

FRANKLIN STARR

[DIARY OF] A JOURNEY TO CALIFORNIA IN THE YEAR 1849

[22 March - 23 Aug.]

ORIGINAL IN ILLINOIS STATE HISTORICAL LIBRARY, SPRINGFIELD

we should see
 again the life
 from action and
 it was well down
 entering the Buffon's

Friday March 23
 Packed the mouth of the
 Greenall

Saturday 24
 Packed the mouth of the
 Uge last night. Car
 we took along

The town a
 the
 the
 the

had had Bluffs on our side
 on the other must all
 the way. For a few miles
 below Rockport they were
 high and thickly lined
 with Red Cedar

Packed Alexist
 Sunday 25
 Packed Park

Crossing March 2

Paper the ~~end~~ of
last night Paper
with and ~~the~~

Wednesday

We arrived at Pt. D.

so collect this morning

Landed spirits and provisions
and tents for the first time
on the bank of the river

The country around Pt. D.
is beautiful but there is
a scarcity of timber

We are camped at the
bottom which here extends
some six miles back

The river and is very heavy
by timbered with cottonwood
and some fish Hackberry
Yucca Pine Alder and
Cedar The jointed Rush
grows as thick as it can
stand and four or five feet
high Deer and Partridge are
tolerable plenty and Perch
are extremely numerous
We shall have to stay here
some time as there is no
grass yet for the cattle
is very high and deficient

to get the camp out
getting every thing in readiness
for starting and in waiting
tubs for gathering the camp
collecting Captains etc

April Tuesday 17

The Spring is very backward
and the weather has been
cold most of the time since
we landed a few fleeces
of snow fell this morning
I saw the first flowers that
I have seen this Spring in
Alaska this morning

April Wednesday 19

Remained our camp for
some back from the sea
to the top and camped
on a rather pretty creek
among blackberry and blue
grass weather still cool. Wind
etc. There has been very little
flocking in camp and the
quite slight. The cattle has
been turned out for the
last 2 or 3 weeks but we
are hard them. As the grass
gets better they stray off

April 19th 1841

Today we did our first
 preparatory for starting on
 our long and arduous
 journey. The cattle are doing
 well with but little
 we graze during the day and
 lay them up at night.
 We have kept guard or rather
 watch very night since
 finding the Bull on which we
 are camped runs at the foot
 of the Bluff and is eight or
 ten ft wide and about three
 feet and very clear and cool

April. Saturday 21

We found a Rattle snake
 on today on the Bluff on
 what found them all of them
 very large Augustus killed
 five of one that we saved
 the rattle off the largest
 as a memento of the place

Wednesday 25

We commenced our journey
 this morning and moved on
 to Wolf River 18 miles it has
 been every one for him self
 today such a rugged starting

when they get ready the only
 thought is to drink a small cup
 of tea 4 miles from Wolf River
 The road is hilly but good
 The front axle of one wagon
 got broke today The crossing
 at Wolf River is very bad
 The river is like the rest of
 the streams that we have crossed
 rapid and clear It is quite
 small There are numerous trout
 along its banks and excellent
 fish in its waters The Indians
 are very thick about here

There is a village of them a
 few miles above

Friday April 27

Traveled 10 or 12 miles
 Camped on a branch on the
 prairie Wood Deer and water
 had Passed the Mission which
 is the last of Civilization
 Saw a wolf on the prairie soon
 after camping

Saturday 28

Traveled 10 miles The country
 today has been as beautiful
 as I ever saw Soft hilly trees
 yesterday Saw numbers of
 Antelope

Friday

Sunday 29 April

Made 14 miles wind very high

Monday 30

Traveled 18 miles and camped where there was no wood and

poor grass but we fortunately brought a little wood along. The wind has been higher if possible than yesterday. The dust nearly put our eyes out.

Tuesday May 1

Traveled 16 miles to the primary has another beautiful stream Rose last night

our bullets have high

Wednesday May 2

Made 19 miles road quite hilly crossed a small stream

Thursday 3

Traveled 20 miles Camped in bad water without wood but got some in our baggage about 2 miles before stopping. We have been looking for the Big Blm all day but have concluded that it has run out. We had a hard storm get of the

got our little camp here
It rained all night &
was in guard and of course
got completely soaked
We lost all of the next day in
consequence of the storm beat
down our little and part
of them were not found

Saturday

Saturday May 5

Traveled 12 miles and camp-
ed on the Big Blm We have
been expecting to reach it
for a number of days and

This morning it was found
that we had had a
It is the greatest stream I
ever saw about 4 ft deep
and 75 to 100 rods wide with
Soft Maple Cottonwood and
Willows which branch and
divide close to the ground
and lignate the water
and much to its beauty

Sunday May 6

Today we crossed river for
we feared that it would
rise which would prevent
us from reaching our baggage

led on blocks to prevent
 our provisions from getting
 wet. Camped on the west
 bank. An Elk found dead
 and was buried on the bank
 a few days ago.

Tuesday May 9
 Yesterday walked out some
 today we made 40 miles.
 The company decided this
 morning to huggens leaving
 and going ahead. There were
 before 36 waggons. Saw what
 was supposed to be Elk
 on the prairie. One waggon

broken
 today. Interdicted the Indi-
 -pendence trail today.
 Wednesday May 9
 Traveled 22 miles. There
 has been both Elk and
 Antelope seen during the
 day. I saw 1 Buffalo.
 Shall we have been travel-
 -ing part of yesterday and
 today from two to five
 miles from the better
 Blue Aug and several
 others seen yesterday.

to the little blue to lumber
and did not get into camp
until today.

Thursday May 10.

We traveled 22 miles and
camped without wood
and poor water and grass.
Camped Walnut Creek.

The country from St. Joseph
to the Big Blue is as good
as I ever saw but timber
very scarce. Although there
very good it is not as good
as before there is down gravel

and a great deal of sand in
the soil.

Friday May 11.

Washed sandy creek which
well merits the name.

Here I found the first *Pachy-
Reis* growing. There was also
a singular plant with
strange wood like leaves
and a tongue in the center
with large seed pods.

We camped on the little
Blue which at this place
is about one half as large
as the Big Blue is when

see grass it then is scar-
 cely timber and it is from
 better wood and berries but
 a great plenty of timber
 is found. We traveled up
 miles today. The grass
 is of a different kind from
 that which grows on the
 prairie in Illinois. It is
 short and fine.

Saturday May 12

Traveled up the Little Blue
 most of the time within
 200 miles of it. Traveled 10 miles

Sunday 13

Traveled 10 miles more

Traveled 10 miles more
 We passed the deserted coun-
 try. Some hunters brought
 two Antelope into camp.
 There has been some Buffalo
 seen. The Indians saw 21
 Indians at a distance with
 his glass today.

Monday 14

Traveled 25 miles and camp
 on the Little Blue. There
 is a thunder storm

with wind last night
 it blew down with all the
 tents and the tent was
 with nothing else on

~~was on foot again and~~
 I was on foot again and
 got another nice shell-
 ing but I was not at all
 in any trouble for as
 the two blue down the
 mountains crawled out from
 under them and took to
 their baggage

Tuesday May 15

Left the little Blum this
 morning and struck for
 the Platt Pined 18 miles
 There was a mist all the
 forenoon Crooked some
 bad branches about the

middle of the afternoon
 saw about 3 miles ahead
 ahead. They were supposed
 to be Indians but knowing
 what their intentions might
 be the Captain ordered the
 baggage to close up and
 keep close together and to
 have the guns so that
 they could be got ready
 They proved to be Sioux
 and Cheyenne all mounted
 well armed with each a bow
 and arrow and a spear
 and a few of the Sioux were

back of that the bridge was
 18 inches long and the sides
 wide. There were about 60 of
 the Indians a scouting party
 from two bands who were
 camped on the head of the
 Little Blue about 5 miles
 from us. They were after
 the Ponies. They were
 deep in bucking men.
 There were some who had
 a small onion and some
 Deer. After accompanying
 us a short time they left
 us and as they were

the Prairie in a fast gallop
 with their spears pointed
 forward over their heads.
 heads they presented a
 wild and formidable ap-
 pearance. No good tonight.

Wednesday May 16
 Traveled 12 miles and
 camped on the Plateau. It con-
 tinued raining almost day
 light slightly and increased
 until we camped. Wind at E.
 quite cold about 10 miles
 from the river there is a range
 of sand hills or sand dunes

which are sandy. The main
 back of them is rather low
 than they are and nearly
 level. There is no timber
 this side of the Plate but
 the islands are timbered.
 The main Channel and this
 side of Grand Island and
 is not more than a mile
 wide. It is rapid and muddy
 like the Imperial Grand
Island is said to be six miles
 wide at this place.

Thursday May 17
 Traveled up the Plate 3
 miles. Paper Post Charles

which is just established
 There is no paper post but
 as they have a circular
 saw running ^{at} which they
 are sawing out lumber.
 The road up the Plate is
 level and would be good
 were it not for the ruins
 that have fallen later.
 It commenced raining a
 little after noon and
 we camped and did not
 move again during the day
 although it did not rain
 long. It rained all day ^{long}

Friday May 18
 Traveled 14 miles Colby
 passed a very muddy place
 but got over it without
 much trouble An or two
 buggies got in and had
 to have a long string of
 men to pull them out
 But as we camped there
 was a Puffin. Cow and
 only discovered The birds
 around the Cow but they
 escaped to the islands in
 the river. The Cow was
 secured however and was

very fair riding
 Saturday May 19
 Traveled 13 miles The road
 was very muddy and a good
 many teams started to
 all last night Found in
 the lower hills today a curious
 kind of Cactus It was
 small and shaped like
 half an apple
 Sunday May 20
 Traveled 23 miles The river
 at one place we passed took
 was about 6 miles wide
 without an Island but

yearly there are a great
many I have written
many at 40 from the
All of them struck and covered
with Paul making them look
very pretty

Monday May 21
Barclay is 2 miles The Bluffs
have appeared today a more
rugged and picturesque ap-
pearance and are higher
It has rained almost every
day since we struck the
River

Tuesday May 22
Barclay is 2 miles to Camp

Several dry ravines some of
them evidently timbered
around opposite Priddy's
Island named after a man
who was considered there some
years ago by one of his com-
rades His grave is on one of
the ravines which are deep
There is a fine spring in the
same hollow I climbed the
hills today which are high-
er here than they have been
before probably four or five
hundred feet high and owing
to the steepness it was

work but I am repaid for my
trouble They are very rugged
and broken frequently nearly
perpendicular with deep
ravines with large Cedars grow-
ing in them I saw the fork
of the Platt from the top
We camped at night at
the forks It was cold this
morning

Wednesday May 23

Traveled 17 miles and
camped at the foot of
the Pallins bluffs named after
a man who made a fortune

selling liquor to the Indians
at this place The high
ground comes close to the
river forming the bluffs
It was cold and cloudy
wind N.E

Thursday May 24

Traveled 4 miles in the
rain It rained all day
and was very cold wind etc.

Friday May 25

It rained the greater
part of last night. Very
little cloudy Traveled 7 miles
Just as we camped four

Buffalo were seen over the
river which is quite wide
here and two men waded over
and followed them up and
killed one but during at
a distance what they sup-
posed to be an Indian
willing they returned.
Then has been Buffalo
seen over the river several
times lately and one large
drone but the river was
very wide.

Wednesday Aug 26

Priscilla & I waded and
crossed the last fall of

the Platt. The river when
we crossed it is about three
fourths of a mile wide and
the angle that we took
down stream made it a
mile. The water did not
quite touch the waggons
but we waded and the
water was rather cool for
comfort so cold that
it took our breath away
and our efforts to hollow
at the bottom who wanted
to go down stream were
have been very amusing.

person standing and looking
 on. The wind gets very
 the wheels snubbing it very
 hard drawing and snubbing
 the wagon just hill go-
 -ing over stones. It is called
 Cedar Bluff Crapsing. It was
 very cold this evening as soon
 but grew quite warm in the
 dawn.

Sunday (May 27)
 We traveled 13 miles up
 the river and camped at
 the upper crapsing.
 There is a village of one

100 lodge of Sioux Indians
 on the other side a little
 above and the Camp
 follows with them Old
 people of the name. They are
 the best looking Indians
 I have seen and are very
 busy. The grounds are some
 of them very good food
 (even partridge) and they are
 very fine in Indian life.
 They succeed in their
 a few better things in
 spite of our small boats
 some of the great and be
 for the winter.

in the ...
 side for 3 quarters of ...
 but they were ...
 with their ...
 see ...
 of a ...
 the ...
 they spread their ...
 down in the center of ...
 ...
 ...
 ...
 ...

and the wife of
 Chief received the
 gift. When the square
 decided to paint using
 the Vermillion being their
 touching of our doors
 and not becoming to
 the over as I ex-
 pected your hunters killed
 Buffalo today and the
 some of the carcasses
 were an old Bull
 of the year 1861
 at the year 1861

By this I have
 of very costly
 particular and
 of methodical
 in a great many
 of Buffalo
 which have
 from off the
 the value
 of
 of
 the
 the
 the

several of us started ^{the}
 them. We could not see
 them at dawn as they
 got alarmed they start-
 ed off in a heavy gale,
 the only quiet they have
 and soon left us far be-
 hind. They look singular
 their high head. I should
 bring up and down for
 they run that way up
 and down alternately, but
 the same speed turning
 out for nothing. I had
 been in an hour and a half

got all of them from
 the Blackly Bears which
 had given us great profuse
 use of the company who
 were out hunting reports has
 my den a dead horse
 which he could not ap-
 proach although it never
 broke from a tree

Wednesday May 30
 A Thunder storm came
 up last night and we
 retreated to our tent and
 lay down. The Thunder was
 more grand than any I

now heard in the tent
 and kept up on the
 rear. The rain fell in ter-
 ents and although our
 tent was on a little bank
 the water commenced
 rising in the tent and
 we felt it dancing around
 and we got up. It rose in
 a few moments about 3
 inches deep and we gathered
 up our blankets and return-
 ed to the wagon. In a
 short time it settled down
 into a moderate rain and

continued all night.
 This morning some of the
 day cold is soon cutting
 sled falling which has
 driven the cattle off so
 that I fear we will have
 trouble finding them.
 We got plenty of Ash
 cedar wood and kept big
 fire and so managed to
 keep warm. We are very
 lucky in having such a
 good camping ground
 at such a time. Plenty
 of good wood and water

for there is several fine
 springs near the Camp
 and we are protected
 from the wind by the
 hills I am on guard again
 Ellis Clark and myself went
 out this morning together
 on foot to look for the
 cattle and about a mile
 from camp secured three
 immensely large White
 Wolves out of a sort of
 Cave in the rocks We
 had no arms not even a
 pistol and therefore

could not kill them
 They slowly get out of
 our way but would stop
 and sit down and howl
 at us with perfect uncon-
 cern as though they knew
 that we could not harm
 them

Thursday May 31

The cattle are still
 moping and the search
 is continued. It is still
 very cold but has stopped
 snowing. Evening
 The cattle have been found

at last and took very thin
 The grape in this region
 very poor. A Mani boy
 of the Indians a few
 ago fell down and died
 while hunting the cattle.

Friday June 8

We left Ash hollow
 early this morning and
 stopped at 9 o'clock to
 graze the cattle and
 then moved on Pruselia
 7 miles. The road was
 muddy or sandy all
 the way frequently travel-
 ling through the water

Now days just below the
 mouth of Ash hollow there
 is an old Indian battle
 ground. A battle was fought
 here some 10 years ago between
 the Sioux and Pocomo tribes.

We passed the carcass
 of the horse that died
 yesterday half devoured
 by the wolves. On the hills
 here are rocky basins
 regular in their outline
 than on the south side.
 I was very warm in the
 middle of the day.

Saturday June
 Traveled 18 miles down
 the river as yesterday
 We had some Antelope
 meat today and I think
 that it was a little ahead
 of any thing I ever ate
 The wolves howl around the
 camp every night in herds
 and each wolf makes as
 much noise as 5 dogs and
 probably 50 howl at once
 The hills to the left during
 the afternoon have thin-
 ly timbered with a species

of Pine the largest I ever
 saw today

Sunday June 3
 Traveled 22 miles the horses
 were better than before
 We camped at night oppo-
 site Court house rock which
 is about 4 miles distant
 We moved 10 miles back
 and were then in sight
 of the Court house & Chimney
 rocks & Chimney rock last
 seen with a short view at
 a great distance the crops
 were fresh in the forenoon

Monday June 19th
 Discovered 24 miles from
 Moona nearly opposite the
 Chimney rock I thought
 that it was not over two
 miles from us and started
 to go to it when the tides
 were hatched up but found
 that it was far off. It is
 a very singular pile
 The base is very steep
 so much so that it would
 be impossible to climb
 on some sides. The Chim-
 ney is deep and looks

as if it would not stand
 a week. The whole hill
 and Chimney is composed
 of a very hard clay or else
 soft stone and some rock.
 I climbed up to the base
 of the Chimney and cut
 my name among some
 thousands others. Probably
 it will be cut away in a
 short time to make room
 for another. The roads
 have been good most of the
 day but there was a
 very bad place a little

below the Charming
 Seventeen Russians were
 up to the Apeltres at once
 Thelby Inn &
 Raveled 20 miles and
 ped at a spring on a ridge
 back of Tecto bluffs Our
 road today left the river
 at Levee bluffs and follow-
 ed up a hollow we did
 not stop at noon The
 bluffs and the hills back
 are very picturesque. Below
 being ruins and fortifica-
 tions on every hand

Some hills will rise perpen-
 dicular and then have a flat
 top of rocks - another sharp
 rise and some a succession
 of such shelves and a regular
 all around with some square
 some round Thelby the
 place look like the ruins
 of a city. The spring we
 are camped at although
 excellent water does not
 afford any for the cattle
 but it rains a little
 about 4 o'clock and as
 the grass here is plenty