles from where we were Encamped to make our hay and moved on \*\*\*\*

42

the grass Extends along the river about 10 or 12 miles about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile in width Calvin Bidwell came to our camp to day. At Sunset to day we caught a glimps of the Sire nevad. California or Snowy mountains, the view was not very distinct.

[Aug] 20<sup>th</sup>

Morning very cold. Indians were thick and troublesum Made hay to day.

[Aug] 21<sup>st</sup>

Cold packed on our hay (about 250<sup>#</sup>) and moved down the Slew about Six miles then turning to our right we went about 4  $\frac{1}{2}$  or 5 miles out of Sight of grass or water we turned round and went back. very hot from Eleven oclock AM to 4 oclock PM. We had to dig for water and what we obtained was very brackish.

[Aug] 22<sup>d</sup>

Hard times last Night, Misquitoes in abundance and was very crowded Bidwell, Case, Hyde & Co moved out about 4 oclock which was a little before day light. we were in bed when they left. about 9 oclock we Started, I went ahead of our team and took dinner with Bidwell & <sup>co</sup>. we reached reached[sic] Sulphur Springs which was a little beyond the Sink of Humboldt river (about 5 miles I should think).

43

This was truly a dreary place the water was filled with all kinds of impurities and not a green thing in Sight we reach the Spring about 4 hours and then pushed on until 2 oclock.

[Aug] 23<sup>d</sup>

the next morning when we Stopped about 2 hours and then pushed on for the boiling Springs. where I arrived long before our wagon. To describe this place would be impossible, cattle dead and dying the air full of the odor of rotting carr[i]on and the water being thrown 3 and 4 feet from the ground by heat desolation reigned Supreme. these Springs are about 25[?] Miles from Sulphur Springs. I remained here until nearly Sundown cooling water for our team by pouring water from a dish into tubs and other vessels that had been used there for that purpose. At 7 oclock we left the Spring (PM) made a halt of 1 hour from 10 oc to Eleven PM. then went on until 2 oclock AM.

[Aug] 24<sup>th</sup>

Morning very cold and the road that had been tolerable good become Sandy and heavy. We were

until three o'clock PM. going 8 miles to Truckee or Salmon trout

44

river. Here we found most Excellent water, clean and cold. We crossed the river and went up Stream about three miles and Encamped for the first time for Several weeks where we had good Wood Water and good grass. We also found plenty of Bull Berries. We had a fine Shower the most water fell that we had Seen fall for many a day, wetting my woolen coat through. We are also Surrounded by high mountains and lofty trees as we had none on the Humboldt they are quite a luxury.

[Aug] 25<sup>th</sup> Saturday.

Left camp about 7 o'clock crossed the river Six times and camped on its bank. Three of the crossings were very bad ones the water very Swift and the Stream very Stony twice were our mules washed down Stream and had to Swim ashore. There was much firing of Guns and

[Aug] 26<sup>th</sup> Sunday

-pistols last night in this ravine which made Such a fine Echo that we joined in the Sport. left Camp. Crossed the river five times this forenoon and Came to noon halt. Took dinner and 45

then crossed the river once more and went a Short distance and camped about 1 O'clock PM for the night making a Sabbath days journey. Took a little to much brandy to day. I got 1 Pint of whiskey for 75 ¢ I found a nice blossom with 5 long leaves and the center was a fine tassel.

[Aug] 27

Left our camp Early crossed the river Seven times and came to Noon Halt. After noon crossed the river twice and one branch and Some Steep hills. found Some fine flowers which I pressed and dried. I also found a curious kind of Wigwam made on the bank of the river or part of the bank and part in the river. It had a nice Seat[?] in it and was fixed off in good Style. I suppose the Indians made it to fish in it. We camped in what

[Aug] 28<sup>th</sup>

is called a large basin with Several Snowy peaks around. We took a good Start and Stopped for dinner on the bank of the river. Afternoon crossed the river four times and camped for the night we went through Several beautiful pine groves this afternoon and as beautiful a country as I Ever Saw.

46

August 29<sup>th</sup> 1849

To day we bid the Salmon Trout river good by having crossed its Icy waters Twenty Seven times in going as many miles. It was with genuine reluctance that I turned my back on this beautiful River for the last time. where we last Saw this fine stream it ran dashing over a decent of large round rocks for Some twenty or thirty feet. After climbing Most of the day We reached the Summit of the Mountain range and looking ahead to the valey beneath we Saw another fine Stream of water flowing through it, which Stream we reached and Encamped.

[Aug] 30<sup>th</sup>

this was one of the finest camping places we have had Since we left Missouri, the valley was level and Surrounded by high hills or mountains on Evry Side and the grass and wild flowers covered the level bottom while lofty pines covered the Surrounding hills and Mountains. At the upper End of the valley there was a beautiful Spring from which a nice Stream of gelid water flowed down through the center of the val. and through a gorge at the foot of the valley. Last night was very cold. Water Standing in buckets froze more

47

than one inch thick. We followed the valley up (South) through a pine forest between two and three miles and after assending and decending Seviral hills we came to another nice valley through which runs grass creek, finding pleanty grass and haveing traveled about twelve miles this morning we Stopped to feed and dinner. After dinner we went about ten miles and Stopped for the night on the banks of a nice creek the weather is very cold this evening.

[Aug] 31<sup>st</sup>

Fine morning Sun Shines bright and very pleasant we followed our way through a beautiful pine grove or forest came to turkeys[sic] river. leaving it to our left we followed up a little creek Some distance where we made noon halt. After a Short Stop we preceeded up the creek about two miles when we came to the noted cabins which held the Sufferers of Byrants[?] party or the fraction of his party that left him and were Snowed in. There is but two of these cabins now Standing. They are made of pine trees from Six to ten inches in diameter and in Size one measures fifteen feet square and the

48

other fifteen feet by twelve feet. these two cabins are connected the roofs were flat and the Shingles were pine boughs, and about Seven feet high. We Saw many Stumps of trees which were cut by this party from Eight to twelve feet from the ground to the place where they were cut on the Snow. This valley is most beautiful having the Snow Summits of the Cierenevad Mts in plain view and only a few miles distant. We crossed the little Stream by these cabins and went as it were direct to[wa]rds the foot of the main ridge of the mountains after we went, went Some four or five miles and Encamped near the foot of the main ridge. The Scenery here is delightfull beyond description. here and there on the mountains could be Seen among the pines fires that had been lighted by Indians. As night drew near the Severe cold increased until thick overcoats were Scarcely warm Enough for comfort.

49

September 1<sup>st</sup> 1849

This morning was very cold. We left camp a little before Sunrise and proceeded up the dividing ridge to the Summit. After offering 25.\$ to have our wagon hauled about one fourth of a mile to the Summit we were obliged to unload our wagon and lift at the wheels in order to reach the Summit. after which we were obliged to carry our loading by hand which was very laborious for it was very steep. At the summit and near where our roat[sic] mad[sic] the top was a windlass which had been used by Colonel Freemont or Some other party to haul up their wagons and loading. The windless was Supported by two trees which were about 5 feet apart. After packing our wagon and taking a few moments to rest and view the Scenery which was sublime in the Extreme we proceeded about two miles and camped on the bank of a beautiful Stream with an abundance of good grass. The day was fine and very favorable

50

for our hard days work. Nearly all the way from the Summit we were obliged "to rope down" that is tie heavy ropes to the hind axles and rap around the trees have on only one pair of mules to guide the tongue. I found Several flowers which I pressed to prserve on and near the Summit of the mountain, Some of which were very pretty.

[Sept] 2<sup>d</sup>

We left camp Early. Baldwin having left Yesterday afternoon to look ahead a little and to day I took command of the team. We passed two beautiful lakes and halted for rest and dinner. After which we crossed a young mountain that was some Steep on Either Side and after proceeding about five miles farther over the roughest and Stonyist road I ever Saw we camped in a thicket of pines many of which were of large Size being over ten feet in diameter and three hundred and fifty feet high. We Spread our blankets under the boughs of one of the largest trees and being very tired I went to Sleep and knew nothing more until Morning.

51

September 3<sup>d</sup> 1849

Morning clear and Cumfortable not as Cold as usual. Road rougher than the devil, used the ropes Several times to day in letting our wagon down precipicises. The bark of many trees were worn 3 and 4 Inches deep where ropes had been much used in "ropeing down". Took our nooning in a beautiful valey- our animals Strayed while we were at dinner, Some of them went up the Mountain Sides to a considerable hidth and we was much troubled in getting them together. Our friends Channel, Burt, and Gris would[sic] with pack mules came down into this valey while we were here. One or two of their mules capsizing in their discent. After dinner we wih[t][sic] but a Short distance.

[Sept] 4<sup>th</sup>

Took an Early Start passed many trees that were five and ten feet through. To day we heard of Edward King and Daniel McClery of Warren Ohio. I measured a Cedar which was Nine feet three Inches in diameter this was the largest

52

tree we Saw to day, it was a beautiful tree and not near as tall as most of the trees in this vicinity. Our road to day has been very rough and hilly. Camped in a beautiful valey.

[Sept] 5<sup>th</sup>

Day pleasant, road Exceeding rough, went over one very high and Steep hill in the fore part of the day. Used ropes frequently in letting down and Camped in bear river valey.

[Sept] 6<sup>th</sup>

Put our wagon into the hands of a Mr. I. C. Smith (who had broke down and had his family along) to be delivered to us at Sacramento with our medicine chest and prepared for packing.

[Sept] 7<sup>th</sup>

Heavy dew last night. Packed our mules and got under motion about 9 O'clock. Met Mr Baldwin (who had went on Early Yesterday Morning to discover the nature of the road) who was

much pleasily[sic] to find us packed. Took dinner at a large Spring and after dinner we went on not finding water or grass we did not Stop until it got So dark that we could not See the road  
53

when we camped on a very rough Stony piece of ground being the best we could find. Rolled up in my blanket without Supper and Slept but little.

[Sept] 8<sup>th</sup>

Without breakfast we pushed on until we came to Steep hollow (rightly named) where we took breakfast and looked round a little among the miners for we had reached the Diggings. We beheld for the first time people washing gold. Went of Six miles when we came to a Store. Wood, Baldwin and myself took Some whiskey and Brandy for which I paid 1.50\$ for being the first thing which I bought from a store in California. We went five miles further to another valiy here we found another Store where whiskey was Sold for 25 [cent sign] pr drink Sugar and Flour Each 50 [cent sign] pr lb also pork at the Same price. Being Saturday we camped Early.

[Sept] 9<sup>th</sup>

Rose a little before the Sun. One of our mules and horse had Strayed from Camp. I went in Search and after traveling about 12 miles I brought up at camp without them. Being Sunday I concluded

54

to take it Easy. In the afternoon we decided that Packard & Baldwin Should remain and find the Strays and Mr Wood and Myself Should push on to Sacramento. In accordance with this arrangement we Started Mr Griswold in cumpany went on until 7 oclock when we camped.

[Sept] 10<sup>th</sup>

Lit up our fire at one Oclock AM. got breakfast and Started, at 2 and one half oclock we Stopped to feed our mules we rested during the middle of the day as it was very warm and dusty. About four Oclock, we came to the prairie and to comparatively level road which we could appreciate as we had been haveing an abundance of the rough kind. At Six clock we passed Johnstons ranch which is Situated on a branch of feather river. this was the first Settlement that we reached which was built before the gold Excitement. Proceeding a Short distance from this ranch (or farm) we Camped.

[Sept] 11<sup>th</sup>

We left our Camp about Nine Oclock in the Morning and traveling about five Miles on a rolling  
55

prairie we came to tolerable good feed for these parts which however was not as good as we found generally in the Mountains. Here we Stayed about two hours to let our Mules feed. Went about two and one half Miles below Nicholes ranch and Camped.

[Sept] 12<sup>th</sup>

Left Camp at four and one half Oclock and by hard driving we reached the american fork of the Sacramento river opposite from Sacramento City at two and one half oclock on the way we baited our Mules on a little grass and ourselves on Cheese and Bacon or ham at .25¢ for Small quantity.

[Sept] 13<sup>th</sup>

Crossed the river on a visit to Sacramento City Bought a few groceries and returned to our Camp Paid 25 ¢ pr lb for Sugar, Whiskey & Molasses were 25 ¢ pr pint &c. Saw Mason and heard from the Warren people.

[Sept] 14<sup>th</sup>

Wrote Father and A.W. Porter

[Sept] 16<sup>th</sup>

Sunday- Baldwin came in this morning. Packard will Soon be in with the Stray animals.

[day missing]

[Sept] 18<sup>th</sup>

Moved over to the city.