

DIARY OF MRS. ASHLEY, CROSSING THE PLAINS - 1852.

Out 27 days -

May 29 Pleasant. Sandy road. Drove till one o'clock, camped on Platte a few miles from Fort Laramie which is on the south side of the river. We could see it plainly from the road. The buildings are made of Spanish brick. We wrote from there. Grease wood gro. ALONLINE JACKSON was married to WILLIAM ASHLEY brighter green; it in Waterloo (now Burton) Wisconsin just before they are all they started for California in the spring of 1852. in bloom, and Mrs. Ashley was twenty-two years old. The Sioux are es-

tablished in this part of the country; they keep a great many The first and last parts of her diary have been horses, mules, and ponies for sale and ask from \$100 to \$125 for lost and this part is a copy so that it has not horses and mules, and from \$65 to \$75 for ponies. There are been verified and numbers especially are often many French traders with them. They keep a great number of dogs uncertain.

and are very careful to keep them away from the tents. They do not beg but offer to pay for (San Diego Public Library) They make their tents of buffalo skin and long poles and carry the poles with them when they move because there is no timber for 200 miles back of the Fort. All Well.

May 30 Struck the Black Hills this morning. They are covered with cedar and Norway pine, which gives them a dark appearance. Some are very stony (cobble stones). The blue larkspur, white and red pinks balm, cherry trees and purple and orange flowering peas, equal in beauty and odor to the sweet pea, grow along in the ravines. Rough road ... over steep hills and

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May 31 Out 27 days. Morning yesterday after-noon, rained all night and

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few miles from Fort Laramie which is on the south side of the
river. We could see it plainly from the road. The buildings
are made of Spanish brick. We wrote from there. Grease woods
grow along here. It looks some like cedar only brighter green;
it is a thorny and the leaves, rubbed between the fingers are
slippery. It is greasy. The Abundant of flowering currants in bloom
and very tall rose-bushes, not in blossom. The Sioux are es-
tablished in this part of the country; all they keep a great many
horses, mules, and ponies for sale and ask from \$100 to \$125 for
horses and mules, and from \$65 to \$75 for ponies. There are
many French traders with them. They keep a great number of dogs
and are very desirous to keep them away from the tents. They
do not offer to pay for anything they desire. They make
their tents of buffalo skin and long poles and carry the poles
with them when they move because there is no timber for 100
miles back of the Fort. Beadle stayed until he started but did
not sell his again. William sold the big wagon today for

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cedar and Norway pine, which gives them a dark appearance. of the
Some are very stony (cobble stones). The blue Larrea, white
and pink waterbalm, cherry trees and purple and orange

June 2 Flowering pear, equal in beauty and odor to the sweet pear, grow
along in the ravines. Rough road. beaver steep hills; it
looks exactly like a gilliflower at a little distance.

ridges. Good grass and water. Passed eleven graves. Beautiful mosses or lichen on the rocks because they were dissatisfied.

May 31 Commenced raining yesterday afternoon, rained all night and all day today. Road over hills and ridges though not so rough as yesterday. Sage, prickly pears and some good sized pines grow along over the hills. Have a good view of Laramie Peak in the Black Hills (south side of the river) it, and some other hills are very snowy. Four wagons have left the train because it was inconvenient to find grass for so many horses so it was thought

June 4 Went to divide. The violin player has left. Hail storm in the afternoon. Cool and rainy to night. Passed 8 graves. Good grass. Camped in the Black Hills. You may call this a poor

June 5 Write on my lap with the wind rocking the wagon. If we did not have so much rain everything would be pleasant. Water for all well. Passed 5 graves. Child and young man much better of

June 1 Some rain today. Cool and cloudy now. Road muddy from the rain

June 6 Last night over hills and ridges. Another wagon left the train this morning. The man's horses were poisoned by eating a weed and the company thought them unable to travel (he died) so the train started on. Beadle stayed until he started but did not join us again. William sold the big wagon today for \$25 (written \$25,000). The horses' shoulders were sore and he thought it best to put the load in one wagon so that more of the

June 7 Teams could rest. Ride horseback some every day. Rather poor grass. Miserable water and very little wood. Water 3 rods wide

June 2 Thunder shower in the afternoon. Very steep hills to cross. Some heavy sand. A flowering bunch bean grows on the hills; it looks exactly like a gilliflower at a little distance.

- June 8 Child has the measles. Breedlove is quite unwell. - Passed the
 the graves. Two wagons left because they were dissatisfied.
- June 3 Pleasant till noon, rain in the afternoon. Sandy land and near
 the river. We passed the graves. I camped 18 miles from the upper
 ford of Platte. Excellent grass. Considerable snow on the high
 bluffs south side of the river. There is a good bridge
 across the river 5 miles from the ferry. The bottom land is
 narrow along here. Found bright green moss, flower like the
 bunch pink & very fragrant. John is better between perpendic-
- June 4 Rained all night and all day. Restings on a man very sick with
 measles. John is much better. Have a good blacksmith in the
 brain near the river some of the way, and crosses small creeks of
- June 5 Pleasant and very hot; two severe hail storms; ground white all
 with hail. Camped near the ferry to fill the keg with water for
 tomorrow. Passed 5 graves. Child and young man much better of
 the measles. John better. on Sweet Water -- excellent grass. The
- June 6 Warm and cloudy. Left Platte, (648 miles from Council Bluffs) post.
 for the last time. Carried water for the horses. Passed a
- June 9 Mineral spring and lake, water poisonous; and a great many
 alkali swamps - found black like tar and camped 1 mile from Willow
 Springs on a creek formed by them. No wood, but sagebrush and it
 burns rapidly, to the summit of the dividing ridge between the
 Atlantic and the Pacific. Greasewood grows along
- June 7 No wood. Very pleasant road some sandy, passed some large
 beds of alkali lakes and marshes. Camped on Sweet Water, and 8 rods wide
 and 2 feet deep. Good water; swift current. A great many
 Indian ground holes between the fingers it is slippery or
 greasy. It burns rapidly.

June 8 Very pleasant. Ferried the river in our wagon-bed--saw the horses and were detained but a short time. There is a bridge across but it is under water, so that it is difficult crossing--
going \$3 a wagon. Passed near Independence Rock, north side of river--about 600 yards long and 120 wide, hard granite. It is not as high as many other mountains in sight--it looks broad, and around on the top and stands by itself; as there were a great many wigwams beside it. 5 1/2 miles from this rock is Devil's Gate, a little west of the road. The river passes between perpendicular rocks 400 feet high. Beadle and some others went to it. I wished to go but could not without getting behind the train.

June 10 Road near the river some of the way, and crosses small creek of good water; sandy part of the way. Passed considerable alkali and graves. No fuel but sage in abundance of that and it grows very stout along here and has a different leaf from that which grows further back. Camp on Sweet Water.--Excellent grass. The hills are very high and rocky, soil barren. Passed trading post. All Well hills, it is cold and clear as ice water. Beadle, while

June 9 Clear, windy and cool. Rough road. It is a new route, said to be shorter and fords the river but once. The old road fords seven times. We have been gradually rising for three or four hundred miles, to the summit of the dividing ridge between the waters of the Atlantic and the Pacific. Greasewood grows along the road in great abundance. The first that we saw was a little below Fort Laramie. It is two or three feet high and looks more like cedar only brighter green; the new shoots are white, it is thorny. When rubbed between the fingers it is slippery or greasy. It burns rapidly. Passed over the summit of the dividing

It grows in patches about a foot square; the flowers are snowy with an orange center, and about the size and shape of the bunch pink; they are very fragrant. Also a plant spreading on the ground about an inch high. Leaves like the mullen-pink--flowers

June 12 Like a pea--very small and bright purple, covering the leaves entirely--it is handsome. Rain and hail storm severe, two hours. Clear now. Camp near Sweet Water; poor grass. Passed four graves. Passed a grading establishment from a large yellow house with a family living there. There is a wagon near us selling brandy to the emigrants that pass along -- miserable grass. Breedlove was ill & sick last night -- thought it was ague -- took a light

June 10 Clear, cold and windy. Road rough. In sight of a range of high snow mountains--snow in the hollows and on the low hills close to the road. The small purple media grows in the alkaline swamps. Abundance of blue pea blossoms running along the road and a pink and white flower resembling the hibiscus. Soil barren -- no tim

June 13 Very poor camp near a spring formed by the snow melting and drifting from the hills; it is cold and clear as ice water. Beadle, while dipping it, fell into the snow bank up to his arms. We get no birds now but little brown birds, black birds, ravens and crows. A man named Parnell from Platteville has joined the company -- he

June 14 Has his wife, child and sister with him & they appear to be fine people. Passed six graves, aspen, sage, stunted weeds, and the arrowweed moss with white flowers grows along here. They say

June 11 Cloudy and cool; very rough until we struck the old road, which is broad and level. We see few traces of buffalo now, except occasionally an old head -- we have seen none. Camp near Sweet Water, 17 miles without grass on the summit of the dividing

Ridge of South Pass. Altitude 7,085 feet. The ascent and descent is so gradual that it is hard to find the summit, but it is supposed to be near the twin mounds. There is considerable timber on it. There is a well being built here. The ferryman and some traders.

June 12 Warm during the day but cold nights now. Sun shone very hot till two o'clock, then very hard wind with rain and sleet lasting 15 minutes or so. We could see considerable snow falling on a range a little distance from us. They are high and very white with snow -- we have seen them three days. Camp near the Pacific Springs, good water -- miserable grass. Breedlove was taken sick last night -- thought it was ague -- took a light portion of physic. He is very sick now. All say it is mountain fever which is common on the mountains and severe but does not last long. He has taken a dose of calomel. We are laying by today. Another man has taken sick with mountain fever this evening, rest of the company in good health, crossing Black's Fork.

June 13 Very pleasant. The sick are able to ride on beds in the wagons -- they are a little better today. Good road. Passed the junction of the California and Oregon roads; here the Oregon emigration and part of the California emigrants leave us. Camp a little sandy -- swift current. Sick a little better. Passed four log houses and an enclosure of some sort on the north side of Black's Fork.

June 14 Clear and warm. Sandy road -- rough and over cobble stones. Very barren soil nothing but greasewood, sage, stunted weeds, and the beautiful moss with white flowers grows along here. They say that beautiful cornelians are found here. I have looked vainly for them but have found none. Passed 42 graves in all. Camped on big sandy -- a few cottonwood trees on it. We traveled 17 miles without grass or water. I do not get tired of the journey, on the contrary.

road very rough. Many of the mountains are very snowy. Saw a few
few oak trees on the mountains of they look like old friends. There
are many delightful little poplar groves between the mountain-
tains. Saw some swallows twittering about their nests in the
high rocks. Camped near a beautiful spring and creek with cool
green willow growing around them. Excellent mountain grass. Saw
the Utah Indians gathering locusts in old basins and bags and
eat. They gather them very fast, pulling one wing off so they
cannot fly. They are very low Indians and very ugly looking.

June 21 Pleasant. Road through the deep ravine till we arrived at and
Weber River. The mountains look very high and grand and there
are numerous fine springs and brooks along the road. It is very
delightful. There are rose bushes nine and ten feet high that
grow with the willows along the brooks. Ferried Weber River
4 rods wide. It has more timber on it than on any other stream

June 23 Pleasant. Camp in the ravine between the mountains. Good
grass and water. The streets are regular and broad and
All Valle runs from the mountains east of the city, divides into

June 22 Pleasant. Very bad road through the Hanyon the crossed Hanyon
Creek three times, short turns in the road, high bushes and good
trees. Crossed the high mountains because we saw other trains
going up and the latest tracks were over them so we thought the
Hanyon impassible when we might have come around. High Parnell from
Platteville killed a 150 dollar horse dead by pulling him too
long without breathing. We got up without any trouble but it
was very hard for the teams, and we did not get any grass for
them till four o'clock in the afternoon, then very good grass. We
Camped near a beautiful little brook of clear, cold water.

I like it better every day. Sick - better.

June 15 Clear and pleasant. Ferried Green River today. 16 rods wide. It grows low and is sweet and beautiful. Abundances of the moss. It is very high now, has considerable timber on it. There is a new house being built here. The ferryman and some traders live here. They have cheese for sale at \$1 a pound (written \$1000). Camp on Green River. Found some light red, bell form flowers growing like tomato plant. The leaves were exactly like

June 16 Clear and warm. Very rough road travelled near Black's fork of Great Basin. Altitude 7,700 feet. Small cedar trees on the mountains. Crossed near river (the branches). Forded one, saw some high clay hills next to the Fork. Were obliged to

June 17 Clear and pleasant. Took new road to avoid crossing Black's Fork. There is a strip of 20 miles without water. Took in water at a small creek and drove 10 miles out to camp. Excellent grass. John is not so well tonight. All the rest well. Mosquitoes are intolerable. The whole company united in declaring they never knew them so bad before. We cannot sit still. Rich soil, good cold water and considerable timber. Very rough

June 18 Road - over some high ridges. Altitude 7,315 feet. Passed two copperas or soda springs, some alkali and several springs of clear cold water. Camped in the valley between high mountains. The descent from the mountain to the valley was difficult, the pass narrow, rocky and steep.

June 19 Clear and warm. Crossed between mountains. Passed over east foot of dividing ridge between the waters of the Colorado and Green River most of the day. Passed over very barren country mountains. Crossed near river (the branches). Forded one, saw some high clay hills next to the Fork. Were obliged to

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We ascended one mountain just before camping. Altitude 7,245 feet Salt Lake extends from a point a little south from the city have a view of the south part of the valley of the Great Salt to about 80 miles north. It is about 25 to 30 miles wide. It Lake. There was snow 12 or 15 feet deep on the summit of it close is 25 miles from the city but we could see it plainly from the beside the road. We scraped the top off and got clean snow-- road. Passed 2 sulphur springs, one that has pipes to convey the stopped there to let the teams rest a little. The sun shone very water to the bath-house, another 2 miles from there; it is boil- hot and there were green trees, bushes, and flowers in blossom ing water and runs along near a big rock. There are many farms alk around the monstrous snow pile forming such singular contrast along here, they are all irrigated by little brooks that are between the glistening leaves and dreary snow. The mountains easily turned out of their course into the farms. They gen- here are covered with pine, fir trees and poplar. There is a erally make good butter and cheese, butter is 25¢, cheese 3, man named Shaw who was acquainted with your brother Oliver and sugar 4, flour 16, per hundred. They passed a law that no flour all of your relations in N.H., Captain of a company from Racine. should be sold for less than 20 per hundred to keep it from His company has travelled along with us from New Fort Kearney. going out of the city because it is so scarce. The grasshoppers He stayed with Charles one night four years ago and when he heard are destroying their crops this year. We have been 47 days the name Ashley he thought it might be him and so got acquainted coming from Hanesville here, that is we have travelled that with William. He appears to be a fine man.

June 23 Pleasant. Drove through the city of the Great Salt Lake today. It is 800 miles from here to California. If this is worth read- It is handsomely laid out, the streets are regular and broad and ing read it and show it to no one if you please. Give our love a stream runs from the mountains east of the city, divides into to all and remember us always when you are happy. We are getting two branches, passes through the city into the outlet of Utah along well and have been blessed with good health. River which is three miles from the city. There are many good buildings most of them are adobes. The church is low, large and long and the Council house is large. They are building a temple 300 feet long and 100 feet wide, four stories high of stone. Brigham Young is President of the city, he lives in a large adobe house painted white, it stands by itself on the side of the hill with a pretty yard and grease trees around it. The valley is about 40 miles long and from 20 to 25 wide -- surrounded on the south and east by high mountains.

DiaryIntroduction

Algeline Jackson was married to William Ashley in Waterloo (Now Burton) Wisconsin just before they started for California in the spring of 1852. Mrs. Ashley was twenty-two years old.

The first and last parts of her diary have been lost and this part is a copy so that it has not been verified and numbers especially are often uncertain.
(San Diego Public Library)

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All well.

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A. J. Ashley

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Typescript

(Newberry Microfilm 1 - 3)