

Cmel



Edmund Green Recollections, 1849

CENTRAL MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
CLARKE HISTORICAL LIBRARY
Mount Pleasant, Michigan 48859
(517) 774-3352

5 September 1985

Merrill J. Mattes
5800 W. Plymouth
Littleton, CO 80123

Dear Mr. Mattes:

The "someone" who handed John Cumming the overland diary was none other than me and I am happy to enclose a copy for you. I especially call your attention to the note on the final page. Given the fact that your book is at press, you might want to contact the Society personally to discover whether they have access to additional diaries or journals.

John seems to be recuperating nicely and remains in good spirits.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "William Miles".

William Miles, Coordinator
Reader Services
Clarke Historical Library

WM/jhl

Enclosure

Note: Already have Edmund Green
recollections, from Stephen's Castles in
California, ✓ UCB
m

See Mattes
Platte River Road Narratives
465 Based on
sources in UCB/CASL

"Preserving Michigan's Past
to Serve Michigan's Future"

REMINISCENCE OF A PIONEER

About the first of April, 1849, my brother-in-law, Wellman Castle and I started from Corunna, Michigan for our long-contemplated trip across the continent. We were accompanied by Paul Barrett and Duane Castle.

We had two covered wagons and ten horses. We went by land as far as Joliet, Illinois, where we sailed down the Illinois to St. Louis. From there we took the steamer up the Missouri to St. Joseph, Missouri. While on board the steamer cholera broke out among the passengers and several died. On arriving at St. Joseph, we traded one wagon and a number of our horses for an ox team of four yokes. We were quite surprised to find so many here of the same mind as ourselves, all bound for the new El Dorado. Fearing that the mining claims would all be taken up before our arrival, we four decided to divide up, two going ahead with pack animals and the other two remaining with the company, in charge of the ox team and freight wagons. Wellman Castle and I were chosen to go on ahead of the others so the fifth of May we started out in good spirits notwithstanding the predictions of Judge McElroy, a frontiersman, that the Indians would have our scalps before we were half way across the plains. We crossed the Missouri River at old Fort Kearney and were the first to take the trail that led to the Platte River. We rode two days without seeing anyone but on the third day while passing through a ravine, we heard someone hallooing to us, which proved to be an Indian. He motioned for us to come to his camp on a bluff nearby and there we found three little papooses who had been without food for several days and were merely living skeletons. The Indians's wife had died and he was trying to get them to a settlement but his strength had given out. We gave them what provisions we could spare and told him to remain there until the rest of our party came along.

The next day we struck the Platte River and followed it up on the south side for about twenty miles. We were preparing to camp for the night when we crossed a gully where corn had been planted the year before. I remarked to Mr. Castle that this would indicate that we were near an Indian village. Riding along a little further and turning a point, or bluff, we came in sight of a Pawnee village about half a mile ahead of us. The village consisted of thirty or forty round wigwams made of mud, some of them large enough to hold thirty or forty people. Not knowing whether they were friendly or hostile and it being late in the evening, we concluded to wait until morning before going through the village so we dropped back behind the bluffs and camped in the ravine among the cornstalks. We dared not light a fire for fear of attracting attention. Soon after we had camped, a heavy thunderstorm came up. We took turns in keeping watch over our animals. During the flashes of lightning we could see a number of wolves sitting on the bluffs watching us. All this with the thought of being far from home and friends, and the danger of an attack from the Indians at any time and with no shelter from the rain stamped itself indelibly on my mind as one of the most terrible nights I ever experienced.

Just before the break of day we packed our animals intending to run through the village before the Indians were up. As we neared the village, I told Mr. Castle to go ahead as fast as he could, as the mules would follow his horse better than mine, and I would stop if anything happened to prevent us from going through. As we entered the village, a number of dogs began barking furiously at us. We had passed nearly through the village when four or five large Indians awakened by the barking, came rushing out to find the cause. I stopped my horse but Wellman rode rapidly on. The Indians came up and seemed to be very friendly.

They shook hands with me and asked by signs if more white men were following us. I made motions that there was a large company just behind us. While our confab was going on, I noticed one Indian had slipped his arm down through my horse's bridle. My horse had been a race horse in the States, and as soon as I thought Wellman was far enough ahead not to be overtaken, I quietly reached my hand down, jerked the Indian's arm out, put spurs to my horse and was soon through the village.

Nothing more eventful happened until we arrived at Fort Kearney, a new trading post that had just been started at the head of Grand Island on the Platte River. Here we supplied ourselves with what provisions we needed. We also learned here that large numbers of emigrants had arrived by the way of Independence and had gone on ahead of us.

About forty miles farther on we came across the first indications of buffalo. It was understood between myself and partner that whoever saw a buffalo first should have the privilege of shooting it. Late one afternoon I chanced to see a large one. I shouted "Buffalo!" and rode through a ravine as near as I dared to the animal - a large bull - who was grazing alone near some sage brush. I knew if my horse should chance to spy the buffalo he would run, so I got off and picketed him then, creeping nearer, took a good aim, fired, then turned and ran for my horse and mounted ready to run in case the buffalo should charge me. But all was quiet, so I returned and found him dead. From there on we saw vast herds of buffalo working their way north. We took advantage of this privilege and supplied ourselves plentifully with buffalo meat while passing through their country.

For several nights we managed to camp with emigrants whom we overtook along the road. We left each party in the morning as we traveled so much faster than they. After leaving the emigrants and to avoid any band of Indians who might be roving about we would seek an elevated spot towards evening, strike camp, kindle a fire, cook supper, wait there until after dark, then repack and go on two or three miles, camp in a ravine, or cross over to some island in the river and camp for the night without fire. In this way we were not molested by the Indians.

Nothing of interest happened until we arrived at the upper crossing of the Platte. Here we found a large number of emigrants getting ready to ford river and on the opposite side of the river there were camped about two thousand Sioux Indians. They were directly in our way. After we crossed the river five or six large Indian chiefs came down and presented a paper to the captain of the wagon train. The paper was from an Indian agent in which he stated that the Sioux were friendly but that it would be best to make them some presents to pay for the buffalo we had killed while going through their country. They spread out their buffalo robes and we filled them with tobacco, sugar, coffee and so forth. They were well pleased, shook hands with us and told us to go on. The Indians then divided, and gave us the freedom of the road. My partner and I left the company at this place and pushed on as fast as we could. Within forty miles of Fort Laramie we overtook Captain Paul, who, having light wagons and plenty of feed for his animals had made better time than the rest of the party from St. Louis. Glad of their company, we rode along with them for several days.

Fort Laramie, which is situated on the Laramie River, was an American trading post belonging to the American Fur Company. On arriving here we found the river so swollen that it was dangerous to cross but we were shown by parties

at the Fort a safe fording place. I urged my horse into the river and in a moment we were both under water but after two or three plunges my horse regained his footing and we were soon on the opposite bank, dripping wet but thankful to be safely landed. After supplying ourselves with jerked meat, which was about all we could get at the Fort, we travelled on a few miles and camped for the night.

In the evening a half-breed from the Fort came up with a letter for Paul containing the information that two Mormons had just arrived from Salt Lake and reported that the Crow Indians were at the upper crossing waiting for the emigrants. These Indians at that time were inclined to be hostile so Mr. Castle and I decided to remain with Capt. Paul until we had gone through the hostile country. When we arrived at the upper crossing we saw no signs of Indians but a day or two afterwards on coming to a divide we saw hundreds of fresh pony tracks which indicated that they had come to that point and turned back. We concluded that they must be the Crow Indians so we stopped, examined our guns and prepared to protect ourselves if necessary. We moved along close together and after coming to the summit of another divide we saw about a mile ahead of us on a flat in a small valley, a large camp of Indians with tents of buffalo hides. Just as we espied the village we saw dust rising, then a band of Indians coming toward us on the full gallop. We immediately placed our wagons in a circle and put ourselves in position to give battle in case they proved to be enemies, but on nearing us one of their company cried "Friends!" and on coming up they proved to be a tribe of Cheyenne Indians on their way to Fort Bridger with furs and buffalo robes for trading purposes. There were two or three Frenchmen with them who spoke English. They each had an Indian wife and papooses with them.

We camped near them that night and travelled with them the next day. At night we camped about a mile behind them and the next morning as we were about to start out we were amazed to see a band of warriors riding toward us - about one hundred and fifty Indians well mounted and well armed with spears, bows, arrows and guns. Each had a bunch of jerked beef tied to his saddle and all wore shields made of buffalo hides. They proved to be our late companions. As they passed us they told us that they had just heard that the Crow Indians were near here and they were on their way to fight them. The women and children and part of the men travelled with us all that day. At night we camped at Independence Rock near the Sweet Water River.

Soon after this the Indians turned southwest going toward Fort Bridger and we turned west taking Sublett's cut-off to Fort Hall.

Soon after leaving them we came to Green River which we found impossible to ford as the stream was much swollen by the melting snows in the Rocky Mountains. There were plenty of dead cottonwood trees along the bank and we soon made a raft large enough for two of our men who went over on it to look for some canoes which we had been told the Mormons had stored. While searching for them they came across two Mormons who had just arrived. They had two canoes which they lashed together and ferried us over.

Here we were to part with Capt. Paul as we could go faster with our pack animals than he could with his wagons. We induced Dr. Dickerson, from Beaver, Pennsylvania, and his four men to cut up their wagon and make pack saddles and go on with us, making a party of seven in all.

From there we were the first Pioneers of '49. We went over a broken country, a spur that divides Green River from Bear River. This was good game country, full of bear, elk and deer. As we neared the summit of the divide we saw a large band of elk that seemed to be quite tame, not having been hunted. After leaving the divide we made our way toward Bear River and camped for the night near Soda Springs, a delightful spot. These springs are situated on a plateau in a beautiful little grove of cedars some distance above the river, the largest measuring ten or fifteen feet across and eight or ten feet deep. They are filled with beautiful, clear, bubbling water, the result of great quantities of gas which are thrown off. The Oregon Short Line now passes these Springs and they are quite famous as a health resort.

A few miles farther down the river we passed the home of "Peg-Legged" Smith, the man celebrated for having amputated his own leg. He had married a squaw by whom he had several children, two of his daughters being then in school at Salt Lake.

Here we left Bear River and struck across to Snake River at a place known as Eagle Rock. On our way to Snake River and while eating lunch, a man on horseback was seen riding toward us. He proved to be a colored man who was out horse hunting and said he had had nothing to eat for several days. He seemed to be well acquainted with the country and could speak the Indian language so we engaged him to go on to Fort Hall with us.

We followed the Snake River to Fort Hall where we arrived the seventh day of June. This fort at that time was an English trading post. They were surprised to see us and to know that we were from the States. They said we were one month ahead of any train that had ever come over the road. They also told us that buffalo had not been seen on the west side of the mountains in twenty-one years.

Now being the advance pack train of '49, we were determined to lose no time but to push on as fast as we could so as to be the first into California. They killed a steer for us and furnished us with what fresh meat we wanted. The commander of the fort also furnished a guide to go with us to the American Falls in the Snake River some thirty miles below.

Reaching this point we left the trail to Oregon and took the one over the Goose Creek Mountains to the Humboldt River. On our arrival at the Humboldt, we found fresh wagon tracks made a short time before and were informed that some Mormons had been sent to California to make a settlement. We had no trouble in following their track all the way down the Humboldt and, in fact, into California.

We saw very few Indians while going down the river. We learned that they were all in the mountains and that they subsisted on pinenuts that they had gathered the year before. We always camped at night without fires so as not to attract attention. We could see their campfires in the mountains.

The Humboldt River at its head was a pure, beautiful stream of water but as it meandered on through the sagebrush and alkali country, with no streams of any importance emptying into it, its waters became brackish and unfit to drink. It runs down and forms a lake called the Sink of the Humboldt, which has no outlet. We followed the river along crossing and re-crossing several times until we passed the sink on the south side. Here we came to the Great American (Union)

Desert, forty miles in length that lies between the Sink of the Humboldt and the Carson River. We had no guide and knew nothing about the country beyond us but as we had had no trouble finding water, we did not provide an extra supply. We travelled all day and were obliged to camp at night without grass or water.

The next morning we packed early and started, hoping to find water. Another man and myself went on ahead as fast as we could hoping to find a place where we could dig for water. After riding eight or ten miles we saw, far in the distance a line of trees just above the horizon. I said to my companion that there must be water where there were trees so we pushed on rapidly and just before night we came to a clear, cool, beautiful stream of water, the Carson River. Our horses were almost exhausted for the want of water. After supplying ourselves and them bountifully, we took all that we could carry and returned to meet our companions. About five miles out we found them completely exhausted. Some of them could not speak their tongues were so swollen. We returned with them to the river, arriving there after dark. We remained several days to recuperate.

The morning that we were packing to start out again, we heard a shout. On looking up we saw an Indian on the opposite side of the river on a high bluff. He stood gesticulating and talking wildly in a loud voice. Of course, we could not understand him and were much frightened fearing he might be a forerunner of the Apaches. After talking some little time, he whirled around and went back over the hills. We packed hurriedly and pushed on as fast as we could up the river, travelling about thirty miles before camping for the night. Who the Indian was, or what he wanted of us we were never able to learn.

We followed up the river to what is now known as Carson Valley, where the capital of the State of Nevada is located. A few miles from there we crossed what is known as Eagle Valley and found here a beautiful grazing country. There was plenty of grass and water as the valley was fed by streams that came down from the Sierra Nevadas. We turned to the right at the upper end of this valley and followed a branch of the Carson through a heavily timbered canyon for about ten miles when we came to Hope Valley. Here we kept to the right across to sharp mountain peaks. From the summit of the last one, far in the west and below us, we could see the Sacramento Valley. From this point we followed down the divide for two days. Here we were short of grass and water as we were in a heavily timbered pine country. As we neared the valley, the timber changed from pine to oak. On the third day as we were riding along we saw an Indian and family approaching us. They were quite well dressed in new clothes and had new blankets. They also had some gold in a little bag which the Indian proudly showed us. Pointing toward the valley, he assured us we should find there "plenty oro and plenty white man". Our spirits were quite revived by their apparent prosperity and the encouraging news that we were so near our goal. After travelling about ten miles farther, we heard the tinkling of a cow bell. Never did we hear a more welcome sound for we realized that we were nearing civilization.

We soon came to where some Mormons were camped and found they were the same ones who made the trail for us down the Humboldt. About ten miles from their camp we came to a settlement called Hang Town, where the town of Placerville is now situated. Here we found two or three log houses and several white men. (Date: July 4, 1849)

As we were nearly out of provisions, we decided to replenish our stock here but, oh! such prices! Bacon, five dollars a pound and everything else in proportion.

About twelve or fifteen miles from there, on the American River, we found Sutter's sawmill, built where gold was first found by Marshall. They showed us the millrace where Marshall took out the first gold. Being short of provisions and hoping to find letters from home at Sacramento, it was thought best that some of us go on at once, so Dr. Dickerson and I volunteered to go. We took two pack animals and two riding animals and started out. After travelling about twenty-five miles, we camped for the night at a watering place. Here we found two or three cloth tents, one of which was a saloon with an eating house attached. We camped about three hundred yards from the tents in a little grove of trees.

The next morning, when preparing breakfast, we found we had no bacon. We at once made up our minds that someone from the tents had stolen it. On making inquiries at the saloon, the barkeeper laughed and said we could charge it to the coyotes, which we found to be a fact proven, subsequently, by many a miner who had lost his meat in that way.

The next day we went on and when within ten miles of Sutter's Fort we passed an adobe house, well-built and owned by a man named St. Clair. This was the first house we had seen for two thousand miles. Soon after leaving St. Clair's, we came to Sutter's Fort, the Mecca of all Americans. We passed the fort and went down to a clump of timber about half a mile from the Sacramento River and camped. After getting our supper, I suggested that we go on to Sacramento, but Dr. Dickerson, who was much older than I, said he was too tired so I went on alone. I followed a trail, cut out through the brush by the river, down to the town. It had just been laid out and there were only two buildings, both stores, one owned by Priest, Lee & Company; the other, by Sam Br..(must be Brannan) The rest of the town was composed of tents. I continued on through the town until I came to the bank of the Sacramento, being the first emigrant in '49 to stand on tidewater.

While we were camped there, the editor of a small paper came out from Sacramento and took our names and addresses and a short sketch of our trip, which article was published in the Sacramento paper and afterwards in the New York "Tribune". From that article our friends in the East learned of our safe arrival.

We purchased provisions and returned to our friends in the mountains and from there we went over to the Big Bar on the American River, where we did our first mining.

The next morning I started with my pan and shovel to prospect. After going up the river about half a mile, I struck a big hole that had been washed out in the rocks. It was eight feet deep and six or seven feet across, round like a big kettle and had a large crack right through the center about four inches wide. Some miner had shoveled out the dirt and gravel until within two feet of the bottom. He had probably been driven away by high water before finishing his work. When I arrived, the water had receded and left the bottom of the hole dry. I dug out what was left in the rocks, washed it and found I had eighty-four dollars. This being my first day's work, I decided to take it home with me as a memento. Having a silver case hunting watch, long since stopped

running, I took the works out and packed the gold inside the case. I afterwards lost it, or it was stolen.

We remained there a few days then went back to Sacramento to meet our friends, whom we had left in St. Joe to come on with the freight wagons. We were detained in Sacramento for over a month but while waiting, we employed our time profitably in cutting hay for the U. S. Government troops stationed at Sutter. One day, a little way from our camp, I looked up and saw a California lion standing on a large limb of a tree about forty feet high. I thought at first it was a wild cat and yelled for the men at camp to bring a gun, thinking to keep him there by standing under the tree. Before I was half way to the tree - about one hundred feet away, he jumped from the limb down to the ground and, bounding ten or fifteen feet high, ran into the woods. Had I known what it was when I first say it, I should have run the other way.

After a time, our patience was rewarded by the arrival of our friends with everything in good condition. We divided up our stock and property and each man went for himself. I purchased a team of two yokes of oxen and a wagon and having two horses, I loaded the wagon with such goods as I thought would be wanted in the mines and went with Judge McElroy and Company to Foster's Bar on the Yuba River. This was no pleasure trip, I can assure you. There were no graded roads over the mountains and we were obliged to climb high bluffs and go through deep canyons. These were so steep in some places that we had to cut down small trees and fasten them to the back of the wagons to keep it from pitching over.

One night we reached the summit of a mountain just at dark. We had to get down into the valley in order to find feed and water for our animals. I engaged a good driver named Dunlap to drive my ox team, fastened my riding horse behind the wagon and walked on ahead searching for the trail. As I went on it grew steeper and steeper and the darkness increased. All at once I heard a terrific crunching noise just over my head and was almost paralyzed to see the wagon, oxen, horses and all come crashing down almost on top me. I hallooed to the driver and we both ran out of harm's way just in time. A large pine tree had been overturned and, fortunately, everything landed on this, breaking the fall the roots of the tree keeping the wagon from rolling farther down the mountain.

After cutting our animals loose and finding none were seriously injured, we rested a part of the night, righted our wagons, repacked and, towards dawn, found our way safely down the mountain, camping for the day.

The next day we reached Foster's Bar without any more mishaps. Here we found quite a settlement of miners. The stores were all in tents. We turned our team out on the opposite side of the Yuba River where the grazing was better. The afternoon of my arrival at Foster's Bar, I was offered eight hundred dollars for my two yokes of oxen, which I refused as I intended sending them back to Marysville for more goods. After a day or two I sent a man over to look after the oxen. On his return he reported that they were missing and as the Indians had none, they had probably appropriated them. Five men volunteered to go with me to search for them. We were all armed and I had my good riding horse, the others following on foot.

We traced the cattle for several miles and finally found that they had been driven into a deep canyon and killed - nothing visible but a horn or two, which I took possession of. We started out to overtake the Indians to see if we could not secure some of the beef. After going a short distance up a divide, we

heard someone pounding. I rode on ahead and on coming to an opening, I saw on the opposite side a squaw pounding pinenuts. I rode across unobserved and caught hold of her before she could run. I asked her by signs where the Indians were and she pointed to the woods above us. By this time, the other men came up and the squaw hallooted for the Indians. They came out of the brush and were very friendly, shaking hands all around. We could get no information in regard to the cattle. I showed them the horns but they denied all knowledge of the whereabouts of the lost animals. We then forced our way up to their camp in the woods. We saw no beef but found traces of blood where it had lain on poles. While we had been parlaying with parts of the tribe, the others had carried the beef off down the mountain on the other side. As we could get no satisfaction, we decided to return. When we started back those near us gave three or four whoops and in an instant the woods seemed to be full of Indians, coming from all directions. They were quite naked and carried bows and arrows. They followed us for two or three miles, whooping and yelling but keeping out of the range of our rifles.

On our return to Foster's bar, we put up a large tent we had close to the river where we stored all the goods that we brought with us. We decided to spend the winter in the mountains.

We sent Judge McElroy back to Marysville to buy more goods and animals as we knew that we would need them before Spring. During the Judge's absence our camp was visited by a Mr. Havens and several of his men, who came down from the upper fork of the Yuba. Havens stopped with me several days. He said he left very rich diggings on the Yuba and would return in the Spring. After relating this news to the Judge and Dunlap on their return, we decided to go up there at once, although it was late in the Fall. We stored what provisions we could not carry and packed two yokes of oxen and started out.

After going up the divide about twenty miles, we struck snow. Ten miles farther on we camped for the night. The snow was about two feet deep. During the night a warm rain came and in the morning the snow was gone. The next afternoon we struck snow again and travelled thru it until we reached the top of the mountain above Goodhue's Bar on the Yuba River. Here we found the snow so deep it was impossible to get our cattle any further, so we killed them and hung the beef in the trees to keep it away from wild animals. We cached what provisions we could not take and blankets we had to carry. We dragged this sled down the mountains over the snow to Goodhue's Bar, four miles away. Here we found two men named Smith and Gorman occupying a good log house which had been built early in the Fall by Goodhue and brother. The elder Goodhue had died here and the brother went down into the valley with his remains and left the house vacant.

While resting here two or three days, we learned that about twenty people were camped about ten miles above us at the Fork. We took what we could carry on our backs and started up the river. This was a very hard day's work as we had to travel along the bank of the river over boulders and sliding places without a trail. It was dark when we arrived at the Forks. Here we found several we were acquainted with. They had built three or four log houses and were well settled for the Winter.

I went with three others about two miles up the South Fork of the North Fork. There we built a small log cabin and commenced mining on a bar in the river. We could each average with the washings of a tin pan about one hundred fifty dollars a day.

One morning, I had started down the creek when I heard a call and a man named Smith told me to come over where he was, wait for him and he would go down to the camp with me. I found him working in a bank. He had shoveled away the top dirt and was down at bed rock, crevassing. I stayed with him about an hour. When we reached camp he had the gold weighed that he had taken out that morning and found that it amounted to a little over eighteen hundred dollars.

Early in the Spring our provisions were nearly out so I started out to replenish them. A man named Stone and I went to Marysville and purchased nineteen animals, packed them and started back to our camp, which in the meantime had been named Downieville, after a sailor who was the first to get in there the Fall before.

On arriving at Foster's Bar, we packed the goods we had stored by the river. Among them was a barrel of flour marked Richmond Mills, Virginia, which I had bought at Sacramento for twenty-two dollars. I repacked it in sacks and when we reached Downieville, I sold it for four dollars a pound, realizing eight hundred dollars*for one barrel of flour.

Before we reached Goodhue's Bar, we were overtaken by a tremendous snow storm. We took shelter in a pine tree that had been burned out and had fallen leaving a large hollow in which we camped for eight days. Our poor animals had no shelter. We gave them what flour we had and tried to save them but they all perished.

After we reached Marysville, we purchased another pack train and were more successful in getting through. We were the first packers through into Downieville in the Spring of 1850. We sold out our goods at a large profit and Mr. Stone returned for more while I put up a tent store and purchased a half interest in the Little Rich Bar, about half a mile down the river. We mined there until September, when I sold out and started for the States.

I went to San Francisco and paid four hundred and fifty dollars for cabin passage to New York via the Isthmus of Panama.

By Edmund Green

* * * * *



Hangtown
In The Days
Of '49

Now
Placerville
California

Needed for the Archives — old letters, ledgers, photographs, diaries and any type of records that will help preserve the county's history.

SHIAWASSEE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
dues are now due for the year
October 1, 1985 to September 1, 1986



1 year \$5.00



The annual potluck dinner and meeting of the County Historical Society will be held October 6 at 1:30 p.m. at VENICE CENTER TOWNSHIP HALL which is located one/quarter of a mile north of M-21 on Durand Road.

Please bring a passing dish and your table service.

Our special guest speaker will be Thomas Marcoux, who was born in Peribonka, Quebec, Canada. Mr. Marcoux will talk about the Curwood family visit to Peribonka in the early 1920's.

See the next issue of the GAZETTE for more about our Corunna gold miners.



SHIAWASSEE GAZETTE

CURWOOD CASTLE
224 Curwood Castle Drive
Owosso Michigan 48867

Non-Profit. Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Owosso, MI 48867
Permit No. 32

Clarke Hist Lib
Central Mi Univ
Mt. Pleasant Mi 48858

short blue grass—after leaving ascend and travel on high ground—About three P. M. I cross the South platt this stream is half a mile in width has a rapid shallow current not to exceed three feet in depth and very muddy the bed of which is quicksand
Days travel 25 m

May 22 I travel over high rolling country. About sixteen miles from the crossing of the south platt I find ash hollow a deep narrow ravine I descend with difficulty through this ravine to the valley of the north platt at this place we were obliged to let our wagons down with ropes—a few ash trees at this place from which it takes its name—a good spring at the mouth of this hollow which is very rare for this region (region) of the country—After partaking of a sumptuous dinner one of the delicacies of the plains, a buffalo soup, I pursue my way which leads directly up the north platt at this place about three quarters of a mile in width and is a very rapid turbulent stream

Days travel 25 m

May 23 Leave at the usual hour travel on the bluffs about four miles then descend to the river bottom again.

Days travel 24 m

May 24 Leave and travel over a high rolling sandy country pass a small creek this morning, about twelve miles from this stream I find another creek at this place I nooned—at this place I find court (court) house rock, it is situated on an elevated piece of ground on the bank of this stream about five miles to the left of the road—I visited this in company with Mr. Baldeley—it is an enormous pile of very fine sand stone, it resembles clay when at a distance This rock is about three hundred feet in height four hundred in length, one hundred in breadth, at the base and twenty five feet at the top And has the appearance of a fine building—coming on to the bottom found the grass good soil fine

Days travel 24 m

May 25 This day I visited Chimney rock which is two miles from my place of encampment to the left of the road—Chimney rock is situated on a high ridge From its base to its top it is three hundred feet it is a fine sand stone and is easily cut with a knife upon this rock I inscribed my name and date May 25th, 1852. Following the river about fifteen miles I came to the place where the road leaves the river. this place is called Scotts bluffs at this place I find three lodges of Indians and some traders these Indians belong to the Sioux nation—At this place I nooned Here I leave the old trail and take a cut off passing through a gap in the bluff—which was very winding and difficult These bluffs present a magnificent scenery at this place I got a good supply of seeder (cedar) wood enough to last me three or four days there is no timber in this region (region) of the country—After passing the bluffs about two miles I find a trading post, the valley is wide here and rather wet with producing a good growth of grass

Days travel 26 m

May 26 Travel five miles then ascend a range of sand ridges, thence to a clay bed this portion of the country is thickly set with prickly pears—a short distance ahead I find Hans creek a considerable stream of pure water having a very rapid current—I travel several miles then descend to the platt

bottom I encamp near the ruins of an old fort or traders station the river comes near the bluffs at this point

Days travel 25 m

May 27 I leave my encampment and pursue the trail which leads me up platt about three miles then ascend a hill about six miles, upon descending this range of hills I find the Laurime (Laramie) River it is a beautiful stream and has a very rapid current, the garrison of Ft Laurime is situated on this stream about three miles from its junction with the platt—it is a brick structure and of good workmanship I arrived at this place May 27th 1852 at 12 o'clock M.—Mr. P. Green, Holeman and Allen stopped with their families to rest wash and get some smith work done—no grass Mr. Gray Kipp and Baldeley thought it best to move on to good grass and await their coming Consequently three wagons of the train moved on up platt about six miles and encamped for the night we were visited by a number of Indians among which was two girls who appeared to be of rank in high station among them they wore long robes made of antelope skins neatly trimmed with colored cord and highly decorated with beads—There were many lodges of Indians in this vicinity these Indians belong to the Sioux nation

Days travel 15 m

May 28 I move on up the platt about six miles from my encampment I find a trading post about two miles from this point I leave the river and ascend the hills this portion of country is called the black hills after traveling about four miles I find a stream called bitter cottonwood creek traveled on about one mile and encamped for the night

Days travel 13 m

May 29 The part of my train which I left at Ft. Laurime not overtaken me as soon as I expected and thinking them not far behind I concluded to move on leisurely,—After leaving my place of encampment about a mile I succeeded in killing an antelope we stopped and dressed the animal and it was divided among the three wagons—resumed march over rough hilly country—about ten miles from bitter cottonwood I nooned and found good grass after crossing a small ridge I find the valley of a large creek After leaving my camp leads me over hills After traveling about twelve miles I came onto the platt bottom and encamp

Days travel 21

May 30 Travel up platt then ascend the hills, and travel over a rough hilly country Destitute of water and timber for eighteen miles—wild sage in abundance, I have traveled five days in sight of a high towering peak—(generally known as Laurime's peak) I come onto the river Labante encamped for the night As we encamped early in the afternoon and having a plenty of dried fruit spices and brandy, and a good supply of antelope meat—the two cooks—Mr Dye and Mr Ellis thought it advisable to make a few mince pies—while they were engaged in this business the remainder of the company were fishing.

Days travel 20

May 31 My company not yet having come up I resolved not to wait longer—at an early hour my company which was composed of eleven men and three wagons were upon the road about six miles from Labante I came to the red hills this portion of country takes its name from the color of the ground

which is red as verry red brick I find a small crick pass up a ravine then descend to the valley of the lapeal I cross the Lapeal and persue my way about twelve miles to little Dean Crick
Days travel 25 m

June 1 four miles to platt bottom, thence five miles to big Dean crick thence across big Dean one mile to the platt here I cross this stream on a bridge—About ten miles from the bridge I find a fertile bottom of the platt river I encamped for the night—we had scarce picked (picketed) out our mules when a violent storm of rain and wind ensude (ensued) accompanied with sharp flashes of lightning and heavy peals of thunder

Days travel 21 m

June 2d three miles from encampment ascend the hills destitute of production except scrubby sage I find myself at the upper crossing of the platt After grasing our mules and partaking of a good cup of coffee wee again resumed our march find a narrow bottom of the platt river encamp for the night
Days travel 20

June 3 I now leave the platt and take my coars westward twenty six miles to willow spring find no grass—no good water—at this place I nooned and had a prairie Dog sirved up for Dinner I set out for Sweetwater river most of the way entire desert I arived about mid night and camped making a trip of forty eight miles in one day and half a night—
48 m

June 4th Leaving encampment about a mile I find a lake the banks of which was white as snow—I found the substance to be saleratas—After two miles I find Indipendence rock—I find a ferry cept by three mountaineers they had a raft upon which they crost wagons Six miles from this place I find the Devels gate a pass in the mountains through which the Sweetwater passes—I am now at the foot of the rocky mountains and persue my way directly up the valley of the sweetwater
Days travel 19 m

June 5 one mile from my encampment I find alkalye lake here I leave the river pass around a hill to the river again
Days travel 30

June 6 Four miles from my encampment I find the canon of the Sweetwater the river being high and the road impasable I turn and cross a Desert of deep sand about sixteen miles to the upper crossing of the sweetwater—at this place I find a number of lodges of Crow Indians these Indians are the most filthy of the North american tribes except the diggers I cross the river and move four miles to a good patch of grass and camp

Days travel 24

June 7 I now leave the Sweetwater and ascend the rockys mountains among which I have bin traveling three days the summit of the rocky mountains this clump or peak is generally known as the wind river mountains at the aspen spring I nooned After leaving I find a crick about four miles, another three, another five, tributaries of the sweetwater, the last stream I was obliged to ferry with my wagon bed this ocupied a good part of the night
Days travel 24

June 8 persue my way graduly asending to the south pass, this is the

summit of the mountains—is many miles wide, it is a grate plain, lying between two high peaks,—the south pass is generally known to the emigrant, upon pasing between two considerable hills, Directly after pasing this place I find Pasific spring this is the first water flowing westward

Days travel 18

June 9 Cross pasific crick—nine miles from this place Dry Sandy crick, ten miles from this place little Sandy. After leaving little Sandy about seven miles I find big Sandy I encamped for the night no grass of any importance

Days travel 26 m

June 10 I am now encamped on the west side of big Sandy preparing for a desert of forty one miles—At one oclock P. M. I enter the Desert travel twelve miles—past this desert mostly in the night which renders it imposible for me to discribe this portion of country the general production however is sage and grees brush

Days travel 41

June 11 It is now ten o'clock A. M. and I am on the west side of the Desert at the crossing of Green river—at this place I find a ferry this stream has a verry deep and rapid current After crossing wee stoped a short time to rest our animals and refresh ourselves no grass—This is caled the half way place of the grate theroufare to California—After leaving the ferry I persue my way over a verry rough and mountainous country ten miles here I find lost river (on blacks fork of Green river) here I encamped for the night and found plenty of grass, and willows for fewel

Days travel 10

June 12 I leave at ten o'clock and follow the river four miles here I cross and ascend the hills—There was a division of one of the teams belonging to my train this morning. Two men who ware partners in a team seing fit to seperate Did so without hard words. The principal owner in the outfit Mr Balsley took the wagon two mules and a hors accompanied by two young men and set out on his journey erly in the morning—leaving his partner Mr Beel behind with two mules Beel applyed to Mr. Gray my partner for conveyence to California wee took him into our wagon and traveled on pasing Balsley about two O'clock of the same day—about one mile from the grove Balsley rode up to my wagon and shot Beel in the left breast cosing (causing) instant Death—There being an ox train band by a company of thirty men wee concluded to await their arival they came up buried the murdered man and after a short counsil took the murderer into custody Wee then traveled on about six miles and encamped over a verry ruff and mountainous road

Days travel 17

June 13 A council being held upon the best way of disposing of the prisoner and it being agreed upon that wee travel on about thirteen miles to a large crick (hams fork of queen river) whare we expected to overtake a large train—in doing so our object was to get more council—accordingly wee set out for that place over a verry ruff and mountainous way Wee arived at Hams fork about one O'clock P. M. Here wee found a large ox train from Iowa a mule train from pensylvania and some packers making in all about