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Wm. J. Matthews

JOHN A. MARKLES DIARY

APRIL 18th 1849

TO

JANUARY 5th, 1850

THE TRAVELS OF A GOLD DIGGER

ENROUTE CALIFORNIA

JOHN. A. MARKLES DIARY  
April 18th 1849

The Travels of a Gold Digger, enroute California.

Wednesday April 18th A.D. 1849

Leave St. Joseph at 1 o'clock p.m. in company with Foster, Steiner, Schott, Taylor and Blissner with one wagon, 2 mules and one pony, with about 3000 lbs. of baggage and travel about 5 miles toward Fort Chiles. Struck our tent, packed our supper, and ate at 3 o'clock, then retired and slept very comfortably although it was very cold in the morning.

Thursday April 19th 1849

We started about 1 o'clock p.m. traveled over 1 1/2 miles of hilly and rough roads and struck tent three times. The third time we unloaded part of our baggage, got our wagon out of the mud and encamped for the night. Mr. Jennings from Greensburg staid all night with us, but Mr. Foster and myself slept in the wagon and we had pretty much of a justification.

Friday April 20 1849

We started early in the morning and traveled about six miles and struck tent about 1 mile above Greensburg. The road very hilly and rough. There is a deep mud hole. After the noon we pitched our tent in the woods and did a good deal of work. I shot a squirrel and a rabbit and shot some more with dogs, then retired.

Saturday April 21 1849

Still laying at Greensburg. Foster and I go to the woods to hunt game. It being very windy we get only 2 squirrels and a rabbit, and at night it rained very fast.

Sunday 22nd 49

It clears off in the morning and is a beautiful day. We are still at the same place as the day before the company is behind.

Monday April 23rd 49

I started in the morning and went back to St. Joseph for letters. came back and the balance of the mess had moved on to Newark about 11 miles and I overtook them at 3 o'clock in the evening. the roads were hilly and very muddy.

Tuesday 24th

We stay at Newark all day. in the morning I took my gun and went to the woods and found any quantity of squirrels and rabbits and for supper we had squirrel soup. the night being pleasant, we slept very comfortably.

Wednesday 25th 1849

We stay in Newark till 2 o'clock p.m. and rig up our team, go about 2 miles and in crossing the notaway bottom we double teamed, then crossed the Notaway River and encamped on the bank with 3 other teams. rained some little in the night. in the evening there was a dark cloud on one side and a prairie burning on the other.

Thursday 26th

As the balance of the company had not come up yet, we are still encamped on the bank of the Notaway River picket our poles in the woods and fish awhile then go gunning discovered some deer but killed none and at night we went fishing.

Friday 27th A.D. 1849

The greater part of the company are still back yet and our situation on the Notaway being very good we still lay here and the wolves howl around our tent all night which kept us from sleep a part of the time.

Saturday 28th

We hitch up our team early in the morning and overtake 15 of our wagons. travel over some very hilly roads built our bridge, cross 10 miles of prairie travel about 3 miles farther then encamp on the edge of a beautiful prairie at 5 o'clock. the distance of today's travel was about 14 miles. the night was very pleasant although very windy.

Sunday 29th

It being a pleasant place we lay all day and graze our mules in the prairie. Went on guard at half past 3 o'clock and the night was very windy.

Monday 30th

Start in the morning at 7 o'clock and travel over about 19 miles of prairie, somewhat rolling, and 4 miles of scrubby timber and then encamped on the banks of the Tarcas, some on one side and some on the other.

May 1st A.D. 1849

this day we traveled about 20 miles over prairie land, here and there some low scrubby timber. the roads were very good. we then encamped in the bottom below Linden Salt County Mo. The day was very cool and very windy, and rained at night.

Wednesday May 3rd 1849

This day we traveled about 19 miles. the road was very good except some hills, principally all rolling prairie land. we crossed River Ichahpohlay in the evening and encamped on the bank by a store and a dwelling house.

Thursday May 3rd 1849

We started early in the morning and traveled about 17 miles over prairie land, here and there some very romantic mounds. about ten o'clock we passed the lake house and about 2 o'clock we encamped 3 miles from the Missouri River on low bottom and at night it rained very fast with some hail.

Friday 4th

The wind being very high we could not cross the river. So we lay at the same place with 4 other men. we had a very pleasant place as there was plenty of deer to chase. But we caught none.

Saturday May 5th A.D. 1849

We still lay at the same place as the ferry was crowded with  
Mayans

Sunday 6th

Today we start and go down to the river and cross at  
Bussells ferry, 7 miles below old fort Kearney and encamped  
on the bank and in the evening I started up the river by  
myself and on the way I saw some very pretty crystal stones.  
Some were hard, and some were very soft. I proceeded a  
little farther to the blue point which was really a  
natural curiosity. I then crossed the river and went up and  
staid all night with the Kickapoo men who were  
encamped on the west side of the river and learned from them  
that they had left the company and joined an old company from  
Indiana.

Monday 7th

We still lay on the bank of the Missouri river as the  
company is not yet all come up yet today I went to the  
woods to hunt

Tuesday 8th

We started today at 1 o'clock and traveled about 5 miles  
through prairie land. No road except what was made by the  
emigrants, encamped on a small ravine.

Wednesday May 9th 1849

Started at 10 o'clock A.M. and pass old fort Kearney. I  
started at 10 o'clock P.M. then take a W. course and traveled over a  
beautiful plain. the road was excellent and as there was no  
need for water we could not encamp till half past eleven  
o'clock at night. We then found a small ravine with some  
wood on it and a stream of water which was very clear and  
good. the distance today was about 26 miles

Thursday 10th

Today we lay at the above encampment as our mules were much  
fatigued, and at night it rained very fast

Friday 11th

We started this morning at 7 o'clock and traveled 15 miles, all prairie land. The road was very muddy from the rain last night, and on account of a bad crossing we had to encamp and fix it. We had to carry our wood for cooking about one mile. Rained considerably in the forenoon, and clear in the afternoon.

Saturday 12

We start in the morning 5 o'clock and in a north western direction about 20 miles, the roads were very bad, as it was all prairie land the rain of yesterday made it very muddy particularly mill river bottom. In crossing the river we had to let our wagons down to it with ropes, all got across safely, and encamped on the bank. The night was very cold.

Sunday 13th 1849

Today we lay by, and I tasted the water of the river and found it so salt that I could not take more than a sip without casting it up again. A great many catfish and pike in it. Some of the company caught some very large ones. I went back from the encampment and found a great many wild onions. Took some to the camp and ate hearty of them. Today for the first time I began to suspect one of our company for having the money which I lost on the bank of the Missouri but said nothing. At night it rained very fast. Some of the tents had 3 or 4 inches of water in them.

Monday May 14th

We started this morning at 8 o'clock. The roads were very dry and hilly and a great many ravines which were very bad crossing. We encamped on a small stream which was clear and very good. The distance today was 15 miles still prairie land.

Tuesday May 15th A.D. 1849

This morning our mules shoulders were very sore from the hard drawing yesterday. We started half past 8 o'clock and found the roads much better, and more level than they were yesterday. But there was no water except a small pond here and there, about 11 o'clock several others and myself had a fine chase after a wolf but did not succeed in catching it.

and in returning I found several sticks of wood and as it was precious stuff I shouldered it and trotted it to the wagon, for fear we could not get to where there was any and we would have to supper on a cold chuck. But fortune favored us. After traveling 31 miles from where we last encamped, we came to a beautiful place on the right hand side of the road. Between two ravines in which there was both wood and water. The wood was all cottonwood and the water of one of the ravines was very sulphury.

#### Wednesday May 16th.

We started this morning at 8 o'clock. Three of our mules shouldered were so sore that we had to take them out and put in the pony to make a team. The road was very good and the day cool, so we got along very well, although our mules suffered considerably for the want of water as there was none of any account for about 25 miles. This day was a day of considerable fun. The mules that we took out were not broken to ride and the whole country was level prairie. We thought we would ride them. So I mounted one and rode it ahead to graze it and when the train came up the first thing I saw was Ellsesser coming limping along and when I asked him what was the matter, he said that the Danish mule had threw him and it was vain to try to get him on it again. By this time Taylor became tired walking so he thought he would ride the mule that I had rode. So we got him on, and the mule started out and in about 500 yards he was sprawling on the ground. Then Steiner mounted Ellsesser's mule and rode it awhile very well, but it was not very long till he came sprawling. He got up and got on again and rode till night and I rode the other one. We came to the Platte river about 3 o'clock and went on up some three or four miles and encamped after travelling 36 miles. There was a little disaffection in the company and there was three encampments. As the mules were very tired, some of them stopt, and some went to the encampment picked by the captain. Our mess and three others encamped between the two encampments.

#### Thursday 17th A.D. 1849

This morning we all got together again and made a start about 9 o'clock up the river. The river was very dry and appeared very shallow. Some few cottonwood and cedar trees on the bank but the land back from the river on both sides had not even a twig on it and was low and level and very sandy and appeared as though it never overflowed. The grass was better today than any we have yet past. The road was



Very good except some marshy places that was very much cut up by those that were ahead. Our mules being tired, we encamped on the bank of the river after traveling about 17 miles. Taylor Steiner and Ellsesser were very sore from their troubles yesterday.

Friday May 19th 1849

This morning we started at half past 5 o'clock and traveled 18 miles up the Platte. The road was very good but no water except in the river. White, Foster Steiner and I went ahead about 1 mile and just before we got to Pawnee town we met a Pawnee Indian with whom we had some sport. Steiner talked Dutch to him. We then got him to shoot at a dine fixed up on a stake and told him he might have it if he knocked it down with his arrow. He drew his bow, shot and missed it. He shot again and knocked it down and the next shot he knocked another down. He then left us and we went up to the village and on the way up we saw the grave of a chief which was all encircled with dead horse heads, 50 in number. But we found no person there as they had all went down to the Council Bluffs. The town was irregularly built, consisting of 110 or 120 houses all built with mud. They were all built round with a long entrance which was like the entrance into a scalp-bank. We then went on a little farther and met 3 more who had come. They were very friendly they shook hands as friendly as though they had met their best friend. We then went 1 mile above the town and all the wagons came up and we then encamped and at night it rained as fast as it will. It rained and lightened and thundered very much. I stood guard from 10 to 12 and it was so dark that I could not see a mule till I was far against it.

Saturday May 19th 1849

This morning we started at 5 o'clock. The road was very muddy in places and other places where there was mud and it was better than yesterday. In about 5 miles we came to a Pawnee Indian who was shot with three balls in the hip and he had some writing with him stating that he had been shot by the Sioux which was signed, an emigrant. Some of the company gave him something to eat and we passed on. We traveled 10 miles and encamped on the Platte. At night it rained very fast with a great deal of lightning and thunder.

Sunday May 20th A.D. 1849

Today we lay by. In the morning, 60 Sioux Indians came down the river and from what we could understand they were in pursuit of the Pawnee Indians as the two tribes were at war.

with each other. They were very friendly and asked for something to eat. We gave them some biscuit which they eat. then they turned back and went up the river and crossed. A short time after, an old Indian came up the river and showed us a scalp off an Indian which we supposed was the wounded Indian that we saw yesterday. in the morning Schotte traded 12 biscuit for a buffalo robe. the day was very pleasant except a very strong south wind which was so bad that we could scarcely keep our tent from blowing over. today I began to get a little more suspicious about the money which I lost.

Monday 21st 1849

This morning we started at 8 o'clock and traveled 16 miles. the road was very dirty some places and other places very sandy. and toward evening our mules became very tired. the grazing was better today than any we have past. a great many deer, elk antelope and wolves were seen, but as it was all prairie land we could not get close enough to shoot any. in the evening, Black and Smith fought and there was a great deal of confusion in the camp. a great many think that we will never get our wagons through and some was for throwing them away and packing some for double teaming. But there nothing done so I went on guard at 10 o'clock and off at 12. The night was very cold.

Tuesday May 22nd 1849

This morning as usual, at 7 o'clock we hitch up 8 mules and push along. the road was good, the day very warm. we encamped on the Platte after traveling 15 miles. today my feet got very sore and about 2 o'clock I pulled off my boots and went barefoot till evening but the change did not help the cause any as the road was sandy. in the evening I rode about a mile for wood and whiffy played me the slip and went back to the camp, so I was left to foot it. the night was very cold.

Wednesday May 23rd 1849

This morning we started half past 8 o'clock. passed through Fort Kearney about 2 o'clock and encamped one mile above the fort. the night was very cold.

Thursday 24th

today there is a general tie up. we all concluded that we have too much load and we get at work and take half of our wagon bed off and unloaded every load and trunk out every unnecessary thing that we have and a great deal more than we wished to throw away. This evening Captain Ankrum said he would resign as the company was divided into about 6 companies. at night it rained very fast and blowed very much. It rained 10 inches in the bucket standing out on the ground. In the evening Foster & I went down to the fort. and traded 1 pair of pants, and a trunk and 2 shirts for 2 large buffalo robes which were very comfortable at night.

Friday May 25th A.D. 1849

Today we went we hitched up 3 mules and started by ourselves and passed about 100 ox teams and encamped after traveling 10 miles. On the river there was no wood we cooked our supper with grass. The road was very miry and a great quantity of water standing on the low places. This morning there had 3,200 teams passed the fort. The Star company this morning was divided and every team started when they pleased.

Saturday May 26th 1849

This morning it was very cold. So cold that we thought it was going to snow and as there was no wood we had to make our breakfast on biscuit and raw bacon. after breakfast we started and went about 10 miles and cooked some dinner and grazed our mules. we then went on with the 3 mules and encamped by ourselves. the road was very swampy today and a number of deep ravines. we passed several good encampments but unfortunately got to a place where we had to carry wood about half mile. I roasted a snipe at the camp this evening which was quite palatable. the River here is about a mile wide and has been wide from the fort this far, but appeared shallow.

Sunday May 27th

This morning there was a little confusion in the mass whether we should move today or not and finally there was four in favor of moving today so, we started, and it fell my turn to drive, and I drewed the lines and started but not without regret. we traveled about 10 miles and encamped on the same old river. the road was very miry and very much cut up with other teams. on the way Taylor bought one

gallon of Brandy for which he paid 2¢. And in the evening we encamped (with) two other wagons and 6 men from Joseph, Michigan who appeared to be very clever fellows. The country was today as usual all prairie land.

#### Monday 28th

Today we traveled 20 miles about 10 o'clock we passed a very good encampment and in the evening we encamped on the bank of the river where there was good grass on the bank, no wood but plenty of buffalo chips which answered the same purpose. For the last or 2 days the bottom in marshy places was covered with a salt like substance. In the morning Steiner went back of the bluffs to hunt and when he came back he said he had shot at 6 antelopes, two of which he had wounded, but got none, although he saw more than a hundred. they were very plenty but I did not see that many. today we got into the buffalo range. We crossed a number of their trails in which they come to the river for water. they were about 4 inches deep and 10 wide and as evenly as if they were cut with a spade. The land still the same.

#### May 29th A.D. 1849

Today we went 25 miles still in company with the two wagons that we joined with on Sunday evening. At 11 o'clock we passed a beautiful cottonwood grove in which there was water and good grazing. It lay about 1/2 mile from the road on the east side. I took Whitty and rode through it and it done me good to get in the shade and hear the wind rustling through the leaves as it has been some time since I saw a tree of any size. about three o'clock we overtook a company of nine teams from Cincinnati with whom we encamped, as usual, on the river. at night my feet were so sore that I could scarcely walk. about 10 o'clock at night it commenced raining, blowing, lightning and thundering with a perfect rush.

#### Wednesday May 30th

In the morning it quit raining. We started but it soon commenced again and rained very fast with a strong west wind which was very cold. the bluffs today were very rough and rose very abrupt. I saw that there was some rocks and my curiosity led me up to them through the storm at an angle of about 45 degrees and I found them to be a kind of limestone which is used for making white lime. we traveled 13 miles and encamped in a ravine in the bluffs. after the miles

were picketed. Elissesser and I went up a ravine in search of wood. We followed it about 1 1/2 miles and a large solitary and lonely cottonwood tree on which there was an eagles nest and under its root was a wolf den which was large enough for a small family to live in.

Thursday May 31st

Today we traveled 22 miles. for awhile the bluffs were low, the road then ran on the top of them. the grazing was very poor and towards evening our mules were very tired. about six o'clock we drove down to the river and encamped with the Cincinnati company. we took our mules on the island to graze and after night there was a freeze between Steiner and Taylor about a gun cap. today and yesterday the plains were all run over by emigrants in search of oxen that were scared away by the storm on Tuesday night. one man told me that he knew of 700 head that were not found. there were whole families that lost all their teams which places them in rather an unpleasant situation. but I believe they found them again. as a great many of the emigrants stopped to help them to hunt them.

Friday June 1st A.D. 1849

Today we traveled 7 miles. 3 miles brought us to the lower crossing of the South fork of the Platte where we crossed. at the crossing there is an island. We crossed on to the island, and in getting out of the water cracked our wagon tongue. We were detained there some time by some of the ox teams who were double teaming it to cross as the river was about 1/4 mile wide and very sandy in the bottom, and the banks very dirty. I saw 10 yoke of oxen and one horse in one wagon which was not as large as ours. after they were across we started with 2 oxes and went across without any trouble. about 2 miles then brought us across the bluffs to the north fork. we then went up it about 2 miles and encamped by ourselves, a train of ox teams above and below us. The other two wagons were back yet so they did not like to try the ford. They were consulting whether they would go to the upper ford or cross at the lower. but they finally crossed where we did. In the evening we had some buffalo meat cooked on buffalo chips which was very good. it was so good that I thought that I would roast a piece on the fire, but the buffalo chips gave it rather a strong flavor.

Saturday June 30th 1843

Today we traveled 20 miles. the bottom of the north fork resembles so far that of the south which is from 3 to 5 miles wide. Some places the bluffs approach nearly to the waters edge. the grass has been better today than it was on the south fork. today I walked all day in my bare feet as they were so much rubbed that I could not wear shoes

Sunday June 31st

Today we lay by to rest our miles and sun our load. in the evening there was a company from Armstrong & Indiana Counties encamped along side of us

Monday June 4th

today we traveled 21 miles. the road in places was very sandy and run up the bluffs twice as they came bluff to the waters edge. In the morning I saw a little girl by the name of Virginia catch a young antelope and her father could hardly get her to leave it. about 20 miles brought us to ash hollow. we drove down to the mouth of it and encamped. the hollow on the right hand side was very rocky and bluff. a beautiful ravine of clear water runs through it. the bluffs today was decorated here and there with a cedar tree which appeared very majestic as some of them stood on the very highest points.

Tuesday June 5th 1843

Today we traveled 21 miles. the road was very sandy which made it hard driving all day. no wind on the way today and a hail storm at night spoiled the buffalo chips, but fortunately we had some wood in the wagon.

Wednesday 6th

We traveled 13 miles today. 5 miles brought us to Spring creek. the water of which was clear and good for drinking 11 miles farther brought us to another creek, the name of which I could not ascertain but judge it was cedar creek. 2 miles more we came to a good spring where we encamped. during the day we past 2 graves, one was Tindell from Michigan, who was buried on the 4th the other was William Stephens from Boone County Mo who they were just about to bury. They wrapped him in his clothes and put him in a sand

hole but fear that he will not lay long as the wolves appear very hungry as they every night yet have been howling in every direction. in the evening we had another very hard hail storm.

Thursday June 7th A.D. 1942

Today we traveled 20 miles. In the morning Steiner & I took our guns and ascended the bluffs. when we got to the top we saw the solitary tower which appeared to be about 3 miles from us, in the direction that the road run. we traveled about 6 miles toward it and it still appeared to be 3 miles. being determined to go to it we traveled on as near as we could judge about 12 miles to a creek the name of which I could not ascertain. but when we waded it we found it about 4 feet deep and very cold. 3 miles then brought us to the tower, which is a stupendous pile of sand and clay cemented together as to resemble stone, but crumbles off very easy. we ascended to the top of it from the north side without much difficulty. It appeared to be about 500 feet high. Palmer says from 6 to 8 hundred, but from the appearance I think that it has, from the incessant storms been washed down some since he saw it. When I got to the top, I felt quite giddy, but after remaining some time, I could walk around on the top, which was from 3 to 10 feet wide and 100 long, with the bottom or base north and south about 300 feet and east and west about 600, without any trouble. looking from the top towards the river it appeared to be about 3 miles, but after walking it I acquiesced with Palmer and thought it was about 7. There was a great many who came to it, but when they ascended about half way, returned. to view it from the road it appears as a person might imagine that it was a magnificent building. But a nearer approach dispells the idea and it looks as it is, rough and unseemly. near by stands another pile of materials similar to that composing the tower, but neither so large nor so high. the bluffs in the vicinity appear to be of the same material and I judge that the whole country for some distance around the tower at one day was as high as it and has been washed away. a very hard hail storm in the evening.

Friday 8th

We traveled 16 miles today and encamped on the river bank. about 4 miles brought us opposite the Chimney Rock which was in sight yesterday morning. it is of the same material as the tower. it is about 300 feet above the level of the river and is round at the base, and tapers regular to the



height of about 200 feet where it is about 30 by 15 feet, then runs perpendicular to the top and resembles a chimney. In the evening I became more suspicious about my money belt.

Saturday June 9th 1849

Today we traveled 20 miles. About 6 miles brought us to Scotts Bluffs. It is one of the most beautiful places I ever saw. There is a large bottom of about 10 by 15 miles surrounded by them. They are cut up into all kinds of towers some resemble houses, some furnace stacks and chimneys. The tops of which are decorated with modest little cedars. As I passed along through them I thought that if I had a companion I would stop and stay. 10 miles brought us to where we crossed the bluffs where there was plenty of wood and water of the best kind. At the head of a ravine, there is a spring which boils up out of the ground so fast that it throws up black sand with it but does not even cloud the water. I envied Mr. Subedean his situation who has a blacksmith shop, a store and an Indian wife, all of which were situated at a good distance from the spring.

Sunday June 10th

Today we lay by and go back to Subedean and loaded our wagon for a smaller one during which time 6 or 10 Pittsburg wagons past us and from the name they have got, I resolved not to own that I belong to the company.

Monday June 11th

We traveled about 25 miles today. 3 miles brought us to Horse Creek, which was bad crossing. The road was very good, and very good everywhere after we got to the river where there was wood on the shore and islands. At noon we overtook that part of the company which crossed the river at St. Joseph under the command of Captain Taylor. In the evening E.T. was in his elements.

Tuesday 12th

Today we traveled with Taylor's company to noon, where they stopped to lighten off. We were then joined by mess No. 27. After grading we started together where the road leaves the Platte. About 10 miles from where we encamped last night brought us to Fernside Fork, on river, where we had to block up our wagon bed about 6 inches to keep the water out. 1 mile farther brought us to Fort Laramie where we encamped. Wood and water was plenty today along the river.



Wednesday 13th

This morning we took the river road. 3 miles brought us to a very steep bluff which we descended by fastening ropes to the wagon. we then grazed and left the river. about 7 miles farther brought us to a big spring or creek which bursts out at the base of a hill and runs down a sandy hollow. it is about one fourth of a mile below the road. the water was very clear, but too warm for drinking. we filled our kegs and went 5 miles farther and encamped where there was neither wood or water, but good grazing. our mules being back at the spring, we got along very well. Tarasien Peak & the Black Hills were in sight this morning and they are still in sight in the forenoon. Steiner saw snow on the peak and in the afternoon he saw rain.

Thursday 14th

This morning the road forked about 1/2 mile from our camp. we took the left hand fork. about 4 miles brought us to Bitter Cottonwood creek, up which we traveled about 5 miles where we found Dr. Walker's pass preparing to park. at which place there was a large spring with as pretty water in it as ever I saw and was about 8 or 10 feet deep. 3 miles more brought us to another good spring. 2 miles more and we encamped where the grazing was bad and has been so all day. our camp is on a knob, with a ravine below it in which there is some water and a beautiful fine country on our right. Tarasien peak on the left, a long red in front and Killdeer hills behind as I have named them from their resemblance to the old worn-out Pennsylvania fallow fields. The only difference there is wild sage in the place of Killdeers.

Friday 15th

Today we traveled 21 miles. 14 miles brought us to horse shoe creek, on the banks of it there was abundance of wild currants and gooseberry bushes. 7 miles more brought us to a creek where we encamped, the name of which I could not learn. (Afterwards I found it to be La Bonte.) the road between the two creeks was very hilly and covered with wild sage. the grass was very bad. at noon we grazed within about 3 miles of Tarasien peak and on the top of it we could see snow and ice, with the assistance of a spyglass.

Saturday June 16th 1849

Today we traveled 20 miles. 5 miles brought us to a ravine at small creek where there were 50 government teams drinking, and detained us some time. 15 miles more brought us to La Prele river where we encamped. The grass had been good on the banks, but was all ate off by the teams that were ahead. The country was today as it was yesterday, dry and barren. After we were encamped, Sleeper came in from hunting and said that he had shot a mountain sheep. So he and Dr. Galtbreath started after it about 1 1/2 hour before sunset and returned at 2 o'clock in the morning with the head of it.

Sunday June 17th 1849

Today we traveled 17 miles. 3 miles brought us to Boise river. 4 miles more brought us to Deer creek. We then went up the creek about 2 miles before we could get grass as it was all eaten off and the creek was lined with tents, some fishing, some washing, some shoving oxen and mules. The country today was more barren than yesterday. There was nothing but sage and wild mustard and toward evening the mules were very tired.

Monday June 18th

Our mules being tired from traveling so long without grass, we lay by as there was good grass by going up the creek. In the morning we went fishing with another company who had borrowed a skin from the government train and we caught as many and more than we wanted, and in the afternoon we gourmandized on fish, none less than 3 inches.

Tuesday 19th

Today we traveled about 5 miles across the divide to the north fork and there was three other Pittsburg wagons led by Captain Taylor who told us that there was 800 wagons up at the ferry, and if we would stop and help them build a raft that they would help us cross. We went to work, and by sunset we had three wagons across, and all our mules swam over. The process was very laborious, as we had to take our wagons all apart.

Wednesday June 20th 49

Today by 12 o'clock we had the other wagons over and ready to start. We started in company with the slave named company. But not with my consent, as we were getting along very well. We traveled about 10 miles up the north side and encamped at the base of a bluff band which was a kind of formation of sand stone. The road was very sandy and the grass scarce, but as usual. A quantity of wild sage about 8 miles brought us to where a vein of coal about 6 inches thick made its appearance and I judge there was more from the appearance of the ground.

Thursday June 21st 1849

Today we traveled 15 miles. 8 miles brought us to the ferry, which was at the lower end of an island, which from its resemblance of a heart. I concluded to call it heart island. But I was not the first that called it by that name. for in the evening I learned that Fremont and Bryan had called it the same. 7 miles brought us to where the road leaves the river, where we encamped. The road was very sandy all day, and the country might be called a desert if it were not for the wild sage. There was no grass only on the banks of the river.

Friday June 22nd

We traveled 23 miles today. In the morning, Graves told us that it was 15 miles to the willow spring, and no water between it and where we were encamped. But he was much mistaken. for when we started, we left the river and 10 miles brought us to the Mineral Spring. Then 10 miles farther brought us to another spring which was good water and tasted like nutmeg. 2 miles brought us to the willow spring, which was delightful water. 1 mile farther brought us to our encampment where there was several good springs and willow sufficient for fuel. The road was very good, but hilly and sandy, but not so much as yesterday. Wild sage still continues. yesterday evening there was three men drowned in the river just below our encampment.

Saturday June 23rd 1849

Today we traveled 26 miles. The country was as yesterday destitute of anything but wild sage. There was ponds or small lakes on the which there was a thick scum, and the edges from ten to twelve feet back were white with a kind of soda which was white and appeared like ice. Some places it

was from 8 to 10 inches thick. after starting this morning we ascended a long hill. 30 miles brought us to a branch of the Sweetwater, where a good encampment might be had, but no wood. 12 miles more brought us to Independence Rock on Sweetwater, which was a solitary rock about 500 yds long, N.W. and S.E. and about 150 N.E. and S.W. It is a kind of gray granite and is very hard. the creek runs on the S Side and a large plain on the north. It on the side next the road is full of the names of emigrants. 4 miles up the creek and we encamped. the grass was very good.

Sunday June 24th 1849

Today our camp is stationary and I spent the forenoon in wandering over the mountains and through the Devil's gate where the creek bursts through a gap in the mountains. It is about 25 yards wide and about 1/2 mile long. On the south side it is about 250 high and projects over a little, and on the north side is much higher, but not quite perpendicular. and the afternoon I was rambling over Independence rock on which I put my name in two places, one on the top and the other on the side next the road. In the evening Captain Burger's Company past and a government train of 40 wagons encamped below us.

Monday June 25th

We traveled 32 miles today. the mile brought us to the above named gate. after passing the mountain we got into a beautiful valley with very high mountains on both sides. we past several small runs of lovely water from the mountains which entered into the creek. the road sometimes would leave the creek for several miles, then strike it again. our camp is on the creek, and buffalo chips are in demand. yesterday evening another of the Pittsburg wagons joined us, which made six wagons in the Company.

Tuesday June 26th

Today we traveled 17 miles. 1 mile brought us to where the road leaves the creek and runs over a sandy plain. 6 miles brought us to the creek again, where there is two roads. one takes up the creek which is the left, but the creek being high and difficult to cross, we took the left hand road and found it very sandy and a constant drag. 3 miles brought us to the creek again. 3 miles more brought us to where we encamped among sage & grease wood & artemisia, a species of sage which has been plenty for the last two days.

Wednesday 27th.

We traveled 24 miles today. We left the creek as we started, 3 miles brought us to the ice spring where there was ice from 2 to four inches thick for 5 or 10 rods around and clear as crystal. But the water was not good, as it tasted very much of sulphur and there was no water for 16 miles that was good to drink. We then crossed the creek which was about 2 feet deep. We then left the creek for about 5 miles over some very steep hills, though the road for 20 miles was very good. We then went up the creek 3 miles and encamped on the bank of it and after supper we had a fine spree shooting prairie squirrels which were very numerous and as tame that we could get within 5 or 10 feet of them. Yesterday and today we had the pleasure of looking at the snow clad peaks of the Wind River mountains.

Thursday June 28th.

Today we traveled 17 miles. After traveling 1 1/2 miles we commenced ascending the mountain. The road was very rough and stony for 6 or 8 miles, sometimes ascending and sometimes descending. We got two small lakes, but the water was so strong in them that they were poisonous. 8 miles from our camp brought us to a spring where we watered. 4 more and we grazed where there was plenty of wood and water in a run which we had followed for about 1 1/2 miles. At the time that we were unhitching to graze, Captain Taylor laid his gun on the ground and a mule ran over it and the picket rope caught on the cock which discharged it. The ball first struck the ground, then struck Alexander Seal on the knee. It entered in the cap and lodged in the bone. The Sergeant that was along with the government train was just behind and we got him to come and examine it. After looking at it sometime he said that the leg would have to be taken off. But Seal, his brother and Calbreath were not willing to have it done until they were certain that it was necessary. So they probed it and found the ball to be in two places. They then dressed it and we got him in the wagon and then started, and after traveling 3 miles we came to a branch of the Sweetwater on which there were snow drifts from 6 to 8 feet deep, and flowers in blossom close by. 7 miles more brought us to willow creek where we encamped. There was plenty of willows for fuel and the water very cold.

Friday June 29th.

Seal was no better this morning and his leg was so sore that

he could not ride in the wagon. So we had to leave him and his men which consisted of Mr. Miller, Dr. Galbreath & his brother Thomas. But I never hated to leave any body as bad as this for they were all noble fellows. About 7 miles brought us to the Sweetwater again, the last stream that runs east. We then passed over the dividing ridge to the Pacific springs which was about 13 miles from our camp where we grazed and cooked dinner. We then started and traveled 3 miles intending to encamp on a run, but it was dried up. We then grazed again and pushed along about 11 miles from the Pacific springs. We came to a ravine, but the water was so brackish that we could not drink it. 2 miles more and we encamped among the sage without wood, water or grass, and as we had no water along, we got very thirsty. The road was very good all day.

Saturday June 30<sup>th</sup> 1849

This morning we started between three and four o'clock and 3 miles brought us to where the road forked, the left hand road leading to the Salt Lake. The other by the way of Tablets cut off, which we took. 5 miles more and we came to Little Sandy where we cooked breakfast. The water was about two feet deep and very cold as it headed in the wind river mountains which were on our right. We were sometimes within 3 or ten miles of them and they were all covered with snow and looked beautiful when the sun shone on them. 10 miles more and we came to Big Sandy, which was broader and contained more water than Little Sandy, but about the same depth at the upper ford where we crossed. After crossing we went down the river a short distance and encamped. The grass was not good as it was all ate off along the river and there was nothing up on the bluffs but sage. We heard that Mr. Seal's leg was taking off today.

Sunday July 1<sup>st</sup> 1849

Today we lay by till one o'clock. We then started across the long dressed desert, but I was pleasantly disappointed, for we found grass very neatly as good as usual and plenty of sage for cooking. And all that was wanting to make it as pleasant as any other part of the road was water. About 25 miles brought us to a very steep hill which we descended without any trouble and as we were ascending the other side of the hollow about 2 o'clock we stopped and grazed our horses till morning. We then started and arrived at green between 1 & 2 o'clock P.M. traveling since yesterday between 45 and 50 miles. Some 4 or 5 miles before we came to the river there is a very steep hill

to descend. When we came to the river there was about 300 wagons there waiting to be ferried over, and the grass all ate off, and the ground all tramped in dust for some distance from the landing. at night the camp was a little extra, some playing the fiddle, some the fife, some dancing and some singing.

THE DIARY ENTRY FOR SUNDAY JULY 1ST IS REPEATED AND ABOUT HALFWAY DOWN THE PAGE. MARBLE STARTS MONDAY, JULY 2ND. EVIDENTLY HE WAS CONFUSED OR FORGOT TO INSERT THE MONDAY, JULY 2ND, DATE IN HIS SUNDAY, JULY 1ST, ENTRY

Sunday July 1st. 1849

Today we lay by till 1 o'clock, then started across the long breaded desert, where we expected we would have a severe tramp. But was pleasingly disappointed, for about an hour after we started there fell a hard rain which made the walking for a short time, but it soon dried off and made it quite pleasant. The night was very clear and we traveled along, sometimes singing, and sometimes howling and after traveling about 20 miles, we stopped between 12 and 1 o'clock and rested our mules till morning.

Monday July 2nd

Today the road became very dusty, and at 1 o'clock we arrived at grassy river, making our way since yesterday 45 miles. Last night just before we stopped, we descended a very steep hill, but it being very sandy, we got down without any trouble, and about 5 or 6 miles before we came to the ferry there was another which was steeper and a little more difficult to descend, when we came to the ferry, there was about 300 wagons along along the river waiting to be ferried across.

Tuesday July 3rd 1849

Today we were laying, waiting our turn at the ferry. In the afternoon we swam our mules across the water being very swift and the banks bad, it was hard for the mules to cross, but once all got across, but Captain Sargents company last evening, and this morning, descended its head. In the morning the government train came up, and started 13 of the regulars along with some of the volunteers to hunt a man by the name of Brown who had killed a man at the Ferry last Saturday.



Wednesday 1th 1848

Last night. Taylor engaged to steer the flat for five dollars. So this morning very early by a little triperry, we got across and traveled 7 miles to a creek where we encamped to wait on the balance of the Company who had not got their wagons across yet. In the evening Steiner was very sick and Taylor was complaining.

Thursday 5th 1848

Steiner being no better, and the Company not come up yet, we lay by. In the evening at 5 o'clock the balance of the Company came up.

Friday July 6th 1848

Today we traveled 22 miles. after traveling 3 miles up the creek, we crossed and left it. 9 miles over a barren country brought us to a beautiful pine grove where there were several good springs. after leaving the grove, we ascended a very long hill. During which time we past two good springs. we then descended a very steep hill. 2 miles more and we descended another. Both being very sandy, we had no trouble in descending, but after a rain it would be very difficult. 10 miles from the grove and we encamped on a small ravine, where there was sufficient willows for fuel, and reasonable grass. For the last 10 miles there was plenty of water every 3 or 4 miles, and any quantity of snow which we were sometimes above and sometimes below. as I could not learn the name of the above creek, I have concluded to call it Yvelid Creek, from the number of sick that lay on it.

Saturday July 7th 1848

Today we traveled 18 miles. about 2 1/2 miles brought us to where there was a new road which turned to the left. we took it and in so doing we avoided 2 very high mountains. 3 miles more brought us to Thomas Fork, a small stream in which there was plenty of trout and good grass, and some wood on the bottom. 1 1/2 miles more and we crossed: after crossing we ascended a very high mountain. 7 miles more from the creek brought us to a beautiful Quakenass grove which had a good spring at the west end. 1 mile more brought us to another grove of the same kind, on the right of the road where we encamped in grass up to the knees. the water in the grove was like ice water as there was a bank of



snow just above the spring. the grass was better today than any we have yet saw, and after we crossed the creek, the land was limestone land and appeared as though it would produce it in seasons of sufficient length.

#### Sunday July 8th

Today our camp was stationary until 1 o'clock when we started and traveled about 11 miles. Soon after starting in ascending a mountain we passed through a grove of pine and Quakesap which was so thick that a mosquito could scarcely fly through. after we got to the top of the mountain, we commenced descending the other side which was about 2 miles down to the base, and very steep. one place we had to take the mules out and let the wagons down with ropes. \* we then crossed a small stream, then up another mountain and down it again which was very steep. We then got into musketoe valley. about 6 or 7 miles brought us to Bear river where we encamped. \* The above bad place may be avoided as there are two trails, one turns to the right at the top of the mountain, and the other to the left which is better. there was wagon pass down by taking one wheel.

#### Monday July 9th

Today we traveled 25 miles. 5 miles brought us to a head of Bear river which was very bad crossing and for about 7 1/2 miles it was very rocky, the road then was very level and good, and the grass was excellent. 18 miles brought us to the crossing of Tulare Fork, down which we went 7 miles and encamped.

#### Tuesday 10th

Today we traveled 24 miles. In the morning when we started we took across the mountain. Soon after starting we came to a good spring on the mountain side. about 2 miles brought us into a valley where water and grass was plenty, but no wood. we then ascended another mountain which was very steep and about 2 miles from the base to the top. 10 miles from our encampment brought us to Bear river again and the mountain which we ascended was very steep, but very sandy which made it easy to get down. 11 miles brought us to a small creek which emptied into the river about 1/2 mile below where we crossed it. we went up a few rods and encamped. we, in the last 13 miles past several small streams that flowed from the mountains that bordered the great Basin and the water was so clear and cool that I drank when I was not dry.

Wednesday July 11th 1917

Today we traveled 22 miles. 8 miles and we left the river. 7 miles more and there was a good place to encamp. 6 miles more brought us to a good spring and wood sufficient for last some time. 12 miles more brought us to the Soda Springs where we encamped. No water between the two places.

Thursday 12th

Today our camp is stationary. In the morning, Smith and I started to go to the top of a mountain that was about 3 miles from our camp, and on the way to it, Smith fell into a Soda Spring. I ran back to him, and he was holding to the grass along side of it. I caught hold of him and pulled him out, and I think if he had been alone he would not have got out for he was into the chin. We then went to the top of the mountain and found it to be rocks upon rocks. We got back at 1 o'clock, and I spent the afternoon in running around the springs, some of them were very sulphury, particularly one that was just at the crossing of a small stream. Others were exactly like soda. I made some cakes with it, and it made them quite spongy and good. Up at the base of the mountain there is one that is almost a small lake, it is about 50 yds. long and 25 wide and from 5 to 8 feet deep and so clear that the smallest speck can be seen at the bottom. And down the river about 3/4 of a mile from where we encamped there is another which boils out of a hole in a split rock. Sometimes throwing the water up 2 and 3 feet, which is about milk warm, and all in froth. I threw a black ribbon into it, which went down as dirty as it well could be, and in the course of a minute it came up as clean as if it had been washed with soap. It seems so considerable that I had not tried it sooner and washed a few shirts.

Friday 13th

Today we traveled 25 miles. About 3 miles brought us to an old crater. 2 miles more brought to another which is larger. There was nothing in it but stones which were black and appeared as if they had been intensely heated. They were clear of dirt and every thing else. There were crevices in the stones in which, if a small stone were thrown, it would roll down a great distance making a kind of rumbling noise. 1 mile more brought us to a good spring where there was good grass, but no wood. Several soda springs on the way. 10 miles more and we came to a spring, but the water was not very good. 9 miles more brought us to where we encamped on a small creek. Good water was scarce.

for the last 19 miles but the road was good and level, occasionally a rough place, and the grass was excellent. today was the warmest I have felt since we started, although there was plenty of snow from 8 to 10 miles from us on the mountains, but the sun let it down in the valley.

#### Saturday 14th

Today we traveled 14 miles. Soon after starting we crossed the stream which we were encamped on, which was very bad crossing. 3 miles brought us to a good spring where the grass was good and plenty of dead Quakenasp, and from the appearance it would be a beautiful place to encamp. 5 miles more over a mountain brought us to another lovely spring with pebble stone in the bottom. 10 miles more brought us to where we encamped on a small stream flowing from the spring at the foot of the mountain we past over. the country today was very mountainous and the road very bad, and the day very warm.

#### Sunday July 15th 49

Today we traveled 22 miles. 2 miles and we came to where the road became very sandy and for 10 miles the country was destitute of every thing but wild sage. we then came to a beautiful stream of water where there was good grass, and some wood. 7 miles more brought us to Fort Hall. the road from the creek to the fort was very bad as the soil on the surface from 2 to 3 feet deep was of a black silty nature, and under that it was gravelly, which I found out by slipping over the lead mule into a slue, and after finding myself mud all over, I waded all the slues, and found gravel on the bottom of all of them, but some places it was deeper than I liked, for at one place I got in so deep that I had hard crawling to get out. 7 miles more brought us to where we encamped on Fort Nez river, which is a beautiful stream of clear water flowing into Lewis Fork. in the evening I took a glass look at the

#### Monday 16th

Last night the mosquitoes were swarming and I shifted my sleeping place 3 or 10 times. we started early in the morning and traveled 26 miles and the mosquitoes worse and worse. immediately after starting we crossed the river which was easy crossing. 2 miles then over slue and swamps brought us to another branch of the Nez, on the main branch

as it was the largest and very bad crossing. 22 miles more over a sandy, dry road destitute of every thing but sage, except here and there a sliver of water where there is some grass and wood. The river is near enough to drive to for encampments, where there is plenty of grass but not of good quality; brought us to the American fall. 2 miles more brought us to where we encamped on the bank of Lewis Fork.

#### Tuesday 17th

Today we traveled 22 miles. 12 miles brought us to Fall Creek, which was very bad crossing on account of the steepness of the banks. The road was very bad and sure very steep hills. 2 miles more and we left the river. 8 miles across brought us to Raft river, a small stream that would scarcely called a creek in Penn.

#### Wednesday July 18th

Today we traveled the same distance that we did yesterday. In the morning, soon after starting, we past where the Oregon trail turned off. 2 miles up the river and we crossed and left it for 12 miles across a sandy plain without water or wood except sage. When we came to it, there was abundance of wild rye and good grass where we grazed. We then crossed again and in 8 miles we struck it again. Where we camped the grass was excellent. About 5 miles from the crossing there is a good spring.

#### Thursday July 19th 40

Today we traveled 28 miles. 4 miles up the river and we crossed again. 8 miles and we came to a hot spring on the right side of the road. 8 miles more and we encamped on a branch of the river. The grass was very good. At noon we got some ponies and decorated our gules and took a stiff

#### Friday July 20th 1849

The grass being good, and the mules tired, we lay by, and in wandering around we found a hot spring, which is not mentioned by Fremont or any other writer. It is about 100 yds. above the road on the right hand side, a short distance before you come to the creek, perhaps 1/8 of a mile. It is beautifully clear and soft. At one place the thermometer stood at 104, another 102. I washed some shirts in it and it was the easiest washing that I have had. It make a bad

swamp in the road. There was an old gentleman ahead of his train, hunting a place to graze, and when he came to it, he thought it a good place and called up his train. He then lay down and tested it. He jumped up as though he was scared and hollowed for the train to move on that he was not a mile from there.

#### Saturday 21st

Today we traveled 22 miles. About 1 1/2 miles brought us to a gap in the mountains through which we past. The road was very rocky and rough for about 1/2 mile after we entered it. The gap in some places was from 1/2 to 1 mile wide and filled with lovely rocks of all shapes. 10 miles from the creek where we encamped brought us to a spring on the road. The only water between the two places except a spring about 1 1/2 miles from where we entered the gap. About 7 miles from the creek brought us to where the trail that runs on the north side of the Salt Lake runs in. Our better way would have been to have kept up the valley to the gap where it came through. 12 miles more brought us to where we encamped at a good spring between the mountains, and the road was very rough; but the grass was very good, and the last 12 miles there was plenty of wood and sufficient water.

#### Sunday 22nd

Today we traveled 21 miles. 1 mile brought us to Battlesnake Creek. We then went up it 20 miles to where the road leaves it, and encamped. About 13 miles from where we started the creek, we came to another hot spring, which was about 18 or 20 degrees warmer than the one on Salt River branch. It is between the road and the creek. In a swamp, the grass on the bottom along the creek was excellent and the road was very good. But the country out from the creek was very mountainous and barren, covered with sage. Steiner picked all day, and was much surprised when we told him that it was Sunday. Today at noon Meredith's two wagons, and two men, concluded that they would not travel as fast as Captain Taylor's team and came so they lay by to recruit their mules. So we pushed along with the two wagons and 13 men.

#### Monday 23rd

Today we traveled 21 miles. 3 miles brought us to another canyon which was very narrow and the road rough. There was a small stream of water ran through it, which we followed about 2 miles. We then past over 15 miles of mountains

and barren country, destitute of water, and little grass but wild sage were abundant than heretofore and considerable quantity of cedar. We then came to a spring 4 miles farther down the bottom and we encamped between two beautiful cold springs.

Tuesday July 24th 1849

Today we traveled 30 miles. our road was in a valley all day, and it was a lovely, level road. in the valley there was plenty of swamp grass, but good grass was scarce. water was also scarce as there was been a long drought. But there could be sufficient had by sinking a well three or four feet deep. at night "T" was how come your eye out and a general breeze in the camp. But he finally acknowledge he was wrong and got quite cool.

Wednesday 25th

Being kept back considerable yesterday by the ox teams, we started this morning between daylight and sunrise to get ahead of them, and succeeded in passing about 50, and was no more troubled with them through the day. 1 mile after starting and we came to some hot springs. The steam rose of them like fog. the exact temperature of them I do not know, but one of them was hot enough to burn some of our fingers and about 50 yds. from it there is another spring that is just the reverse. it is cold as ice. 5 miles more brought us to a mountain where there is a small ravine, in which there was good water. 3 miles more brought us across the mountain to a spring, but the water was not very good, and the grass scarce. 5 miles more brought us to another good spring and at the end of 27 miles, we encamped at 2 natural wells which were quite a curiosity. they were on elevated ground and the water arose to the top of it. There was good white silver all around them, and abundance of wild garlic. they are about 2 or 3 hundred yds. above the road on the right hand side.

Thursday July 26th 49

Today we traveled 38 miles. 7 miles brought us to the head waters of Mary's River, as it is called. it was a flat bottom, here and there a pool of water. 11 miles more brought us to where we could discover the water running. 10 miles more and we crossed it and encamped where there was excellent and willow sufficient for fuel.

Friday July 27th

Today we traveled 30 miles. 20 miles brought us to a branch of Mary's river, which we crossed. 10 miles more brought us to where we encamped on the bank of the river. After crossing the branch, we left the river for about 2 miles over a sandy, dry country. We then traveled a short distance and left it again for a few miles. The road all day was very dusty and a great many sand holes.

Saturday 28th

Today we traveled 15 miles and lay by for the balance of the day, as there is 11 miles of a stretch without grass or water. About 3 miles brought us to where there were a number of hot springs on the opposite side of the river. They were hot enough to loosen the hide. The road as yesterday. The river where we encamped was about 30 yds. wide and from 3 to 5 feet deep. This morning we were joined by 3 teams from Armstrong, 3 Indians One and 2 from Mississippi.

Sunday July 29th 1849

Today we traveled 33 miles. 4 miles and we came to where the road leaves the river. 15 miles more, over a sandy, mountainous, barren country, destitute water or grass, brought us to the river again. The road was smooth and wound around the mountains so as not to be very steep. At the place where the road came to the bottom, there can be water had by sinking a well. About 5 miles from where the bottom terminates, there is a small creek where the Salt Lake road comes in. We crossed and encamped.

Monday 30th

Today we traveled 31 miles. 1 mile and we left the river again. 9 miles brought us to a good spring where the misfortunes of the Graves family commenced. 3 miles more brought us to the river again. The road was very rough and the ground was so burnt with the intense heat that the grass was all dead. The sand off the road was so soft that a person would sink in over the shoes. 3 miles more and we crossed the river. The ford was good with a pretty, pebbled bottom. 10 miles down the river and we encamped. Grass was very scarce all day.

Tuesday 31st

Today we traveled 22 miles. the road followed the river all day, with the exception of about 2 miles it crossed a bluff. the grass was very scarce. we crossed the river in about 5 miles from where we started in the morning. the road was very dusty, but level. our camp at night was just below a spring of warm water, on the bank of the river where the grass was very good.

Wednesday August 1st 1849

Today we traveled 23 miles. Soon after starting we left the river and past over a barren, dusty plain, destitute of everything but sage. 5 miles brought us to the river again. we then followed it till we encamped just below a long rise or lake. the day was very warm, and the ground and the grass was all burnt to a crisp.

Thursday August 2nd 49

Today we traveled the same distance as did yesterday. the road about the same and followed the river all day. In the evening we camped where Snider a member of Donagh's party was killed who was staked by Road.

Friday 3rd

Today we traveled 27 miles. Soon after starting we left the river and crossed over the bluffs, the road pretty good. 10 miles brought us to the river again which we followed until we camped.

Saturday 4th 49

Today we traveled 20 miles. the road followed the river all day. sometimes leaving it for 2 or 3 miles. In the evening we encamped on the bank of the river.

Sunday August 5th 49

Today we lay by. and the willow bushes were well poked and a wonder tonight.



Monday August 6th 1849

Today we traveled 27 miles. 5 miles brought us to where the road left the river. 15 miles across a dusty, barren plain, and we came to the river again. Whilst crossing it there was a great many swirls or whirlwinds which would carry the dust hundreds of feet high where it would form into a kind of a cloud. 5 miles more down the river brought us to where we encamped. the grass for the last 2 days has been very poor, as it was all burnt and dried up with the sun.

Tuesday 7th 49

Today we traveled 22 miles. 8 miles brought us to where we left the river again. 14 miles more across a dry, sandy plain and we came to it again, where we encamped within a spear of grass, and lay in the sand from 5 to 8 inches deep.

Wednesday August 8th 49

This morning we started about sunrise, and immediately after starting, we left the river. 15 miles more brought us to it again where we got water, but no grass. 10 miles more and we came to a spring in a deep ravine on the left hand side of the road. But still no grass, and the ground was all burnt into a crust. We then left the main road and crossed the ravine and went 7 miles down into a valley where there was some quantity of grass and alive water which was about the same as the river, except it tasted a little of alkali.

Thursday 9th

Today we layed by and mowed grass and prepared for the desert. There is about 300 wagons laying in the valley, preparing and recruiting for the same thing. We are surrounded by Indians, but they have committed no depredations other than they have stolen a few horses. One they killed and we supposed they had taken his flesh for food as there was nothing left of him but the head and bones.

Friday August 10th 49

Our camp is still stationary.

Saturday 11th

This morning we started about sunrise. 18 miles brought us to a sulphur spring where we left the sink. The water was got by sinking wells, but it was not good, as it was very sulphury. But it was the only water we got from the time we started till we got to it, and none for 25 miles. We were obliged to use it. After resting our mules awhile, we pushed along.

Sunday 12th

This morning we arrived at the boiling spring where we cooled water for our mules. There were about 25 teams encamped when we came there, and from the appearance there had been a general destruction of property, as there were wagons, clothing, guns, led, traps, mining tools and all kinds of stuff left lay by the emigrants whose stock had given out. We lay by till 5 o'clock in the evening. The day was a very disagreeable one, as it was very hot, and no water except what we cooled, and it being hot enough to boil meat sufficiently done in 20 minutes, we could not get it very cool in the hot sun. About 4 o'clock Graves and I started ahead of the teams for the Salmon trout river on foot with a canteen of coffee and one of hot water and some biscuits. The road was beautiful for 12 miles. During which time we past a salt spring, but the water could not be used. We then descended a little hill which was steep and very sandy and continued so for 10 miles which brought us to the river where we arrived between 11 and 12 o'clock in the night. The water was clear and cool, and before we drank any, we filled our canteens, and before we were satisfied we drank 3 pints apiece. We then got in among the willows and slept the balance of the night as comfortably as if we were on a bed of feathers. 3 of the wagons got to the river about an hour after sunrise, and the other 3 were left in the sand, as their mules gave out. They brought them on to the river and watered them and turned them out to graze with the intention to go back for their wagons in the evening.

Monday August 13th

Today we lay by, recruiting our mules. We herded them about 2 miles down the river where there was good grass.

Tuesday 14th

The grass being excellent and our mules tired, we lay still laying by.

Wednesday August 15 49

Today we traveled 10 miles. In the morning we crossed the river and traveled up the right hand side for about 1 mile and crossed again; and in the 10 miles we crossed 7 times. the crossings were very rocky and the same. the water in the river was beautifully clear and cool and the banks were decorated with a few large cottonwood trees. the grass was all ate off the bottom, as they were very narrow, back of which the mountains rose very high and abruptly. today, Mr. Beahl got badly hurt by falling off a precipice. at night we had a shower of rain, the first since the first day of July.

Thursday 16th.

Today we traveled 20 miles. 5 miles brought us to where there was good grass. during which time we crossed the river 5 times. 14 miles brought us to a beautiful valley where there was an quantity of grass. and in the 14 miles we crossed the river 10 times more and the fords were very rough. the mountains and valleys as yesterday.

Friday August 17th 1849

Some of our mules being tired and the grass excellent. we remain in camp today to recruit them. about 9 o'clock a.m. Kit Carson met our camp with a pack train, who had started by way of Fort Smith, but the Colorado river being overflowed, he had to steer his way through the mountains and strike the road by way of Fort Bridger, about 500 miles out of his way.

Saturday 18

This morning we started early and traveled 20 miles. After crossing the valley, (about 3 miles) we left the river. 8 miles more brought us to it again where there is a pine tree that measures 15 feet, 3 inches in circumference. 9 miles more brought us to where we encamped on the river among some large and beautiful pine trees. the camp was pleasant, but the grass very scarce. In our days travel we only crossed the river 4 times. the road was so stony that the wagon would scarcely get to the ground, but bounced along.

Sunday August 19th 1842

21 miles today. This morning immediately after starting we crossed the river, when Graves, Steiner and myself left the wagons and crossed the mountain which the road wound around, leaving it in the left in search of game. But we found it very scarce. about 9 miles brought the wagons to a valley where there was grass and water, and in the ravine there was a kind of dust which the said was gold. 8 miles more brought us to a creek where there was a good camp. 4 miles more brought us across a ridge to another valley where we encamped, the grass and water was very good. The first 9 miles after leaving the river, the road was very rough, but the balance was good. this morning after crossing the creek, we got into a thick pine country, which made the travelling quite pleasant, compared with the travelling before, as we had shade to rest in.

Monday 20th

Today we traveled about 10 miles and encamped in a valley at the base of a mountain about 3/4 of a mile east of Truckee Lake. 3 miles more brought us to the valley where Bonner encamped. 1 mile more brought us opposite to where his cabins were, which were situated about 1 1/2 or 2 miles from the road on the right hand side. there were a number of fragments left, but more human bones than any thing else. 6 miles more and we came to where the Graves family wintered, and all perished except 6; and 2 of them died after they got through. 1 mile more and we came to Foster's and Seep's cabins, where we encamped. the road now leaves them on the right, but the old road ran just past them, leaving them on the left. Graves's and Foster's cabins are the only ones that are standing yet, and they present a gloomy appearance. in Foster's, there was old clothes which were worn by females and also long female hair which appeared as if it had fallen from the head, and any quantity of bones in and around the cabin. In the afternoon there was 7 of our men ate a red berry which was very plenty in the valley, and at night they proved to be poison. they all got very sick, some of them thought they were going to end the chapter, particularly P. Woodward. there were a great many straw and gooseberries, but they were unfortunate and did not get them.

Tuesday 21st

Today we traveled 12 miles. Soon after starting we crossed the south-east end of a mountain. the road then was very good for 3 or 4 miles. we then commenced climbing of rocks

and stones. 11 miles brought us to the summit of the long dreaded Sierra Nevada. We came within about 1/2 mile of the top when it became so steep that we had to double team. The ascent was difficult, but not so much as I expected. We had all the wagons on the summit by 1 o'clock p.m. 2 miles more brought us down into a valley, where we encamped. The descent was gentle, some places pretty steep, but not so rough as the ascent. The view from the peak on the south side of the gap was magnificent. The poisoned men are better this morning.

Wednesday August 22nd 49

Today we traveled 18 miles. Soon after starting we crossed a small stream which headed in the mountains where we descended. About one mile from our camp and we left the valley to our right and went up a ravine on the left. 4 miles more brought us to a group of lakes (5 in number). The water in them was cool and beautifully clear. They averaged from 1 to 2 miles in length and from 1 to 500 yds. in width. The road was very rough. After passing the lakes, which were strung out about 4 miles, we traveled up and down 9 miles of the infernal roughest roads that ever was traveled. The last mile was so steep that we had to check down with ropes. After we all got down, we encamped among the rocks at a beautiful spring which is one of the head branches of Yuba river. There was no grass where we encamped, but by driving our mules up the other branch, we got very good grass. In coming down the mountain to our camp, Doctor Quinby's wagon upset!

Thursday August 23rd 49

Today we traveled 15 miles. The road today was indescribable, but it was the dirtiest, roughest and rockiest road I ever saw. About 3 miles from our camp we had to take out our mules and let our wagons down with ropes. And it was off of one rock onto another all day, except a short distance after we started, and a few places to the bottom of the river. We also ascended some very steep mountains. 9 miles brought us to where we left the Yuba river. We then crossed a mountain which was not so rough as expected. 6 miles brought us to a valley on Bear river where we encamped. The grass was very good, but none between the two camps. 6 miles from our camp and we came to where there had been grass, but it was all ate off. In crossing from Yuba to Bear river, there was a few oak bushes, and on top there were two small lakes. Through the day we past another valley where some of the sufferers of the Donner party got too

Friday August 24th 1849

Today we traveled 7 miles. 5 miles brought us to the main branch of Bear river where there is a large valley. In descending to the valley there is a very steep hill where we let down with ropes about 3/4 of a mile. The trees were worn very much where the ropes run around. 2 miles more brought us to the lower end of the valley where we encamped and mowed grass.

Saturday 25th

This morning, the Armstrong and Mississippi men, thinking there was no more to be made, refused to go ahead, lay by, and Captain Taylor's and our wagons started and traveled 13 miles. The road for 5 miles was as usual, rough and hilly. 3 miles brought us to where we crossed the river. We then ascended 2 hills, the second was so steep that we had to double team. 7 miles brought us to a spring on the left hand side of the road. 5 miles more brought us to another spring where we tied our mules to the trees and fed the grain we cut in Bear valley. The road for the last 8 miles was very good, the timber was very large and not any grass along the mountains or any other place.

Sunday August 26th 49

Today we traveled 11 miles. 11 brought us to another branch of Bear river, where there were some of the Gold Diggers operating, but not much success. The road from our camp to the branch ran along a ridge and was very hilly as there was a great many gaps in it. The descent to the branch was so steep and long that we had to tie teams to the wagons. We then crossed and ascended a long steep hill or mountain. 7 miles from the branch brought us to a spring on the left of the road where we encamped and cut down trees and let our mules graze upon the leaves as there was no grass.

Monday 27th

This morning we started and drove 2 miles to another branch of Bear river where Bixie Mass was encamped. By this time our mules were so fatigued that we could go no farther. We encamped and drove our mules 1 mile to grass. A number of men were digging gold where we are encamped, but it is scarce.

Tuesday August 22 49

Today we traveled 16 miles. 3 miles brought us to a spring on the left of the road. 3 miles more brought us to another spring  $\approx$  middle. where we encamped and tied the mules to the wagon and fed them up brush. the country was hilly and more arid than usual. The was not so rocky as before.

Wednesday 29th

Today we traveled 8 miles. the road was hilly and rough, water was scarce and not good. it could only be got in pools which were very much stagnated. about 3 miles brought us to a tolerably good spring on the left of the road. there was some grass in the ravines, but it was so dry that the mules would not eat it. our camp was in a small valley on the left. hay & timber was more plenty today than usual. about sunset we got sight of the long looked for valley of the Sacramento.

Thursday 30th

Today we traveled 12 miles. 6 miles brought us to a spring at the base of a hill on the right. 4 miles more brought us to Johnson's. 3 miles down the river and we encamped where we found good grass. the day was very good and the valley presented a beautiful appearance.

Friday August 31st 1849

This evening we started and traveled 11 miles and encamped at Nicholson's ranch about 10 o'clock at night.

Saturday September 1st 49

This evening we started and traveled 25 miles during which time there was no water. We encamped about 1 o'clock in the morning near to a slough.

Sunday 2nd

Today we traveled 9 miles. 4 miles brought us to where we crossed the American Fork. 2 1/2 miles brought us to Sutter's fort which was converted into a hospital. 2 1/2 miles more brought us to Sacramento City.



Monday 31st

Today we lay in the city and recovered around, during which time I discovered that I was poisoned with poison oak.

Thursday September 20th 1949

Since the third, my residence has been under an oak tree within the suburbs of the city, during which time I took nothing as my hand was badly poisoned. today there was an election in town. the City was trying to get a charter for which I voted, but it was defeated by 140 of a majority. by this time the City has become filthy from Gabon and other filth.

Wednesday September 26th

By this time I have got much better of the poison. this evening, Jerry Robbins and I agree to go to the mines together.

Thursday Sept 27th

This morning we got some provisions and about 4 o'clock P.M. we got them on our wagon, and started for North Fork Dry Diggins. we traveled with the wagon while, but it being slow, we started ahead and got to the blue tent at 10 o'clock where we waited until the wagon came up. we then got our bed and slept at the foot of an oak. distance today was 10 miles.

Friday September 28th 1949

Today we wandered along until we came to the half way house where we got dinner. 4 miles more brought us to the Oregon tent where we staid all night with some New Yorkers, that came around the bend.

Saturday 29th 1949

7 miles this morning brought us to the Miner's hotel where we cooked dinner. we then started ahead of the wagon and 6 miles brought us to another boarding tent kept by a woman. being lost from our wagon, and not knowing when it would come up, we called for supper and got it by paying 2 dollars each.



Sunday 30th

We waited until 8 o'clock this morning and the wagon did not come, so we started on. 4 miles brought us to the dry diggings, our place of destination, but no wagon there. But, however, it arrived about 1 o'clock. We then selected an oak, cooked supper, made our bed and slept.

Monday October 1st 1849

Today Robbins & Richer, [a man that came up with us], sold some articles they had left when they were up here before, and in the evening we moved up the left hand river about 1 1/2 miles to a spring where we staid all night.

Tuesday Oct. 2nd

Today Robbins and I made a tent and Richer went to the river to prospect.

Wednesday Oct 3rd

Today Robbins and I went to the river. We prospected with our guns, but could get nothing. He then loaned a washer and washed about 5 dollars worth.

Thursday Oct 4th 1849

Today Richer and I went prospecting further up the river, but did not succeed well, and Robbins went to buy a mule to pack our things to Middle Fork. But like us, he did not succeed in getting one.

Friday October 5th 1849

Today we all went to the river and caught out about 2 dollars worth, and after that time the mountain to our tent, we concluded to stay at the river. Our bed was on public stones, and O such a sleep as we had.

Saturday 6th

Today we washed articles and then went to our tent where we supposed on flat land. Then retired.

Sunday 7th

Today we were working about in the dry diggings and I succeeded in picking up a lump worth from three to four dollars. I then gathered up about a gallon of dirt, carried it to the water and washed it and found about 2 dollars worth in it.

Monday 8th

Today we dug in the dry diggings and made about 6 dollars.

Tuesday 9th

Today we did as yesterday. In the evening it rained enough to wet a man through his clothes. The first rain I have seen fall for some time.

Wednesday 10th

Still working at the same place. Getting good lumps worth 12 1/2 dollars. In the morning from our camp to the diggings, we saw a flock of birds. There were millions of them going from the ground to the air. It rained in the evening.

Thursday 11th

Today we dug and found a lot of dirt in pack to the water. Found about 12 1/2 dollars worth. It rained in the evening and in the night.

Friday 12th

Today we bought a horse and rode to a well that is dry. Weather clear and cool.

Saturday 13th

Today we packed 7 loads and got 20 dollars. Weather clear and warm.

Sunday Nov. 4th

This morning it was clear and we went to work at the cabin as we thought it was necessary. In the evening it began to rain, and rained all night, but we were a little more comfortable, as we had fixed our tent.

Monday Nov. 5th 1848

Today it rained all day. In the evening, Mr. Willick and Whigam arrived here from Sacramento City. This evening, Jackson made arrangements to call with us. Daddy Blue, Nidge and Quirk in a way about the weather.

Tuesday Nov. 6th 1848

Today it was clear. Simpson, Robbins and myself went to work at the cabin.

Wednesday 7th

Today it rained by showers and we worked by intervals.

Thursday 8th

Today as yesterday.

Friday Nov. 9th

Today it was clear and we got our cabin ready for the road.

Saturday 10th

This morning I took our horses and started for Sacramento City in company with Fisher who was going home. The day was somewhat wet but not so much as to stop us. We got to the half way house and staid all night.

Sunday November 11th 1848

This morning my bill for breakfast and for letting us leave stand on a pile of spoiled hay was 3 1/2 dollars. The day was clear, the sun shone beautifully, and as we were going down the valley, we could see the snow clad peaks of both the Sierra Nevada and the Coast Range the behind us and the other before.

Monday Nov. 12th

Today it was clear and pleasant. I thought what things I wanted, and was ready for starting. During the day I saw Steiner, who looked ill, at night I wrote a letter to C. P. Marble.

Tuesday Nov. 13th.

Today I waited till the steamer Mekin came up, expecting to get some letters, but got none. It rained during the day in showers, at night it came down in torrents.

Wednesday Nov. 14th

This morning it was clear and I started for home with about 50 lbs. on one horse and 15 on the other. By wading and ploughing through water from 1 to 2 feet deep, I got across the valley. My horses frequently slipped down so that I had to unload them, and about sunset, one of them slipped down so bad that I had to unperk him, viz the bridle's value to his feet and roll him over before I could get him out. By this time it was dark and I was unable to proceed farther, so I wrapped myself in my blanket and was lulled to sleep by the howling of coyotes.

Thursday Nov. 15th 1849

This morning I found my horses with a drove of ranch horses and had trouble catching them. After catching them, and shaking the lice out of my blanket, I started and in three miles I slipped down twice with the horses so bad that I had to unperk them. About 10 o'clock I got to the half way house where I got my breakfast, the first that I had since yesterday noon. About 10 o'clock at night I got to home, where I staid all night.

Friday November 16th 1849

After sleeping in Kennedy's tent all night, I went up home and got my breakfast, the first since yesterday morning.

Saturday Nov. 17th

By this time, Robbline and Gannon had built the chimney and got the clapboards ready, and by noon we had part of the roof on. In the afternoon it rained.

Sunday Nov. 18th 1849

Today the weather was clear and cool, so we dried our bed clothes and other things.

Monday 19th

Today we worked on the cabin and finished the roof. It rained all day, but at night we fell as if we had a shelter.

Tuesday 20th

Today was clear and warm and we finished the cabin.

Wednesday November 21st 1849

Today was clear and pleasant and we built a large fire in the cabin and dried it thoroughly.

Thursday Nov. 22

Today we moved into the cabin and commenced to test the machinery.

Friday Nov. 23rd

Today we had a shower of rain. Since last Thursday the weather was clear and warm.

Sunday December 2nd 1849

Since Monday the weather was clear and warm, without any rain. Today I tried to bake some ginger cake, but made a mistake and put in sweetened in the place of ginger.

Sunday Dec 2th

During the last week the weather has been beautifully clear without any rain, and at night there was a strong north wind which made the nights cold, and in the morning after sunrise, the wind would change and blow from the south, which made the days warm and pleasant.

Sunday Dec 10th 1849

The weather for the last week has been variable. Monday and Tuesday were clear and cold. on Tuesday night it commenced raining and rained until Friday, occasionally ceasing a few hours. on Friday morning it commenced snowing and continued until night, when it ceased. There was considerable of snow fell, but the ground was so wet from the rain, that it melted away.

Sunday Dec 23rd 1849

It rained all last week except which was a beautiful clear day, which gave me a chance to get out of the cabin where we were pent up to our satisfaction.

Tuesday December 25th 1849

Since Saturday, the weather has been fine. Today being Christmas, we did not work. O glorious Christmas. Hall, Robbins and I got a quarter of Venison and a bottle of wild Honeyalala and retired to the cabin. we then made a pot pie. after it was cooked, we ate, drank and was merry until evening. we then kept it off with a taffy pulling. It was quite amusing when we got our fingers stings along the sticky rollers. and at night I dreamed of conversing with Uncle Joseph Mackie.

Monday Dec 31st 1849

Since Tuesday there has been no rain except a little that fell on Thursday.

Tuesday January 1st 1850

Today it rained moderately and about 11 o'clock, Robbins and I took our plates, knives and forks and went to McCall and Martin's tent to partake of a pot pie made of beef and potatoes for the occasion. The feast was glorious and good.

and not without a little of that stuff which makes a person  
happy for a short time. At night we went to Antuan where we  
spent the evening.

Sunday January 9th 1850

The latter part of the week was variable sometimes raining  
and sometimes trying to rain.

End of the Mackie Diary

Mr. Markle's diary is mentioned and quoted from in the 1882 History of Placer County, printed by Thompson and West, in the chapter entitled, Early Mining History. At that time, Mr. Markle was a resident of Kelsey Township, El Dorado County. The book states, "It was written at a time when all of the localities spoken of were known by the primary names. On Sunday, September 2, 1849, Mr. Markle and party had arrived at Sacramento via the Truckee, Donner, Bear River and Sinclair Ranch route, where he had remained suffering from poison oak outfit," and then he quotes from Wednesday, September 10, 1849, by the conclusion of the diary. The diary was quoted, as he states, "for several reasons. First, as showing the vicissitudes of the early pioneers in the days of their young experience, secondly, as being valuable for reference as to the rainfall in the vicinity of Auburn during the time it was written, thirdly, it records the time, namely, when the name was given to the place, for thus he relates that on September 27th, he started from Sacramento for the 'North Fork Dry Diggings', the only name by which the locality was then known, and that in returning from Sacramento upon a subsequent trip, November 15th, he speaks of arriving at Auburn - circumstances which tend to prove that the nomenclature was applied between those dates; and fourthly, it designates several of the old wayside stopping places en route, whose identity is now, necessarily, recorded and preserved from oblivion."

The Markle diary is also mentioned and quoted, (the last 14 pages), in the Lardner and Brock 1924 History of Placer and Nevada Counties. This book states, "A most interesting diary was kept by an old pioneer of Placer County, John A. Markle, who later died in Kelsey Township, El Dorado County. The diary is entitled, The Travels of a Gold Digger Enroute, starting at St. Joseph Mo., April 12, 1849 and ending in Auburn, Cal., Jan. 18, 1850. The diary is contained in a book 6 1/2 x 7 1/2 inches, written on eighty-seven full pages. Mr. Lardner states his reasons for quoting the diary, which are somewhat similar, yet slightly different from those of Thompson and West. To quote Mr. Lardner, "The above from Mr. Markle's diary, shows several things, first, the vicissitudes of early pioneer days; second, the weather conditions for fall and early winter; third, his success at mining in the North Fork Dry Diggings, and that the mining on the river was some distance away, with a hard hill to climb up and down to their mining fourth, that they built their camp above the 'Dry Diggings' our place of destination."



The following passage appears in the 1883 publication of  
Stall's, History of El Dorado County, California  
Marion (Valley) is connected with Placerville by a good  
wagon-road and a suspension bridge across the South Fork of  
the American River, a trail running in the direction of  
Nelson, the township center. Dixon, Summerfield, Adam  
Waltner, Charles J. Egan, John Sallack, Mr. Hamilton  
and John Mackie are the present inhabitants."