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Jackson County (Missouri) Historical Society
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This diary was kept by Dr. William A. Gordon who journeyed by horse back and caravan from Lexington, Missouri to the Gold Fields of California in 1850. He came back by boat around Cape Horn and up the Mississippi then the Missouri River to Lexington.

The Diary of William A. Gordon

This was written by him when he crossed the Plains going to California in 1850.

Journal May 3, 1850

Journal April 29, 1850

Left Col. Green's at half past 1 o'clock, staid all night at Mrs. Elizabeth Bledsoes. Distance traveled about 20 miles.

April 30.

Left Mrs. Bledsoe's after breakfast by Esq. Waltons; spent an hour or two. Bid them all good bye, went to Lone Jack for dinner, staid all night with a Mrs. Oldham; distance 30 miles. Passes 18 wagons bound for California.

May 1

Left Mr. Oldham's after breakfast, traveled on until a little after dark. When I overtook my mess mates; to wit; B. F. Gordon, George Rust, and Edmin Creel. Encamped on the Wakamsa Creek. Passed a great many wagons bound for the gold regions. Distance traveled about 40 miles.

May 2

Traveled about 12 miles and encamped on a branch, about a mile north of the road, grass tolerably good; rained all evening and night. Our oxen all got away from us, and all our horses and mules but six. Our company now consists of Mr. Fletcher, Mason, Martin, and Wm. Vivian, Lind and Johnson; Wm Barnett, Smith Either, Jimmy Bary and our mess as named on proceeding page.

May 3

Did not travel any today. Found all our oxen and all the horses and mules, but three, 2 horses and 1 mule.

May 4 (Saturday)

M. Vivian, G. Mason and G. Corns, went back some distance in search of the lost horses and mule. The rest of us took up the line of march towards the gold regions. Traveled about 15 miles and encamped about half mile north of the road. I killed 5 large snipes or plovers and we had a fine snipe pie for supper.

May 5

Traveled about 18 miles and encamped on Mission Creek. Vivian, Mason

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and Corns overtook us today about 12 o'clock. They found the 2 horses and mule and brought them up. G. W. Rust bought a gallon of sweet milk from an Indian woman, which we relished finely, notwithstanding it was bought of a squaw.

May 6

(Monday) Took up our line of march as usual for the Eldorado, passed through a Potawatamie village, situated on the Kansas River at the upper crossing seemd to be a place of considerable trade. There were four drygoods stores, hotel, one or two blacksmiths shops. I bought myself a buffalorobe here paid \$4.50. Crossed the river by fording it and encamped out near the foot of the hills. Distance 9 miles.

May 7 (Tuesday)

We did not travel any today. Fletcher, B. F. Gordon, Rust and myself went to the Catholic Mision, about 10 miles from our encampment on the Cal. road. We were looking for grass for out stock; returned the same evening. Ed Creel got dinner today, made a pot pie composed of 3 blackbirds, 1 snipe, and 1 duck. It was very fine.

May 8

Traveled up Caw River today, crossed Cross Creek and Mill Creek, passed Circular Saw Mill, Catholic Mision, encamped in a prairie. I killed 3 blackbirds and 2 snipes. Rust and myself went fishing and caught about 20 small fishes.

May 9 (Thursday)

Traveled six miles and encamped. Vivion, Rust, Hays and myself went ahead to look for grass. Found excellent grass a little east of the road on the Vermillion Creek about one mile from the road. Rust and myself caught some very nice fish. We had apple pies and sassafras tea for supper tonight.

May 10 (Friday)

Layed by today. Frank Gordon and myself went back about 8 miles to meet the rest of the Dover Company. We have fine grazing at our present encampment; our stock is doing very well.

May 11 (Saturday)

The rest of the Dover company and 8 wagons from Ohio came up to us today. We organized a company for the purpose of traveling together, called the Lafayette and Coshocton Company, by electing Thomas Watkin Captain for the term of two weeks. B. F. Gordon was his opponent. The vote being a tie it was decided by lot. W. Fletcher, Mr. Richmond and Mr. Barnett were elected as wagon masters. M. Vivion, B. F. Gordon, Mr. Reinland and W. A. Gordon

were elected advisers. J. H. Hall, Jacob Wolf and W. Fletcher were elected as inspectors of wagons and teams. In my rambles I fell into the creek and got wet to my knees. Had a heavy frost this morning and some ice in our water buckets. Layed by today.

May 12 (Sunday)

Did not travel any today. Nothing of interest occurred worth noting.

May 13 (Monday)

Took up our line of march this morning; passed 2 graves, made last spring. Have passed 3 in all. All made last spring. Apart of our road today was quite hilly. We encamped about half a mile west of a little stream, called Cedar. Myself and 3 or 4 others took a walk to the top of a high mount some 200 or 300 feet high. Set up a rock on end, about 4 feet in height, that resembled an Indian at a distance. Traveled 18 miles.

May 14 (Tuesday)

Started this morning about the usual hour. Passed 2 graves both made last spring. Road generally hilly; no timber. Crossed a little creek we will call it Little Cedar, encamped on the same about a quarter of mile below the ford. Water in this creek very clear. I was called to see a Mr. George Williams, who is sick. Had a fine mess of frogs for dinner today, which were most excellent. Frank Gordon cooked them. 18 miles distance.

May 15 (Wednesday)

Started this morning at the usual hour. Had a good road, crossed little creek about 6 miles east of Big Blue--passed 3 graves, all made last year, except one which was made in 1846. It was the grave of a lady, 70 years of age. Encamped about 300 yards west of the Blue. It is about 40 yards wide and when we crossed it 2 ½ feet deep. G. M. Rust and myself caught a fine mess of fish out of the river. I was called this evening to see Mr. Maxwell's little son who was sick. Distance traveled 18 miles.

May 16 (Thursday)

Came to the junction of the St. Joseph and Independence roads this morning. Both roads lined with wagons and teams; which made a great deal of dust. Very windy today. Some of the boys saw some antelope and some elk today, for the first time. It was thought that our company was too large to get along expeditiously, and it was agreed to divide it into two companies on tomorrow. Distance 12 miles.

May 17 (Friday)

Company divided this morning according to agreement yesterday. The Dover Company consisting of 7 wagons and The Ohio Company 9 wagons. Our

road was in the prairies all day, it was in fine traveling condition and a good natural road. Passed 1 grave. Encamped in the prairie about 1/2 from timber and water. Distance traveled 10 miles.

May 18 (Saturday)

I have lost my original notes for this day also, except distance traveled, 20 miles.

May 19 (Sunday)

Lost my original notes for this day also, except distance 13 miles. White cow had a calf today. We encamped on Sandy Creek to the left of the road.

May 20 (Monday)

We did not travel any today. I acted the part of washerwoman today, but somehow or other I did not fill the office very well, as I did not get our clothes to look very white. Frank Gordon went back, G. B. Gordaon today, who came up with us yesterday to meet his company. Had a heavy rain last night. I stood guard the latter part of the night. The rain came down in torrents from 1 o'clock till day. Here at this encampment I lost my knife.

May 21 (Tuesday)

Traveled about ten miles and came to Little Blue River; traveled up the same and encamped on its banks about 1/2 mile to the right of the road. Passed 5 graves, 4 made in 49, and 1 in 50. Distance traveled about 22 miles.

May 22 (Wednesday)

Started this morning about the usual hour. Rust, Goodrich, Schmidt and myself took a hunt today. Saw 1 wolf and 5 antelopes; none of us got a shot. Rained about half the night last night. B. F. Gordon was elected Captain today for the term of two weeks. Some 50 wagons encamped within a mile of each other. A Pawnee Indian came to our camp this evening. He was nearly entirely naked. Road good. Distance traveled 15 miles. Encamped 1/2 mile to the left of the road.

May 23 (Thursday)

Traveled up Little Blue Bottom some 19 or 20 miles after leaving Blue. Here G. B. Gordon and mess and Dr. Brand and his mess came up with us. Our company now consists of nine wagons and 37 men. All in pretty good health, but Jef Campbell, who has accute Rhuematism. Road good. Encamped on a high prairie, about 1 mile from wood and water. Distance traveled 24 miles.

May 24 (Friday)

Rust, Schmidt and myself went hunting today, saw about 40 antelopes,

3 large rabbits, and 1 turkey, killed nothing. Passed 3 graves all made last year. Road good generally very level. Came to the Big Platte River this evening, upon whose banks we encamped. This is a wide shallow stream, being fordable in many places with wagon and teams. The water is muddy and the current swift. It is something near a mile wide at this place. Distance traveled 20 miles.

May 25 (Saturday)

Traveled up the bottom of the Platte about 12 miles, when we came to Fort Kearney. Passed 3 graves, 2 made last year and 1 this year. Wood very scarce yesterday and today. Had to use green elm and green willow for fuel. Distance today 22 miles.

May 26 (Sunday)

Layed by today. I wrote a letter to my wife and sent it back to Fort Kearney by Ed Creel and had it mailed there. We were threatened with a storm last night, but it passed away without coming to us. I was a guard and had great difficulty in arousing the boys, to help corral the cattle.

May 27 (Monday)

Several of us went hunting today, saw a good many antelopes, and wolves, but killed nothing. Passed 2 graves, both made last year. Had a considerable thunder storm last night, we all got wet more or less. I cut our fire wood today with my pocket with my pocket knife. It would have been a difficult matter today, to get a riding switch anywhere on our road. Grass is good also. Encamped on Plum Creek, a small stream ending in the Platte. Distance traveled 22 miles.

May 28 (Tuesday)

Quite cold today, those that were traveling horseback, found their overcoats quite comfortable all day. Encamped about 200 yards from the Bank of the Platte. Cooked our supper tonight with Buffalo chips. Distance 20 miles.

May 29 (Wednesday)

Smith, Hays and myself went out into the sand hills today hunting, found game very scarce--saw a few antelopes and a wolf or two. Country very broken. The hills rise from 100 to 300 feet the level of the river, hills very steep and hollows very deep. The chief productions of these hills are grass hoppers, lizzards and buffalo gnats. Passed one grave, made last year. Road continues up the Platte bottom and is good. Encamped about 300 yards from the river. Grass good. Distance 22 miles.

May 30 (Thursday)

Link went to sleep while on guard and had his gun taken from him. Passed 1 grave today made in 1849. Road still continues up the Platte bottom and is good. Grass good. Encamped on a sloo of the river about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the road. Distance traveled 22 miles.

May 31 (Friday)

Rouche, Edwards, Hays, Smith and myself went hunting today, but killed nothing. Saw one buffalo, the first that has been seen by any of our company, although their carcasses have been thick along the road for several days. The first that was killed was on Little Blue. The country that we hunted over today was very broken and sandy. The sterility of the land was almost complete there being very grass or vegetation of any kind, but an abundance of lizzards and grasshoppers and some prairie dogs and rabbits. We traveled up the South Platte and 18 or 20 miles, and encamped on a sloo of the same. Distance traveled 22 miles.

June 1 (Saturday)

Considerable excitement in camp this morning, occassioned by several small squads of buffaloes appearing in sight of camp. Hays Wilkes and Williams went in pursuit of them. Hays and another man from another company killed one. We could see small herds of them on the opposite side of the river, occassionally for ten or twelve miles. Myself and some others concluded to cross the river and give them chase, but we concluded the river was too deep, and we did not go over. While traveling up the banks of the river we saw a man on the opposite side of the river in full pursuit of 3. He soon put 2 of them in the river, which soon crossed over to our side. We were in readiness to receive them, and as soon as they reached the shores, we gave them a warm reception. They sped away as fast as their heels would carry them and we pursed close on to them. We had great difficulty in getting our horses to go near them, but I finally succeeded in getting my old mare near enough to bring the fellow to a halt. When I shot him and broke his thigh, which brought him to the ground; several other shots were fired, after he fell, but with little effect apparently, until I gave him another shot with my double barreled shot gun, charged with an ounce ball, which broke

pursuit on the other side of the river even came across and claimed a first choice as he had drawn the first blood, which according to hunters rules he was entitled to. Some of the rest of the company dispatched the other one that crossed the river, while we dispatching ours. Both were thin in order and consequently not very good beef. In the eveing we observed another very large one, that had crossed over some half mile or mile behind us. Several of us concluded we would go back and give him a race, we approached within about 100 yards and fired several shots at him, and hitting him nearly every time, which only to make the old fellow mad. We would shake himself when hit by a ball and would seem to say by his actions, I defy you all, just come near if you dare. Finally, however he thought the odds against him was too great and that in his situation _____ was the better part of valor so he took to his heels, and we took after him. My old mare being less afraid

that the other horses. I ran up in about 20 yards of the old fellow, when he concluded that the odds against him now is not so great. I will try my strength again, so he turned up on me just as got to the main traveled road. Seeing that I had such a fearful combatant to contend with, I concluded that prudence would be the better part of valor on my part; so I give him around with one barrel, and then beat a hasty retreat, but in doing so my mare fell down, in turning around, and threw me off, when my monster combatant was not more than 10 steps from me. But from some cause, whether through fear, or pity for myself and old mare, the old fellow stopped. But you must not think that I stopped retreating, for I had not much more than touched the ground until I was up and doing some of my best running to get out of his way, and my old mare was up nearly as quick as I was, and got out the way a great deal faster. After I had run a few yards, finding that the enemy was not pursuing, I turned and shot him with the other barrel. He received not less than 12 or 15 shots before he yielded up the ghost. He fell in about 10 or 15 steps of the road. He was one of the largest framed animals I ever saw, except the elephant, but was very poor, so we took none of his flesh for beef. Encamped on the South Platte about 300 yards from the river. Road good. Grass only tolerable. Thunder storm this evening, lasted but a little while, doing no damage; rained very little. Creel and Edmunds went back this morning after some Buffalo meat, that had been killed by one of our company, have not yet returned. 9 o'clock p.m. Distance traveled 18 miles.

June 2 (Sunday)

Did not travel today. Nothing worthy of note occurred in our camp today. Benson, Hale Porter, Clonsley and C are encamped about a mile below us, went down to their camp and spent an hour or two with them.

June 3 (Monday)

Crossed the South Platte today which is nearly a mile wide where we crossed. It is like the Maine Platte is a turbid stream, the water in the deepest place was about 3½ feet deep, which came very nearly swimming some of our oxen. Encamped on the divide between the South Platte and Ash Hollow. There came up a storm while we pitching our tents, which continued all night. Our cattle strayed off during the night, but we found them again the next morning, without much trouble. No grass. Road good. Distance 18 miles.

June 4 (Tuesday)

Came to Ash Hollow in about 3 miles from where we camped and descended it to its mouth. We had to go down some very steep hills in descending this hollow. The hollow is very deep and narrow and the hills are very high. Passed 1 grave made last year. Grass has been very scarce yesterday and today and especially so between the North and South Platte. Encamped on the North Platte about 1/4 of a mile from the river, near Castle Bluffs. Road rough generally and sandy. Some 20 Indians wigwams 1 mile from us. The Indians are of the Sioux tribe. Snowed a little this evening. Distance 12 miles. Rained all night last night and until 10 o'clock this morning.

June 5 (Wednesday)

We passed an Indian grave today, in which two Indian Chiefs were buried. They were buried in the following manner to wit. A scaffold was erected about 8 feet from the ground, poles were laid across this scaffold and a buffalo skin stretched across these; upon which the Indians were laid across this scaffold, a fine Spanish blanket was spread over them. Road bad

being very sandy in places. Rained again last night, all night and until 9 o'clock this morning. Encamped about 150 yards from the river. A large encampment of Sioux Indians, in about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile of us, a great many of them visited us, begging for bread, meat and other things. They are entirely friendly. Distance 16 miles

June 6 (Thursday)

Passed an Indian Village this morning, consisting of about 85 wigwams or tents. Passed 3 graves, 2 made this year and 1 last year. Road tolerably good, apart of it was quite sandy. Benson, Porte, Hale & Co. passed us this evening. Encamped about 100 yards from the Platte. A small Indian village near us this evening. The Indians are great beggars. Grass good. Distance traveled 22 miles.

June 7 (Friday)

Passed Court House Rock this morning about 11 o'clock. It is about five miles off the road, to our left. At a distance it resembles a circular wall, rising some 250 or 300 feet above its base. 150 or 200 feet above its base it draws in suddenly, some 10 or 15 feet, nearly at right angles to the wall below making a flat surface of some 10 or 15 feet, which makes a very nice promenade; it then rises perpendicularly again several feet, and then makes another offset, and then rises perpendicularly again, and then another offset, it is very narrow on its summit, not being over 3 feet wide at the narrowest place. On this Rock (or rather it is a bank of sand, spap stone and limestone) are inscribed hundreds if not thousands of names. Mine is inscribed upon its very summit. This is a great natural curiosity. About 10 or 12 miles further on from this great natural curiosity is another called the Chimney Rock. It is about 2 miles from the road, to the left. It takes its name from its resemblance to a chimney. At a distance of 8 or 10 miles it resembles a stack of hemp, capped off nicely, more than anything else that I can compare it to. At a distance of 4 or 5 miles, it more nearly resembles a large dome, with a spire in its center. Under 2 miles it resembles a chimney rising out of the center of the mass. This rock, or mass or rocks, will measure 300 yards in diameter. At the top of the chimney it is some 15 or 20 feet in diameter. Where the chimney commences, it is some 30 or 40 feet in diameter. The chimney is in the form of an oblong square. This rock also, has many hundreds if not thousands of names inscribed upon it. I did not ascend to the top of this rock, because it was much more difficult and dangerous to do so than Court House Rock. I put my name some 200 feet or more above the base of the rock. This rock I think must be at least 300 feet high. The scenery in the bluffs, along ~~our~~ road today has been exceedingly grand and picturesque. Passed 2 graves both made last year. Road good. Grass good and abundant. Encamped about 300 yards from the river. Distance 25 miles.

June 8 (Saturday)

The scenery in the bluffs today was grand and magnificent. Many places had a considerable resemblance to a City. The mass of rocks representing the houses and those towering far above the mass, resembled churches with their domes and spires. We left the river this morning bearing to the south so as to pass around Scott's Bluffs. We pitched our camp this evening near those

Bluffs. Had no water for our stock. Passed 1 grave made last year. Road good. Grass good. Another storm this evening. Maring Vivion went ahead of the teams and got lost from them and had to lie out all night. Several of the boys were out until after night. Distance 18 miles.

June 9 (Sunday)

Passed a blacksmith shop 5 miles this side Scott's Bluffs. Six graves at this place, 4 made last year and 2 this year. This shop was conducted by a Frenchman, who lived with the Indians and had one or two for wives. There is also a trading post at this place. Road good. Grass good. Encamped on Horse Creek about 13 miles this side the shop and about a mile above the ford. Distance 18 miles.

June 10 (Monday)

Laved by today. I acted the part of a washerwoman today again. Whether it was done better, than I did before I will not say, but it answers the purpose very well, out here in the wilderness among the Indians. I also darned my socks. Commenced writing my fourth letter to my wife.

June 11 (Tuesday)

Passed a trading post this morning, 20 miles this side of Fort Laramie. The houses were built of dobe. Buffalo gnats very bad today. Encamped in the Platte Bottom about 600 yards from the river. Road pretty good. Grass tolerable good. Distance traveled 20 miles.

June 12 (Wednesday)

Crossed the Laramie River about 3 o'clock this evening. It was very deep fording, coming very near swimming and wagons and teams. This stream is some 20 or 30 miles wide, is muddy and has a very rapid current, running at the rate of 5 or 6 miles an hour. Fort Laramie is situated about a mile above the ford, immediately on the banks of the river, on the west side. The ford is about a quarter of a mile above the mouth of the river. The prickly pear or cactus, grows very abundantly in this section of country. We found it a difficult matter to find a place large enough to spread our bed without spreading it on some of them, thus difficult to stretch our tent. I noticed at least three varieties today; one being yellow, one spale red or pink and the other a deep rich red flower. The latter grows in the form of a cone the flower standing on top. We have seen a great many beautiful flowers in the last week or ten days. We had a storm last night, with rain and hail. Encamped about 2 miles west of the fort, and about 3/4 miles from the North Platte. Roads tolerably good. Grass first rate and has been every since we left the river, some 6 miles back. Distance traveled about 23 miles.

June 13 (Thursday)

Ed Creel went back to the fort today, to take some letters. On his

way back he met Roslton, Bradley & Co. I was a little upset today being affected with a diarrhoea. Martin Vivion also was unwell with the same complaint, got worse at night while standing guard, thought he had the cholera and was going to die. Road had been good today. Had to descend one or two steep hills. Grass has been fine all along our road today. We encamped in the head of a hollow about one mile from which was a very large warm water spring. It is about 300 yards to the right of the road. Distance traveled 12 miles.

June 14 (Friday)

Came to the Artemisia or wild sage today in great abundance. This is a shrub and grows from one to two, three or four feet in height. Passed 2 graves, both made last year. I was called to see a sick man today from Arkansas. His disease was dysentery. Encamped on a branch near a spring, it being a little to our right. Roads only tolerable good, some steep hills and deep hollows, to go up and down. Occasionally we would have very high bluffs on each side of the road. Grass very poor. Distance traveled 23 miles.

June 15 (Saturday)

Had a stampede today, occasioned by the running away of a horse. One of these large rabbits started up near the road and several of the boys started in pursuit of it. One of the boys was thrown and his horse ran along the line of wagons and teams, causing several of them to stampede. They did not run far until they stopped. No damage done. We got fairly well into the spurs of the Rocky Mountains today. Passed several very lofty peaks. One several hundred feet high, whose summit was covered with snow. This is called Laramie Peak of the Black Hills. Crossed 2 or 3 creeks. Passed 2 graves, one made last year and one this year. Roads very hilly and rocky, we had to ascend and descend many steep hills. The little pebbles were very sharp and would cut a wagon tyre a fourth or third into it. In descending one hills, they wore the cattles feet very much and made some of them lame. Grass scarce along our road today. Encamped on the La Bonte River about 300 yards below the ford. Distance 23 miles.

June 16 (Sunday)

Passed the Red Hills and a bed of white carbonaceous earth that resembles chalk. Passed several small creeks or branches; most of them were dry. We passed 2 or 3 springs also. Came into the cricket region today. The earth in many places seemed to be almost entirely covered with them. They were very large fat sleek looking critters. Roads very rough, hills high and deep hollows were numerous. Encamped in the prairie one mile west of the Lassele Creek. Distance 20 miles.

June 17 (Monday)

Crossed several small creeks today. The names I do not remember, except Deer Creek, this we crossed about 5 miles before we struck the Platte again. I saw some horn toads today. Their shape is between that of a lizzard and a frog, having the tail and legs of the former the body and head of the latter. They are of an ash color, with spots here and there over their

bodies of a darker color than their general color. We also saw some juniper a shrub growing in the mountains, and resembling the cedar a good deal. Encamped on the side of a hill about 3/4 of mile from the river. Road hilly and crooked. Grass tolerably good. Distance 22 miles. It has been cold enough all day for an overcoat.

June 18 (Tuesday)

Rolston, Bradley & Co. came up with us today. They are all well. It snowed about 2 inches last night. When we got up we found it about 1 inch deep; our tent cloth was completely covered with it, it remained on the high hills or mountains on our left nearly all day. B. F. Gordon and myself thought we would go out into the hills and hunt awhile, but as we drew near to them the atmosphere became so disagreeably cold that we gave up our hunt, notwithstanding that we had our overcoats on. Roads tolerably good, some short steep hollows. Grass pretty good. Encamped on the banks of the Platte. Distance traveled 16 miles.

June 19 (Wednesday)

Crossed the North Platte 9 miles from where we encamped last night. There are 5 ferry boats at this crossing, one belonging to the Mormons, and others belonged to two individuals of Boone County, Missouri. They crossed from 250 to 300 wagons per day, charging at the rate of \$5 each. We swam most of our cattle and horses across. Passed 2 graves, both made last year. Road good except a few little branches, which were very bad. Martin Vivion's wagon turned over in crossing one of these little branches, but did not injure anything seriously, got some things wet. Grass tolerably good. Encamped on a very flat smooth piece of ground about 3 miles beyond the crossing of the Platte. Distance 12 miles.

June 20 (Thursday)

Came to alkaline water today, saw several dead oxen killed by drinking it. Saw a mountain to our right covered with snow. Our old steer Dick, gave out some 3 miles this side our encampment and we had to leave him. Passed a very strong sulphur spring this evening about 2 miles from the Willow Springs. It is the strongest sulphur water I ever tasted. Road not very good. Grass poor. Encamped at Willow Springs. Distance traveled 23 miles.

June 21 (Friday)

Passed several saleratus lakes today, some four or five miles this side our encampment. In many places the surface of the earth was covered with this deposit, to the depth of one or two inches. Our steer John gave out, but we made out to get him into camp after having rested awhile he recruited

and was able to travel, when we left this camp. Roads heavy and sandy. Encamped in the bottoms of the Sweet Water about 2 miles this side of Independence Rock. Grass good where we are encamped. Distance traveled 19 miles.

June 22 (Saturday)

Layed by today. Several of us went into the mountains hunting. Smith killed an antelope. Several others got shots, but did not kill anything. I shot at a antelope but did not kill it. I saw a great many curiosities in the mountains, such as curiously formed rocks, caverns and I also quite a variety of pretty flowers. Mr. Vivion lost a yoke of oxen, and has not found them yet. It is supposed that they are on their way to California.

June 23 (Sunday)

Came to Independence Rock soon after starting. Greel was driving and turned our wagon over, in a mud hole, right at the east end of the rock. All hands had to help get it out. A number of things fell out in the mud. I was greatly disappointed in not getting to go on to this rock and around it. My disappointment was occasioned by the wagon turning over, which threw us considerably behind. There are a great many names inscribed upon this rock. It is some four or five yards in length from east to west, and some 250 to 300 yards in width from north to south and about 75 to 100 feet in height. Five miles further on we came to the Devil's Gate. This is formed by the Sweet Water passing through a gap in the mountains. The River at this gap is about 50 feet wide and the walls of rock on each side something near 400 feet in height, being nearly perpendicular. It looked like a very convenient and suitable for a gate, but for some cause or other had not swung his gate. I was called to see a man with cholera today, do not know whether he recovered or died, as I had to leave him and saw him no more. Had a shower of rain this evening. Road tolerably good, very sandy in some places. Encamped on Sweet Water. Distance traveled 16 miles.

June 24 (Monday)

Sold our wagon today for \$3.75 and bought slighter one for \$7.50. Road very sandy and heavy. Had a shower of rain today which improved the roads some. Grass has been pretty good ever since we struck the sweet water. Frank Gordon is sick this evening with the diarrhoea. Distance traveled 17 miles.

June 25 (Tuesday)

We lost our white cow this morning. Saw several peaks of the Rocky Mountains yesterday and today covered with snow. Smith got into a set today about hitching one yoke of his and Barnett's cattle to our wagon, to help us across the river, and took his two yoke of cattle and made him a little cart and traveled by himself. Crossed the Sweet Water 4 times today, pretty deep fording at one or two places. Have seen a good deal of dead stock.

Horses and oxen since we crossed the North Platte and got into the alkaline region. Had a shower of rain this morning and one in the evening about the time we pitched our tents. Encamped about 2 or 3 miles on the west of the Sweet water. Grass only tolerable good. Had to carry our water with us to cook with.

June 26 (Wednesday)

Passed a good many dead horses and oxen today. Had a slight shower of rain this evening. Passed the Ice spring today. It is said in the Mormon Guide book, that ice may be found here at anytime by digging two feet deep. We did not try it, to see whether it was true or not, the water was quite cold. Came across a new variety of ground squirrel today, which resembles the large gray rat, except its tail which was covered with hair like the common gray squirrel. Encamped on Sweet Water. Grass good. Traveled 22 miles.

June 27 (Thursday)

Crossed several small streams, one called Strawberry and a branch of the Sweet Water, whose name I do not recollect. I got as much snow today as wanted, out of a snow bank about 3 feet deep. Saw several others, one or two of which were some 20 feet deep. Grass was growing within a few feet of the snow banks. We could see snow in almost all directions. Road hard and gravelly; but apart of it very hilly. We ascended a long steep hill, just after leaving the Sweet Water. Very little grass along our today and very little at our encampment. Passed a grave just this side of Willow Creek. It appears that the man got tired of living and cut his throat. A fight between 2 emigrants this evening. Encamped on the high prairie, about 1½ mile west of Willow Creek. Distance 20 miles.

June 28 (Friday)

Passed 2 graves, one a child died in 1847, the other man died in 1850. Johnson and Link each killed an antelope this evening and William Vivion killed a sage hen. Road good. Grass tolerably good. Encamped about 1/2 mile north of the road, on the Sweet Water, and about 1 1/2 or two miles this side the South Gap. Distance 11 miles.

June 29 (Saturday)

Layed by today. Several of us went hunting into the mountains to our right, being some 5 or 6 miles from our encampment. We killed 3 young antelopes and 2 sage hens; Johnson, Reiter and myself each killed an antelope, and Frank and Reiter each killed a sage hen. I crippled another antelope badly but did not get it. The sage hen is a large fowl between the size of a common hen and a turkey and have nice white meat. B. F. Gordon and Co. exchanged their wagon for a lighter one. Some of the boys washed their clothes today. I saw many curious and interesting things in the mountains. Mountain gooseberry just in bloom, some wild flowers, buffalo grass and so on.

June 30 (Sunday)

Passed the famous South Pass of the Rocky Mountains early this morning. It is said to be 20 miles wide, but I do not think it is so much. I think it is not more than 12 or 15 miles. No one ever suppose that they were on the summit of the Rocky Mountains. If they could be placed there without their knowledge, but suppose they were on a vast plain, between two spurs of the mountains. It resembles a good deal the flat ridges in our prairies, between the heads of two hollows. Some 8 or 10 miles to the right of the road were some tall peaks covered with snow. The Pacific Springs about 2 miles west of the Pass is a bold spring and the water very good. Here I mailed my 5th letter to my wife; paid 50 cents postage to have it brought back. Came to the forks of the road, one leading by Fort Bridger and Salt Lake and the other by the Soda Springs and Sublett Cut off. We took the right hand or Sublett Road. Roads for 15 or 16 miles west of Pacific Springs. Road hard and firm, but filled with small flinty pebbles. Plenty of wild sage today. Encamped on the Little Sandy about a mile below the ford. Grass scarce. Distance traveled 26 miles.

July 1 (Monday)

I was called to see a Mr. Elliot today who was very sick with diarrhoea, accompanied with a very high fever and involuntary discharges from the bowels. I do not know whether he got well or not as I had to leave him. I did not see him again. He was in company with John L. Mock and Marrs. Road the same character that it was yesterday. Encamped on Big Sandy, about 2 miles above the ford. Drove our stock some three miles above our camp to get grass, found it pretty good. Distance 10 miles.

July 2 (Tuesday)

Started about 1 o'clock this morning across the desert between Big Sandy and Green River. The first half or two thirds of this road is excellent, being level and firm. Stopped about daylight and ate a little snack and let our oxen rest a little. The remainder of the road to Green River is hilly and gravelly and sometimes rocky; and just before coming to the river we descended a long steep hill. We passed 8 dead oxen on the desert, besides several others that had given out. We struck the river at the upper ferry, where we found an excellent spring of very cold water, it was as cold as ice water, and it was the very thing that we wanted to cool our thirst, which was very great, having drank no water since the evening before, it being 11 o'clock when we got to the river. The distance across the desert is said to be 53 miles. There is no water from Big Sandy to Green River, but some grass on the first half of the road. The road near Green was very dusty, it being from 1 to 4 inches deep. The evening and night were cool and pleasant. Very little grass at our encampment. Drove our stock some distance down the river for grass.

July 3 (Wednesday)

Finished our journey across the desert, and crossed the river at the lower ferry late in the evening. Price of ferriage \$7.00 per wagon and \$1.50 per head for horses and mules. We swam most of our stock over. Frank Gordon swam his horse across. Green River at this crossing is about 200 yards wide and the current is very swift--water muddy. Big Sandy and little Sandy are of the same character; the former some 40 or 50 yards wide and the latter some 15 or 20 yards wide. Encamped on the bank of the river.

July 4 (Thursday)

Swam our cattle and horses across the river this morning, had great difficulty in getting them to take water. Frank Gordon, Rust and Wetcherton mounted a horse each and drove them into the water and attempted to follow on their horses, but had to abandon them before they got across on the account of the current being so swift. Apart of our road was level and good but the rest mountainous and very crooked. Passed 5 or 6 dead oxen, three graves, 1 made in 1847, one in 1849 and 1 in 1850. We encamped on a creek do not recollect the name, it was about 25 or 30 feet wide and about 2½ feet deep, rapid current and somewhat turbid. Celebrated the day in the evening by firing several rounds. Grass very fine and abundant. I was sick today and took a dose of medicine at night. Distance traveled 8 miles.

July 5 (Friday)

Layed by today and rested and grazed our stock. My medicine operated finally and I feel much better this evening. Nothing occurred worthy of note today.

July 6 (Saturday)

We had snow on all sides of us today. I went to one bank about a quarter of a mile from the road and got a bucket full. The snow was 10 feet deep. The country today has more the appearance some soil mixed with the sand, then it has for several hundred miles back, but it still is very poor and barren. M. G. Frizell was taken sick and had to take medicine. Passed 2 graves, one made in 1849 and 1 made in 1850. The first was that of Joseph Merrill of Lexington, Mo. Road mountainous and crooked. Grass tolerably good. Encamped on a branch in the mountains. Traveled 18 miles.

July 7 (Sunday)

Frizell being very sick today, we only traveled half the day. Passed 10 dead oxen. Had a light shower of rain yesterday and considerable frost this morning. Gathered a mess of strawberries this evening, the first that we have had since we started. Road mountainous and crooked. Encamped about a mile and a half below the ford of the creek. (Ham's Fork of Bear River) where we had very fine grass. This stream is about 40 feet wide, and $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 feet deep--rapid current--water slightly muddy. Distance traveled 10 miles.

July 8 (Monday)

Ascended a high mountain immediately after starting. Was called to see a man who had shot himself through the right breast accidentally. He attempted to take his gun out of his wagon; the muzzle being toward him, the ramrod being in the gun, hit hammer, caught or stuck something and went off. The ramrod and ball passing through the right breast. He was almost in a pulseless condition when I first saw him and the wound still bleeding. Dr. Canfield of Cincinnati came along about this time and we dressed his wounds and left him, with very little hopes of his recovery. Passed 24 dead cattle, 2 mules, one horse. Passed 2 graves, one made in 1848, and one in 1849. I was called to see four sick men in one company from Clay County, Mo. One of them had cholera severely. Two others had diarrhoea and the other had elongation and tumefaction of the uvula. I excised a portion of it. They had eaten pretty freely of some plum pudding the night before. I staid with them some two hours before I left them. I had but slight hopes of the man who had cholera from the fact of his stomach being so irritable that he could retain nothing on it. After trying a great many remedies all to no purpose, I gave him a dose of calomel dry by placing it on the back part of his tongue and then gave him a sup of water. He retained it as long as I staid with him. Encamped in the bottom near Thomas Fork of Bear River. Road very mountainous. Traveled over several very high mountains. Grass good. Distance 19 miles.

July 9 (Tuesday)

I was not well today and after the middle of the day I got into Mr. Fletchers wagon, and rode in that till night. Ours was not fixed for lying down in. Today has been the only time that I have been so sick, that I had to take to the wagon to ride in. Before I got into the wagon we had passed 14 dead cattle, one grave made in 1848. Road level and very good except some crossings of creeks, it being down the Bear River Bottom. Encamped about

2 miles north of the ford of the creek. I do not its name. It is about 20 feet wide and from 2 to 2½ feet deep. Distance traveled 18 miles.

July 10 (Wednesday)

I was still sick today, but better than I was yesterday. Did not keep account of the dead cattle and horses, as I was sick. Mr. Fletcher lost one of his wheel steers. Encamped on a branch of Bear River. Road mountainous. Passed two graves both made this year. Grass very good. Distance 20 miles.

July 11 (Thursday)

Layed by and rested our stock and selves.

July 12 (Friday)

I was not well enough to ride horse back and therefore have not as much to note as otherwise would have had. Plenty of wild flax andrye., all along the valley of this river. Road good; running mostly along the valley of Bear River. Grass first rate along this river. Encamped about 300 yards from the river and ½ mile from the road. Distance traveled 22 miles.

July 13 (Saturday)

Passed the Soda Springs or Beer Springs today. For some distance before we got to these springs, the country on our right had very much the appearance of an old peach orchard. I could hardly persuade myself that it was not one. If it had been in a civilized country, I should have been certain that it was an old orchard. These springs are great curiosities; the water is strongly impregnated with carbonic acid gas. One of these springs issues forth out of the top of a conical rock about 3 feet in diameter at its base and about 2½ feet in height. It tapers gradually from the base to the top, being very small at the top. There is a continual ebullition gain on at the top of this rock. The stream is very small. Another one of these springs is close to the ford of a creek, that puts into Bear River and but a few feet from the road. Out of this spring I took my first drink of soda water, being a little feverish, I relished it very much. It was very grateful to my parched mouth and tongue. This creek is very clear and full of long moss or grass. It did not appear to be more than 6 or 8 inches deep, when it would be 2 or 3 feet deep. A few hundred yards further on we came to 3 other springs of the same kind. At these springs was a trading post. A few hundred yards further on was the Great Steamboat Springs. It was a little off the road, and I not knowing anything of it until I passed, and I did not see it. I suppose it is the same kind of water of the soda springs. It is said that the water comes out in jets like the puffing of a steamboat, hence its name. Some 3 or 4 miles beyond the Soda Springs the road forks, one (the right going to Fort Hall to Oregon, the (left) called the Headspeth Cut Off, goes across the mountains to the Humbolt River. We left Bear River just at the forks of the road. The rocks and earth just beyond the forks, had every appearance

of being of volcanic origin; these deep and dark chasms between these volcanic rocks. Encamped in the mountains on a little branch $1\frac{1}{2}$ or 2 miles from the road to the left. Road level and good except the last 3 or 4 miles, which was mountainous. Grass good Distance 30 miles.

July 14 (Sunday)

Did not start until after dinner. Had some of the worst roads today, that we have had since we left home. It being very mountainous, rugged and dusty. Grass good all along our road today and an abundance of fine water. Passed one grave made in 1850, the man came to his death by being shot, by one of his company. Encamped in the prairie about a mile from Raft River. Thunder storm this evening, rained but little. Distance 10 miles.

July 15 (Monday)

Passed 2 graves, one made in 1849 and the other in 1850. Johnson and Link had a fight this evening. It was occasioned about driving the oxen. No serious damage done, a few hairs plucked, and a few scratches made was the extent of the injuries. We crossed a beautiful clear stream of water this evening about 6 miles west of our encampment. All the streams in the mountains are pretty much of the same character. Roads tolerably good, somewhat mountainous and very dusty. Encamped on a little branch in the mountains, near a first rate spring. Distance traveled 16 miles.

July 16 (Tuesday)

Descended one of the steepest, rockiest and dustiest mountains that we have passed since we have entered the mountainous region. The dust must have been from 4 to 6 inches in depth. We had to lock 2 wheels of our wagons, and then could hardly keep from running over the oxen. Passed a very fine large spring, about noon today, some half mile to the right of the road and above the ford of the creek. Passed 2 graves, both made in 1850. Encamped near the foot of a very steep rugged mountain. Had good grass at our encampment, but no water. Road hilly in the morning and mountainous in the evening. Distance traveled 25 miles.

July 17 (Wednesday)

Passed a good spring about 2 o'clock this evening and another late in the evening, but it did not afford a sufficiency of water for our stock, a weak stream. Passed one grave made in 1850. Road tolerably good. Encamped in a narrow deep hollow up which the road passed. Had plenty of grass, but no water. The grass that grew upon the sides of the mountains was in bunches generally and afforded very good pasturage for our stock. Distance traveled 25 miles.

July 18 (Thursday)

Came to a fine spring about 2 miles from our encampment. Descended

a long hollow and encamped in a valley on one of the branches of Raft River, about 200 yards from the creek, and to the right of the road. Weather warm and sultry, being surrounded by mountains except in the western direction. Road good. Grass excellent. Distance traveled 12 miles.

July 19 (Friday)

Came to the junction of the Fort Hall and Headspeth roads late this evening. The latter is said to be 30 or 40 miles nearer than the former. Had a slight shower of rain about 2 o'clock this evening. Encamped on one of the branches of Raft River. Road level and good. Grass good. Distance traveled 25 miles.

July 20 (Saturday)

Traveled about 22 miles, and encamped in a small valley in the mountains, near the head of Raft River. Near our encampment, was a place called Rock City, it resembling a city in the arrangement and appearance of its rocks. Road good. Grass good.

July 21 (Sunday)

Stopped at noon, on Steep Creek and grazed our stock. Road this morning good, in the evening very mountainous and rough. Encamped on Goose Creek where the road first strikes it. Grass tolerably good. Distance traveled 20 miles. Passed one grave made in 1850.

July 22 (Monday)

Johnson was taken sick yesterday, is quite sick this morning. Frizell is also sick, has been sick ever since the 6th inst; got much better but has relapsed. We passed the junction of the Fort Hall and Salt Lake roads yesterday morning about 5 miles west of our encampment, the night before. Encamped on Goose Creek just where the road leaves it. Road good. Grass good. Distance 18 miles.

July 23 (Tuesday)

Entered Thousand Spring Valley this evening and encamped in the same, some 5 or 6 miles from where we first struck it. This valley certainly has the wrong name instead Thousand Springs Valley, it should be the Valley almost destitute of springs, at least so far as my observation extended. Road good. Grass scarce. Water and wood scarce. Distance traveled 22 miles.

July 24 (Wednesday)

Traveled about 18 miles down Thousand Spring Valley, and encamped in the same, on Cold Water Creek. Road very good, but very dusty. Had very good at our encampment this evening. I killed a sage hen this evening.

July 25 (Thursday)

Passed some large hot springs this morning about 10 o'clock. These springs are so hot that you cannot bear your hand in them, the water is clear and looks like it would be very cooling to ones thirst, until that unerring monitor experience tells you that it is not drinkable at all. I think the water is sufficiently hot to cook an egg in 20 or 30 minutes. About 200 yards beyond these springs (3 or 4 in number) is a fine large cold water spring, which affords fine drinking water. It appears so strange to see hot and cold springs so near to each other. There are a great many speculations concerning the cause, of the heat of these springs. Some accounting for it upon the theory of volcanic heat, supposing that the water passed over rocks that are kept constantly hot by volcanic fire. Others accounting for it upon chemical principles, such for example as the union of some of the strong acids with water. It is well known that sulphuric acid and water combined in certain proportions, produces a heat so great, that you cannot bear your hand in it. The heat of these springs is about the heat produced by the union of water and sulphuric acid. I think the chemical theory the most plausible. There is no appearance of volcanoes near these springs. We encamped in Canon Creek, near a fine spring. Road good but plenty of dust. Grass good, water tolerably good. Distance traveled 28 miles.

July 26 (Friday)

Passed one grave made in 1850. Encamped in a valley of Canon Creek, about half a mile to the right of the road, and about 300 yards below a good spring. Road tolerably good. Grass the same. G. W. Post killed a young rabbit this evening which we had served up for supper. It was very fine indeed and made us wish that he or some of the rest of us could kill one every evening. Had a pretty good shower of rain this evening, which laid the dust for awhile, and made traveling much more agreeable. We have been annoyed with the dust very much for several days. Distance traveled 10 miles.

July 27 (Saturday)

Crossed Canon Creek this morning; stopped at noon and grazed our stock on the same creek. The grazing here was very fine. Mr. Post swapped horses at this place with an Indian, got a fine gray pony, made a very good swap. Struck the Humbolt River today, and crossed it where the road first struck it. Here it is about 40 feet wide and about 2½ feet deep. We encamped on this river a few below where we crossed it. G. B. Gordon and mess had to stop here on account of Frizell's being so sick. Road good being mostly level, but very dusty. Grass good at our encampment. Distance 24 miles.

July 28 (Sunday)

Passed 3 graves today, made in 1850, and the other 2 made in 1849. The occupant of the first one was said to have been killed by an Indian. Was shot while standing guard, and died from the affects of the wound 4 or 5 days afterwards. Encamped on the Humbolt. Roads good, running down the valley

of the Humboldt. The valley along here is from 100 to 300 yards wide. Our road was a little sandy this evening. Grass good on the opposite side of the river from our encampment. We had to drive our stock across to the grass. It was deep fording. Frizell was delirious all night last night, and the wandering of his mind called for many of his friends to administer to his wants. I got up in the middle of the night and went to him, but I could do nothing for him. Oh what feelings of sorrow one experiences when they witness the agonies of death of a friend in this wilderness country, where mother, nor sister, nor wife can sooth and comfort the dying with their kind offices, while crossing the dark valley of the Jordan of death. May it never be my lot to witness similar scenes again. How dark and gloomy is the thought of entering the grave, when surrounded by parents and friends, but oh how much more gloomy when far away from home and family and friends. I learned from L. B. Gordon that he died the day we left or the day after. Distance traveled 22 miles.

July 29 (Monday)

There are a great many miry sloughe along the river today. Crossed a branch of the Humboldt, yesterday evening. Road continues down the Humboldt and is good. Grass good on the opposite side of the river from our camp. We had to drive our stock across to the grass. Had plenty of dust again today. Distance 22 miles.

July 30 (Tuesday)

The bottoms of the river today are very narrow indeed in many places there are no bottoms at all, the hills running up to the river, compelling us to cross the river 4 times, 3 times in a few hundred yards. Fords all deep, we had to raise our wagon beds, by putting blocks under them, some 10 inches to keep the water out of them. The second crossing was very bad getting into the river. The hills or bluffs on each side of the river were very high. We crossed another branch of the Humboldt, passed this, just previous to camping. Distance traveled 16 miles.

July 31 (Wednesday)

Road left the river about one mile from this side our encampment taking over the hills and mountains for a distance of 18 or 19 miles. The road today has been very mountainous and rough and dusty enough for any use. You could hardly tell at night whether the drivers were black or red they were in fact none of those colors but the color of the dust. We struck camp about 2 miles from where we emerged from the mountains, on the banks of the Humboldt. Crossed the river just before camping. Grass good on the opposite side of the river. Had to drive our stock over to it again. The last crossing of the river was good. Distance traveled 22 miles.

August 1 (Thursday)

Ed Creel's mare ran off last night, but he found her again this

morning. The road forked just before crossing the river, the right hand going over the hills and mountains. I think it the nearest perhaps, the best route; at least I think it is better supplied with water. We encamped about 200 yards from the river to the right of the road. Road good except for the dust. Continues down the river still. Grass first rate. Distance traveled 12 miles.

August 2 (Friday)

The road passed over alkaline earth today. It made a great bend to the North east. Encamped about 200 yards from the bank of the river. Grass good. Road good but awfully dusty. Distance traveled 28 miles.

August 3 (Saturday)

Road continues on pretty much the same kind of earth, that it passed over yesterday. Rust and myself took up a fine cow that had given out and been left by emigrants ahead of us. We think if we can get her into California, that she will bring us from \$150 to \$200. Encamped about 1 mile to the right of the road, on a slough and $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 miles from the river. Grass first rate. Water very indifferent and scarce at that. Road very good, except for the dust which was almost intolerable. Since we entered this alkaline earth the dust has been so deep, that when stirred up by the feet of our oxen such a cloud of dust would rise that the driver frequently could not see more than 2 yoke of oxen or cattle. It was almost suffocating both to the oxen and driver. Distance traveled 18 miles.

August 4 (Sunday)

Came to a new variety of fruit today, it grew on a shrub from 10 to 15 feet in height. The fruit was a small berry about the size of a cranberry, some red and some yellow; was of a very agreeable subacid flavor. Would make most excellent tarts. The leaf of the tree was an oblong oval, small and smooth, dark green on the upper and an ash color on the underside of the leaf. Passed one grave made in 1850. It was the grave of my highly esteemed friend, neighbor and former pupil Russel L. Bradley, who died on the 29th of July. What strange feelings came over me when we came to this grave, none can know, but those that have experienced similar ones. To think that one whom I had known so long and so intimately and had passed so many pleasant hours with, was deposited in the cold and silent grave in this lonely desolate wilderness in a far distant land, where in all human probability, his mother and father, brothers and sisters would never even behold the lonely spot where their dear son and brother was laid, nor have the poor consolation of shedding a tear over the grave of the dear departed one. I never until now thought that I should care where I died, provided only I was ready and prepared to die. But seeing the grave of this friend, produced a complete revolution in my feelings. The thoughts of dying far, far away from family and friends and in a dreary and desolate wilderness, where my relatives and friends would not even have the privilege of even beholding my grave. I could not contemplate the thought, without the tears stealing

down my cheeks. From that time forth, I said to myself, when I die, let me die at home, or at least in a civilized country and among my friends. Saw some more horned frogs today. Encamped in the valley of the Humboldt some 3/4 mile from the river and 1/2 mile from the road. Road generally good, passing over a whitish ash colored looking earth. Dust exceedingly annoying and suffocative. Grass very tolerably good, being the coarse wild rye or wheat. Distance traveled 18 miles.

August 5 (Monday)

Left the river soon after starting this morning and passed over 2 high rugged mountains. There was a ferry across the river just where we saw it, and the ferry man tried very hard to get us to cross at it; but we thought he was so exceedingly anxious that one thought perhaps, that it was altogether self interest that prompted him to be so urgent, so we took over the mountains and did not cross at his ferry. Only traveled half the day and encamped on the river. Grass good. Road good except the dust and the two mountains that we passed over. Reiter killed an antelope this evening. Frank Gordon caught six young ducks, of which we made a pot pie. Passed 2 graves, both made this year, one man drowned. Distance 8 miles.

August 6 (Tuesday)

Traveled about 24 miles and encamped on a slough about 1/2 mile from the river. Had very bad water, had to use water out of the slough, which was covered with a slimy looking moss. Passed one grave made in 1850. Had to mow grass for our cattle and horses at noon today on the account of the sloughs being so miry. The sloughs and swamps have been very plentiful, for the last few days and we have had to be cautious about letting our stock go into them on account of their miry condition. We had another fine mess of frogs this morning for breakfast. The weather for several days past has been very heavy, resembling very much our Indian summer. Grass tolerably good at our encampment. Road generally good, apart of it was deep sand, very heavy pulling. Dust very deep and disagreeable.

August 7 (Wednesday)

Road for some 2 or 10 miles this morning very sandy and heavy pulling. Traveled about 18 miles and encamped on a slough about a mile from the river, and about 100 yards from the road. Grass tolerably good. Here we cut grass for our stock tomorrow, as we have understood, that there is no grass for 20 miles. Road in the morning sandy and hard pulling, but in the evening very good. Water about like we had last night, being obtained from a slough.

August 8 (Thursday)

We crossed the river today had to cross our plunder over in a wagon bed, which took us about four hours. We got all over safely and without damage. Had to swim our stock over. Pulled the wagon and other things over with a rope. I think we would have done better to have traveled down the river on the east side some 20 or 30 miles further before crossing, perhaps even further than that. Some continued down on this side to the Big Desert.

Grass scarce and dried up at that, being the wild oat species. Road only tolerably good, the first few miles of the road were terribly sandy and heavy, the remainder good except the dust which was deep. Distance traveled 12 miles.

August 9 (Friday)

Traveled an hour or two by sun, then stopped and rested our stock, but a little grass for them, it was not very good and they ate but little of it. Seemed to be so thirsty that they could not eat. Fitched up again about dark and traveled all night. Road in the morning somewhat sandy, in the evening very good except the dust. Passed one grave made in 1850. Traveled about 32 miles before encamping, making some 18 miles in daylight and the balance during the night and next day. We encamped on a very high bank of the river; bottoms very narrow and but little grass in them, plenty of young willows. Here we think the Indians made an attempt to steal our horses. One swam across from the opposite side of the river and no doubt intended to take a horse or two, but was discovered before he got his booty, and had to leave in quick time; there were some 10 to 20 Indians together. Here we left our wagon, put our load into Mr. Fletcher's wagon and doubled our team. We got to this encampment about 10 o'clock a.m. The 10 inst. Martin Vivion stopped last night, because he thought his cattle could not stand it, we traveled on and left him. Johnson and Link also left him. Two men that he was taking out to work for him on the shares. I would here take time or occasion to say that the old saying "That niger will run away, and white man is very uncertain" has been verified, innumerable instances since this immigration started across the plains. My advice to those who might have it in their minds to come across the plains in search of the Eldorado of the Pacific not to outfit anyone on the shares, there is too much uncertainty in it. When you get nearly to California you have to be very gentle with them, even to keep them with you until you reach into the gold region, if you do not do just as they want you to do, they will leave you to get along the best way that you can, and you may whistle for your outfit, that you have finished them. Man knows but little of man till he has tried him.

August 10 (Saturday)

Stayed by half the day Saturday. Started in the evening and traveled all night and until next morning 10 o'clock, then stopped and rested our stock, then started again and traveled about 5 miles, and encamped on a slough of the river. Grass at our camp plentiful but not very good for stock. Road good except for the dust and a few sandy places. For the last 60 or 70 miles grass has exceedingly scarce, there being none near the road, and very little in the river bottoms, in fact the whole country is nearly entirely destitute of grass and other vegetation except the artemisia or wild sage. For the last 50 miles back we have passed a great many dead horses and cattle, and for the last 8 or 10 miles the road has been literally lined with them; the principal part of the dead stock is horses, some oxen and mules. We passed a very large sulphur spring, some 6 or 7 miles from where we camped. Our stock as well as ourselves were suffering very much for water; when we came to this fine looking spring, both men and animals rushed to it, with the expectation of quenching our thirst. But we were disappointed, neither man nor beast could drink the water, on account of its disagreeable taste and odor. Our steer Brady gave out just after leaving this spring. Ed Greel went back in the evening, to try to bring him up, but could not find him. My mare

took sick this evening and vomited freely, thereby proving a certain theory of physiologist to wit: that a horse, owing to the structure of the stomach could not vomit, to be erroneous. I saw both horses and mules vomit several times. What was the cause of this vomiting I could not tell but am inclined to the opinion that it is produced by something they eat and not anything that they drink. Whole distance traveled 35 miles.

August 12 (Monday)

Traveled about 5 miles and encamped on the slough of the river, or I might say apart of the main river, for the river spreads out here over a large bottom, with deep and shallow places. We had to drive our stock over this slough to grass, which is first rate and very abundant. But in order for the stock to get it they had to wade in water knee deep frequently and sometimes deeper. This is the Great Meadow. Here we cut grass for our stock to last us across the Great Desert. We had to wade in water about half leg deep to get at the grass, after we had mowed it, we then had to carry it on our backs for more than a quarter of a mile, to the slough or that part of the river upon which we were encamped, then hitch ropes to it, draw it over and spread it out to dry before we were ready for traveling again. Those who are very anxious to see the elephant, can get a pretty fair view of him at this place, they can at least see 2/3 of the monster.

The Humboldt at this place, spreads out over the bottoms and forms a marshy wet valley. The water at this time is from six inches to two or three inches deep all over the bottom. This bottom or meadow is quite extensive, being from 2 to 3 miles wide, and I don't know how long. We sometimes speak of harvesting and breaking hemp, as hard work, but these are luxuries of labor compared with haymaking in water half leg deep, then carrying it a quarter a mile on your back, through water as deep as where you cut it, or to hunting in grass 6 to 10 feet high, and in water from 1 to 4 feet deep. Here we cooked enough vittals to last us across the desert which is said to be 65 or 70 miles from here.

August 13 (Tuesday)

We did not travel any today. We finished making hay today and will be ready to take up our line of march in the morning. I saw my friend and medical class-mate W. B. Wallace of Cooper County, Mo. who is encamped close to us. There are a great number of wagons encamped at this place, all preparing to cross the Great Desert. My old mare is still sick and has vomited several times since we stopped at this place. I fear I shall not be able to get her across the desert, any time that she eats any hay that we have cut it makes her vomit; she has become very sick.

August 14 (Wednesday)

Left the Great Meadow this morning about 9 o'clock. Passed over some bottom land which has been covered thickly with large reed grass, which had been set on fire, the earth being very dry and a great many of the

old grass roots being just under the ground, they caught fire and burnt down for some 6 inches or more, the whole earth for some considerable distance seemed to be burnt up, and there was nothing left but a loose dusty ashy looking substance. We came to what usually known as the sink of the Humboldt some 15 miles from the Great Meadow. It has very much the appearance of a lake. We traveled along the margin of this lake for some 6 or 8 miles, then encamped about 1 mile from its outlet as it is generally called the slough whole distance 28 or 30 miles. The river spreads out here over its bottom or valley and forms this lake, that we have spoken of above. It is some 2 to 4 miles wide and 8 or 10 in length. The river leads off from this lake, through the hills, then expands or spreads out to form another lake off to the right of the road, which is not so extensive as the first. In this last lake the waters of the Humboldt finally sink or evaporate. For a distance of some 20 or 30 miles above the Great Meadow down to it, is a nasty stinking place, accasioned by the great amount of dead stock along the road.

August 15 (Thursday)

We started across the great desert this morning about 8 o'clock. The morning was cooler than it had been for several days and considerably cloudy. It is the custom of most emigrants not to start across the desert until late in the evening and then travel all night, but the weather being cloudy and cool we thought it best to start across in the early part of the day so we started as above stated. We traveled on until about dark when we stopped and fed our stock, and took a little refreshment for ourselves. After resting an hour or two, we hitched up and started again, and continued our journey all night and until about 10 o'clock the next day. When we came to Carson River. We had to leave one of our wagons on the desert, some 8 miles from Carson River. We hitched both teams to one wagon and went through with that, rested our teams, then went back after the other. Frank Gordon, Wm. Barnett remained with the wagon until we got back. We lost 5 head of cattle crossing the desert. Fletcher lost 3 and Frank Creel and myself lost two. The two that we lost were Old Jo and Cole. The first 30 or 35 miles of this road is a very good road, there being but little sand and not a great deal of dust. A part of this road is equal to any natural road in the world. I suppose as it is level, smooth, and hard, the wagon wheels scarcely leaving a track. The whole road from the sink of the Humboldt to Carson River is over a level plain. The last 10 or 15 miles is very deep sand and most trying upon teams of any other part of the road, that we have yet traveled from Dover. The teams when they arrive at this part of the road are generally very much fatigued and or not able to make more than a mile and a half or 2 miles per hour. It is truly distressing to see the great numbers of dead and dying stock along the road, and the great destruction of property. The road is almost literally lined with dead stock and with wagons, carriages, harness, ox-yokes, and bows, water kegs, gin barrels, stoves and old clothes. The traveler is seldom out of the offensive odor of dead animals. About where we struck the deep sand was a drinking establishment, fixed up in a wagon. Now reader what do you think these men had for sale? King Alcohol, No, nor none of his subjects. What then? You are reading to inquire. Water; pure and unduluted water; at least it was as pure as that country would afford.

I suspect you are now ready to exclaim, what, sell water? Yes reader they sold water at \$1.00 per gallon and those who purchased it, spent their money to a better advantage and more profit to their bodies, than if they had spent it for whiskey or brandy. We passed several of these establishments before we got across the desert. They charged in proportion to the distance they had hauled their water, for example they charged \$1.00 per gallon when they hauled it ten miles, 80 cents when they hauled it 8 miles and so on. One man had a kind of grocery and eating establishment, charging \$1.50 apiece for pies of ordinary size. Where we struck Carson River is quite a town of tents, wagons, shanties and so on.

The price of a meal of victuals is \$2.50 and take such as you can get. But if you call for such as you want, you have to pay \$5.00. From here we traveled 3 or 4 miles up the river and encamped on the river. Grass tolerably good on the opposite side of the river. Carson River is some 20 or 25 yards wide where we struck it. Distance traveled 45 or 50 miles.

August 17 (Saturday)

We moved up the river about 5 miles and encamped on the bank of the same under a large cotton wood tree. This is the most pleasant encampment we have had since we left the Blue and also the most convenient. We have seen no large timber for the last four or five hundred miles, the principal growth along our road being wild sage, greasewood, and in the mountains the aspen. We are now encamped within a few yards of Rollston, Bradley & Company, who are all well.

August 18 (Sunday)

Left our encampment about 3 o'clock this evening and traveled until about 12 o'clock at night. We left the river about 3 miles from where we started and did not come to it again for a distance of 13 or 14 miles. After the road leaves the river it is sandy and barren, but the sand is not very deep. Grass tolerably good at our camp. Distance traveled 18 miles.

August 19 (Monday)

Left our encampment about 2 o'clock in the evening and traveled until about 10 o'clock at night. We traveled what is called the River route, instead of the road over the 20 mile desert. The road runs along the river for a distance of some 4 or 5 miles, from the road starts across the 20 mile desert, and then leaves the river, and does not come to it again for a distance of 10 or 12 miles. This part of the road is sandy and heavy pulling for our teams. We came to some very fine grass, just before striking the sand. There was considerable ice in our water bucket this morning. We encamped on the bank of the river in amongst the cottonwoods. We had the finest grass here that we have had for a long time, just across the river it was about knee high and was as thick as it could stand, here was plenty of wild clover. Distance traveled 16 miles.

August 20 (Tuesday)

Traveled about 16 miles and encamped in a deep hollow, or rather it was a narrow bottom or valley. The willows were so thick just below where we encamped, that you could not see a man in many places, more than five steps. Grass good, but not so good as at our last encampment. Road good very little sand. Crossed the river this evening about 3 or 4 o'clock.

August 21 (Wednesday)

Traveled about 22 miles and encamped on the river, in pretty wide valley. Grass tolerably good, it would have been much better if it had not been grazed so closely. The road apart of the way was very rocky and rough, with some sand. I believe it about the worst we have had since we struck Carson River some 9 or 10 miles of this rough road. This part of the road is called the 9 mile desert. I killed four young ducks today, nearly large enough to fly, killed one after night just before getting into camp. They were very fat and fine. There are a great many sloughs along this river which abound in these young ducks.

August 22 (Thursday)

Traveled about 10 miles and encamped in the 35 mile valley of good grass. Only traveled half of the day. Frank Gordon, Turner Williamson, and myself concluded that we would pack our horses and foot it from here to Houghton, it being about 120 or 130 miles. So we packed up ready to depart on the morrow. We sold six pounds of bacon here for \$6.00, a dollar a pound. Grass very good at our encampment. Road good also. I killed two young rabbits today, so we feasted on young rabbits and ducks for a meal or two.

August 23 (Friday)

Frank Gordon, Turner Williamson and myself started this morning afoot. We had packed our horses with a few provision, clothing, bedding and We passed some hot springs this morning, some 30 or 40 in number. They burst forth from the base of a high mountain. The road running between them and the mountain. These springs are not so large as some others that we have seen but they are equally as hot. The top of the mountain out of which they gush has plenty of snow upon it. Here again the philosopher and chemist may put their wits to work, to divine the true cause of these springs. The water is hot enough to cook an egg in 15 or 20 minutes, it is so hot that you cannot bear your hand in it a half of minute without scalding it. Road excellent. Grass good all along our road to within 5 or 6 miles of where we encamped, some mile and half east of the mouth of the Canon, up which we ascended to cross over the mountains. Saw some new kind of fruit this evening. It resembles the wild cherry very much, but was larger, was of a sweetish bitter taste, and I think poisonous. The bush upon which it grew resembled the cherry very much. Slept in the open air tonight for the first time since we left home.

August 24 (Saturday)

We struck the big Canon early this morning, about 11 miles from where we encamped, or rather where we bivouaged; and passed over one of roughest pieces of road that we have traveled over since we left here. It was full of boulders some very large, would weigh several tons. We had to get over and around these the best way that we could. In some places there was barely room enough for a wagon to pass between these base boulders, and no way of getting around them. The distance through this canon is some 4 or 5 miles. The Carson River passes through it, it rushes down its banks like a torrent, and is a perfect cascade from the head of the canon to its mouth. I have no doubt but that this river falls from 50 to 100 feet in a mile and perhaps 150 feet. The mountains on each side of this canon rise to the height of several hundred feet. A great deal of very fine timber, principally pine and abor-vitae, some of it from 150 to 200 feet in height and almost as straight as an arrow, frequently from 50 to 100 feet to the first limb. After we reached the head of this canon, we came to a valley some six miles long, in it was tolerably good grass, to the right of the road some 1/2 mile. We came to a lake just before striking the snow mountain, lying on the right of the road. We here commenced ascending Snow Mountain and continued to ascend for a distance of about 1 mile, where we reached its summit. This is the steepest and most rugged by far of any the mountains that we have passed over yet. We had to foot it up this mountain and lead our horses. We had to stop and rest ourselves and horses some eight or ten times. Here we thought that we could see the Elephant more fully developed than any time before, indeed we thought that we could see him in all his parts. Plenty of snow all along our road today. We had as much snow to eat and snow water to drink as we wanted, passed over several snow banks, some of which was several feet deep. Passed 3 graves all of which was made in 1850. Roads very bad. Grass tolerably good in some places. Distance 22 miles.

August 25 (Sunday)

We commenced ascending the main chain of the Sierra Nevada Mountains soon after starting, and continued our ascent for about 5 miles, when we reached the summit of this chain of mountains. The first 4 miles was a tolerably gradual ascent, and not very difficult to ascend, but the last mile was very steep and much more difficult to ascend. This part of the road though very steep and tiresome to climb, was not obstructed with any large rocks or ugly branches to cross. The road passed over several banks today, one of which was not less than 40 or 50 feet deep not more than 100 yards from where the road ran. We passed some of the prettiest and tallest timber today and yesterday, that I ever saw, principally pine. Encamped at the head of Leek Spring Valley. This valley takes its name from the great quantity of leeks or mild onions growing in it. Here we overtook our old friends, Hop Hall, Sam Stephens, and Jo Speck who had encamped at this place. Road mountainous and a part of it rough (that which we passed over in the evening). Grass very poor. Our stock had to eat the leek the leeks that grew in this valley. There were some more eating establishments. Prices were not so high for eating as it was where we first struck the Carson River. Met John McFadin today, packing flour across the mountains to sell to the emigrants who were destitute. The first of these

flour establishments that we came to was on Carson River. Gold flour at only \$1.50 per pound. These appear like extortionary prices from 25 to 30 cents in Sacramento, and then consider the rugged mountainous road over which they had to pack it, the risk of being robbed, or having it stolen from them, it does not appear so exorbitant. Distance traveled 26 miles.

August 26 (Monday)

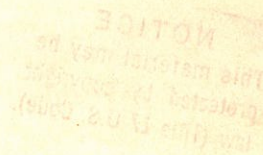
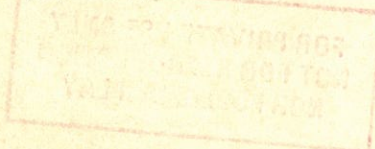
We came to some of the prettiest and most beautiful trees today that I have seen yet. Arborvitaes from 150 to 200 feet high and as straight as a gun barrel almost, and pines from 250 to 300 feet high also very straight. They would measure from 1½ to 7 or 8 in diameter. Turner Williamson and myself measured one standing in the road that measured 24 feet in circumference. The arborvitaes will measure from 1 to 5 or 6 feet in diameter at the stump. Road some better today, not so mountainous as it has been for several miles back but still pretty rough. We encamped a quarter a mile

August 27, 28, 29, 30 and 31 missing.

September 1 and 2

Desecrating the Lord's day as they were doing here was shocking to humanity. Sunday seems to be the great day for business here and if one should happen to lose the day of the week he could find it again by observing the great bustle and stir in the little towns. This town takes its name from the circumstance of three men having been hung on a limb of an oak tree standing in the town. These men were gamblers and thieves and were hung by a mob. Distance traveled 18 miles.

This ends the diary.



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