

MY ROVING LIFE.

A DIARY OF
TRAVELS AND ADVENTURES BY SEA AND LAND,
DURING PEACE AND WAR.

BY JOSEPH A. STUART.

ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS OF ORIGINAL SKETCHES

AND OF PLACES VISITED.

VOLUME I.

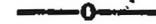
BOYHOOD IN THE NAVY. CROSSING THE PLAINS IN '49.
MINING LIFE.

AUBURN, CAL.

the same time, and now forms one side of the harbor, which seemed to be about nine miles square. The present anchorage is over a part of the old town.

The *Erta* sailed for home a month ahead of us. We then supposed we were to make the circuit of the globe and thus lose a whole day in our lives. To our surprise and joy we heard the order passed to "Up anchor for Cape Horn and Home!" The anchor came up with a rush. Off the Cape we lost a quarter boat from its davits swamped by a sea in a gale, but made a quick passage to Rio. On the home stretch we crossed "the line" with a spanking fair breeze. We arrived off the Chesapeake capes and took a pilot during a nasty gale and sailed up past Ft. Munroe with studding-galls set on both sides while saluting with our guns. We had met the Washington steamer on the way and our boat had taken Capt. Hollins to her for passage to Washington to report our arrival. On our return to the ship we were being towed astern while the ship was firing from both sides under all sail, giving us a sight rarely seen then, and now never to be seen again. This was on October 2, 1844. We were shortly put ashore at Norfolk with our bags and hammocks, ordered to report the next day without them on board the *Pennsylvania*, of 120 guns, for discharge or furlough and a check on the Bank at Norfolk for cash in settlement. I had seen enough of the Navy. Most of the men went home by Washington, but many of us took passage on a coaster for New York at a very cheap rate for the lot, including some already out of money who had friends there. With one of my boatmates who belonged in Woburn I took the Norwich Line for Boston, and then the stage for Lowell, dropping my boatmate at his home and thus severed my connection with the Naval Service.

CHAPTER II.



ACROSS THE CONTINENT, AND LIFE IN THE MINES.

In the spring of 1849, wishing to regain my health, which had been quite poor during the previous autumn and winter, and also having caught the "gold fever" then raging, I concluded to go to California. Several routes were proposed at that time, but the greater part preferred to brave the storms of Cape Horn as least expensive, and thinking I would contribute my mite of flesh and bone to swell the list I went to Boston to make arrangements. I learned however that an old friend of the family, Mr. Calvin S. Fifield, was trying to raise a company, intending to cross "The Plains." I had already been "around The Horn," and wishing to see something new I was rejoiced to find a path open to gratify my curiosity and desire for new adventures. I therefore set to with a will in helping to form a company. At Mr. Fifield's suggestion I went to Pelham, N. H. to see Mr. Joe. Butterfield Gage, with whom he had hunted foxes, as a man able to help form a company of men who would be hardy workers on reaching the mines. We raised thirty men, nine of whom were from Pelham:—Joe. Butt. Gage, Dr. A. Bachelder, Robert Thom, Davis Gage, James Butler, Albert Pinney, George Carlton, Benj. Ellenwood, and — Morris. From Maine was a lumberman and river-driver named Hodgdon. From Vermont were Dr. A. Haynes, his brother Jonathan H., and a young man named Lewis. Two belonged in New

back before reaching the Oregon Trail.) The rest were from Boston and vicinity. Of these were Mr. Fifield, John P. Hoyt, Charles Childs, Alfred Williams, Thomas True, an elderly gentleman named Lyon, George Houston, Grosvenor and Lafayette Allen, — Woodbury, myself, and five others, whose names I cannot recall after forty-five years. We called ourselves the "Granite State Company," and united with the "Mt. Washington Company" under Capt. Joseph Thyng, of South Boston, as guide, he having been across fifteen years before and having helped build Ft. Hall.

We started from Boston April 17, 1849, in the cars for Albany, numbering 73 in the two companies, all uniformed in gray suits that distinguished us all the way through, and with the holstered and saddle-bagged, half-Spanish saddles upon our horses, with our rifles or double-barrelled shotguns slung across, we presented a military aspect on the route that was quite a protection from Indian interference while traveling off the wagon road in the Rocky Mountains.

We returned the cheers of the crowd that had gathered to see us off, and sped on our way to Albany. At Albany, in bartering for special rates for a car to ourselves and a car for our baggage, (given by the Boston & Albany,) a misunderstanding occurred, they giving us an emigrant car in an emigrant train. After seeing several passenger trains go by us while we were side-tracked during the cold, snowy night, and nearly coming to blows with the train hands who were disposed to treat us as they did immigrants, we compelled the station agent next morning to apply to headquarters for change of car and train under threat of representing to our friends and local papers at home our unfair treatment, both by the company and its employees. Our two cars were left on a side track, our baggage and ourselves shifted to other cars and we had time to get a good breakfast at a hotel near

the depot before the next passenger train came. After this everything went smoothly until we reached Independence, Mo., our starting point for crossing "The Plains." At Buffalo we laid by a day to visit Niagara Falls and then took a steamer for Detroit. The other company preferred to go by Cleveland, Cincinnati and the Ohio River to St. Louis. At Detroit we took the first passenger train on the Michigan Central that went through to New Buffalo, on the lake, opposite Chicago. A storm was raging on the lake, and the steamer just coming in from Chicago was unable to remain at the pier on account of the heavy swell. They succeeded in landing a father and his six-weeks-old baby, threw overboard his two trunks and backed out, taking with them the mother. The babe fared well, for in the town there were plenty of mothers with babes, they having come to celebrate the opening of the road. Two Lakemen offered to row through the surf with me to secure the baggage, but after getting clear of the last roller, which partially filled the boat, a tub of a thing, they grew faint hearted and begged me to put back. Mr. Houston followed alongshore with me till by wading into the surf we could reach the trunks before they got to the point, where they would commence to recede. Plenty of people were ready to carry them to the hotel after we got them to dry land. We slept in the car that night as every house in town was full. The bakery was in full blast all that night, coining money out of flour. Arriving at Chicago we took the Illinois Canal, (there was not a foot of rail laid west of New Buffalo at that time,) and at the Illinois River took a steamer to St. Louis, where we waited some days for the Mt. Washington Company, coming by Cincinnati and the Ohio. They had had considerable sickness and one death by cholera, and arrived at Independence three days after us where we were camped in a beautiful grove two miles out from the

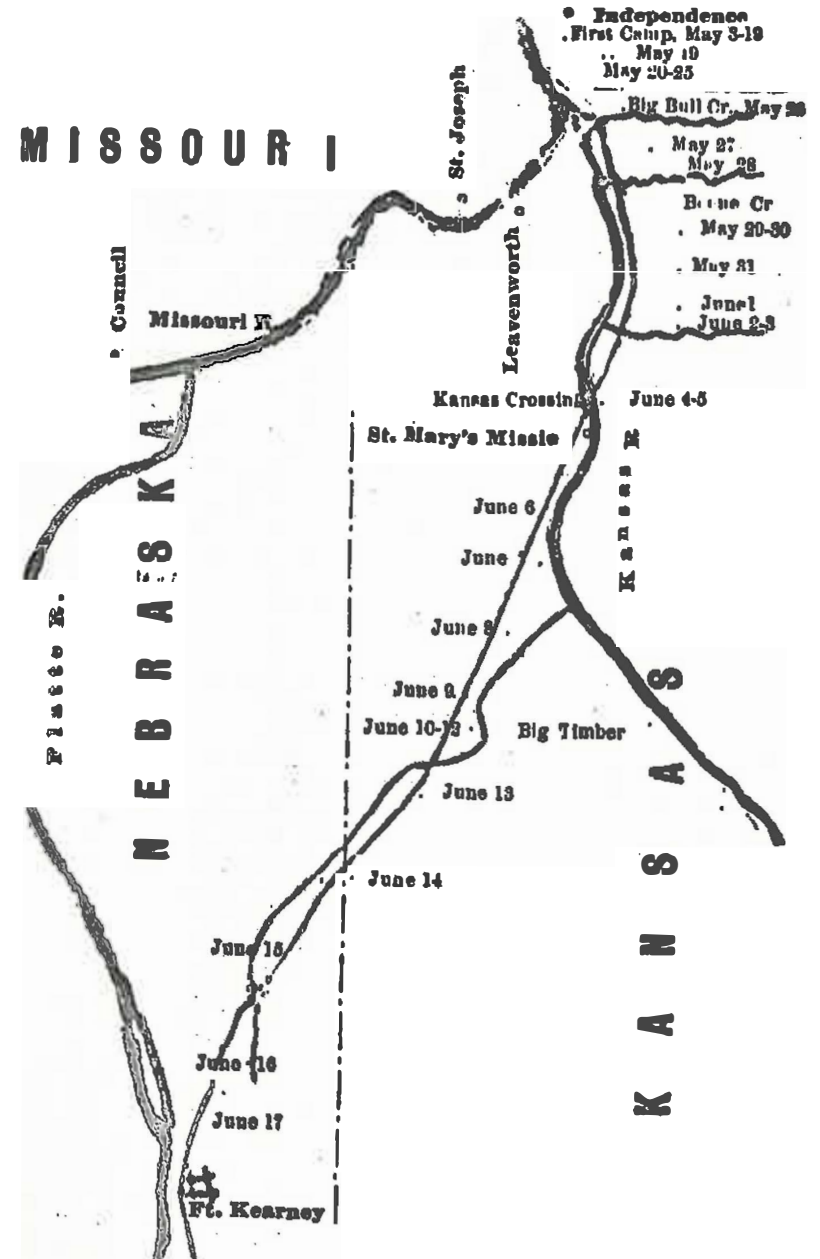
MY ROVING LIFE.

town. On the way up the Missouri I was quite sick, with symptoms of cholera, but being persuaded by my ohm, J. P. Hoyt, to take a mixture prepared by Drs. Bachelder and Haines (fourth-proof brandy and peppermint he afterward told me) I speedily recovered, and twelve hours after, at

2 A. M. May 2, We reached the landing three miles from Independence, when I tallied the company baggage as it came ashore, walked up the hill to the town and then ate a hearty breakfast. Our baggage was hauled to a camp two miles out and we followed, the boys chaffing me on my ability to carry so heavy a dose of liquor without "showing it,"—and I "claiming to be a teetotaller!"

We remained in camp with the Mt. Washinstons, while both parties trained their wild mules to packing, and completed arrangements for starting on our journey.

Saturday, May 19.—We had divided into three messes at first coming into camp. To-day No's. two and three messes were ordered to pack up and proceed to the prairie. In the "breaking" process many of our animals had been broken down and one mule had been killed outright. I got started after dinner and finding I had an old, steady pack mule just from a Sante Fe trip and could take my own pace I stopped at a house three miles out and returned to assist those who had wilder mules than myself. Found Hoyt at the old camp with the wildest mule of the lot, the "Little-Yellow-bitch," a name already earned by her. Every one shunned her,—she had given Woodbury a kick in the stomach from which he never fully recovered, had bitten Joe. Butt. Gage, leaving life-long prints of her teeth, and hurt almost every one that tried to handle her. With her Hoyt had all the mess kit and was trying to tie them on any way. The tent made a good wrapper for the pots and kettles, and after dark we reached the cabin where I had left my mule. Had to repack often,



the mule jumping and kicking to release herself. We both had our lariats fastened to her halter and to the horns of our saddles, and our horses kept the ropes taut even while we were dismounted to repack. We got supper at the cabin, rolled ourselves in the tent and passed a very comfortable night, far more so than those who shunned the work and at supper time found themselves with plenty of grub but not a thing for cooking in nor eating or drinking from, and no tent to shield them during the night's shower.

Sunday, May 20.—Found we had picketed our animals in a patch of mayweed or wild chamomile at the edge of good feed. It was dark when we camped. Gave them better grazing while we were at breakfast and then packed up.—We gave "Santa Fe" the mess kit and loaded the other with Santa's two trunks. We reached camp at 10:30 A. M., 12 miles from Independence. A hard thunder shower in the afternoon with sharp lightning.

Monday, May 21.—Sent one of our party back to help drive a herd of beef cattle intended for our use on the road. At 3 P. M. had a severe thunder squall from the southwest and had to rig preventer stays to support our tents. Our food is fried bacon and hardbread or bread baked before the fire, and coffee. As a consequence many are sick with a severe bilious trouble, myself being one.

Tuesday, May 22.—Still sick and weak. A cold wind makes it quite uncomfortable. C. C. Barklay, of our mess, was taken with convulsions shortly after dinner and for two hours was apparently in great pain. He will return home. A number of No. 1 mess arrived at 10 P. M. This evening our animals were stampeded at two different times. We lost some mules. Horse thieves probably about.

Thursday, May 24.—No. 1 mess arrived to-day. Rained hard all night with heavy thunder and lightning. The same

occurred the next night, when we had to turn out and hold the tent to prevent its being blown down.

Saturday, May 26.—Broke camp and proceeded to the Big Bull. To catch and pack the mules was a hard forenoon's work. It was mid-day before we had all of them packed, and we had to re-pack often. The two companies are scattered over the road for eight miles, by messes, as they succeeded with their mules.

Sunday, May 27.—Crossed the Big Bull and after ten miles travel camped with Capt. Thing for the first time since leaving the camp at Independence. Our cattle joined us at this place. Our camp presents quite a military appearance. The greater part of the Mt. Washingtons had arrived yesterday and their tents were pitched upon a grassy knoll near a small brook, while the busy groups of our own men showed us our station on an opposite slope. Our "animals," 175 in number, were picketed in the space between the two camps, while the 78 "cattle" were grazing near by under guard.—When the last stragglers arrived the animals were turned loose to graze with the cattle until sundown, when all were driven in between the lines and the animals picketed, and a night guard set. The cattle soon lay down near the others.

Monday, May 28.—After I had helped pack the mules of the whole mess we found that Hoyt's wild mule had gotten out of sight and rolled her pack off. The rest started ahead and left us to get along as best we could; but Charlie Childs missed us at last and came back in time to help us reduce to terms a refractory mule that some one of our mess had left. We reached camp at sundown, three hours late, very tired from our hard day's work. We made 15 miles. Hoyt has refused to touch that mule again. We two bought a horse together at Independence, and as I had drawn a spirited one that I did not care to learn to ride upon, and he had drawn

a wild mule for a riding animal, we had agreed that he ride my horse till I had learned upon the new purchase and that the mess might pack his riding mule. We two thus had the care of three pack mules, two of them among the wildest of the herd. I therefore took the little yellow one, and Alfred Williams joined us as packing partner.

Tuesday, May 29.—Broke camp at 8 A. M. and drove all the animals we dared trust, leading the rest. Crossed Boone Creek and camped 12 miles out on the Oregon Trail. Mr. Moore left us in the morning. He was having rheumatism from sleeping on the ground. Many of us took the chance to send letters home. He took passage with an ox team that had been far enough to "see the elephant" and was returning. Mr. Lyon, of Boston, also of our mess, took his office of Secretary.

Wednesday, May 30.—Twenty men of the Mt. Washingtons started in search of a team said to have stolen a mule and its pack having the company books in it. Two of our horses belonging to Fifield and Grosvenor Allen with Child's mule were missing from their pickets this morning. Sent a party to hunt them up and they found the horses. Child's mule came into camp in the afternoon. Capt. Thyng's men were unsuccessful. Rain set in just before noon and we had a wet night.

Thursday, May 31.—Rain during the forenoon. Started at 1 P. M. and traveled 8 miles, driving all the mules. I was unable to catch my mule at night and had to lasso her.

Friday, June 1.—The mules begin to drive pretty well, and we made 20 miles, but I could not catch mine at night.

Saturday, June 2.—Two Mt. Washington's were taken with cholera and delayed our start till 2:30 P. M. Reached a creek with wood handy. I had to lasso my mule again.

Sunday, June 3.—The two sick men died last night at the

Mt. Washingtons' camp. Enjoyed a fine bath in the clear water of the creek. Two Indians visited our camp to trade horses.

Monday, June 4.—We "caught up" early and made 20 miles. We crossed the Kansas by ferry and swimming our animals and cattle, and camped on its farther bank. Charles Snow, of Lowell, of the Mt. Washingtons was taken with cholera last night and barely escaped death.

Tuesday, June 5.—A dull day with us. Our mules are broken down in breaking them to pack. Dried my clothes which were soaked from my mule lying down in a mudhole. Threw away some clothes to lighten my packs. Our mess bought an Indian pony and 160 pounds of flour, our bread being nearly gone. I am tempted to join a mule team as I think it improbable that we can get through with our present loads. The backs of many of our mules are so affected that we hold our breaths while we saddle, spaces the size of the palm of the hand bare to the ribs nearly; yet these mules have to carry 220 to 225 pounds a distance of 15 to 20 miles each day. Many of us are quite discouraged, and some are tempted to turn back. Homesick myself.

Wednesday, June 6.—The mess were later than usual in packing, and were behind the whole day. Travelled 18 miles and passed the Indian Mission. Reached camp after dark, just as it commenced to rain. We made a supper of hard-bread and water, it being our dinner also. I could not catch my mule at night and had to let her run with 225 pounds on her. The cattle drivers were exposed to as fierce a thunder storm as we have had, and owing to the carelessness of the leaders in not having a guide at the road after dark, they passed the camp, were out in all the storm, and did not find us till near midnight. George Carlton of No. 1 mess, and six other men, one from each mess, have driven them till now;

but feeling somewhat vexed refused to drive cattle longer, except by regular turns. They have avoided much of the labor and vexation of mule driving, however.

Thursday, June 7.—Made a noon halt for the first time, and traveled 15 miles with far less fatigue to the animals. We had to use stratagem to catch my mule at noon. Her pack had been on her since yesterday morning. To relieve her I packed my horse with part of her load, using a rubber bed bought of Barclay and so cut as to form a flap for each half. I intend to quietly dispose of my shattered trunks as soon as a small sore spot on my mule is healed and then use the rubber bed on her. I shall walk in the meantime.

Friday, June 8.—Packed my horse in the morning and walked. My use of the bed upon my horse was an object lesson that many others adopted in part to-day. The trunks are appropriately styled "mule-coffins" by George Carlton, and weigh 44 pounds, one-quarter of a proper load for so long a journey. Painted flat canvas bags with flaps to shed rain would have been better and cost much less, and with a small valise for clothing or mess kit to go on top would have saved us many mules and days of walking. Made 20 miles.

Saturday, June 9.—We traveled 20 miles and camped at a pool of standing water that was scarcely palatable. Made our coffee strong and "shut our eyes" while drinking it.

Sunday, June 10.—We made 10 miles before breakfast to find good water, and camped for the day at 10 A. M. Sent a letter home by a young man who was returning after he had reached Ft. Kearney. We three youngsters overhauled packs at this camp and quietly stowed away all of the axes, picks and shovels not needed on the route. This caused an outcry against us from Fifield with threat of "court-martial" unless we resumed them. We had secretly ascertained that he had so managed as to carry nothing on his mule.

his own personal effects. We offered to take our share of mess weight, but more we would not any longer. George Carlton loudly defended our course and the matter dropped. We did not resume the hardware, nor did the oldsters care to take any, or to weigh packs with us. They may have to.

Tuesday, June 12.—Finished re-stuffing our pack saddles. We had a rain squall at breakfast time yesterday that blew to the ground nearly all our tents. We have remained in camp yesterday and this day to recruit our animals. The heavier beef cattle are getting footsore. Lt. Stansbury's Government-train passed us here. (See his report, p. 24.) We had now become generally known as the "Boston Pack Co."

Wednesday, June 13.—We started again and made 20 miles, and camped on the banks of the Blue, the first stream of clear water we had seen for a long time.

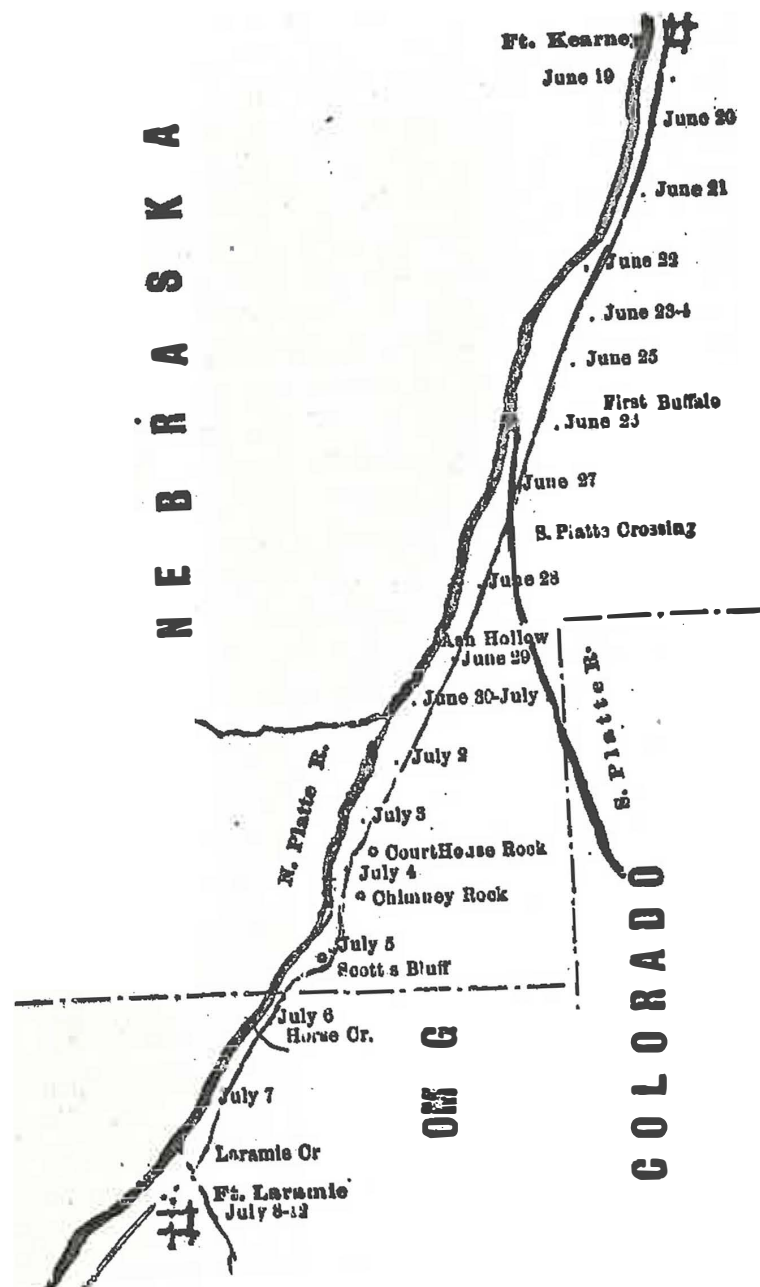
Thursday, June 14.—We started early and made 25 miles as easily as 15 miles heretofore.

Friday, June 15.—Every day brings new species of flowers, many of them of brilliant hue. We made 15 miles and encamped near a spot recently occupied by a large party of Indians, supposed to be Pawnees.

Saturday, June 16.—Started across a plain to reach the Platte, but we were unable to make the whole distance and camped without wood or running water.

Sunday, June 17.—To-day we reached the Platte. It is a muddy stream, wide, but shallow and with a swift current. We made our noon halt on its bank, our only fuel being rose bushes. In the afternoon moved up stream and encamped 1 1-2 miles below Ft. Kearney.

Monday, June 18.—Were busy all day repairing saddles and overhauling packs. The clothing of each man was limited to 50 pounds and weighed. Some of those loudest in



clothing and take mess baggage. Tried hard to get a vote to stay up the mule coffins. We will do it, however.

Tuesday, June 19.—Went to the fort to sell a gun bought of Mr. Moore and got some sugar for the mess. Our Company bought some flour from the Government stores at \$2 a hundred pounds. Lt. Stansbury's train camped a half-mile below us.

Wednesday, June 20.—We made only 7 miles to-day. I drove cattle and got wet through in a very heavy thunder shower.

Thursday, June 21.—I walked in the morning to let Butler ride. Although Hoyt and I bought a horse together for our own use, and have less personal baggage than any others in the mess, we have walked more than any of them except James Butler, of Pelham, who has given up his horse for the mess to pack with flour since leaving the Kansas. He was to ride a horse in place of each of the others in turn, but at least three of our number have never offered him a ride for a short time even. He, however, does not help to pack or drive cattle. Drying our clothes made us late in starting. Most of the wood we get for fuel is upon islands in the river, and is mainly cottonwood. To-night we had to wade a long distance for it.

Friday, June 22.—In the afternoon Hoyt and I rode out to an emigrant team to get some vinegar, and on our return tried the speed of our horses, the only time I ever started mine out of a walk unnecessarily.

Sunday, June 24.—A day of rest to the animals, but not to the men. Hoyt and I broke up his two trunks and packed in bags. We have been packing together, and his mule's sore back has been growing worse, while mine has improved steadily since packing in the rubber bed. Dr. Bachelder gave him some whitish powder to apply to the sore after he

had cleansed it thoroughly, and advised throwing away the trunks. This prevented any chance for a "court martial" threat from any one so disposed. My case was dismissed on the ground that the mess were having the use of two pack animals through my riding a private horse, and that I could claim the horse Hoyt rode and he claim his own riding mule, leaving the mess to throw away both the trunks and packs. Hoyt's ride has developed a swelling on his horse's shoulder by his picket bruising it. We fear serious results. Buffalo and deer "sign" plenty.

Monday, June 25.—Hoyt and I find that our mules travel much easier by the change from trunks to bags. The stiff boards pressed wholly upon one spot, while the pack in a bag can be so arranged as to form a cushion next the saddle. Hoyt is walking to-day on account of his horse.

Tuesday, June 26.—Killed our first buffalo at our noon halt, Charles Hodgdon, of Athens, Me. having that honor. He chased him four or five miles and fired ten rifle balls into him before bringing him to the ground. They were crossing the Platte a short distance above our camp when we first saw them, and there was such mounting in hot haste that some forgot their guns. Fifield was so unfortunate as to receive a severe sprain by a summerset from his horse stepping into a prairie-dog hole just as he was coming up with the herd at a full gallop. He gathered himself up and in vexation fired at the retreating herd. I lent my horse to Hodgdon to go for the meat, his riding mule being too tired to go again. One of the Mt. Washingtons killed a calf, but we found the bull beef prefferable, though of a strong flavor.

Wednesday, June 27.—Reached the crossing place of the South Platte, about 150 miles from Ft. Kearney. Some of our party, Mr Fifield among them, visited some Indian burial lodges and Mr. F. took a robe from one. They were built

upon poles in the open prairie. They contained their dead, wrapped in robes and surrounded by their worldly effects.

Thursday, June 28.—Crossed the South Platte with but little difficulty, though my little mule had to swim once. I found the rubber had kept the water out better than trunks; the bottoms of which leaked. We made the 12 miles to the North Platte, which we found to be the main branch. My turn to drive cattle according to President F. Quite often, I say. I told him he will drive before I do after this time. He has no responsibility farther than to preside at company meetings; and as a Director I can and will call a meeting to-night to see if *any one* shall be excused from *any* duty on account of holding company office, unless he agrees that the oldsters of the mess do their share of detail duty hereafter. He preferred at night to have no meeting.

Friday, June 29.—Made no noon halt to-day. Travelled 15 miles, passed Ash Hollow and camped at a mud hole upon a high bluff some distance from the river, with a plenty of rattlesnakes, but poor feed.

Saturday, June 30.—After traveling 1 1-2 miles we left the bluff and struck the North Fork again, where we found good feed and water. For most of the time since leaving the Fort we have been using "buffalo chips" for fuel. They burn with a smell like peat and when dry kindle readily from a match. Charles Hodgdon killed another buffalo, but we were unable to get any of the meat, the party sent for that purpose meeting a large body of Sioux as they entered the ravine where the buffalo was. Seeing our men the Indians rode at speed toward them, making signs that Snow thought were of peace. Our men preferred to take no chances and left that locality. (We learned afterward that they had the cholera among them and wanted a doctor.)

Sunday, July 1.—Ran all day regardless of weather and

cleaning our mules' sore backs. Snow and I were to visit the Sioux camp to buy horses, but did not have time. (Perhaps it was well we did not.)

Monday, July 2.—Led most of our mules to prevent their roaming and chafing their backs. A hot day and the road very dusty. The top of Chimney Rock just in sight ahead.

Wednesday, July 4.—We made 25 miles. Fired three volleys in honor of the day and gave three cheers for "Old New England." Chimney Rock looms up like Bunker Hill Monument in the distance.

Thursday, July 5.—Passed Chimney Rock and camped in sight of it upon the river bank. I took a rough sketch of it while opposite before coming into camp. Some of our men ascended the cone to the perpendicular shaft, but none could get farther. They judged the shaft to be about 100 feet high and the base 150 feet high from the bottom of the ravine. Although the ground between it and the river was from camp apparently quite level, they found it anything but smooth traveling. The whole country about here appears to have been an extensive plain hundreds of feet above present levels, and as if the soft marl and earthy limestone of which it was composed had been washed away, leaving these remnants to show us its former elevation.

Friday, 6th.—Passed Scott's Bluff. I went to the right from the road quite a distance to get a better view, and got a sketch of it from a point nearer the river than the road, the traveled way following up the ravine at the left. Williams and I ascended a portion of this bluff at our noon halt and had a fine view of the surrounding country. We tried to set fire to some dead cedars, but the wind blew almost a gale up here and blew out our matches. Found the bleached skeleton of a buffalo upon the very top. We capsized an eagle's nest on a narrow shelf a short distance below the edge of the



cliff and returned tired with our walk. Soon after starting at noon we passed a small trading post called Ft. Bernard, said to be 55 miles from Ft. Laramie. Here we found some springs of clear, ice-cold water. All dismounted and filled their canteens after drinking intemperately of the delicious beverage. Every spring must be tasted even when we could drink no more. Camped at night on Horse Creek, a stream of clear water, a joyful sight to us who had been drinking the muddy water of the Platte. Scott's Bluff is of the same loose material as Chimney Rock and Court House Rock, off farther to the left. Court House Rock was named for a fancied resemblance to such a building. Mr. Fifield was to get a sketch of it and exchange with me, but was taken sick on the road with a colic and barely reached camp. Scott's Bluff received its name from finding the skeleton of a trapper named Scott there several years ago;—some hunters or trappers tried to return to the settlements with their pelts in a canoe by floating down the river. The muddy color of the water prevented their seeing the many shoals and sandbars, and they were often capsized in the rapid current. One of their number was taken sick, and thinking he could not recover, and that by lightening the canoe of their weight it might go safely over the shoals and he might thus get through if at all, they left him in the canoe to float down with the current. They reached their destination on foot, but saw no more of Scott. A party of trappers found his skeleton at the foot of this bluff and recognized his rifle that still lay at his side. Had his companions not deserted him it was thought that he might have returned also.

Saturday, July 7.—I drove cattle. We camped at night in a grove of cotton-wood upon the Platte with good feed. The road was very dusty and at the night's camp the gnats

the mess have been packing till now. Ellenwood's riding mule was never fit to carry his weight and he walks most of the time. A pack mule in charge of True, and one in care of Butler, Childs and True, also one in charge of Mr. Lyons are in no condition to carry their loads. Those of the other messes are in a similar condition. Our packs, which were too heavy at the start, are insupportable now that one-fourth of our animals are unfit for duty and the remainder in a fair way to become so. The mining tools and trunks have been most exciting causes of sore backs. (These tools were found not at all adapted to mining use when we reached the mines. The only mining tool we youngsters carried through was a small copper, flatly-inverted-cone shaped pan having a spiral "hoop" soldered inside the bottom to retain the gold, while the "sand" would be whirled out by centrifugal force. It had been saved by Williams through all the discardings and set up at Long's Bar of Feather River for trial. He found that gravel, not sand was the material to be worked and sent his pet machine whirling down stream after one trial, amid the shouts of the crowd. The picks would have proved too unwieldy and the square shovels unserviceable.) Better no more than a change of clothes than the 75 pounds taken by some. Had we spent the money for mules, flour, rice, sugar, beans and bacon we could have gone through in better style, in less time, with fewer privations and reached our destination with more material. We are already repenting.

Thursday, July 12.—Recommended our westward route and traveled 25 miles over a rough, hilly road. Deserted wagons and provisions piled in heaps are frequently seen. We packed our horses with such as we needed.

camped on the banks of the Platte, 50 miles from Fort Laramie. We are having rough, hilly roads and expect poor feed for a time.

Saturday, July 14.—We passed Deer Creek, a stream of clear water, and stopped for the Sabbath on the Humboldt, with poor feed and plenty of sandflies. The land is quite barren, wild sage being the prevailing product of the soil. (A vein of coal three to four feet thick and similar to tunnel coal was found here by Lt. Stansbury.)

Tuesday, 17th.—Crossed the North Platte, 120 miles from Fort Laramie. Our mess lost a mule by drowning. Some one left a halter dragging so as to catch him readily on the other side, and many animals were entangled in the 80-foot length of rope. My horse was among those entangled, but extricated himself and returned to the shore. I had stripped to go to his rescue with my bowie between my teeth, but he got himself clear before I reached him and returned with me. I held him by the bight of a rope ready for slipping in case of accident and he followed with his nose resting upon the stern of the ferry boat. This ferry boat was composed of a half-dozen cottonwood log canoes lashed together and planks laid across for the wagon wheels. We ferried our packs and ourselves across. The cattle followed our animals as if it was a matter of course that they go together. They give us little trouble. A part of our mess had a long chase in catching their mules after crossing and were an hour late in reaching camp. Remained to help them and we got a good lunch of hot biscuit made by a woman at the ferry and baked in an oven.

Wednesday, 18th.—Butler's horse gave out. He has had to walk for some days and lead his horse, riding occasionally to rest himself. To-day we had hard work to get the poor beast into camp at noon halt. We also left some pack

saddles and other things with a few pounds of powder buried and a slow match applied as we left camp, that made Butler's old horse cut a few capers of a laughable description when the explosion occurred.

Thursday, July 19.—We caught some whitefish from the Platte at this night's camp. Williams attempted to float a log down to our camp that he found lodged above us, hoping to have a glorious campfire, but he got into the swift current and lost his log and nearly missed reaching the shore, being encumbered by his clothes and high-top boots. We threw the end of a rope to him and he came to shore all right. A Colonel Glass and a young man with him named John Mac Donald, from Delaware, with a mule team have been keeping up with us for awhile since our leaving Laramie. Yesterday they left their wagon, finding the roads too sandy and hilly. They now pack their mules and intend to keep with us to the end of the journey.

Friday, July 20.—Left the Platte, passed the Red Buttes and camped at the Mineral Springs. Had a severe thunder shower at our noon halt.

Saturday, July 21.—This day we passed between thirty and forty head of cattle lying dead by the roadside, eight of them lying in the road as if they had dropped dead while yoked in the team. (Struck by lightning yesterday, as we afterward learned.) The water is strongly impregnated with saleratus, weakening the cattle and causing them to give out very fast. We pass about one ox per mile and our animals have learned to pass to windward to avoid the stench. The grass is of a light yellow color.

Sunday, July 22.—We traveled 20 miles without a noon halt. Passed Saleratus Lake, which is encrusted with this article stiff enough to bear a man. We laid in a supply for making bread and found it answered the purpose quite well.

The road is still strewn with broken wagons, hardware and provisions, mostly bacon and beans. We are saving our stores and living on gleanings from the road, and even add to our stock of some things. We passed Independence Rock and camped a mile beyond on the farther bank of the Sweet-water. I returned ten miles with others to get the meat of a buffalo killed by Hodgdon, Nutting and Snow. This was against the wishes of the officers, who feared we might meet Indians so far from the road, also were opposed to the extra travel for company animals. I claimed that we should send to *save* Nutting if we feared Indians, and on that account I should go with Snow, and riding a private horse I was independent as to animals; (they were ready to take their share of meat to jerk when we got back the next day, however.) Nutting had stayed to cut up the meat and came to meet us. We arrived upon the ground at dusk, and being unable to find the carcass spread our blankets at the side of a small brook, turned our animals loose and took turns at watching. In the morning we found the lower half of the carcass not eaten by the wolves, but the parts that Nutting had cut up ready for packing while waiting for our arrival were spoiled. It measured 11 1-2 feet from the base of the horns to the roots of the tail, and was 4 feet deep in the neck. Snow disabled him just as he was about to gore Hodgdon's mule. The first two balls had pierced his lungs and the others had lodged near. One ball we found flattened to a wafer against a rib. Got to camp at 10 A. M., Monday, with two mule loads of the best parts clear of bone. (500 lbs. from one side.)

Tuesday, July 24.—Jerked our buffalo meat. The hard feelings and contentions between Mr. Fifield and the youngsters has culminated in a division of the mess. At our first camp near Independence we had elected Mr. Fifield president of the company in place of Mr. Houston, who we suspected

had feathered his own nest at our expense in purchasing the supplies, as saddles and all other equipments of a superior quality labeled with his name were found when we opened the boxes for distribution. Presuming upon his office Mr. Fifield was not inclined to take his turn of routine duty, a course that brought a disproportionate share upon us, as all details were made by messes; and he was even practically "excusing" Mr. Lyon, our secretary, by not sending him on any detail duty. The other messes took turns regardless of office, age or former condition, and we youngsters did not propose to submit to any thing different. When we got a vote to weigh the packs of each man and restrict personal effects to the fifty pounds agreed upon at Boston we found that the pack mules of these two had been carrying only their personal effects and the tent. They then had to dispose of considerable extra baggage and take mess baggage. In all our endeavors to reduce useless weight Mr. F. had bitterly opposed *me* as the ringleader. The six youngsters had at all times been alert to procure stores of food, and packed their horses with the same until otherwise disposed of—but the others never offered the walkers a ride. My disobedience of yesterday produced a storm that made a division of the mess the only remedy. The six youngsters:—James Butler, of Pelham, Charles C. Childs and Thomas True, of Boston, who together had the care of one gang of mules; with John P. Hoyt, and Alfred Williams, of Boston, who with myself had packed together, gave the other three their share of the mess things with the tent, retaining only the fly for our use. By our giving them the carriage of a third of the gleanings we find we have again reduced our packs. The feed here is pretty good. Capt. Duncan, of Fort Laramie, with three emigrants in company came to our camp this afternoon, four

their cavalry horses and started for California. He gave Mr. Norris of the Mt. Washingtons authority to take them, dead or alive, and sent him ahead to decoy them into the hands of the emigrants, charging them with a crime against an emigrant's wife that would cause them to receive a short shrift if caught. (Lt. Stansbury fails to mention anything farther than desertion and stealing government horses.) A reward of \$100 was offered for their capture. Mr. Stinson, guide to the Washington City Co. stopped with us over night and gave us some hints on packing.

Wednesday, July 25.—We started again. Our new mess picked up a lot of coffee sufficient to last us through (which afterward served for many a day's ride without other food.) I packed my horse with bacon and beans we picked up early in the morning, delaying me so that I did not get a sketch of Devil's Gate, through which we passed. It is a gorge in a range of hills running north and south, is about 600 feet long and not over 20 feet wide. In some places the sides are 300 to 400 feet high, vertical, and even overhanging at times. After passing through this we caught our first sight of the snowy peaks ahead. We then traveled in the broad valley of the Sweetwater between ridges of the Rattlesnake Mountains, with good feed. The river is very crooked, often going 600 feet to get 40. Spruce trees are plenty on the mountain sides, but the only growth of wood here is a kind of willow growing in clumps near the banks of the stream, and fifteen to twenty feet high.

Thursday, July 26.—Came in sight of the white heads of the Wind River Mountains at 9 A. M.

Friday, 27.—We had a hard drive of 25 miles without a noon halt, the road taking a course over the hills to avoid a canyon of the Sweetwater. Both the men and animals were very weary, some having to unpack and rest their animals.

Wind quite high and road very dusty. I had packed my horse in the morning intending to ride my little mule as her back was getting galled again, but we had a chance to buy flour at 6 1/2 cents,—an article which, like sugar, we never found thrown out,—I packed sixty pounds of it on her and walked. All of our mess except the cattle driver were thus walking. Days like this were our harvest days, and each would load up his horse and at night equalize the loads upon our mules according to their ability to carry. We boys are of one mind, and our old messmates sometimes get a part of our gleanings, as coffee and beans for a start, to show we hold no real ill will. We simply refused to be "bossed."

Saturday, 28.—Followed up the river a few miles to get good feed to recruit the animals before pushing across the next hundred miles, said to be quite barren. We camped in a wooded ravine with plenty of wild gooseberries. The animals had their fill of wild oats. At night the grass took fire from one of our campfires and ran up the mountain side with great rapidity and a roar like thunder. The bushes on the river bank crackled furiously, and as they fell would blaze up to a great height or send up dense columns of smoke that writhed and twisted about as if suffering intense agony. Luckily our animals were up a ravine in another direction or we might have had a ruinous stampede. Two messes of the Mt. Washington Co. were near losing their effects from the sudden spread of the fire. Fortunately the nights are now so cool that heavy dews fall, which checked the fire, for as a strong breeze was blowing in that direction, it might have spread some distance down the river, and caused great loss to those behind us. Good feed is too scarce to be destroyed. Being to windward we could witness the sight in safety.—Windship, of the Mt. Washingtons, was bitten in the boot to-day by a rattlesnake, but no harm was done,—except to

the snake. This is the third case of bites. All rattled as they struck, and not before. (My experience with them has led me to the conclusion that the rattling is the result of any sudden motion or emotion; those I have watched while going slowly into coil to strike at me in self defense gave out no sound; they did not form a flat coil like the braids of a round, braided mat, as seen in most pictures, but "squatted" into a heap very much as thick syrup would heap as it runs from a faucet in very cold weather. The head would be a little in front of the apex of the heap and slightly raised, the base of the rattles on the ground just at the rear edge of the heap, and the slightly raised rattles point to the rear. The stroke is by suddenly straightening out the whole body, and the danger distance but slightly exceeds their length.) The other cases were those of Jacob Morris, struck on his boot as he was riding along on his mule, and another person who stepped upon one so near its head that it could only reach the toe of his boot. The man held it till others killed it.—Mills, of the Mt. Washingtons lost a fine horse early on the route from a bite, the leg swelling to great size and the pain was so great that he was killed. In riding my little mule I find she does quite nicely when with other animals, but not yet knowing the meaning of the reins is quite headstrong when away from the train.

Sunday, July 29.—Was a successful day with the hunters. Fear of the fire had probably driven the game toward this point and we were just in season to find them in profusion. Those in camp hearing the frequent discharges of the guns hastened to share in the sport although Dr. Haynes was to preach a sermon in the forenoon. He gave up the hope of an audience and saved his sermon for another time. Geese, prairie hens and dogs, rabbits, venison, mountain sheep and other game were brought in. At such times I was invariably

pressed into the office of cook for my own mess and advisor to other cooks. Cook and eat was the order of the day. I slung my hammock and slept in it at night. (I expected to find trees to hang it to while in the Rockies, but believe that I never used it again, and soon made it into packing bags.) We found ice this morning that formed during the night.

Monday, July 30.—Laid in camp that the animals might get well rested. To-day's hunt has not been so successful as yesterday's although the hunters took a wider range. Of our mess Williams brought in nine prairie hens and a rabbit, which with what the others brought in sufficed for the six of us after yesterday's feast. In fact we roasted a good part to carry with us. Capt. Thyng has concluded to keep up the Sweetwater to its head and then strike across to the bend of Bear River in nearly a west course. He thinks we can gain ten days on the emigration as well as find better feed and some game. He will be going over ground familiar to himself most of the way. We voted unanimously to follow his lead. We learn that Capt. Duncan passed on his return with the four deserters in charge, having captured them fifty miles east of Ft. Bridger. He was alone when he came up with them at daylight while they were asleep. He secured their arms and then with his revolvers presented waked them with an order to surrender.

Tuesday, 31st.—Broke camp at 8 A. M. Left the road at a point about ten miles to the southeast of Pacific Springs. Three of our mess were late and did not arrive till the word was passed to "Catch up!" While eating his dinner Childs' mule started ahead with the train without her pack. True and I sent our pack mules ahead and remained in camp with the pack till Childs could return with his mule. Meantime we amused ourselves by shooting wolves which flocked to the deserted camp in considerable numbers. They had a long

make a "smudge" to keep them off. It was simply a fire so stifled as to cause a dense smoke, in which we were to sit. Some of our horses understood it and came near to get the benefit as well as ourselves. We made some other smudges for their use, for which they seemed grateful.

Sunday, July 8.—Packed up in the afternoon and crossed Laramie Creek, a clear, rapid stream, thirty yards wide and fordable. Turned up its further bank, passed the new Fort Laramie and camped two miles above in a grove of cottonwood. The old fort stands deserted, some distance down the creek upon a barren spot and away from wood and water. It was built by the fur traders several years ago. After we had crossed the Laramie a high wind blew clouds of sand directly into our faces with great force, the particles feeling like so many needle points and nearly blinding us. We saw Laramie Peak on ascending a ridge. It appeared to be fifty or sixty miles distant. We turned our animals across the creek to some good grass. Williams' mule got frightened and would not cross, and I swam across with a coil of rope in my hand to haul her over, but had some trouble to reach the other side against the swift current, they not giving me rope fast enough after my coil was exhausted. The officers of the fort tried to frighten us away from the good feed by pretending we had some U. S. mules in our train.

Monday, July 9.—Wrote a letter home, to go by a private express about to start for the settlements.

Wednesday, July 11.—Have been in camp the past three days to recruit our animals and re-arrange packs. We boys broke up some more trunks. Our mules are getting quite fatigued, and some are completely worn out. Childs, of our mess, has lost his riding animal and taken one of our pack mules to ride. Hoyt ruined my riding horse and has been

