

*Missouri
Way*

**MAHAN'S
GARLAND JEFFERSON MAHAN'S DIARY**

TRIP TO MONTANA BY OXEN TRAIN FROM COLE COUNTY MISSOURI

Age 25 years

April 18, 1864 - July 20, 1866

*to return to the same day
no. of days
no. of days*

from Charles Martin Collection

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TRIP TO MONTANA BY OXEN TRAIN FROM COLE COUNTY MISSOURI

Age 25 Years

Monday, April 18th, 1864. Started from home in pretty good spirits, crossed into Moniteau County. 2 P.M. Camped six miles from California 15 mi.

19th - California pretty site for town but not compactly built. Cooper County has general appearance of wealth. Good buildings, pretty farms, Etc. Traveled 18 mi.

20th - Boonville very pretty town, good houses Etc. Rained all day.

21st - Crossed river in great emigration from Hannibal and adjoining counties. Steam ferry. Saw some relatives, Town W. C. Haver Co. Reached Boon'sborough little place. Camped. Rained very hard in night. Traveled 14 mi.

22 - Cattle all got out, but after little trouble getting up, start through much mud. Reached Glasgow considerable little town on north side of Mo. river. Tobacco factory and other business done here. Pretty mounds. Crossed two or three crazy ^{bridges} bardsges, one over Charlitan River. Great emigration from all these counties. Ferry the river by ropes. River large as the Osage. Traveled up the Charlitan river for 2 miles and camped. Traveled 15 mi.

23 - Rained very hard in the night and on morning of 23rd still raining. Lie by on account of rain till 5 o'clock when we start through rain, water and mud knee deep. Travel 2 miles and camp. Charlitan county very rich waxy land so far.

Sunday 24th - Rained all night and day. Lay by at Latham 18 miles from Brunswick. This morning walked out to the Mo. River. At River had a view of Saline Co. also had a good view of Cambridge, small town in Saline. While rambling on bank of river, the steam boat passenger passed up. At eleven A.M. went in company with Baily to a Baptist meeting. Rather inferior preaching. "Oh merciful God we thank Thee that we can commune with Thee wherever we be."

25th - We have gone up the Mo. river 40 miles, mud and water near knee deep. Six miles after starting we came to Sterling Price's farm, a very rich farm, 3000 acres in farm. Everything has the appearance of antiquity. Large barns and sheds look old. House double frame story and half in form of L. Great no. of evergreens and shrubbery of all kinds, pretty garden and farm very rich black loamy land. 1 mile from Mo. river, 5 miles from Heitsville, 7 from Brunswick. 400 acres in prairie, 200 in timber. Camped 1 mi. of Brunswick after wading through mud and water every step of day's travel. Traveled 15 mi.

26th - Tony got loose and ran away. Followed on track about mile. Up next morning started in pursuit, finally he was found by Baily at house 1 mi. from camping ground. Started 12 A.M. Reached Brunswick little town on south side of river. Ferried Grand river at 4 P.M. Now in Carol County. Not so good land as Charlitan County. Traveled 8 miles.

27th - Started through rain. Rained on us till 12 A.M. when we stopped to lay by, till morning. Traveled 9 miles.

28th - Very cloudy and drisly. Lay by half of the day on account of the rain. Traveled 7 miles and camped 1 mile of Carrolton.

29th - Breakfast over we started through the mud as usual. Beautiful prairie, came to Carrolton before the prairie. Carrolton small

town county seat of Carroi county. Traveled through eight miles of prairie. 1 wagon (mares) mired down to hub. Had to double team and put 8 or 9 yoke of oxen to a wagon to get out. Traveled about 4 miles. In the afternoon we camped on the wet muddy prairie. Chained our cattle to wagon's wheels till morning. Morning got up and 1 yoke cattle gone. Hunted till 9 A.M. when found them back on the road 6 miles. Traveled 15 mi.

30th - Up and started through the prairie, which is muddy undulating prairie. Presents an imposing and beautiful view. Traveled 7 miles. Carrol County great deal of prairie. 18 miles long and 7 wide Ray County. Camped at an old store. I rode off to hunt corn and got bewildered and knew not where to inquire the way to but finally got back. This County mostly plains, generally rich, not much wealth. Traveled 14 mi.

May 1st - Sunday a beautiful morning. Spring seems here. Trees budding out. Some have small leaves. Birds are singing and things seem to adore Nature's God. "Oh merciful parent, help us Thy creatures to improve the Spring of life; that we may be prepared for the Autumn. Lead us in the ways of wisdom and holiness."

2nd - Our travel today has been over plains mostly. Counties are good grazing, fine grass. Great deal of cattle and mules raised here. Live all winter. 15 miles.

3rd - Big frost melts off and then pretty morning. Rolling plains, rich land. At 3 A.M. reached ¹⁷¹¹ Miribile, little village in Caldwell Co. ^{Caldwell} Caldwell mostly rich prairie. After camping one of our party (an Englishman from Saint Louis who has gotten the appellation of Major) put his hand up on his neck and clawed off something; and holding it in his fingers asked (What kind of bug do you call that what bites so?)

"That's a tick you green gourd you saw one. A tick is it? It was then explained to him. He wondered. Camped in Clinton County, mostly plains.

Traveled 15 mi.

^{PASS (PASS)}
4th - Jap Cameron a Mo. small town on railroad in Clinton County, 35 miles from St. Joe. Camped in De Calb Co. Traveled 12 mi. This Co. mostly plains, very rich. Stock raising.

5th - Up, beautiful undulating plains out of Clinton and into De Calb are beautiful plains, very rich. Thinly populated. Camped. Traveled 20 mi.

(Omitted)

^(CIVIL WAR)
Ed. Allen is arrested as a deserter. On an open prairie Baily, Major, and I are riding in front of wagons. We spy a black object, which on nearing find to be a skunk. We chase, Major dismounts gathers chunks, commences to pelt Mr. Skunk the first he had ever seen. "What a smell he has!" Major exclaims. I and Baily roar with laughter at Major's antics. Finally dispatches him, we start on. Passed through Marysville little town in open prairie. Camped. Great grazing country. Traveled 19 miles.

6th - Our travel today has been through pretty rolling prairie rich land Andrew county. This Co. land is very rich prairie timber scarcer than other counties below it, great grazing. Camped, traveled 12 mi. mostly plains.

7th - Up and by 7 A.M. strike into Nodaway Co. Our travel so far has been in this county, extremely rich plains. This Co. mostly plains great grass country rough houses and population. Crossed Platte river at 4 P.M. Shallow stream grass grows to edge of water large as Moreau. Beautiful scenery. Camped 10 mi. of Marysville. Traveled through rain and mud 6 hours. Traveled 14 miles, prairie mostly.

8th - Sabbath day no church in reach therefore lye around camp all day. "Bless us Oh Lord and preserve us from sin." We traveled 4 mi. today. Crossed Minge creek by blocking up wagons. On other side of this creek is the most wild and romantic scenery that we have seen yet, long green grass along the hills and bottoms of this creek and the land loosa and mellow. Dark and camped in the edge of prairie. Traveled 6 mi. Those river Cos. all prairie mostly. 4 miles.

9th - Today we traveled mostly through prairie crossed (102) one hundred and two small streams.

Omitted pages through Marysville but very long look into county seat of Nodaway named for its length. Camped, traveled 15 mi. Rained all day. Nodaway County rich prairie not much timber.

10th - Up and started through 12 miles prairie. At 12 A.M. crossed the Mo. line into Page Co. Camped in Page Co. on Nodaway river size of Moreau, runs through Nodaway Co. in Mo. traveled 14 miles.

11th - Started through prairie passed through Clarinda small uncompact town. There are numbers going to the new Territory from this part of Iowa. The emigration across the plains this spring is doubtless greater than has ever been known before. Traveled 15 miles and camped. This portion of Iowa is all prairie.

12th - Started at 6 A.M. through prairie crossed Nishabashana River at the ferry. Road lined with wagons on both sides of river, some going to Calif., Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Denver and Colorado. There perhaps never was as great emigration across the plains mostly from Mo. Traveled 20 miles.

13 - Passed Sidney in Fremont Co. Traveled 20 miles.

14 - Traveled 14 miles through pretty scenery high hills Etc.

15 - Sunday lay by all day.

16 - Rode to Omaha a distance of 27 miles, passed through St. Marys small town - Saw Bellview to the left on the Mo. river. Passed within two miles of Council Bluffs considerable little village at the base of a range of picturesque hills 300 miles long. Prairie on either side of those beautiful hills. They are from 2 to 5 miles from the Mo. river, 6 miles from Council Bluffs and come to the ferry opposite Omaha. There are (405) four hundred and five wagons at the river waiting their turn to cross mostly bound for California. Crossed the river 1 mi. from river to town, but had a good view of the town 8 miles before getting there. Presents a gradual slope to river, hills, pretty landscape. This is the most business town West of St. Louis at this time. Very large and extensive stores about 70 in number. Here saw buffalo robes, wolverine and various wild animal skins. Also ^{saw} say 300 dollars in gold dust from Bannok Idaho mines. One quartz lump of \$150, one hundred fifty dollar size. Other sizes from pin head to garden pea. Missouri river about half mile wide here.

17th - Still laying by.

18th - Crossed Mo. river opposite Plattsmouth uncompact small town but very much business done here. West of town rolling hills dotted with low trees everything looking wild and romantic. Camped one mile west of town. Traveled 4 miles. This is Nebraska.

19th - Traveled 2 miles and camped in prairie 2 miles from Plattsmouth.

20th - Got up. Gus was taken sick in the night and still no better and rather unwell my self. So back to Plattsmouth at 7 A.M. to get ax, shoes and coffee.

21st - He is well enough to travel this morning. This morning Baily dissolved partnership with Moore and started back to Mo. 1600

wagons have crossed river at Omaha in the last week. 700 St. Joe, 800 Nebraska City, 400 at Plattsmouth. Greatest emigration is to Calif. Next greatest to Idaho (Bannock) almost all freighting.

22 - Sabbath day traveled 9 miles and camped after crossing Salt Creek large as Moreau. Water salty numerous fish in this creek distance from Plattsmouth 30 miles prairie all the way one part of road, no water for 10 miles. We are now in sight of Platte River. Omitted on the 21st. We passed a man with a drove of Cashmere goats, 22 in number bound for Calif. They are worth \$500 in cash where he started. They promised \$1100 in Cal. 4 kids in the drove. Traveled 15 mi.

23rd - Started through prairie 49 wagons now in sight mostly going to Cal. On the 21st fell in with Mr. Ming from Franklin Co., Mo. who is freighting to Idaho having 16 wagons. We have had no timber today, had to haul it for cooking purposes Etc. Traveled about 16 miles and camped at ranch - no wood but well and stock water.

24 - Traveled 15 miles through prairie destitute of timber and camped one mile from ranch. Take sick in the night.

25 - This morning there is 12 head of oxen missing but they are hunting them. They are Ming's oxen. I am better this morning eat no breakfast got well enough to eat a hearty dinner. Traveled all day through prairie camped at a ranch which is the 6th we have passed this the best one the ranch-man having corn, pies, eggs and coffee for sale and good spring Etc. These ranchers are the only inhabitants in this part of the country. They live exclusively by trading with Emigrants buying and exchanging for sore footed cattle, selling hay and corn. Traveled 14 miles.

26 - Our travel today has been through an extensive plain level and beautiful. On the right 9 miles from the road we have a good view of

Platte river, to the left is an expansive plain. At a distance we can see timber perhaps 15 mi. from the road. We have had no water or timber for a distance of 30 miles. 4 A.M. Came in sight of the Platte River after being out of sight of it for 15 miles. Level bottom camp on Elm Creek at a deserted old ranch. Traveled 18 miles. Ommitted. Saw a tame antelope at ranch. This bottom which is called Platte bottom is very rich and level from 3 to 10 miles wide, numerous antelope deer and corn this bottom. Saw 2 beaver pelts at ranch, 7 miles from, we camped.

27 - We started through prairie bottom up Platte River 9 mi. travel came to mound at Clear Creek also ranch at Clear Creek half mile of Platte River. At camp this evening, saw the first Indians 4 in number 1 had red blanket, 1 a white blanket other 2 calico shirts and leather pants. Their first salutation was, "haw" shook hands with each of party took out a paper which had obtained from Indian Agent which read like this - "George Pawnee is a good Indian give him 10¢ an old shirt, cap or anything." We most of us gave them money tin cups and coffee as they could not be put off. Had their bows and arrows, tomahawks with "fix-ings" for smoking. After supper gave them 25¢ apiece to dance around a minute or two, and wanted more money gave them heap money as they said to dance. They finally left, went across on an island and camped till morning. The ranches in this part of the country are of various material - some dug into a bank with but one side logs others made of sod cut 12 inches by 18, put up and covered with poles and dirt on top. Many have grass woods and growing vegetables on them. Traveled 15 miles.

28 - Platte River along here is from 1 to 2 miles wide, 2 to 4 ft. deep, many pretty islands from 1/2 to 10 acres. Some have tall trees elm, cotton-wood willows and corn growing on them. Other small ones have only willows from 2 to 4 ft. high. In some places islands resemble

an archipelago, they are so numerous. No water but river number of antelope, deer, silver fox badgers, wolverines, kiotes and misc. animals along here. Traveled 15 mi. and camped on Platte river.

29 - Beautiful Sabbath morning moved camp about perhaps 10 miles. Pretty scenery along river here. Blue, red white flowers hide their heads among the low shrubbery. Some resembling touch me nots in shape, fragrant as the rose and dwarf grape vines climb up the low bushes perfuming the air with the fragrance of their blooms. There is nothing more sweet smelling than the grape blooms. Numberless isles some not more than rod square. Made 10 miles.

30 - Traveled up the Platte River all day. Camped 1 mile of Platte River. Traveled 16 miles.

31 - Traveled 13 miles.

June 1st - We are this morning in 50 miles of Fort Kearney. Traveled 15 mi. and camped.

2nd - This morning Moore and our wagons left Ming's train and we started on our own two wagons only together. Stopped at 11 A.M. to noon. All the country nearby from Plattsmouth along this road is prairie. Cloudy and drizzly, the weather since we crossed river. Fine till this evening some indications of rain. Traveled 13 mi. and camped.

3 - At 11 A.M. where we camped came in sight of Fort Kearney though 7 miles from it. At 3 P.M. we arrived at Fort Kearney a military post on the south side of Platte River. A few families live here. Here we also got letters from home.

Military are preparing to stop a train from Franklin Co., Missouri for using disloyal language, hurrahing for Jeff Davis. One mile above the Fort we passed Kearney City considerable little town, several stores. Traveled 16 miles and camped 1 mi. of river on telegraph road.

4th - Lay by 2 mi. from Fort Kearney until 2 P.M. Saw D. Nolana and Nelse Martin. Traveled 6 miles and camped.

5 - Holy Sabbath day. We thank thee Oh Lord for thy mercies bestowed the past. Keep us from sin, Lay by all day.

6 - Great numbers of Buffalo carcasses along here. Camped. Traveled 19 miles.

7 - Several overland coaches passed us today. They travel 100 miles per day. The line is owned by Ben Holoway. We have traveled up the Platte from Mo. River for 50 miles. Have been in sight of Grand Island, the most notable island in Platte River. Passed some good ranches. They are all made of sod or "adoba" covered with the same.

8th - Pretty morning. Started at 6 A.M. Saw 2 antelope. Our travel still is up the Platte. On the Mo. side of river could be seen wagons scattered from 2 to 30 in a train as far as the eye could reach and down the river. Made 21 mi.

9 - At 12 o'clock came to Gilman's (which is a ranch). Had to go 2 miles to right of road to get grass, when came to it, it was the best on our travels from Mo. river. Traveled 17 miles.

10 - Friday. Numerous Buffalo carcasses along road from Ft. Kearney. At 11 A.M. came to Cotton-wood. Military Post 50 houses, log, all newly put up. Military stopped a train from Franklin Co., Mo. at this place to look for U.S. pistols. Took 2 from train. One of our oxen's foot has been sore for a week. It is the foul or "foot evil" as it is called. It still is but little better. Put hot tar sulphate of copper on it. Traveled 18 mi.

11 - Ranches every 5 to 10 miles from Ft. Kearney this being the Overland Stage route. Most of ranches inferior, some good especially stage stands. Camped after traveling 15 mi.

12 - Sabbath day compelled to travel 9 miles when camped at 1 P.M. for the night. Turned one of our oxen out of the yoke owing to foot being so sore it could not travel in yoke. Drove him on behind wagon. Traveled 9 miles.

13 - Today passed O'Fallons Bluff. Nothing more than a ranch and a trading post at the base of low sandy bluffs. Here river runs to river thence turning off through bluffs for 8 miles then back to Platte bottom. After travelling till 5:30 camped. Thunder storms came up interfered with supper, a good deal wet us. Lay down to sleep with wet clothes on, slept right well after they dried. Traveled 16 miles.

14 - Tuesday still cloudy but not rainy. Passed Alkalai Station at 11 A.M. Some Alkalai water here. Here saw H. Clay Ewing of Jeff City. Said he was as glad to see me as a relation; because from the same vicinity but not more glad than I was to see him. Also saw Al Baker of same place. This is 50 miles from Julesburg. Camped on a pretty elevation half mile of river behind the hills on the other side of platte. We could see the red pretty sun declining a pretty scene. Trav. 17 mi.

15 - Rained again last night but clear this morning. Breakfast at 9 o'clock this morn and then started at 10:30. Now in sight of river again. On the left is a pretty plain dotted with numerous yellow blooms of cactus. On the right is the rolling Platte River. Number of hacks passed us today bound for Calif. Some very fine looking ladies. They wore masques to prevent sunburn. This hack train was from St. Joe. Three men along from Jeff City. Traveled 9 miles.

16 - Up and started at 7 1/2 A.M. At 10 A.M. fell in with Gibsons' Train from Cooper county, Mo. Joined their train. There are now 9 wagons and 2 hacks in the train. At 11 A.M. came to and camped at Old California crossing of Platte River 200 miles from Fort Kearney and 210

from Denver. River very high. Higher than has been in 20 years. Some are crossing by lashing 3 or 4 wagon beds together; and taking running gear of wagons apart and piling it on this temporary boat, then putting their freight on and pushing the boats across with oars and swimming the stock. Traveled 8 mi.

The great flood or "mountain of water" as it is called, has washed Denver a great part of it away, drowning many persons. Some houses were seen floating down with lights burning in them. The inmates of them could be seen through the windows. Hundreds who were rich have been reduced to beggary by having their all washed away.

Fri 17 - Lay by all day waiting for river to fall. But others more eager to push forward on journey are crossing their goods in boats made of their wagon beds, then they swim their stock over.

18 - Still lying by. This A.M. there came up the most violent hail storm I ever witnessed. Hail fell larger than a hen egg. The forked lightning and thunder so rapid and so little intermission between them, it was hard to tell one from another. There was a man and his boy killed on the opposite side of the river by lightning while at supper. Also three killed a mile or 2 above the river and one stunned. One man also drowned at Calif. crossing and one or two above.

19 - Holy Sabbath Day. "Merciful parent keep me from sin this day." Lay by all day.

20 - Moved up the river 6 miles above the old Cal. crossing and commenced lashing our wagon beds together to cross the South Platte. We are now 180 miles above Ft. Kearney.

21 - Today we got wagon beds formed into a boat and made a trial or first trip. Landed on opposite shore without trouble, the wind being in our favor. Towed up 100 yds and started back, but a cloud and hard wind

came up, so that we had to haul to an Island and lay by until nearly dark. I was taken just as we started back but had to sit on a cross bar and swing to water in boat till got to island above named when got out, got some willows and an oar and lay down in the sun. The island was muddy and I had a very hard time, being too sick to sit up. But at least landed 2 miles below where we started in and I got to camp weary but not so sick.

22 - Today got medicine of Dr. Stine. Better this evening. Crossed 2 or 3 loads today. Boatmen took bedding and "grub" over and camped on opposite side of river.

23 - Sold our lame ox yesterday and bought a 3 yr. old cow. Got (\$37.50) about half value for our ox. Not so sick today. The boys sunk a part of our boat. Did not damage goods much.

24 - Fed pretty well today

25 - Got most of our goods over river today

26 - Sabbath Day. Today finished getting our goods and also stock over river. Swam our stock over river.

27 - Started again on our journey this morning at 7 1/2 o'clock. Came to Ash Hollow at 4 P.M. Omitted. We were 11 days at Platte river before got across. There are two very steep descents in road down Ash Hollow. The first being the worst it being so steep in 2 places that some of train had to lock all wheels of wagons and take off all but on yoke of cattle. This is a romantic looking place where we came to the top of Ash Hollow hill rough craggy rocks seeming ready to tumble down on our heads. High bluffs and cedars mark the general appearance of this noted hollow. The hollow in many places, (down which the river runs to the North Platte river from summit of hills) is 5 miles wide. It was here Gen. Harney had a pretty hard fight with the Siam Indians a

year or two ago. We now come to North Platte and camp. It is 22 miles from where we started from this morning (South Platte). Traveled 22 miles.

28 - Our party killed 2 antelope today and we feasted highly on this most excellent meat. They can be seen all day here also large white wolves and kiotes are numerous here. Traveled 12 miles. Good deal of sandy road.

29 - Some sandy places today had to double teams to heavy loaded wagons. Our travel today still has been up North Platte. Traveled 15 miles.

30 - Camped at a spring to left of road, 200 yds. before crossing a clear creek. Traveled 15 miles.

1 - July - Friday. Thunderstrom last night cool north wind this morning. Started at 6 1/2 P.M. At nine came in sight of the court house rock. This singular shaped formation which is not rock as it is called. At 20 mi. distant seems to be a house with round top as dome. It is 300 ft. high and covers an area of about 5 acres. It is a composition of clay and sand cemented till it forms a kind of rock. Thousands of names or autographs cover the face of this strange structure. I could also see the chimney (or chimney rock) 40 miles distant. Could only see the chimney of sun post, ^{KT SET(?)} which at a distance resembles an old dead tree deprived of its branches. At 6 P.M. came opposite the court house rock where we camped, having made 19 mi.

2 - As we progress the chimney appears more distinct. At 2 1/2 P.M. I left the train on horse back and started for this towering object which was now eight mi. distant, starting quartering across the plains from the road (which runs in 2 mi. of the chimney). On nearing it, it proved to be of a conical shape up to stem of chimney part. Alighted

from my horse and began to climb the hill to the chimney. Climbed to second bench about 15 feet, about half way to top. This rock is likewise covered with person's names the oldest date that could be seen 1849. Wrote my name in 2 or 3 places and descended by putting feet and hands in the niches. This rock is 300 ft. high, the stem 150 ft. Base covers 5 acres. Stem at top 20 ft. across. It is composed of clay and sand. It is not indeed a rock. I extracted some kind of bones from base of stem which proves that there was a deluge. The bone was a very fine texture. This sublime object, unlike the "court house rock" is in the vicinity of other towering hills and about 3 miles from the south side of the North Platte, 18 miles down the river can be seen the court house rock, it being 8 miles from any other elevation. It and the neighboring hills present a grand and romantic scene. What emotions fill the soul of the spectator as he stands on the side of the chimney and gazes down on these hills and the extensive valley of the Platte, the river from here seeming as a small creek. Some of these hills are conical; others have the appearance of cities, distant towers Etc. We encamped opposite the chimney rock, having made 16 miles.

3 - We enjoy another Sabbath day. Oh Lord keep us from sin this day. We had to start contrary to many of our wishes. Lay by at 11 A.M. Traveled 8 mi. About 12 o'clock 6 of our party started out hunting. They were gone till 6 o'clock when they came galloping up to the corral. On arriving we learned that the Indians were in pursuit. One of them was so frightened he could hardly speak. They had chased a black tail deer through the hills down into a canyon; when one of them elevated his gun to shoot but spied the red men a little space beyond coming toward them. They wheeled, made toward camp the Indians following 200 in number, within 300 yds. of camp when they stopped. The greatest confusion

prev. led, especially with the women. We corralled our stock and heard no more of them by morning - made 8 miles.

4th - Came to Scotts Bluffs at 2 P.M. These bluffs got their name by the death of a trapper, who in company with his fellow-trappers was returning to the states from the mountains. Scott had been sick 3 or 4 days and on getting to these bluffs, he had grown so bad that they had to leave him on one of those bluffs and push on on account of the hostile Indians. Some men a few years later in passing through here discovered his bones not far from where his companions had left him. They are the most grand and romantic scenery we have seen on the road. Made 19 miles.

5 - Passed numerous Indians on the road today. All seem friendly. Saw a camp of about 700 just across the Platte from where we camped. Traveled 21 miles.

6 - I have been suffering from the pain of a fellon for 3 days, at times extremely, 17 miles.

7th - Got to Fort Laramie I hardly knew when on account of the pain I endured. That agonized suffering while we stopped here I endured for 2 hours. Was almost delirious. Doctor Stine cut it open, then was a little better. Crossed Laramie^e river on the toll bridge half a mile up before coming to Ft. Laramie. Also came in sight of the black hills, they being 30 miles off. Made 15 miles.

8th - Lay by today to wash Etc. My thumb that has the fellon on still grows worse. I have suffered the most intense pain the last 3 or 4 days.

9 - Slept more last night for pain. Made 5 miles.

10th - Holy Sabbath Day. Lord keep us from sin this day. We have to travel today. We are now 15 miles from the Ft. at the base of the

black hills. As we ascend from the base the most grand and beautiful scenery bursts forth on the eye of the traveler. These hills are covered sparsely with low pines. In one of these is an Indian wound in his red blanket and put away this being the fashion of the Sues tribe of burial. As I ride along in front of the train I can see the North Platte to the right up in the hills 1/2 mile distant. It makes its way through perpendicular bluffs 300 ft. high. All is calm save the chatter of a blackbird with white wings peculiar to these hills. That breaks the grand stillness by its chattering. Craggy bluffs and Etc. make up the grand scene. Beyond us straight ahead we have a commanding view of Laramies peak 75 miles distant we saw this before getting to the Fort 100 miles distant. It looks like a blue cloud at this distance. Had it not been for the pain of the felon I could have enjoyed this scene wonderfully. Suffered extreme pain most of all day. Traveled till late in the night before we came to water or grass. Our route lay over the black hills. Broke one wagon axle, tires ran off two others. Made 24 mi. Camped at 8 1/2 o'clock.

11 - One of our oxen died with a disease similar to the Murrain last night, leaving us with 2 yoke and an odd cow. How are we to get along? Suffered the most extreme pain last night with my thumb was nearly crazy for some time. Dr. gave me morphine then did not suffer so much. Rested some in the night. Had my thumb cut open the second time this morning. It now feels better. We have lay by all day today.

12 - Had a rough road and long dry hills, literally barren in our route today. We are still in sight of Laramies Peak. Its looking like a blue sky. Saw cedars and pine growth. Traveled 14 miles.

13 - Four or five head of cattle died out of the train last night. There has been no grass and very little water for 40 miles. Lay by.

14 - Lay half of today when we broke camp, after being here 1 1/2 days. A fine spring stands by numerous trees. This is truly a wild and romantic place. Here grows the goose berry, currant, the wild plum, red haw, sarves berry and the straw berry. Here in the thicket or cluster (which is so densely thick in many places that it is impossible to see 3 ft. in advance) here on the edges of this creek, which forms from the spring is nearly every variety of growth. Made 10 miles.

15th - Today we hunted a no. of wagons on 10 miles to Luparill ^{Lupard} creek. They had been robbed by the Indians camped on Lupard creek. The Indians are committing horrible acts along here, robbing and murdering emigrants. 20 mi.

16 - Lay by

17 - Our train buried a man and child (little girl 9 yrs. old) - *MARY KELLY* found on the road yesterday. They were killed by the Indians a day or two ago. They have taken all little squads that have passed along for 35 miles along the road. Captured a train of 6 wagons, killed six men out of 11 and took the women prisoners. They took all from the wagons but the flour which they poured on the ground and took the sacks. Took all the stock. One woman got away at night when they were all asleep. Traveled 2 nights lying in the bluffs in day. She got to the Ft. today. Her husband and the husband of another woman they have yet are at the same Ft., at Deer Creek wounded, one will die. The woman who escaped tells the interesting story of their capture and her escape. They had no guards over her when she got away. She started off, not knowing where she was going but happened to get the right course to the North Platte river. She in company with her little boy succeeded in reaching Deer Creek, the third night after escaping, walking barefoot over the gravel and cactus all the way. The woman is an intelligent

person. There have been hundreds fell victims to these savages, who have never been heard of. The Military, who are pursuing them say they have several 1000 head of stock that they have run off this spring from emigrants. Camped at Deer Creek Ft. Made 20 miles.

18 - Lay by

19 - Formed a train of 44 wagons and started again. Traveled 12 miles.

20 - Crossed the North Platte River today on the bridge. Traveled 10 miles.

21 - Came to the Red Buttes - these are red mountains.

22 - Traveled 10 miles.

23 - From here to Willow Springs is 20 miles, there being no water or grass. Camped on Prospect Hill. Traveled 10 miles.

24th - Holy Sabbath day. We were compelled to travel today. We started at 4 A.M. and went 6 miles and then lay over at Grease Wood or Horse Creek till 5 P.M. when we started and went till 11 o'clock at night when we got to Independence Rock on Sweet Water River. Passed large Alkalai Lakes today. Made 16 miles, weary and tired when we camped.

25 - Crossed Sweet Water river at 8 A.M. Came to the Devil Gate a very grand and magnificent scene. The river here runs perpendicular granite bluffs 300 ft. high. I passed down through the gate, the river being low so that we could walk on the large rocks that lie in the bed of the river. This wonderful gap is about half a mile long and not more than 20 ft. wide in places. I discharged my revolver here in the bed of the river as in the gate the report resounds and makes as great a noise as a cannon. Made 7 mi.

26 - Traveled 15 miles.

27 - Passed between some of the most grand and appalling gaps in the mountains I have ever seen. Great round and every shaped rocks lying on the tops of these high cliffs seemed ready to tumble down on our heads. Miles 15.

28th & 29th - Had to travel 18 miles without water for our stock. Camped 18 mi.

30 - Lay by till 1 P.M. then traveled 7 miles and camped.

31 - Sabbath day. Were compelled to travel 20 miles today. Camped on Rock Creek. There has been gold discovered on this and most other creeks around here, but not enough to pay. 20 miles.

August 1st - Got to South Pap, past at 10 here, Lander Cut-off turns to the right up the Sweet Water. Miles 9.

2 - Crossed the great South Pap today. ^{PASS (Wells)} This is almost level but still is called the summit of this range of Mts. At the foot of the Pap ^{PASS} is the Pacific Springs. The road after it begins to descend from the mount runs down a canyon. Here are some grand and lofty hills on either side of the road. Made 20 miles.

3rd - We had to travel 22 mi. without water or grass. 22 mi. camped on Big Sandy.

4th - Crossed Little and Big Sandy creeks. Shallow and sandy creeks. We are still in sight of snow capped mountains and have been for ten days. These peaks seem to reach almost to the clouds. At a distance they seem like a blue cloud. See them for 80 miles. No grass today. 16 mi.

5th - No grass hardly for 15 miles. No grass hardly from Ft. Laramie. Camped 18 mi.

6th - Crossed Green River this evening; beautiful stream, so clear the water appears green. 100 yds wide. Camped right opposite where we nooned, but we made 8 mi. to get there. 15 mi.

7th - Sabbath day. Lay by. Thanks to God that we were allowed to keep this day holy.

8 - Today left Green River at 6 P.M. Traveled 14 miles.

9th - Rough road today and no grass for 13 miles. Made 18 miles.

10th - We are now ^{45 (75)} 75 miles from where we crossed Green River, where we left the telegraph lines and turned a N.W. course. Our route today has been over high mountains, wild and romantic. Deep canyons on either side of road. High hills and deep hollows has been the characteristic of the road today with ice cold springs gushing from the mountain sides. At night camped in a low valley. The stars seemed down on top of the hills they were so high. 17 miles.

11 - ^{saw} Say 9 grizzly bear tracks this morning. Had been no travel on this road for some time. Mired down in a ravine and had to unload to get out. Cool mountain streams, wild landscape. Camped at foot of a mountain. Here was a pretty brook, cold as ice that gushed from the hill and worked its way through the serpentine cluster of aspen trees which resemble cotton-wood, the leaves always in motion, white smooth bark. 10 mi. traveled.

12 - Set tires till 3 P.M. then ascended the mount. at the foot of which was Ham's Fork. Clear stream 20 yds. wide then up another mount on the top of which camped. 5 mi.

13 - Frost and ice last night. Lay by today.

14 - Sabbath. Our travel today has been of interest. Passed through a pretty grove of fir trees situated at the foot of a mountain, shaped like a cone, 2 and 300 ft. high. Climbed and descended high and

rugged mountains. Crossed a creek camped on Bear River after traveling over Bear River mountains all day. Made 15 miles.

15 - Caught fine speckled trout from Bear River. Ate to our stomachs utmost capacity. Train caught two or three bushels. 8 miles.

16 - Pretty vale up Bear River. Up a hill and camped at a creek 13 mi.

17 - Up and down tremendous hills. Camped 13 mi.

18 - Mormon settlement of 200. Fine wheat. Wheat not in bloom yet. Fine grass and water all the way from Green River. Mountain, springs and brooks. Pretty valley, rich land, 14 miles.

19 - Wonderful freaks of nature, Lofty mount, covered with pine and other mountain growth; the pretty vale and the gushing fountain all conspire to show the wonderful works of God. Got to Soda Springs and camped. 15 miles.

20 - Lay by all day. Visited the numerous Alkaline and mineral springs of the place. Mountains are formed from the sediment or carbon deposited from these strange springs; Some of them 40 feet above the level of the valley. One of these is strangely wonderful, sending forth a steam of sulphur from a hole in the top. A rambling noise is heard by laying the ear to the ground. Like a steam boat in motion, from which noise it takes the name of Sulphur Boat Spring, Mormon town. Irrigate to make their crops.

21 - Sabbath, traveled 12 mi.

22 -

23 - Lander Cut-off intersects with Soda Springs ^{ROAD} rock by which we came. Commenced raining at 1 P.M. which caused us to lay by till the morning. Rough road today, no water for 8 miles after leaving Black foot. ^(River) On our left is a pretty mt. side sparsely covered with high fir

and quaking aspen trees. On the right is a high mountain so distant that it resembles a blue cloud that bounds the eastern horizon. Traveled 8 mi.

24 - Clear and cool this morn. Our travel today has been along a pretty vale at the base of a mountain. Pine, quaking aspen trees, shrubbery all along the mountain's side and base. Brooks of water have been pretty plenty with some springs, fine grass Etc. 16 mi. Camp.

25 - Traveled till dark. Found no drinking water or for cooking purposes nor for stock. Camped on a high plain. 8 miles of water. Traveled 17 miles.

26 - No water till got to John Gray's Creek and then it was so bad that could not use it. Went on at 1 1/2 P.M. and got gals. of water and went back to train with it. Came to Snake river, crossed it by ferry boat and by tow, lock and tackle. It was 9 o'clock. Made camp, had supper by bank, 15 miles.

27 - Snake river is a grand and beautiful stream, resembling Green river which we formerly crossed. Leaving Snake River ferry we proceeded on our way up this stream. I now contemplate and behold the most beautiful scenes imaginable. The extensive Snake river valley stretches out before us. On our right far off may be seen pretty mts. the most prominent of which is ^(Green Mountain?) Freemonts Peak which towers high above the others resembling a cone on a high spot. On our left is a streak of mountains that appear like dark irregular blue clouds behind which the glorious sun is declining, spreading his red light and on the peaks of the distant hills; causing Freemonts Peak to look like an immense yellow ball of fire. On we slowly move. The sun now has hid himself beyond yonder high mount., leaving a streak of red athwart the Western horizon. Freemont's Peak now puts on its former appearance resembling a blue conical cloud. The

bat has begun to fly around. To our right is the pretty Crystal Snake river. Up the right hand margin of which we wend our way. To our left is heard the howl of numerous Kiotes. We camp at dark having traveled 10 miles.

28 - Holy Sabbath. Lay by till 4 P.M. when we moved up 3 miles.

29 - Lay by till 3 P.M. to recruit our stock, fill our water kegs make all essential preparations to start into the great 50 mile desert. Started into the desert at 3 P.M. After traveling 3 miles came to a lake that was 3 miles wide and five miles long, which was entirely dried up, there being no rain here since March. Here was an immense quantity of fishes which had died in consequence of water drying up. There were piles of them dead in all the lowest places. Rough rocky road 5 miles when we came to sandy road. About 5 o'clock a great storm of wind, hail and rain came up. Continued to drizzle till 11 P.M. at which time we camped on the "desert," having traveled nearly half the night. 15 mi.

30 - Crossed ^{Cumas} Cumas Creek, no water only stagnated holes. Camped at a Stage Stand. From this and 30 mi. below we can see off to the right 3 high mountains that tower high above the other mountain elevations. Those mounts are 150 miles distant from the road, and are called the three sisters as the three buttes. Traveled 18 miles.

31 - Starting out at 6 A.M. had gone but a mile when we were compelled to double teams in consequence of the heavy sand for miles. Stopped two hours at noon turned our stock out to browse on the sage and dry grass there being no water in 15 miles yet. At 4 P.M. resumed our march being compelled to get to water before striking camp as our stock were really suffering for water. We proceeded till night when blackness was added to darkness by the appearance of thunder storms. We moved on until it became so dark we could not see the road. A plan was then

devised. A beacon light was then constructed by putting a man in front a few yards to pilot, the advance wagon following close after the light; the others were ordered to close up and follow close after the advance. Thus we groped our way, commenced battling with darkness, thunder and lightning. It did not rain in torrents only moderately, till 12 o'clock at night when we came to a little creek of water that made us know that we were over the desert. Then we camped; only broke our wagons having traveled 20 miles.

September 1 - Our road today has been up a canyon for 5 miles; in many places rough and rocky. A meandering rivulet on our right along which our road wends its way; crossing it twice beautiful mountain scenery on either side of the canyon. Numerous beaver houses as dams, are on this creek, proving that they abound here, as also in nearly all of these mountain creeks. They are very plentiful in bear river, damming up the stream every 200 yds for miles. Here bear abound with many other vermin. Our road now re-crosses the Rocky mountains to the Eastern side. Encamped for the night, 10 mi.

2 - Our trail today has been over the rocky mountains. Not rough and high hills as at bear river but good road most of the way. Now and then we would find pretty fertile valleys abounding in fine grass. Some high and pretty peaks to our left. Stage Stations every 10 or 15 miles along here. Encamped after making a 17 mi. drive.

3 - We have been meeting hundreds of stampedeers from the gold mines for the last 3 weeks. Our eyes feasted on some beautiful natural scenery today as in the case through every day's travel in the Rocky mts. Pretty vales encircled by high mountain peaks, some of which are sparsely covered with timber. Traveled 20 miles.

4 - Some elevations, canyon, good water. 55 miles from Virginia City, 200 yards to a spring. Traveled 15 miles.

5 - Today we passed through the deep canyon. Here is some of the most beautiful and grand scenes that ever met the eye. Canyons and cross canyons, mountains towering one above the other like stair steps. The sun is forever hid in many places here, the mountains being so high. Here also are several little brooks that gush down from the mountains and make their way into canyon creeks, down which we move. After emerging from the canyon we come to Black Tail Deer Creek. At this creek we strike an open plain. After crossing this a distance of 7 miles we again ascend and descend mts. long and steep. Camped, Traveled 20 mi.

6 - Came to ^{Striking} Water Creek at 11 A.M. Came to tail gate at 9 A.M. Got in sight of Virginia City or in 5 mi. of it at 11 A.M. Here we camped. Traveled 13 miles.

7 - I went into town to see the sights, very business place. A small creek called the Alder Creek Gulch with gold mines that have attracted so much attention. In this Gulch is situated Junction, Nevada, Central, Virginia and Summit Cities all of which seem to be almost mining towns. Virginia is the center of the business, also the finest town, there being many good buildings. Here is a continual brush and throng of people. Nothing can be heard but the cry of auctioneers from one end of high street to the other. There is a vast amount of goods of every kind here. Drays "busses," wagons loaded with hay wood, vegetables of all kinds and almost blocks up the roads and streets. This in Short is a business place.

Mahan and Summerlin

Days Sluicings

Feb.
8 \$ 11.10

March
28 20.75
30 12.90

April
6 12.45
7 104.40
9 80.00
10 65.15
13 131.65
. 57.40
. 55.50
. 17.05

May
7 77.30
9 79.40
12 31.30
17 42.40
19 21.30
22 25.00
23 28.10
29 22.15

June
5 19.10
. 5.90

No. 21 Days Sluicing
First run 9.90
2 31.00
3 9.24
4 17.15
5 6.10
6 9.60
7 13.90
8 16.05

RETURN TRIP FROM MONTANA TO MISSOURI - 1866

Garland J. Mahan

1st January - In the morning cloudy somewhat. Clears off about 10 o'clock A.M. and thaws some. Sun shines warm and pleasant till 12 o'clock. Toward 2 o'clock clouds up. Wind blows extremely hard with heavy snowstorm continuing fifteen minutes then sun shines out. Alternate snow and sunshine till night.

Christmas day sun shone most of the day. Mercury 20° below zero. About the 25th of Dec. mercury stood 35° below and one day or two it congealed.

Jan. 2

Clear and windy though pleasant all day. Helena M.T.

Helena M.T.

J.E.C. esqr.

Dear Sir,

According to my promise and your request, I at length write you. I should have written sooner but I promised so many of my friends to write to them, that I scarcely remember who all I owe a letter.

Therefore I presume some will have to "take the will of the deed." As you requested I shall endeavor to give you an impartial account of this country. Since my advent into this new country (which was in 1864) there has been a very perceptible change. There has been a great amelioration and development of its vast resources, and it is destined at no distant day to out-rival any country on this continent in an suriferous point of view.

Towns and cities have sprung up as if by magic. We already have a population of fifty-nine thousand which will be considerably augmented

than season. This country alone according to statistics produced five million of dollars last season. The placer mines are extensive and many of them exceedingly rich; and there are new discoveries being made every few days. There has been several towns and cities spring up as if by magic. Farming, Quartz mining, Freighting, Mercantile business. New discoveries made recently, the richest of which is in the Elk creek country, where (I have been authentically informed, They get from 40 cts to \$1.00 to the pan of dirt. These mines are in the vicinity of Hell-Gate river and are represented as being very extensive.

2nd - Started from Helena M.T. (July 1866) aboard a fast mule train for Ft. Benton. Traveled 16 miles and encamped. Crossed Ten Mile creek, six miles from Helena. This is a pretty little stream running through the Prickly Pear valley and affording water for irrigating the other purposes to the numerous farms and ranches that are located in the valley.

3rd - Started by sun up having taken some more passengers aboard which increased our number to about fifty. Passed through Prickly Pear canon. Big Prickly Creek here cuts its way through masses of rock. Our road led down this canon 19 miles when we left it turning across the low mountains. Myers, King and Gillette are constructing a toll road down this canon, the greater portion of which is already completed. They have been employing 100 hands building and grading Etc. We crossed the Prickly Pear 33 times in traveling down this canon. There is the most grand and magnificent scenery on either side of the canon that the eye ever witnessed. High mountains some of which are covered with pines; Others lofty crags and cliffs some of which seem almost ready to topple over on the beholder.

4th - Today is the great anniversary of American independence, though we are debarred from enjoying the convivialities of the day. Crossed the Dearborn River, the water of which is as clear as crystal. The Indians killed several men along here last fall. Encamped for the night near where some ranchmen had been murdered by the Indians and their house burned down. The Blackfeet and Pegan Indians inhabit this country.

5th - Crossed Smoke River which is very rapid and about 150 yards wide. These streams are tributaries of the Missouri. Encamped for the night.

6th - Drove into Fort Benton this morning after a trip of 140 miles. Found 2 boats at the Fort one of which the "Agnes" was raising steam to start down. We embarked on this boat in company with some 25 other Montanians. About 10 A.M. we started bound for Jefferson City, Mo. feeling a considerable anxiety to return to our native land, having enjoyed the luxuries, privations, hardships and turmoils of a miner's life for two or three years.

While sitting on the bow of the boat our attention was attracted to several small flocks of antelope that were quietly grazing along the margin of the river. We had not gotten out of sight of the antelope when several voices were heard to cry out "buffalo" "buffalo" "Look at them, there they go." We fired about 50 shots from revolvers and guns into the herd which numbered about 25, killing but one and wounding three or four others. Our Captain ordered the boat "rounded to" when about 50 or 60 passengers and hands went ashore to bring their trophy on board. They were not gone long when they made their appearance at the bank and tumbled their game down the bank of the river. He proved to be a fine young fat fellow. The greatest excitement prevailed while bringing

the buffalo aboard. But a short time elapsed till they had him butchered and swung up at the bow of the boat.

This excitement had scarcely subsided when "buffalo" again was the cry. There were two flocks about a half mile apart, the largest numbered about 3 or 400. A few miles further and we came on another herd that were storming the river. We had the most intense excitement in throwing lassoes while they were swimming round the boat. We caught a very large one with a lasso, though he escaped but succeeded in capturing a fine fat calf that had been wounded. Passed Maria river about 3 P.M. A few miles below the Maria, we enjoyed the most magnificent scenery imaginable. There were pyramids that seemed to be built by the hand of art, symbols of huge churches with their spires, other formations that resembled old fortifications; one of which attracted particular attention, that of a large face that resembled a port hole. Other forms that resembled a brick or stone wall, every joint seeming discernible.

We passed over (Dapaane) rapids about 4 P.M. We have not been out of sight of buffalo today. They are to be seen in innumerable numbers on either side of the river. We passed the steamer "Iron City" about sundown, landed and tied up at dark to await the morning; as it is unsafe to run at night on account of snags and sand bars. Our journey today has been one of the most animating, exciting and interesting, romantic and grand scenery. Innumerable buffalo, antelope, deer, wolves, wild geese Etc. Etc. have been a perfect feast to the eye of the spectator. Passed Cow Island about dusk, also passed over several "rapids."

7th - Our boat which is the "Agnes" started by day break this morning. Passed five boats this morning about light on their trip up to

the G. three of which were in one train. They were the "Cora," "Tom Stephens," "Waverly" (on her second trip up) "Amanda Foe" and one other. Beautiful scenery. On our right is a very level and extensive bottom, covered with a luxurious growth of timber, while on our left are high mountains with some scattering dwarf pines, and a few buffalo. Saw one elk and a number of deer, some antelope. Noticed but few buffalo. Passed streams and steamers Lou Ella, Cora, Big Horn and Gallatin with some others, making in all 11 that we have met today. Passed through mouth of Muscle Shell river. There were a number of Indians on the bank of the river; they hailed us and wanted us to land but the Captain would not. They were the Crow Indians and are very treacherous. We tied up for the night at dark. The course of the river has been very winding today, running to almost every point of the compass. Beautiful islands covered with cotton wood trees, low hills and valleys have been the only scenery of interest today.

8 - Sunday passed the steamers "Ontario" and "Deer Lodge" on their way up. The latter one on her second trip. The river until today has been narrow and clear, but it increased in width till it is about three fourths and in many places over three quarters of a mile wide and is becoming very muddy. We passed (or crossed?) the south of N. Milk river about noon. Passed several groups of Indians. They hailed us and wanted us to land, but of course were unheeded. Seeing this some of them pointed their guns at us. This was above Milk river. Passed two desolate forts. The river has several big bends; it is so crooked that we have run to every point of the compass today. One bend is 40 miles around; and but 4 miles across. Several others nearly as great. Saw a number of buffalo on either side of the river. Filled so that had come to the river to get water and so could not again get up the bank. There

were about 150 shots fired at them before the fall. On either side of the river have had beautiful scenery today. On either side has been vast prairies or plains covered with luxuriant grass, extending as far as the eye can reach. On many places on the prairies are to be seen small groups of buffalo, elk and deer from 2 to 10 in a herd, quietly feeding. We tie tonight about 200 miles above Fort Union. Stopped twice to wood today. There are no wood yards from Ft. Benton for over 1000 miles below, consequently boats have to cut their own wood.

9th - Rolling plains has been our only scenery today. Passed "Big Muddy." Landed at Fort Union a pretty strong fort about 6 P.M. Went ashore and strolled through the fort. It is owned by a fur company. Here were collected numerous Indians to get their ammunitions. The various tribes were represented. There were some few white men and a good many half breeds. Passed the mouth of the Yellowstone river 51 ^{miles} miles below Ft. Union. The water is very yellow and does not mix with the Missouri immediately. Where it juts into the Missouri, it is over a half mile wide. River continues to increase in size. Passed the steamer Ben Johnson at the mouth of the Yellowstone. She took soldiers up to the mouth of the Yellowstone. They are going to build a fort on the opposite side at the mouth of the Yellowstone, and about where at this junction is the line of Montana, Dakota joining it here on the north.

10th - Our scenery today has been monotonous rolling and extensive plains with now and then some low barren hills.

11th - Passed the steamer "Amanda" on her way to Fort Benton. Old Ft. Clark and Ft. Berthol, both of which are in Dakota Territory. The former is an old deserted place; the latter is yet occupied by the American Fur Company. There are a few soldiers at Ft. Union and also at

this place. On either side of the river today in many places have been beautiful, extensive and rich prairies; covered in many places with luxuriant grass. In other places are low hills, Passed White Earth river Little Missouri and Hart rivers.

12th July 1866 - Passed Ft. Rice about sun up this morning. This is a Military post. Wind rose about breakfast and we had to tie up as we could not make out to pilot the boat. Went ashore, as we landed at a pretty bottom covered with luxuriant timber and grass. Saw the first burr oak, ash, grape vine and other timber that we have not seen since we left home. It was an extensive bottom, rich and pretty. Took a stroll through the woods; it was early morning; there was a cool and pleasant wind, the numerous birds were humming their cheerful notes and all nature seemed animated and to "Praise its great Creator." We felt a strange kind of happiness as we grasped with our feet, this virgin soil where perhaps man hitherto, had never trod.

At the mouth of the Yellowstone, night before last, we did not close our eyes on account of the mosquitos, which swarmed through every part of the boat, filling every crevice and corner. The passengers were fighting, scratching, walking and rolling all night and were raised in thousands of ^{w/176}whelps by morning. We never saw one millionth part as many in any place before. Passed Beaver and Grand rivers, small streams.

13th - Passed the mouth of Moreau and Big Cheyenne rivers. Passed Ft. Pierce met the steamer Sun Set. The soldiers pressed her at Ft. Stully and compelled her to return to Ft. Benton loaded with troops and stores. Passed by on the opposite side of the river at Ft. Stully as we did not like the idea of being pressed. They beckoned us to land but our Captain did not heed them. Country has been mostly level today.

14th - The country today as usual, has been mostly level plains, extending as far as the eye can reach. We have passed many beautiful

Islands today; some of them covered with luxuriant timber. Tied up for the night.

15th - Sunday - Very pretty scenery on either side of the river today. Level plains and low hills. Beautiful green grass. About 12 o'clock today we struck the first white settlement. Small fields of corn was to be seen along the banks of the river; this the first corn we have seen growing for three years. It made us think of old times, of our native land and civilization. Passed Yancton agency. Passed Ft. Randolph at 1 P.M. Came to Bonhomme Island at 7 P.M. It is 9 miles long and a half, to one and a half wide. It is the most enchanting and beautiful Island that I ever saw. Timber so thick that it looked dark. Through this thick grove of trees were to be seen in many places beautiful avenues, varying in width from 4 to 30 feet. The thick shade in these avenues resembled summer houses; the branches of the trees meeting above. Some few grape vines and numerous pea vines in many places. We have seen a good deal of fine country today. No one could form the most remote idea of the hundreds of thousands of acres of rich and beautiful lands that are uncultivated in America, who had not seen them.

16th - We have Nebraska Territory and Dakota on the left, the river being the line. Passed Yancton about breakfast. It is the capitol of Dakota but is a small unimportant village on the left bank of the river. We still can see two territories at the time; Nebraska on the right and Dakota on the left. Pretty and extensive bottoms on either side of the river. Passed the little village called Vermillion situated at the mouth of Vermillion river. Also passed James river, beautiful islands and extensive rich prairies. Little farms are becoming numerous; and things seem to appear like civilization. Passed around a big bend 45 miles and but 7 across by land, on the left after we came to Sioux City

Iowa and Dakota. It is a pretty little town. But little change in the scenery; pretty Islands and level and extensive prairies as usual.

Passed the steamer Elk Horn on her way up to Ft. Benton.

17th - We have had pretty islands again today also extensive and rich prairies. Florence a little village on the Nebraska side of the river. We now have Iowa on the left and Nebraska on the right. Arrived at Omaha, capitol of Nebraska Territory about 6 P.M. There were three boats there the Denver, War Eagle and Jacob Gap. ^{G.A.S.S.} Everything about this place presented a lively and business like appearance. The levee was covered with ties, rails and freight of all kinds. The cars are running several miles above this place. Several passengers got off here.

18th - Passed Plattsmouth, a small town at the mouth of Platte river. Nebraska City a considerable town presents, from the river, a neat and compact appearance and this is in Nebraska Territory also. Arrived at St. Joseph at 6 P.M. It is a pretty city, good buildings and compactly built. The most important buildings are Acadimus Nunnery and Paydy House the latter a hotel. It was built at the cost of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. There is a railroad connecting this place with Atchison Kansas which is 33 miles below on the opposite side of the river. St. Joseph is the most important place west of St. Louis, there being an immense amount of out fitting done for the plains.

There were 400 Mormons arrived here a few days ago on their way to Salt Lake and 2 thousand expected. This place presents a lively appearance. The surrounding country is rich and beautiful. Numerous farms on either side of the river, many of which are extensive. A number of passengers got off here and also at Omaha. There were three boats here at the wharf and we met several others above St. Joe.

19th - Arrived at Atchison situated on the right hand side of the river in Kansas at breakfast time. There were some 30 passengers got off here; most of them living in Buchanan county, Missouri. This is a town of considerable importance, pretty well built and good many substantial buildings. There is a good deal of out fitting done here. This place is 33 miles below St. Joe. Surrounding country is rich and unbroken. Good farms both on the Missouri and Kansas side.

Came to Weston, a pretty little village on the Missouri side of the river about sun rise. Several other little villages. Passed Ft. Leavenworth at 9 A.M. Leavenworth City is a beautiful town on the Kansas side, good buildings and well laid out. Streets are wide and straight and are kept clean and nice. The cars are running here and at Atchison also. The Planters House is a large substantial building built of brick. There are rather good buildings. The houses are mostly of brick. This town is about as large or larger than St. Joe. We passed Wyandotte a pretty little village at the mouth of the Wyandotte river on the line between Missouri and Kansas, and a mite from this place we came to Kansas City. Considerable town in Missouri. A good view is had of either of these two towns from the other. Several passengers got off at Kansas City, among them was Dr. Howard of Tipton and a young man named Dorsey from Cambridge, Saline County, Missouri. City is a small town on the left bank of the river, Wellington a small village of no importance on the right bank of the river. It is 6 miles from Lexington the county seat of Lafayette county. Tied up at dusk at Lexington to take on some freight and await the morrow.

20th - Started from Lexington about sun up. This is a neat and beautiful town on the right bank of the river. The buildings are large, neat and substantial, mostly of brick and stone. There are several

schools of high grade here; a College and two or three Academies. The town is up on a hill a few hundred yards from the river. A very imperfect view is had of it from the river; and the traveler viewing it from the river would conclude there were not more than a score of houses in the place. This place is 185 miles from Jefferson City by water and 160 by land. The cars run within 20 miles of this place. The country from the time we started this morning has been rich on either side of the river, much of it pretty extensive. Miama is a little village on the right bank. Cambridge also on the right bank about the size of former Brunswick, a small town on left of river.

Glasgow is considerable village on the right. Several good buildings here. Arrow Rock on the right, some 60 or 70 houses perhaps. Miama, Cambridge and Arrow Rock are in Saline county. This is a very rich county and land level. Numerous creeks and rivers. The rivers on either side. Numerous good extensive farms on either side of the river. Fields are dark and healthy looking. Corn, some of it silking and tasselling; also fields of wheat, some just ripe, others cut and stacked. Passed Boonville a beautiful town on the right bank of the river, the county seat of Cooper county. Reach port on the left in Boon county, small village. We can now see the Capital of Jeff City, the distance being about fifteen miles. It presents a beautiful appearance at this distance. Landed at Jefferson City a little after sun set. Bid the (Captain and passengers good-bye).

Garland J. Mahan July 20-1866