

EXCERPTS FROM THE JOURNAL

OF

SETH LEWELLING

MAR. 25, 1850 - SEPT. 10, 1852

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From the Journal of Seth Lowelling begun in a book purchased by him at Sacramento City, California, on the 25th of October 1850 for the sum of 2.00

This the 23rd of 3rd month 1850

da mo

23 3 I started this morning at 1 o'clock for California, this was a trying time with me the most so I have ever experienced in my remembrance. I went to Knights town and there took stage for Cincinnati went to Cambridge and there lay over till.

24 Sun 7 o'clock this morning the stage started for Cincinnati where we landed at 9 o'clock this evening at the Galt house where I stayed all night.

25 Mon, this morning I set out to see if I could get passage to St. Joseph I found a boat bound for St Joe by the name of Gladiator I looked out the captain and bargained with him for 18.00 to St. Joe and carried my baggage on board, then went and laid in my clothing for the trip.

26 Tues. bad news this morning on a boat that is near by there was a robbery committed last night 6 of the boys bound for California had their money all together and under took guard it 2 of them watched at a time but there being 2 doors to a room and they not being aware of it while they watched at one door the robbers come in at the other and took out about 2800.00 they will have to make another raise before they go to California

da month

27 wed. at 9 o'clock this morning the boat started with the trail

28 thu nothing of much note today

29 Fri we arrived at the mouth of the Ohio

30 Sat. going up the Mississippi River

31 Sun we arrived at St Louis

1 mon 4 Still at St Louis. this morning this evening the captain told us he could not go up the Missouri River on account of low water. he engaged out passage on the Syranack So we started immediately

2 Tues How we are going up the Missouri River the weather being cool and damp makes our passage very disagreeable

3 wed Still winding our way up the River

4 thu Cold and stormy

5 Fri Cold rains today

6 Sat Still cool and cloudy

7 Sun Fair and some little warmer

8 mon Cool winds today

9 Tues arrived at St Joe this morning

10 wed today I looked around for the company I found a man that traveled through Iowa and from him I learned that they they had started some 4 or 5 days ago I concluded to buy a pony and over taking them St Joe is a beautiful place situated on the right hand going up the Missouri River

11 thu this morning I succeeded in buying a pony I packed my cloths and in the after noon I set out across the plains to over take the company I traveled out 5 or 6 miles and camped in a beautiful valley at the foot of the Bluffs.

12 Fri this morning I struck out a lone across the Prairie meeting a keen wind with some little snow. toward night the sun come out and wind laid which to me was quite pleasant I passed the Agency 4 or 5 miles and camped on a beautiful little run after traveling about 30 miles over a hilly road the Agency is beautiful situation with about 200. acres in cultivation.

- 13 St this morning my feet were verry sore but I set out on my journey to day I found the first emigrants and as good luck would havit they were 5 packers So we fell in to gather but my feet by this time were verry sore but my faith being Strong I endured the pain with out flinching this evening we camped on a little run to the left of the road where we had red elm wood for fire. when I went to ly down I found my feet were swelled so that I could not draw my boots so I had to ly with them on
- 14 Sun this morning we strick out & met some 100 or more men returning from a Gold Search about 300 miles west of StJoseph who had run our of provisions & did not Succeed in finding Gold. the day being quite cold & windy we struck camp one half mile to the right of the road on a beautiful little Stream running to the east some grass & willow for fuel. more deer & turkeys.
my feet were still Swolen very titer
- 15 Monday Cloudy this morning a bout the time we were packed up it commenced raining, wind in the east, rain continued study all day, this evening we arrived at big Blue R. (Cameled on a prairie)
- 16 Tuesday this morning my provision being Scarce I made arrangements with a mule team to travel & board with them the weather being fare this morning we set out, & were till noon crossing the River in the afternoon we traveled about 12 miles camped on a Stream to the left of the road Some wood & water.
- 17 Wed traveled throught a broken Prairie all day Camped on a stream to the right of the road where I saw Some Sign of turkeys
- 18 thur high winds to day which makes it verry disagreeable Camped on a branch of big Sandy
- 19 Friday traveled to big Sandy Camped about 4 mi back to the right of the
- 20 Sat. traveled to little Sandy Camped wood & water scarce
- 21 Sunday This morning I rose before day, settled with the train packed my poney & set out to overtake the company this morning I shot two prairie hens & in a short time I overtook a man with a team, with whom I agreed to give the chieanes to get my baggage halled. I then nounted & road hard till late in the afternoon when I overtook the company & found them all in good health to a branched wood & water
wood & water plenty thence to a branch
wood & water Cal March & April on to day
- 1850 An extract of the travel of the company from St. Joe
Great Holiday killed a buffalo calf & a buck an antelope & Easter a Da. Mo. very large Buffalo Kill 10 feet from camp to kill 7 Buffalo swan
- 30 Sat. We crossed the Missouri River on our way to California. Camped in a large bottom where there was a bundance of Rushes, pea vine & some grass
- 31 Sun. Remained in camp; muddy Rainy & disagreeable
- 1st 4th Mon. Went to St. Joseph & bought the most of our provisions & cattle feed thence to little Blue (Cottonwood rock)
- 2 Tues. Cleared up the dishes & baked a lot of bread, on this day we organised in a company consisting of about 50 men, and elected Franklin Street president W. Peagan & R.J. Johnson directors, D.M. Kelsey Treasurer.
- 3 Wed Moved to the bluff 7 mi wood & good water some grass, cloudy all day at of the broken bluffs
- 4 Thu. Remained in camp. Cold & drisling rain, at night some soft snow wind in the north west
- 5 Fri Still cold & rainy 4 of our boys are out herding the cattle. D.M. Kelsey is elected Cook for two weeks.
- 6 Sat. Went to town to lay in the balance of our outfit
- 7 Sunday Packed up & Started on our journey traveled over quite hilly road but dry 11 miles to a creek Camped at 3 Oak Indian coffin up in a tree, plenty of wood and water
- 8 thence up the bottom of little Blue to where the road leaves the River, thence over the ridge to a branch of little Blue Camped. Some wood remaining

- 24. " 4 , thence to a Sloe. Some wood & Standing water 4 miles
thence a cross the Prairie to Flat River 20 "
- Some wood on an Island the Bluffs are 2 1/2 miles from
the Bank of the River. we struck the River 12 miles
below Ft Kearney this is 267 miles west of St. Joseph.
- 25. " 5. thence up the River 9 "
- Camped to herd our cattle on the Island where there is some
grass the wind turned from the North last evening and blew
strong from that direction all day to day
- 26 " 6 " Snowed last night 1 1/2 inches deep. wind Still in the
North quite cool moved up the River (Camped plenty wood) 2 "
- 27 " 7 remained in camp wind Still in North with showers of
snow R.J.J. & others lassoed a poor 2 year old buffalo Bull
and brought him in Camp
- 28. " 1st day of week Still in camp Some of our men are gone to
the Fort
- 29. " 2 " Remained in camp in the afternoon the clouds thickened up
& we had the appearance of a Storm about sunset the wind turned
from the north & blew off with a hard squall & no Rain
- 30. " 3 " Still in camp, the wind has abated & weather fine
- 1. 5. 4. day Started on our journey 6 teams in company The ballance
of the company stayed to recruit their teams, this dissolved
the organization to fort 2 miles
- Thence up the River Camped on the bank 11 miles
the River is a bout 1 3/8 miles wide at this place. the water
is blown to the north side of the bed of the River in consequence
of a strong south wind leaving the bed of the River dry next the
south bank :
- 2. " 5. " Thence up the bank of the River-- 6 mi
Met 13 See Indians a war party going down towards the Fort
we had considerable of sport with them & after giving them
some bread they bid us goodby & went on their way their weapons
ware spears one sword Some Short guns Some pistoles & bows and
arrows
- 3. " 6 " This morning H.W. Johnson Shot a buffalo about 80 yds in
River Ben Doulin waded in & tied a rope around his horns & we
snaked him to shore he would weigh near twelve hundred, thence
up the River 16 mi
Camped willow & cottonwood for fuel. H.W.J. shot a buffalo cow,
that was good beef. S.L. shot a bull did not get him
- 4. " 7 " Thence up the River to Plum Creek 4 mi
a few scattering cottenwoods on the bank, thence up
the River 5 mi
Camped on the prairie wood & water 3/4 of a mile to the right
- 5. " 1 " Sunday This morning some spits of snow P. Keeler killed
a fine buffalo we saw two large herds of Buffalo today traveled
up the bottom near the River (Camped) 10 mi
grass poor no wood near the war party of the See Indians
overtook us this evening returning holms
- 6. " 2 " Ice this morning 3/4 inch thick quite cool but clear we
saw a very large herd of buffalo on the opposite side of the
River I suppose over a thousand in number 75 horse teams passed
us yesterday Traveled (no wood camp) 15 mi

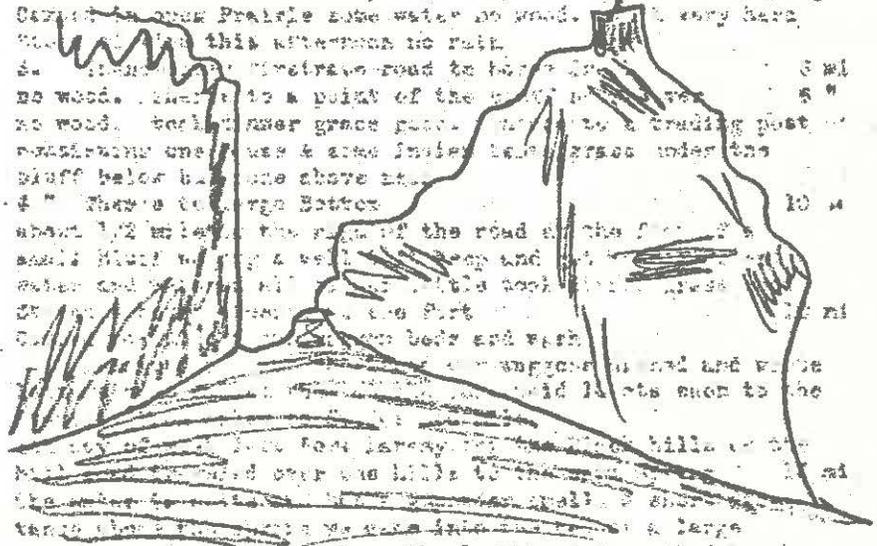
- 7 " 3 " I with others went to the Bluffs this morning I call the highest peaks over 200. ft above the level of the River. Doulin & McWhorter Killed 3 Buffalo this fore noon, after we took dinner a large Bull came Running Close to our Cattle Several of the Company ran out with their guns John & I gave him 2 fatal shots after running about 2 miles and receiving another Shot or two fell dead, traveled up the river (camped) 15 mi
Some wood grass poor
- 8 " / 4 " traveled to Cottonwood Springs 4 mi
Grass tolerably good, thence to ash Guley 2 "
Good Ash wood some grass no water nearer than the River
1 1/2 miles we got Venison at this Camp to revive our spirits.
- 9 " 5 " thence up the river 8 mi
good Grass but no wood, water to the right in Beaver dam
thence up the River (camped) 5 "
Camped by a branch in Valey no wood we use Buffalo chips, we have not had any water since we left the Missouri River better than the Missouri water except one Spring.
- 10 " 6 " traveled up & crossed the south fork of the River 13 "
12 miles above the fork camped on the north Bank. Onley 3 waggons had crossed this spring before us and in 1 hour 90 waggons had reached the northern shore aveageing about 5 naimals to the waggon. onley 10 or 12 ox teams crossed. the River is about 1,000 yds wide and near 3 ft deep in the deepest place. no wood here.
- 11 " 7 " Traveled up the north fork 6 mi
to a small grove of ash bushes by crossing a sloe thence up the valey at the foot of the Bluff 6 mi
Camped 1 mile from the River no wood or water
- 12 " I Traveled up the River to the foot of Bluff 12 mi
Then took dinner thence up the Bluff 4 "
Camped about 200 ft. above the bed of the River
no water or wood keep Buffalo chips
- 13. " 2 " Traveled over the bluffs to the River again (no wood) 11 mi
took dinner, thence up the River 4 mi
Camped on the bank where the bluff came close to the River
- 14. " 3 " Thence up the River (took dinner) 8 "
thence to a butifal Cedar grove of 47 trees 6 "
Ten waggons camped amongst them, passed. 2 "
To a firstrate spring & some Cedar wood grass good a few
- 15. " 4 " Thence over the bluff to ash hollow 3 "
the bed of the Stream is 5 rods wide, plenty of ash wood and spring water, Scarce one mile from where we enter the hollow to the Valey at the foot of the bluffs. Here is a vilage of Soe Indians who are perfectly friendly; thence up the foot of the bluff over heavy sand Camped at the first good grass we 10 mi
- 16. " 5 " Thence over heavy Sandy Road (Cameoed) found to day 20 mi
good grass 10 miles from our Starting point, grass midling good tonight buffalo chips & River water
- 17 " 6 " Thence over good road to pine Creek, pine in sight all the forenoon on bluffs to left 10 mi
no timber on the road water good, thence ^{over} good road 11 "
We camped a bout 8 miles from the Courthouse Rock on the open Prairie grass poor chips scarce, no water near

18. " 7 " Thence to a creek 30 yds wide butiful water 2 mi
 thence up the foot of the Ridge (no water some grass) 8 "
 I with 5 others left the Road & struck for the Courthouse
 Rock soon after we started this morning & did not overtake
 the teams till after they had stoped for noon, after climbing
 on top & viewing the Rock & walking round it I supposed it to
 be about 600 feet high I then walked a bout one mile to the
 north west to a butiful moun from the top of which I took the
 following drawing of the Rock & pass

There is a sawmill shop & several cabins beside a number
 of Indian tents & a fine spring ~~water~~ ^{human figure} ~~is~~ ^{and}
 carries to over Prairie some water no wood. ~~very hard~~
 this afternoon no rain

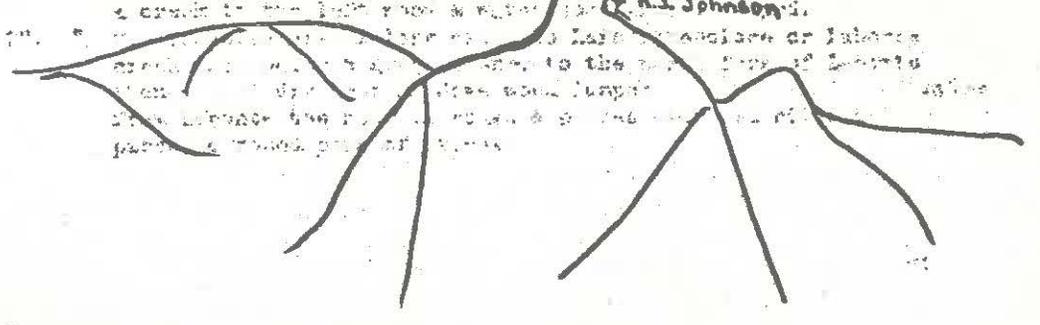
21. " 3 " Thence to a point of the ridge 5 mi
 no wood. ~~to a~~ ^{to a} trading post
 consisting of one ~~was~~ ^{was} a area inside ~~had~~ ^{had} grass under the
 bluff below ~~had~~ ^{had} one above it

22. " 4 " Thence to a large Bottom 10 mi
 about 1/2 mile ~~the~~ ^{the} side of the road ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~road~~ ^{road}
 small hills ~~with~~ ^{with} a well ~~and~~ ^{and}
 water and ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~road~~ ^{road} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~road~~ ^{road}
 St. ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~part~~ ^{part}
 C. ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~part~~ ^{part} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~part~~ ^{part}



23. " 5 " Thence to a good Spring 3 mi
 thence to a ~~spring~~ ^{spring} in ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~prairie~~ ^{prairie}
 Thence to the River opposite Chimney Rock 9 mi
 Camped near an old fur traders Ranch, killed 9 rattlesnakes
 amongst hands this afternoon, Swaped our lead Ashbarger Steer
 to the traders & gave 15.00 to boot. the chimney Rock is about
 one mile South of our Camp I suppose its hight to be four
 hundred feet high. a drawing of which follows below

24. " Thence up the altar to where it passes through the bluff 1 mi
 The bluffs are principally composed of rock & rise to the
 light of 300 ft here we saw the ~~mountain~~ ^{mountain} Sheep J. I.
 & I shot 3 sage hens just evening ~~and~~ ^{and} a firestrick got
 pie for dinner today, thence ~~up~~ ^{up} to the river again 7 mi
 plenty of wood & good grass. ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~river~~ ^{river}
 a creek in the left run a water ~~fall~~ ^{fall}
 A. I. Johnson



- 19. " 1 day of week Thence took a lefthand outoff, traveled 16 mi
without water, over butifful Prairie with high peaks rising on
each side of the Road. Thence to Dribbs trading post 5 mi
Camped. water drift wood & grass, no buffalo in those regions,
Antelope. Elk. Mountain Sheep & woolves are plenty. there are
three good log cabbins at this post & Several Indian tents,
Considerable of Pine & Cedar bordering the Bluffs wood &
Firstrate Robes can be bought for 4.00 with a salt current
- 20. " 2. Thence to Rubadoes trading post 8 mi
Here is a blacksmith shop & Several cabbins beside a number
of Indian tents & a fine spring Thence over the bluff road good 6 mi
Camped in open Prairie some water no wood. had a very hard
Storm of wind this afternoon no rain
- 21. " 3. Thence over firstrate road to horse Creek 6 mi
no wood. Thence to a point of the bluff near River this 6 "
no wood. took dinner grass good. Thence to a trading post miles
consisting one house & some Indian tents grass under the
bluff below but none above near spring & small lake 12 mi
- 22. " 4. Thence to large Bottom north of this water the next 10 mi
about 1/2 mile to the right of the road at the foot of a
small Bluff we dug a well 5 ft deep and got most Excelent 4 mi
water and watered all of our Cattle took dinner grass good 4 mi
Stopped 4 hours thence to the Fort for 10 mi
Camped to cut off our waggons beds and wash water is
- 23. " 5. Remained in camp Shortened our waggons Washed and wrote
letters home mailed them at the Fort paid 10 ots each to the
States. From Salem to St. Joe 260 miles
- 24. " 6th day of week left Fort Laremy for the Black hills on the
hill road traveled over the hills to the warm Spring 18 mi
the water is quite and has a gupeorder smell. a short dis-
tance above the spring we came into the bed of a large
creek where the road forked. the left hand is called the
hill road & the right hand River road we took the right 7 mi
hand road thence to a good Spring (along to the west) 12 mi
thence to a spring in dry Creek (Camped on Prairie) 10 mi
- 25. " 7. Thence to Spring in dry Creek 8 mi
thence to dry creek. water some distance to left 2 "
took dinner Rained & hailed Considerably thence to Horse 8 mi
Shoe creek good grass & wood 8 "
thence to branch (Camped drift wood fog fuel) 2 "
- 26. " 1 day. Thence to the River over the river to grass 4 "
Thence up the River to where it passes through the bluff 1 "
The bluffs are princilpy composed of rock & rise to the
hight of 600 ft here we saw the first Mountain Sheep J.L.
& I shot 3 sage hens last evening & we had a firstrate pot
pie for dinner today, thence across to the river again 7 miles
plenty of wood & good grass. thence up a ridge 10 "
- 27. " 2. Traveled over a long ridge to Lafourcheboises or Labonte
creek wood water & grass thence to the north fork of Labonte
thence to a dry branch. Some wood Camped 7 miles
from Labonte the road is rough & passes over red hills & 10 mi
passed a round peak of Stones, passed several good
waggons places grass good Crossed a Creek with several
Cotton wood trees on its Banks

- 28. " 3. Thence to A. LePrele River timber & grass 8 miles
 this is a fine stream of water runs swift 50 ft wide 4 times
 Thence to Fourchebois River a distance of 8 miles
 4 miles from A. LePrele you will come to a branch a smaller
 grove of timber & some water in it, one mile further you
 will find a beautiful branch grass & some wood From this
 branch to Fourchebois River three miles plenty of wood &
 grass this stream is about 30 ft wide with a swift current
- 29. " 4. Thence to where the road strikes the River 4 mi
 grass scarce no wood, thence to Deer Creek River 5 mi
 plenty of wood & grass, thence to good camping (on the
 River wood & grass) 7 mi
 thence up the valley on the River (Camped) left hand pass
 good grass up a ravine to the left no wood near 6 "
- 30. " 5. thence up the Valley crossing several branches to the
 Ferry a distance of (some wood on the River) 16 miles
 crossed paid \$4.00 per waggon Swam our cattle Camped 17 mi
- 31. " 6. From the Ferry to a mineral spring & small Lake 12 mi
 let stock drink very sparingly of this water the next
 water is a small stream running to the left hand do not
 let stock drink of this water 4 mi
 the next water is a branch flowing to the South east 8 mi
 the road runs parallel with the branch for 2 mi
 where you will find the willow springs this water is 5 "
 good for man or beast named Sweetwater
 The largest Sage we have seen was 18 in in circumference
 & 9 ft 6 in high the June at the foot of the mountain
- 1st " 6. Thence through the pass to Pacific Springs 11 mi
 of 6th no 7th day of the week thence 4 mi
 We came to a muddy branch in a Valley flowing to the left
 we did not let our stock drink of the water we saw several
 horses sick on the spot by drinking of it. From this
 Alkali Branch we alter we cross the second pass the road 7 mi
 We came to a branch to the left flowing to the west parallel
 with the road we let our stock drink lightly of this water
 thence to a small Creek the water is 1 mi
 flowing to the left no wood here but sage grass scarce 6 miles
 Thence over Sandy road to the Alkali Lakes water for 8 mi
 beware of this water or grass 3 mi
- 2. " Further you strike Sweetwater no wood grass plenty Camped
 on the Bank drove our stock over the river to grass The
 Independence Rock is 1/2 mile further up I believe there
 are thousands of names recorded there on this rock is
 a rounding granite rock it appears to scale off like an
 onion thin at the edges and thicker at the middle. 11 miles
- 2 " 1st we crossed the Sweet water, crossed the Rio Grande 1 mi
 above the rock Thence to the Devils gate 5 mi
 where the Sweetwater runs through the mountain Banks of
 about 400 ft high nearly perpendicular. thence to the
 Crossing of Sweetwater we succeeded in getting them 10 mi
 Several Branches in the distance grass only middling the two
- 3 " 2. Traveled up the River on our trail & a part both 13 mi
 it rained nearly half the day. passed several good
 Camping places Grass good Crossed a Creek with several
 Cotton wood trees on its Banks

4. " 3 " Here we leave the river for 6 mi
 here the road forks the right hand Crosses the River 4 times
 the last Crossing good camping the left hand here leaves the
 river and passes over heavy Sand to where it Strikes River 8 mi
 Some grass here we leave the river travel over sand to
 where the other road comes in thence 2 mi
 to Alkali Swamps Camped we didnot let our Cattle tast the
 water but they got Some of the Alkali by eating the grass
 on the hill. avoid this as a camping place.
5. " 4 " Thence to where the road strikes the River 12 mi
 Alkali Lake just above the ford. of Snow Lake morning
 the road here leaves the River for 8 mi
 the left hand Crosses the River twice the left hand passes
 over the Bluff, thence with view of mountains over a 5 mi
 to a branch & spring grass good a fine place to Camp
6. " 5. Thence up the River one mile here the Road 1 mi
 leaves the River & passes up a canon & over the bluff 12 mi
 to quaking Asp branch in this distance we pass 3 Small
 lakes Some grass on the ridge thence 15 mi
 to Sweetwater, north on willow fork, Snow here 10 ft a
 deep on the bank thence to willow creek 2 mi
 traveled over snow 5 ft deep road good but hard on the
 Cattles feet another a deep every hour Snow hill
 Thence to the south fork 5 mi
 fords good on the above named Streams Camped on branches.
 The largest Sage we have seen was 28 in in circumference 10 "
 & 9 ft 6 in high that grows at the foot of the mountain
7. " 6. Thence through the pass to pacific Springs 12 mi
 thence down the spring branch one mile 21 miles
 from here no water till we reach little Sandy 20 "
 in the distance we cross two dry branches, together
 called dry Sandy down at a point of the pass we travel
 about a half mile after we cross the Second one the Road
 forks the left hand is the Ft. Bridger & Salt Lake Road,
 the Right hand is Sublet's cutoff, from the forks of the
 road to little Sandy on the cutoff 5 Miles is the cut off.
8. " 7. From Little Sandy to big Sandy 6 miles
 Camped to recruit & prepare our selves with water for
 the Desert on the foot of the mountain
9. " 1 Sundy At half past one oclock we set out to cross the
 desert traveled five hours stoped one hour 12 mi
 then struck out & traveled all night 22 miles
10. " 2 Stopped at five in the morning turned our cattle over
 to grass one hour over a high ridge & down a spring
 thence to Green River by 11 Oclk 12 miles
 in the afternoon got our waggons across the big & made
 arrangements to Raft our pack, Cattle and Carpas there by 3 mi
11. " 3. Rafted our waggons & baggage over by the middle of the
 afternoon but failed to get our Cattle over 7 mi
12. " 4. After toiling all day we succeeded in getting them over
 late this evening. plenty of cottenwood on the Islands two
 men drowned Immanuel M Kahn of our train & a packer both
 drowned from swimming horses western trip 7 st
 to a spring below each across 2 small branches a
 narrow valley
 Cattle wood and grass good.