

DIARY

A. H. THOMASSON (Dr.)
Journey to California, 1850

[This is a record of the journey of (Dr.) A. H. Thomassen from St Joseph, Missouri to Sacramento Valley, by overland route, April 28, 1850 - August 1, 1850.]

Disy

Copied from original diary presented to California State Library by Mr. T. E. Glazier, December, 1961.

April 28th 1858

A. H. Thomassons Travles from St Joseph Mo to California to day at 11 oclock Sunday we started from the Bleffe Six miles from St Joseph cool and very windy we drove 12 miles about Six on astrait line and the trokmost perarie I ever saw we camped at a small branch which I name the winding branch we seen one dead horse

April 29th

this morning clear & cold wind blood hard all day & knight we travled 16 miles stoped at 2 oclock we et vitules that a dog would not eat the prairie was tottly burnt & the ashes and dust blowed all over our vetules as for our selves we looked like bogers if we had bin at home the dogs would have barked at us our horses took astumped and was bothard some time before we got them some of mine got away I made a motion to stick a pickett stick in a small hole and rattle make run his head out at me and I cut his head off with ax

April 30 this morning Cloudy wind very high & cold past 52 teams to day traveld 20 miles stopet at 3 oclock we left the maine road and went in to the tinbers & camped on the wright of the road on branch just as we got in to the tinbers Mr Fletcher break the axletree of his waggan windy dusty & cold all day very disagreeble traveling all day

Wednesday May 1th

This morning cleare and cold very pleasant all day lay by all day and repard the waggan here for the first time we found plenty grass grazing our horses had filld themselves and took a small stea peed and four of them run about 1/2 miles and cut them with very dificalty we had fish for super this evening 2 of our horses quite lame to day 1 from the effects of kicking 2 days before

Thursday May 2th

this morning hazy and cool at 11 oclock commenced raining and rained moderately the Balance of the day past 12 ox waggons saw 2 dead horses on the road and one grave traveled 25 miles came to the big winama creek at 1/2 past two oclock we let our waggons down into the creek with Larettas camped on the west side of the creek here we found grass very scarce it turned very cool in the night here we had a good bed made of weeds.

Friday May 3th

this morning cloudy and very cool and very windy we traveled 3 miles come to small creek traveled 5 miles came to the little winama here the teams had to travel 1-1/2 miles around and 1/4 miles across this is a butifal camping ground after we crost the creek and got on top of the hill look back the road is so crooked some of the teams looks as tho they was going back to day I picked up the skull of a man saw one dead horse we traveled 10 miles came to a elk broung here we still find grass very scarce the wind bleed all day as hard as ever I saw it and very disagreeable traveling we went across the branch went down the branch 1/2 mile and camped

Saturday May 4th

this morning clear pleasant & com we traveled 5 miles came to a branch plenty wood & watter we com 3 miles came to another branch tolerable camp ground came 12 miles came to big bliew this Stream is as prity a stream as I ever saw plenty timber butifal ford we traveled 1-1/2 miles left the road on our left 1/4 mile and camped here we found grass little better wood very scarce saw 3 dead horses 2 graves on each side of the big bliew very rocky the first rock we came to since we left St Joseph we organised to knight we have 39 men in our company at present our teams consist of horses & mules to knight is the first time we have stood gard

Sunday May 5th

this morning win very high & cool

this day travel we past several good camping places we traveled 30 miles to a small creek which I call turkey creek here we found plenty wood and water but grass still scarce we saw 3 graves to day we seen one where the wolves had scratched the man up we seen some of his hare and bones I paid one tooth to knight and administered Chloriform charged 1 00 dollars killed the nerve of one tooth

Monday May 6th

this morning clear and tolerable cool we seen several good camping places to day we crest big Sandy to day it is a small stream and beautiful water we camped to knight about 6 miles this side of the creek 1-1/2 miles to the left of the road here we found grass little better plenty of water and it is as much as we can do to get snuf wood to get our supers & breakfast we have traveled 25 miles to day it has commenced raining a little to knight we past 7 graves today we past 4 ox teams to day I stood guard to knight for the first time we could here the wolves howling round as some of the company saw some buffalo to day for the first time.

Tuesday May 7th

this morning cool and hazy we traveled 20 miles to day we saw several good camping places to day crossed several streams to day intirely dry sand 1/2 mile deep considerable of the road to day is very sandy we past 3 graves to day to knight we camp on the banks of the little bliev as prity little stream as I ever saw to day there was considerable game seen turkeys deer antelopes wolves buffalo we did not kill any our selves but a company from illinois killed 2 buffalo to day and some and myself went to there camp and got some of the meat the first we ever at

Wednesday May 8th

this morning cool and com tolerable pleasant all day we traveled 30 miles to day I took a buffalo hunt to day we left the road about 4 miles we took a considerable hunt but did not see any buffalo but saw some 15 or 20 antelope I shot at one but did not hit it it [sic] was too fare off they are the wildest and cunningst

animal I ever saw we traveled about 12 miles up the little bliew then we left the creek for 8 miles then we traveled up it 8 miles and camped upon the bank of creek in our traveling to day we found grass very scarce to day we seen in spots what is cald buffalo grass some distince from the road it looks very much like bliew grass we seen where 2 buffalo had bin killed one of the company is old wolf and 2 pups after we stoped

thursday May 9th

this morning cleare and plesant Dr Mathewess hors got away last evening and strade down the creek a man and myself looked for her until bed time but could not find her several of us went out this morning and found her in a short time we expected the indians had got her we did not catch up with the waggons until they had stoped to camp we took another buffalo hunt to day but did not see any of them I saw 3 antelope 15 in one gang saw two wolves we took wolf chase and and (sic) one break his four leg but we could not catch him we saw where 2 buffalo had bin killed this spring we saw a mans head to day we suppose it was a indians head the roads is very dusty to day and the worst day we had had since we left the States we traveled 20 miles to day traveled up the blow 15 miles to day here the road leaves the blow and crosses to the platt we are about 21 miles from the platt we camped on a small creek to the left of the road there is we have past great many waggons yesterday and to day I could not ceap in count of all they was such mixed up mess of them grass is very scarce here and our feed norley exnsted I think we will have enuf to last us 5 to six day yet we intend to stop at the platte and lay by until grass is good we will get there to morrow if we have good luck

Friday May 10th

this morning hazy and plesant remain so all day we traveled 25 miles we camp on the banks of the Flat to knight 8 miles below Fourt Carney this stream is the loest banks and the shallowest stream for the width that I ever saw we have camped oposite of the grand Iland 12 miles long 1/4 miles wide on this side it is about

one hundred 50 yds wide and on the about 250 yide thare is not one stick of timber on this side of the river we have to pack it across on horse back little bras [a] at that they say thar is not any for 300 miles up the river we past 2 graves to day we ceap our horses on the island and gard them the river is not more than 1/2 log deep upon a avredge and it dos not lack more than 3 feet of beaing to the tops of the banks

Saturday May 11th

this morning cleare and cool about 10 oclock turned warm and remained so all day we lay by all day to day to day [sic] for diner we had prarie chicken and antelope for diner this evening for super we had buflow as tender as any chicken I ever et up to ten oclock to day 960 waggons has past the fort up to 12 oclock to day the hole botton as fur as I could see looked very much like waggons and drays crouding through as Sity I canot give any idie how many there was for I could not count thin this evening the cooper county boys with mules tecnos camped clost by us.

Sunday May 12th

this morning cleare and cold turned very warn after 10 oclock laby all day nothing of much importance eourd to day

Monday May 13th

this morning clear and cold at 10 oclock turned very warn we travled 8 miles and came to fourt carney than came 10 miles which makes 18 miles fourt carney is a butiful situation the house with exception of two or three is sed houses every thing looks very clean and neat we camp about one mile to the left of the road to knight oposite of whare we camp to knight the river is at least one mile wide there has bin great many waggons past the the [sic] fourt to I have know idie how many but sevrel hundred

Tuesday May 14th

this morning cleare and plesant to day we travled 18 miles and as prity a rode as I ever saw it is as level and smoth as a plank floor and the hold cuntry

around as far as you eyes will let you see is the same except a small brake in the bluff we only crost 2 little small brakes to day to knight we have to cook our super with buflow chips here had to knight for super the praree rabbit for super they are much tender than the rabbits we have in the Stats and about as large a game I measured its rears from pint to pint and it was 13 inches we past 2 graves to day we past a small stream cald plumb creek we did not cross

Wednesday May 15th

this morning clear and pleasant we traveled 22 miles past one dead horse rode not quite so level to day as usual past some 300 brakes the platt long here is about one mile and a half wide we are some times on the rivir and some times a mile from it the last 3 days for the last 2 days we have seen the the [sic] waggons on the oposit side of the river in the rode leading from counsil bluffs I paid a tooth of amn to day charged him 1,00 dollar we past 32 waggons to dis morning before. they started past 6 ox teams to day

Thursday May 16th

this morning hazy and pleasant bout 10 o'clock cleared off pleasant ballance of the day wind high we traveled to day 16 miles the rod has kithstanding all day the bank of the river is much higher to day considerably more brakes to day but redd very good the much narrow to day than usual about one mile and 1/2 wide some of the boys cant yeng varmint this evening some said it was a badger and some said it was a grisly bare it had has every aparence of abare in our days travle to day the bottoms opsit of us is very narrow the bluffs high and broken

Friday May 17th

this morning hazy and tolerable pleasant Sun Shain out about 10 o'clock the wether changed Sevrel times through the day rained very little sevrel times through the day this morning we descend for sevrel miles very gragley the ballance of the day asended to day the banks of the river much higher the latter part of the day bottom much narrow the Bluffs much higher and broken here for the first time

I seen timber on the bluffs ocasionaly I could see a small Seedar considerable more timber on the ilands to day than usual considerable seedar for the first I saw a little timber on the banks on this side to day we crost several very had brakes to day we could see very little timber ocasionaly on these brakes we crost a little creek it was dry it is call ash creek nearley all of the greth is little ash we travled 23 miles here we found the best grass we seen sence we left the stats seen 1 cooking stove that was left

Saturday May 18th

this morning hazy and tolerable cool about 10 oclock very blowie today the buflow nats very bad to days travle the country such higher and brokenar the low to day there is a second bluff to day they is a glow of very prity watter to day day (sic) runs about 1/4 of a mile to the right of the to read day we cross the south fork of the platt we camp to knight 3 miles from from (sic) where we cross the river 1/2 mile to the right of the read neare a little slow the grass tolerable good to day as soon as we crost the river we looked across the north fork which is about 6 miles to the bluff on the opocit side we could see the hould bluffs oward with ~~something~~ so several of us started to see what they was we found it to be buflow we had a fine chase there was 7 kiled by crowd we have got lots of buflow meat we travled 20 miles to day

Sunday May 19th

this morning cleare and plesant lay by all day to day some of the boys 2 to buflow we have more buflow than we know what to do with I saw a skunks and one prarie rabbit they can out jump any little animal. I over saw

Monday May 20th

this morning clear and plesant travled we 31 miles to day this days travle the cuntry has quite different sperence 16 miles then we left the river then we travled 15 miles came to the river again the road has bin considerable broken to day her the bluffs in both sides seen clost to the river except a small bottom

on this side where we camp on this side it is very broken and has very singular looking appearance bluffs coming up on both sides with out a single stick of timber except now and then a small tree of seeder at this place we had to wind down through the bluffs about 1-1/2 miles before we got to the river we got her about sundown seen waggons that was left several that has bin burnt

Tuesday May 21th

this morning clear and pleasant we started at 7 oclock for 10 miles the road was very bad considerable brakes and very sandy we stoped 1/2 past six we traveled 16 miles we stoped on the river bank here we find grass very scarce I have for got to mention the watter we drink all the way up thro we have dug little holes we stoped at noon 4-1/2 hours in the banks of the river and got cool watter the river watter is very warm and rudy very much like the Missouri river watter to knight it thunders and lightens and look very much like rain

Wednesday May 22th

this morning clear and pleasant we started at 6 oclock stoped at 12 oclock traveled until 1/2 past five oclock we came 29 miles to day we past over some very broken and wariason road to day the biggest portion of the road to day the sand was from 3 to 6 inches deep to day we past several pretty little Seeder groves considerable rock to day on the high broken bluffs great many of them looked as though they had bin laid there by hand we left the river again to day we traveled about 2-1/2 miles then we came to ash hollow this hollow is a small valley of about 2 hundred yards wide it is about 2 miles long here the roads come to gether of the lower and uper fords of the South fork of the platt there is know other greath of timber here but ash thar is a few scattering scrubby looking trees it is sandy and gravelly very little grass and watter to day we come to aencampment of indians of the tribes of Sues they are as fine looking indians as ever I saw we stoped there fore some time I was in thare wigwams I saw squaw to knight grass frustrate the oldest indians here I ever saw there was 36 wigwams in the village the interpetar has

live with them for 12 years he has a Squaw and 2 children he sed if it was not for his children he would go to California but he ses he canot leave his children we past 1 very find spring to day which was great luxury past 1 grave

Thursday May 23th

this morning cleare and pleasant to day the roads has bin very bad all day except now and then alittle solid road very dusty and disegrable travling the bottoms aregular to day some times on high ground some times low horses stand travling much bitter in the sand than mules we seen 4 cooking that was left by the emigrants 4 waggons do 2 that as burnt up I have seen great many things that has bin draped on the road that I have not mentioned saws and buckets harness irons of varies kinds we came to 3 indians village the first 15 wigwams 4 white men 240 wigwams 1 white man 360 wigwams about 5 or 6 hundred indians we stoped just on this side of the 3 village at 12 oclock while our horses was grazing Sevrul of us want back to the village there is great many curositys to be seen amonix these red men of the forist those we past to day is the Sues and Slim tribe the parti-culars is intecley too tedious to mention we seen 1 tallirurs goose 1 whop saw we traveled to day 23 miles the grass to knight is very good past 1 grave we camp here the river to knight opsite of a pine grove some some [sic] 6 or 7 miles on the bluffs to our left low scrubby pine it attracts considerable attention as it is very uncommon to see any timber in this savage land

Friday May 24th

this morning the son rose cleare but it soon clouded up and and [sic] very little mist now and then until 10 oclock cleard off very vurn last night about 12 oclock came up a think cloud wind very high and the hevest litning abd all most without sesation it rained very hard for a short time I expected every minute for our tent to be bloon away and to be left to the open plains the grove of pine I spoke of last evening extends up the bluff to our left 6 or 8 miles this morning in ashort time after we started we could see some pine or sedar on the opsite side

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