DIARY

OF

J. E. ARMSTRONG

1849

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Historical Society.

April 9 Left home April the 9th We put up at Rutland the first night.

10 We got aboard of the boat Mongahela at Pomeroy.

11 Landed at Cincinatti about 9 o'clock P M left the same day at 4 A M for St. Louis on the boat.

12 We arrived Louisville.

15 At 7 o'clock A M we arrived at St. Louis.

16 At 5 A M started for St. Joseph distance 550 miles on the boat Takeda.

May 9 Left St. Joseph for the upper Ferry.

10 Crossed the river and drove to the bluffs and camped.

11 Started for the main road had some difficulty in reaching the road. Distance 11 miles.

12 Crossed wolf & Bean Creeks & Sistonek Creek.

13 Sunday we started for the missionary station Distance 4 m We laid there till 10 o'clock the next day.

14 A raining continued till 10 o'clock. We started on our journey. The land lays well a little roling drove 11 m.

15 Traveled 25 miles The land lays about the same as before mentioned.

16 Finkins came up with us. We cross the Minniho Creek the distance 9 m.

17 The sky is covered with dark clouds. Passed a grave where there were three men buried in one grave Died with colery Distance 15 miles.

18 We started from our encampment at 6 o'clock to day we passed 100 teams and with the rest a small government train bound for Ft. Childs They buried one of the soldiers to day Distance 22 miles.

19 We came to the Big Blue River We crossed without much difficulty. There were a great many waggons awaiting to cross. There was a grave on the bank of the river. It was a catholic. The Indipendence Road & St. Joseph Road came together. D. 15 miles

20 A raining this morning. We passed one grave today Distance 16 miles.

May 21 We past two large trains to day Seen two bufalos for the first we have seen They were on the little Platte D 25

22 Cold & windy. We passed a company from Columbus, Ohio. They had lost 72 head of their cattle. They had them in a corel & they got scared and broke out they dividing off and were in perfect confusion. This was on the bank of the Blue River Distance 15 miles.

23 Started early this morning up the valey of the Blue. We are in the hart of the Pawnies Indians but none have been seen Distance 22 miles

24 It is cold and windy. Remained at our encampment till 12 o'clock and then we started It commenced raning shortly after we started. We put up early Distance 5 miles.

25 Cold rain. Roads very muddy We are encamped on the Blue where we leave it Dis 14 mile

26 This morning we prepare ourselves for a hard days drive but we found no difficulty Distance 11 miles

27 The weather is warm when we come in sight of the Bluffs of the Platt we seen plenty of bufalo & Antilope. We had to swim to an Island to get wood Distance 22 miles.

28 Left our encampment came to Fort Kearney there is a great many people here The houses were built with sod The fort is situated about half a mile from the river and as I should consider very porely fortified. Last week there was 2000 Sous came down upon the Pawnies and whipped them and took some of them prisners Distance 19 miles

29 We traviled on the flats of the Plat Nothing but the bluffs They are 5 or 6 miles wide Distance 15 m

30 Raining very hard Finkin left us to day Distance 12 m

31 Cold & wet

The diary is missing until entry of June 26th when Armstrong was leaving the Platte River near present day Casper, Wyo.

June 26 Tues. Left camp early this morning. Drove about 6 miles& we left the river for Willow Springs which is 27 miles the first afternoon Distance 15 miles

27 Wednedday morning Started for the springs Seen a great many dead cattle caused by drinking alkalie which is vary plenty through here Got there about22 in the afternoon Took dinner and drove a short distance which made the distance 20 m

28 Thursday This days drive very much like yesterday in respect to water & grass and also a great many dead cattle. We crossed a small stream called Grees Creek Distance 18 m.

June 29 Friday Left Independence Rock drove but a short distance till we crossed Sweet River The roads vary sandy and hard wheeling. Drove to the Devil's Gate. It is a place where the river runs through the mountain. It is about 4 hundred yards long and about 60 feet wide & about 300 feet high D. 5 miles

30 Saturday Weather rather damp and cold for the time of the year Grass vary good Drove off the road 1 mile to get it Dis 14 miles

July 1 Sunday Drove 7 m. on the river & left took over the mountains Drove 14 miles before dinner. We came to the river & we crossed the river three times in less than a half hour Dis 18 m.

2 Monday We left one of our waggons & a great many other things & Mr. Pane left us this morning where we took dinner near a small valley where there was ice in abundance. It was under the ground about 6 in & the ice was about the same thickness. We have been in sight of snow for 3 or 4 days but do not appear to get any nearer. Encamped on S River D 22

3 Tuesday Left camp early in the morning Crossed the river & drove 4 m. & crossed twice & took dinner Yesterday we herd that there had been murder committed by a man by the name of Everitts. He had formerly lived in Athens, Ohio He murdered his partner & threw him in the Platte River. We herd he was to be hanged Dis 8 m

4 Wednesday We can hear the guns in all directions The boys feel in pretty good spirits. We all loaded up our pieces. We gave our neighbouring camp a few salutes which made the old Mountains ring. Here was a man who has been living in this part of the country for 13 years. He has a family. He has not been to the States only three times in the 13 years. This was on Sweet River. Drove fromthere to Strawberry Creek We had good grass & water D 12 m

5 Left camp about 7 o'clock & we came on a small stream where there was snow banks that was from 10 to 15 feet deep. I was on one myself that was about that height It was quite sollid It is nothing strange to see snow here on the Mountains. We camped on Sweet water We leave it tomorrow for good D. 11 miles

6 Crossed Sweet water for the last time Drove 8 miles We drove off the road to the Sweet water to noon which was within a half mile of the Oregon line. The line is on the summit of the Mountain We drove about 2 miles & past the Pacific Springs and camped Distance 14 miles

7 Left camp pretty early 8 miles to dry Sandy From here we drove 2 miles apast it and nooned We drove to Little Sandy The roads was very dusty We passed the Salt Lake road which is about 4 miles from the creek. We camped on the bank of the creek D 19

July 8 Sunday We started for Big Sandy which is 5 miles from Little Sandy. We took Sutlers cut off We left the main road too our left Between those two rivers the road takes off We crossed Sandy & went about one mile and camped We laid there from ten o'clock Sunday till 5 P M We was a resting our cattle for a 40 miles Distance 6 miles

9 We started for Green River which is 40 miles without watter or much grass We started at 5 P. M. & we got to Green River at 4 P. M. the next day We stoped at 11 o'clock that night & let the cattle graze about one hour & then we drove till 4 in the morning. We drove the ballance of the trip without stopping the cattle very near exhausted We tried to swim our cattle but could not make any of them swim.

10 The next day july 10th we tried to swim them again but did not get but 3 head over.

11 The next morning July 11th we tried again till noon We only got 7 head more over then we came to the conclusion to swim them by the side of skiff which we had to pay $2.00 for the use of it to swim 11 head over. The Mormons have a ferry here to cross the Green River They charge $4.00 per waggon. They ferry from 50 to 60 waggons a day.

12 Still a laying at the ferry.

13 Still at the ferry.

14 We leave the ferry this morning. The roads very dusty & hilly Seen 4 graves today more than I have seen for a good many days. Put our cattle out at noon Going to stay till morning. Camped on a small stream called Camp Creek. Distance 8 miles

15 Sunday morning left camp pretty early. The roads very hilly & dusty. We drove about 2 miles up the creek & crossed. Left the creek to our right hand drove about 8 miles from the creek & came to a small Run where there was good water. After we left there the water was plenty. We are camped at a place where there is good spring water There was a man shot himself this morning near us with a shot gun through the foot It happened by pulling the gun out of the waggon muzzel foremost. Distance 16 miles.

16 Left camp early this morning, travailed over a very hilly country the worst hills we have travailed over yet, very stony. The springs very plenty and the water cold, grass vary plenty and the best quality. There was a vary fine shower today about noon. The first rain we have had for several weeks. Are camped on Thomas fork of Bear River The distance from Camp Creek is about 30 miles. We have been in sight of snow for the last 4 weeks Distance 16 miles.

17 We leave Hams fork of Bear River for the main stream which is 28 miles a very mountainous country. Worse than any road we have travailed We camped on a small stream which was made altogether by springs. It was the finest kind of watter Distance 15

July 18 Left the camp about 6 o'clock Drove over a tremenddous hill which was about 4 miles over. In about 6 miles from where we started we took dinner near a fine spring. We drove on about 4 miles further and we came to Thomases fork of Bear Creek. We crossed over It was considered one of the swiftest Stream we have crossed yet it emtys into the main River a few rods from where we crossed. We are camped here now Distance 10 miles.

18 This morning we start up a small stream to get across. We was camped near where it emptied into Bear River. We came pretty near back to where we started from We had to leave the river on the account of the cannion. It came down to the watters edge. It was 6 miles across. Distance 18 m.

19 Left camp. We keep down Bear River. The roads very good & the grass the same. The night very cold. We are scarcely out of sight of snow Bear River is about 200 feet wide and very deep The bottoms quite wide and in some places the soil is pretty good & others very thin D 12

20 Travailed but little in the forenoon The afternoon the roads were vary bad dusty & hilly. The dust was from 4 to 6 in. deep. We leave the river on account of a cannion. The rocks come down to the waters edge. Have got two or three days travail down rong D 12

21 Saturday Saw an Indian encampment Drove but a short distance We traded 2 oxen for one to a mormon that was living a trading with the emegrants. There was several Frenchmen that has been with them 22 years It is the Snake Indians There was an old Squaw that owned 90 horses Distance 14

22 Sunday A fine morning though rather warm. We was camped on a fine little stream. It was from 10 to 15 feet wide. The water came from springs there. They dont run more than 2 or 3 miles. There is quite a number of them through this part of the country. There was a fine shower this afternoon, which helps the traveling. The dust was so deep that it was vary dissagreeable. Camped early near a spring Dis 10 miles

23 Monday We commenced travling a little further in a day For the last week or ten days we have been recruiting our cattle We travailed 10 miles before noon Went out a squirrel hunting. I killed18 in travling 10 miles. We are camped near the Steamboat Springs 3 miles from the Beer Spring, there is several Beer Springs near us. We passed two or three of the greatest springs. I went to one spring to get a drink. It boiled up out of a rock in more than fifty places. At the head of the spring it was 10 feet wide $\frac{1}{2}$ mile below it was 40 feet wide. We came to an encampment of the Snake Indians. 4 miles from here there is a cut off which goes between Fort Hall & Salt Lake road which is said to cut off from 80 to 120 miles, but we dont know whether we will take it or not There has not any waggons gone this route till 4 days ago. We have taken the cut off. It 13 miles to watter from the forks of the road is good & grass the same Distance 17 m.

July 24 Tuesday We leave the Beer Springs this morning for the cut off 4 miles to it. We got to it at 11 o'clock. We take it 13 miles to the first watter. It is a fine little stream. It comes out of the mountains. It is very good watter Distance 17

25 Wednesday This morning we start up a vary large mountain. It covered with green Service Berries The roads are good Only 6 miles to the next creek & 4 to the next. The two first were small the latter is quite deep I do not know the names of those creeks. We only drove 5 miles in the afternoon Camped near a small stream Dis 15 m

26 Thursday We leave pretty early Drove about 7 miles and came to a small stream. We filled our canteens with watter & drove 3 miles further and took dinner We drank all of the watter out of them & there was an Indian came to our camp and we asked him how far it was to water. He made signs that we would travail all that day & part of night and as bad luck would have it the signs came true we travailed on till 11 o'clock at night but found no watter When we stopped we herd that there was watter from 2 to 3 miles up in the mountain. We started, some did not. I never was so dry in my life and I never seen so many thirsty men & cattle in my life Distance 20 miles.

27 Friday We leave very early, just at dawn of day. We have 12 miles to watter yet. The roads vary dusty nights vary cold, frost for several mornings. They are vary frequent in this part of the country. We got to water about 10 A. M. We lay here till morning It is a fine spring Dis 12

28 Saturday We take up the line of march as usual and the day is pleasant. They are the best mountain roads we have had & water in several places. We broke an exel tree just as we started down a severe descent on till night and we cut a pine tree & in the morning, and by 11 O'clock we was ready to start We drove on Distance 16 mile

30 Monday At work on exeltree By 11 o'clock we were ready to start. We kept down a small stream till it sank there we camped till 12 tonight.

31 Tuesday We leave camp at 12 o'clock at night for a 20 mile stretch There were good new moon the latter part of the night We got to Raft River about 7 in the morning We laid here till three in the afternoon then we drove over to the Ft. Hall road which was 6 miles from the place where we nooned There was a great many camped D 21

August 1 We come to the Fort Hall road this morning. We keep up Raft River for some 8 or 10 miles. We are pretty near the head of it. At noon we left the river then we drove over a vary dry ridge which was 7 or 8 miles without water. At night we came to a small run that afords plenty of water. It comes from a snow bank D 16

August 2 We keep down this run for 3 ms. We came to some alkalie Springs. Shortly after we left the alkalie Springs we came to a fine little creek. Near that the Salt Lake road came in to the other road We found water plenty at noon I seen one of the finest sights I most ever did see. It was rocks that stood very thick, different sizes from 10 to 100 feet high. We came over several large mountains We camp in a valley. There was springs that afforded watter for us and our cattle D 20

3 We start with the expectation of bad roads. It is very rough country. We find the road as we expected the worst road we have seen yet. We come down a very bad hill. There we found a fine run of water We started for Goose Creek which is 4 miles west. As we got down on to Goose Creek we broke the exeltree that put in a few days ago we got it out of the and in a few minutes a man came along with an extry one and we bought it Dis 12 miles

4 We leave camp about 11 o'clock. We got the waggon fixed & ready to start Just as we got the cattle yoked D. T. Dana came up. He was a packing. We travailed down Goose Creek & camped Grass & Water Dis 15 miles

5 Sunday morning we left camp early still travling down the valley. We came to some hot springs shortly after we started It was as hot as common dish water. It is said that there is 200 men a digging Gold on this creek. We passed a small stream right after we left Goose Creek We leave it to the right. After we leave here, this last run, it is 14 miles to the next watter Dis 25

6 We got to Hot Spring Valley last night Here is a fine spring of good cool. We travail down this valley and the valley is 40 miles long. This day Dr. Dickson & D. S. Donna starts to go on to the diggins to look out a situation for the company. They left as we took dinner at a varry fine spring. The watter sinks in the creek & it is difficult to get watter without digging in the bed of the creek some 3 or 4 ft. Wecare camped near one of those holes D 14 m

7 We continue down stream yet pleasant but rather cold Quite a heavy frost last night. Days warm, rather singular kind of weather, Trains pretty thick. We travailed about 8 m in the forenoon. About 1 m west on the road good springs. It quite dusty today, the wind blows hard D 18 m

8 Camped on a run that is quite warm. I think the hot springs must be at the head of it. We are a going to get to one branch of Mary's River or Humbolt as it is called. We have got to Marys R at the head openings of it We are camped at the springs, fine grass & watter D 17 m

9 We left camp about sunrise, 2 m to a canon which we go through We cross the stream 9 times in 8 miles. It is a vary bad road. There is a road that leads to the left. It strikes a small creek before it strikes the main stream. It comes in to the other road about 20 mi. The creek is small here D 18 mm

August 10 We left camp vary early The teams travailed very fast this morning The roads are good. We crossed the main stream. Its small It is 19 miles from the west end of the canon Its grass & water good. The dust is vary bad The drivers have to suffer now D. 20 m

11 We are camped on the river Good water & the best grass we have had since we left the states D 18 m

12 Sunday We only drove 3 miles We want to rest our cattle The grass is good & watter the same D 3 m

(this portion of diary is unreadable)

Cannion which was about 6 miles through We cross the river 4 times. The place we forded was a bottom The grass rather poor. Where we nooned was an advertisement for some stolen horses $200.00 reward for horses & thief. We crossed Martins fork a little stream that empties into Marys River. Here we have to cross over hills. We leave the river for 20 miles. We dont start across till morning. D 12 m.

15 We started before day light this morning. Just before we got up the guards discovered something in the shape of a man They spoke to (it), he ran. They supposed he was an Indian after the cattle. The Indians have commenced stealing & shooting the cattle with their Bows & Arrows They crippled several. The tromp over the hills were rather dry. We found no watter till we got ? miles. There we found some little springs but they were not sufficent to watter stock. We drove to the river for feed & watter When we got there we found that there was no grass I seen a man that had been there for some days, He had lost a horse & there had been 40 head of cattle stolen & several other horses. There was a group out after the cattle & Indians while we are laying there. The men say that they killed 3 out of 4 Indians and 4 Indians they had of the meat a drying when the Whites came on them. One man by the name of Capt. King From Dayton, Ohio got shot 3 or 4 times But he killed the Indian & took his Bow & Arrows Another by the same name killed one. I seen the bow he took from him He yous to live in London, Ohio. D is 22 miles.

16 We leave camp early on the account of the grass being poor. We are with the Franklin Co. Mo. Company. They had 2 horses stolen last night & cannot find them. The grass is poor for 15 miles. The trains are vary thick on this river. We crossed the river once to day D 15 miles

17 Left camp at sunrise We drove till 9 A M & laid there till noon The grass was good 1 mile from the road. There was vary heavy wind & great appearance of rain but there was none. Good grass where we are camped to night D 14 miles

August 18 Left camp a little after sunrise, the night cold & windy. It seems imeterial where a man sleeps so he is warm, no rain & scarcely any dew to wet the ground. We are near where the Indians are committing some depradations almost every night but they have not molested us. They are the Root Diggers & they are the devils that live here. They are destitute of any kind of clothing. The Shawshanies are uncommonly large & herd over these dum brutes. I herd too yesterday that the Siouxs are a stealing from the Emagrants. The regulars & Siouxs have had a fight. It was a hard fight but the Regulars came out best. The supposition is that the Indians will murder a great many of the last Emigrants D 16 m

19 Sunday Keep near the river till noon. We leave the river. We leave it for 4 miles The river runs the crookedist of any river I ever seen, short bends & pretty deep in places D 16 m.

20 We drove off the road about 1 mile to get grass & watter. The road went around a mountain. There was a good road along the river which was the nearest & best track. We did not know it before we started. It came down the river about 6 miles, over the hill 4 (miles) & down the stream We are camped where there is a large island. Distance 20 miles

21 The trains are beginning to push. The Emigrants threw away so much back on Platte & till within a few days back. Meat from 15 to 20 cts per lb, sugar 50 cts, flour from 10 to 20 dollars. The alkalie bad. The ground has a kind of a scale which is quite hard. The land is like ashes. It has a vary disagreeable smell. It impregnates the grass. D 16 m

22 We leave early this morning. We swam the cattle over the River. We are about trading our waggons to day with a man from Ill. He belongs to the Union Bond & W. S. _____is a going to drive only a small team

night we get a light waggon & one we think will answer our purpose as well as the one we have traded & be 3 hundred pounds lighter.

23 It looks very much like rain this morning but I dont think we will get one for it is very uncommon through these parts. I have not seen any rain for several weeks and but little then. The ground is as dry as ashes, the roads are very heavy and sandy The sand is from 3 to 6 inches deep. We crossed the river again to the south side, Dis 15 miles

24 Friday Two of our men started to pack all on their back. They only took provisions to last them throughwhich is considered 10 days travel. Stedman & Ferris of Mich. We crossed the creek several times to day D 15

25 More of our men get in the notion of packing. Asa Candy & W. H. Smith of Wisconsin belong to our team. Last night we camped near some Mormons that was returning to Salt Lake. They have been to the Gold Mines They gave us some incouragement about the gold. They informed us that there is a road some 12

miles on from here that takes off on the right hand. It strikes the road again. In the distance it is 60 miles without wood or watter & there are many dead cattel. Men that make it cut grass to last 60 miles. We passed the road today about 2 o'clock Between 700 & 800 waggons gone it. Dis 18 miles

August 26 Sunday morning Another took a notion to pack this morning. Wm S. Wilson is a going the cutoff. This morning Elijah Ferrill starts to packing on an ox we riged him. After we started we travailed till about 2 in the afternoon & while we were a laying Ferrill came back to us. He got some news that discouraged him. We drove but a short distance in the afternoon No grass of any consequence The road runs away from the river Its difficult to get watter Dis 17 miles

27 We have been on a dry stretch we might say for 2 days; Teams drive off the road to eat but there is only two places where the road comes to the river Distance 17 miles

28 Shortly after we had started we seen a man just from the mines. He belongs to Waldoes train from Missouri. He sent this man on to see what prospects there was. He has 20 men hired. This man reports favorable. He says any man is sure for $10.00 per day. He says a man can make $100 per day without much difficulty. He thinks we can get there in 3 weeks. It is vary dusty today. The wind blows vary hard. It is 20 miles to watter from here No grass We drove through without grass or watter. Dis 23 miles

29 Last evening we drove the slew of the sink We did not get grass till 9 o'clock at night. We have understood there is goodrgrass 2 miles below here. We start for there this morning Wechave to cut grass to last for 60 miles. Here we camped to be here 2 days. There a great many trains a recruiting here. Grass vary good Dis 2 miles

30 We are still a laying here yet teams are continually coming in here Not a great many started out yet There is plenty of Indians. They call themselves the Pyutes. They live in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Several of them have been to the mines & can give a pretty good description of the place.

31 This morning we leave this place. We go 25 miles above the sink of Mary's River. The road for 10 miles or more is just like a stream bed. The oxen sink into it from 4 to 10 inches. We have had no grass for the cattle. This evening we got to the Sulphur Springs about sun set. We laid there till 11 o'clock & started. We have 45 miles without grass & watter & we have to drive day & night till we get there. We have drove all night & till 3 or 4 o'clock in the afternoon. We laid here till about Sunset & it is one of the strangest sights I have ever seen of the kind. The watter from 20 to 30 springs The watter had to

be cooled for to drink. It did not get cool, that is perfectly cool. There was some that boiled up out of the springs from 6 to 18 inches. I scene some pieces of meat aboil in it. There had been about 20 wagons left & burnt up there for the wood to day. We finally filled up cattle that has given out. Distance from Sulphur Springs to the Hot Springs is 25 miles and it is called 25 mi to the Truckee River the nearest watter. We travailed all night about sun rise we reached the sand hill 9 miles from the river. We had 3 of our oxen give out and we had to leave one waggon here and put all of the oxen to one waggon to get it to the river. We got to the river about 10 o'clock. We staid there till next morning. Two of us started back to the other waggon I never seen such a destruction of property in my life. We saw about 40 waggons & somewhere near 150 head of dead cattle & given out together & more than 100 log chains, ox yokes. In the night we got the last waggon in. We drove about 2 miles up the river.