

COPY OF DIARY, AS KEPT BY WILLIAM B. BAKER,
FATHER OF MRS. GUY SMITH OF SATICOY *Ventura Co*

William B. Baker, bound for California, left home, Avon Rock
County, Wisconsin, March 16, 1852.

Stopped at Elizabeth Illinois till April 6th when I left
for council Bluff, where I arrived the 3rd of May, with a part of
the company and stayed till the 16th when our company had all got
together and we left to try the Plains. Drove to the ferry but did
not get across for there are a great many teams ahead of us.

Monday, May 17--Lying in wait for our turn to cross the river.

Tuesday 18th--All cross the river (Missouri) safe and camped
on the fork of the same. Started early and traveled 34 miles.

(1) Wednesday 19th--We bid the states good by this morning and
drove away on the south side of the Platt river. Traveled 12 miles (12)
and camped on a small creek. Broke a wagon wheel crossing.

(2) Thursday 20th--We mended our wagon wheel and traveled 18 (30)
miles and camped on a small creek. Had a Platt river thunder.

(3) Friday 21st--Traveled 12 miles. Camped on Salt Creek a (42)
good camping place. We started up the south fork of the Platt

(4) Saturday 22nd--Traveled 18 miles and camped on the Prairie (60)

(5) Sunday 23rd--Traveled 19 miles, grass good wood scarce. (79)

(6) Monday 24th--Traveled 27 miles, struck Platt river bottom (106)
at 3 o'clock P. M. Traveled 22 miles, rather a poor camping

(7) Tuesday 25th--Traveled 20 miles, camped where every thing (126)
is plenty. Sunday 26th--Started at half past seven, traveled 12

(8) Wednesday 26th--Traveled 20 miles and camped in a very good
place only wood scarce. (146)

(9) Thursday 27th--Traveled 26 miles. Camped near the river as
we have done since we come on the bottoms. Heavy roads sandy and
uneven. (172)

(10) Friday 28th--Traveled 29 miles, roads good and a cool
day. (192)

- (11) Saturday 29th--Traveled 24 miles. Passed Ft. Carney at 6 o'clock P. M. Drove one mile out and camped. We had to go to the fort for water, no wood grass very short. (216)
- (12) Sunday 30th--Traveled 20 miles, a very warm day. (236)
- (13) Monday 31st--Started at 6 o'clock. traveled 17 miles, camped at 3 o'clock for the day to set our wagon tire and fill a one wheel that is giving out. (253)
- (14) Tuesday June 1st--We did not get our wagons fixed so as to start till 12 o'clock and consequently traveled only 14 miles. Found a good camping place, used willows for wood. (267)
- (15) Wednesday 2nd--Started early and traveled 24 miles. Found a good camping place. We saw four Buffalo this morning, for the first we have seen. (291)
- (16) Thursday 3d--Traveled 26 miles, found a good camping place only no wood but Buffalo chips, which are plenty and answer a very good purpose, last night we had a Platt river thunder storm but cleared off fine in the morning again. (317)
- (17) Friday 4th--We started up the south fork of the Platt and traveled 25 miles. Passed the lower crossing of the south fork about 3 o'clock P. M. We have had an uneven road, since found a good camping place everything handy. (342)
- (18) Saturday 5th--Traveled 22 miles, rather a poor camping place. (366)
- (19) Sunday 6th--Started very early and traveled 26 miles. (364)
- (19) Sunday 6th--Started at half past seven, traveled 12 miles to the crossing of the South Platt where we arrived at 2 o'clock. All across at 5 o'clock drove one mile up the river and camped on the bottoms a poor camp, grass short, no wood, Buffalo chips scarce. The river where we crossed is a long half mile wide with a quick sand bottom and a very strong current but we had to ford it but had no trouble. Water about 3 feet deep. (376)

(20) Monday 7th--We still remain where we camped the night previous. A stranger found in the camp this morning.

(21) Thursday 8th--Left the ⁰uth Platt. this morning and started across the ridge to the north Platt. Arrived at the Ash Hollow at half past 12 o'clock where there is wood plenty, some ~~that we~~ water and no grass, distance 15 miles, then we drove to the river 3 miles where we took dinner then drove 8 miles farther up the river over a sandy road. Found a very good camping place. (402)

(22) Wednesday 9th--Traveled 24 miles. The road in the fore part of the day was very sandy but not so much in the after part but several bad places. ~~camped on a high ridge where there is~~ (426)

(23) Thursday 10th--Traveled twenty mile. Roads better than yesterday. We passed a little creek of good water about half past 9 o'clock this morning found a midling good camping place nearly opposite Castle rock. Wood does not grow here. ~~Found wood and~~ (446)

(24) Friday 11th--Traveled 22 miles left a pretty creek of good water this morning. Passed Chimney rock in the Afternoon camped between it and the Devil's Brick Kiln, a poor camp. (468)

(25) Saturday 12th--Started early, traveled 20 miles, camped early in a midling good place, grass and water plenty no wood. Passed Scotts Bluff in the afternoon. We had rather a rough road opposite it but no difficulty in getting along. ~~good road today.~~ (488)

(26) Sunday 13th--Started very early and traveled 24 miles. Some sandy road in the middle of the day, we found wood tonight and crossed Horse creek at 9 o'clock in the morning. ~~Found~~ (512)

(27) Monday 14th--Traveled 15 miles and passed two trading posts. We ate dinner near the first one where we got some good spring water, something not very common on Platt river. (527)

(28) Tuesday 15th--Traveled 15 miles, passed Ft. Laramie four miles from where we started. We made no stop at the fort for it is one mile from the road a poor camping place tonight. (542)

(29) Wednesday 16th--Laid by on account of sickness. The man that owns the teams J. Marshall is quite sick.

(30) Thursday 17th--We still remain where was the day before.

(31) Friday 18th--We still occupy the old camping ground.

(32) Saturday 19th--Our sick man is well enough so that we once more hitched up our teams and started on our journey. Traveled 24 miles among the Black Hills and a rough road, found a good camping place in a hollow. (566)

(33) Sunday 20th--Started early and traveled 26 miles over a rough road the most of the way. We crossed quite a creek between 9 and 10 o'clock A. M. Camped on a high ridge where there is neither wood or water, but some grass which is thin but good rather a poor camp. (592)

(34) Monday 21st--Traveled 23 miles over a very rough road camped in a hollow tails to the right of the road. Found wood and a nice spring of water. No grass of any account, plenty of sage stalks but our cattle do not relish them much, they are a better substitute for wood than grass. We crossed what I called "Uncle Sam's brick yard" P. M. There is between 3 and 4 miles of road that is as red as a brick and the hills around (which are very numerous) are of the same color. (615)

(35) Tuesday 22nd--Traveled 23 miles. A good road today. We camped on Deer creek, a good camp, wood, water and grass. (638)

(36) Wednesday 23rd--Traveled 21 miles and good road by the side of Platt river. We are now across the Black hills. Found a good camping place, everything plenty once more. (659)

(37) Thursday 24th--Traveled 12 miles only. Crossed Platt river and all got across safe, then drove 4 miles up the river and camped, a very poor camp. Our ferry bill was 48½ dollars, brandy 50cts. per drink. (671)

(38) Friday 25th--Traveled 27 miles over a very barren country. We passed Avenue rock, Alkali Swamp, Willow Springs since 11 o'clock and camped on Prospect hill where there is nothing but sage brush but we found good grass and water for our stock 3 miles from where we camped on the road. We left the Platt for good this morning at 9 o'clock.

(698)

(39) Saturday 26th--Traveled 20 miles over a very sandy barren country. Reached Sweet water river just at night and camped by the side of the same a short distance from Independence rock. No wood, drove our stock 2 miles to grass on the right side of the road.

(718)

(40) Saturday 27th--Traveled 22 miles and crossed the river near where we stayed, passed the Devil's gate in the morning, camped on a hill $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the river, drove our stock across for grass, no wood.

(740)

(41) Monday 28th--Traveled 22 miles over a very sandy road. Camped close to the river; go 1 and $\frac{1}{2}$ miles for grass.

(762)

(42) Tuesday 29th--Traveled 25 miles; crossed the river (Sweet Water) three times since and a good camp.

(787)

(43) Wednesday 30th--Traveled 21 miles over a very rough road in the first part of the day; camped on sweet water; got willows for wood; some grass, water plenty; we crossed a creek this afternoon with a blacksmith shop on one side and a snow bank on the other; we see a plenty of snow now a days; tonight we are in the South pass among the Rocky mountains; altitude 7088 feet.

(808)

(44) Thursday July 1st--Traveled 21 miles; crossed the river soon after we started and left it for good; just after we crossed I broke the king bolt to my wagon which hindered about an hour; passed the Pacific springs P. M.; camped 4 miles from them; no water only what we have in our wagons; grass scarce, sage plenty; we are now out of the pass where the streams run the other way from what they did this morning; cold weather.

(829)