

By Mark D. Manlove,

AN OVERLAND TRIP TO THE CALIFORNIA GOLD FIELDS.

Mark D. Manlove
Personal Experiences of a Forty Niner.

my brother

In the spring of '49, John, Jonathan and myself decided to go to the California gold fields.

We got a wagon and provisions and put them on a steamboat at Attie on the Wabash and went to St. Louis. There I met an old friend Rufus Leet, who lived in St. Louis and he said he had made up a company and wanted us to join him. This we did and bought four mules and harness in St. Louis. We, with the balance of the company, took steamboat to St. Joe, Mo.

We left St. Joe about the tenth of May, going across the plains up the north side of Platte river. The first settlement we came to was Dubedaux trading post, two hundred miles up the Platte. A Frenchman had married an Indian squaw and had a lot of little half-breed Indians. A blacksmith chop constituted the town. Traders would come in and get horses shod and Indians would get arrows sharpened.

We found the covered wagon was too heavily loaded for the mules, so we packed the mules and threw away what we could not pack and left the wagon. There were six in the company now. Jack Pellum had two ponies; Leet had two good mules. Umalvany had one good pony which he rode.

John, Jonathan and I had four mules, three packed and one to ride by turns.

Gift of daughter, Florence J. Manlove,
Jacksonville, Florida. Feb. 1958

We traveled about thirty-three and a third miles a day, two hundred miles a week and rested on Sunday.

The stock lived on grass as we had no feed for them.

The next station we came to was Fort Laramie. It was five hundred miles from Rubedeaux and there was a bunch of soldiers there.

While we had our wagon there was a bunch of soldiers traveling along near us. One rode up to our wagon and offered four dollars for a pint of whiskey. There was no house or anything to be seen except the caravan before and behind us, but we traveled faster than the wagons and soon got near the front of the emigration.

The next place was Fort Goodyear. There was nothing there except a tent and Indian tents around. Goodyear was a trader who had married an Indian woman. We crossed the South Platte and still went up the south side of North Platte. We crossed over in wagon boxes made tight and swam the animals.

Then we went up Sweet Water and saw what is called Devil's Gate, where the Sweet Water came thru a deep canon and is quite a fall. After traveling a while, we came to the Rocky Mountains where is Independence Rock, with many thousands of names put on the rock, either chiseled or put on with paint. We put ours on with paint. We crossed the Rocky Mtn. at South Pass, six thousand feet above sea level.

We came to Green river where we swam the mules. It was very full and ran like a streak of day light. One mule nearly drowned. There were lots of people crossing, and by helping we got to cross over in