

## THE DIARY OF T. M. BARBER

STARTING APRIL 15, 18511 mi  
1 carbon -  
Tuesday April 15.

Bid farewell to Lancaster and many friends. Our Company consisting of Robt. Allensworth, Wells Huston, and myself. We encamped the first night at Mr. Kirk's seven miles from Dubuque. Really our tent is very neat and comfortable.

Wednesday the 16th.

Went on our way pacificward. Stopped at Dubuque to lay in supplies and encamped eight miles west of that place.

Thursday, the 17th.

We travelled twenty-five miles and encamped near Little Farm. Day overtook us before starting. Travelled all together until night.

Friday, the 18th.

We encamped two miles ahead of them.

Saturday, the 19th.

We took Cedar Rapids road. Day went by way of Iowa City. We encamped for the Sabbath at a farm three miles from ~~Mannion~~ <sup>Marion</sup>.

Sunday, the 20th.

<sup>Alcorn</sup>  
We have nothing to do but take care of our Cattle, read and cook. Wrote to <sup>Jno. Slocum</sup>. Read the Bible, which he gave me. The Book of all B ooks. The most instructive way we regard its teachings and learn to do right.

Monday, the 21st.

We left for Cedar Rapids. A nice town on the Cedar River. Indeed Iowa has most beautiful country. All that is lacking is timber. The soil is rich and well watered. We put up seven miles west of the Rapids.

Tuesday, the 22nd.

We crossed the Iowa River at Marengo. The most desolate little town on the road. We camped at (~~Jones~~) seven miles from Marengo. Travelled over very pretty country but bad sloughs.

Wednesday, the 23rd.

We travelled to old Irishman, twenty seven miles from Marengo. Had very good quarters. The old man settled with ten sons and four daughters, and they have two thousand acres beautiful land.

Thursday, the 24th.

We traveled eighteen miles and camped at Lattimore Grove. A very pretty location for a farm, but a woman who never will make it any better has got possession. We are favored with beautiful camp places. This place is twenty-seven miles from Marengo. E. A. Hale left us yesterday.

Hale

Friday, April 25th.

We traveled twenty-one miles. Passed through Newton, county seat of Jasper County. Rather a neat little place. We camped at Cherry Grove with Mitchell, a real New Hampshire Yankee. His farm is pretty and adorned with yankee enterprise. We took dinner at his house, the first meal in a house for two weeks.

Saturday, 26th.

We left Mitchell and overtook eight Peoria teams at North Skunk River. They had stopped a few hours during which time Mrs Taylor gave birth to a fine child and her husband coming to look at his new heir exclaimed "Thar is another quarter section of land, do you feel able to go on Sally." "Oh, <sup>yes</sup> Jeemes! I feel pretty pert. I reckon you'd better hitch up the steers." Jeemes did hitch up the four yoke of steers and away they went on their way rejoicing. Jeemes, that he had another quarter section of land and Sally that her husband was happy. There is certainly something in a name. Old Zack when hemmed in at Buena Vista by Santa Anna with twenty thousand of the flower of the Mexican Army, while he had but a handful of raw volunteers, would not surrender. Neither would Mrs. Jeemes Taylor let any obstacles prevent her onward march to Oregon.

Sunday the 27th.

We encamped at Mitchell's or Apple Grove, where we had very good times, a pleasant place, and an agreeable man.

Monday, the 28th.

We left the grove and traveled fourteen miles to Fort Des Moines. The most beautiful country in the world. At North River we crossed the Des Moines in a ferry, we traveled twenty-four miles this day.

Tuesday, the 29th.

Cold west wind. Snowed very <sup>2.)</sup>severely. We traded oxen, or Allensworth did, and shared a(hoorin). We overtook a widow on her way to Oregon. Her husband had made all preparations for going, but was taken sick and died about the time they were to start. He requested her to go on with her five children, which she complied with, and is now on her way well equiped and appears able to cope with anyone on the road. Her name is Mount and she says she will not dismount until every difficulty ~~is~~ surmounted, and she has selected the land which Uncle Sam ~~so~~ so generously gives actual settlers, which will amount "to a right smart chance."

Wednesday, the 30th.

We traveled twenty-one miles and turned from the road and encamped on Middle River. The most windy and disagreeable day I ever saw. It froze last night one inch thick ice on the camp.

Thursday, the first of May.

Cold as Greenland. Froze hard again last night. Awful severe traveling. One man froze his ear. We encamped at William Alcorn's grove, on the Watta Wak Creek. Twenty-four teams here this night. We are now thirty miles from Winter ~~set~~. A town I have neglected to mention in this book, and a desperate town too. The County seat

of Madison County. It certainly is rightly named, as Winter did actually set in at or near this very place.

Friday, the second.

Still cold. It snowed this morning two inches. We drove fifteen miles to a grove called Campbells, or Nodaway Creek. No house, no corn or yard for brutes.

Saturday, the 3rd.

We drove fifteen miles and encamped at Hedge's grove. A woman and three little girls living alone fifteen miles from any house, her husband having gone for some six months trip. Rather pretty woman for the lonely place she inhabits.

Sunday, the 4th.

We had, in justice to our team, to drive to Indian town. A few log cabins on the Nicht Nabut Na (Nishnabotna) River. A splendid place for camping. I feel sad to infringe upon the blessed Sabbath, but the merciful man is said to be merciful to his brutes. We have found some fifteen teams encamped. ~~Nothing~~  
~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~

Nothing of note happened to us until we arrived at Kanesville ~~xxx~~ having stayed at Cartersville two days. We came to Kanesville and found the town full of emigrants. We had been nineteen days traveling from Lancaster. Kanesville is quite a stirring place of some two thousand inhabitants, nearly all Mormons, a very industrious, quiet set of people willing to dispose of their commodities at farm prices. It was really surprising when we arrived at Cartersville to hear the voices of praise ascending to Him. We owe so much gratitude. I enquired if there was a meeting, and found it had just closed and was held by the Mormons. There is much of the book of Mormon that is more than folly, but hardly even do they take to Jo Smith and his works. They are Bible Christians, and, in many things, are those who ~~purposse~~ to know more of the Christian plan of Salvation. Elder Orson Hyde is president of the "Tribe". He is editor of the Frontier Guardian, he is Merchant, and General Superintendent of the Mormons, this side of Salt Lake. He is a large corpulent fellow, polite and affable, very obliging to emigrants and all together I believe a good sort of a Christian Babbitt, delegate ~~at~~ to Congress from Utah, is here on his way to Salt Lake, a large sandy complexioned man, possessing much energy and considerable ability, but a man of loose habits and reckless character. ~~A Mormon~~ for selfish motives it is said. He has six wives with him, and three at the valley. At any rate there are several very good looking women in his harem. We were at this place from Tuesday until Monday. Intended to go to their meeting on the Sabbath, but Pres. Hyde was called away, by a poor widow of his flock, who had been robbed of her only cow by the emigrants. Elder Hyde, although it was Communion day, went in pursuit and found the cow. This is following the example of our Blessed Saviour practically.

Monday, the 12th.

We pulled up tent and moved toward Upper Ferry. And camped about ten miles from town on the banks of the Missouri. This is really the most romantic place I ever saw. The bluffs are entirely of sand and clay and piled up in the shape of sugar loaves, looking like pins set in some enormous bowling alley. There is nothing in the shape of stone or gravel to be seen in the vicinity of Council Bluffs.

Tuesday, the 13th. *Traders*

I went to Mather's Point to the Post Office, the Council Bluffs post office, thinking that perhaps I might find a letter from Lancaster, but after thirty-five miles ride got home without any letters. We lay three days at this camping ground waiting for the wind to subside so that it might be safe crossing. Then we moved down to the river bank and had to wait for some twenty ~~sucker~~ teams to get over before we could cross.

Saturday, the 17th.

We crossed the river and came some seven miles into Indian Country, When we camped again and remained till Monday, during which time it rained almost incessantly.

Monday, the 19th. *Pappio*

We passed on to Papillion Creek, some ten miles and found bridge gone. We helped ~~Seekers~~ build a new one on Tuesday.  
*"the Suckers"*

Wednesday, the 21st.

It rained, in fact it is raining more than half the time since for the last ten days. All streams are up so that we can not travel. Wednesday night Kelley's horses were lost.

Thursday, the 22nd.

All hands turned out to hunt horses, the rain constant and very hard, brings a succession of thunder showers. Hail fell so as to cover the ground, and some hail stones large as hen's eggs. Our bridge was again carried away.

Friday, the 23rd.

We had to build a new bridge. Kelley found his horses.

Saturday, the 24th.

We came to Elk Horn. Found it very high. Some ~~sucker~~ teams were crossing over to the island some two or three feet out of the water.

Sunday, the 25th.

We are still at Elk Horn. Water still high and appearances of rain. Commenced raining about dark and poured down in torrents deluging every tent in the company. We are now about eighty men strong, some thirty-five teams, and thirty women and children. We have found a corral on the banks of the river, to more easily enclose our cattle, some two or three hundred head cattle and horses.

Monday, the 26th.

Still at Elk Horn and no appearance of getting from it. Rained all last night and still pouring down. I never saw such rain in my life. Water still rising. Emigrants on island very much frightened and want to be brought back to this side, some turning back home, who are perfectly discouraged. Certainly it is a most dismal sight. Water covers the land as far as we can see, and we must cross in order to prosecute our journey, and that pretty soon, else winter on this road. Oh how wicked some of our company are, when thrown from the reach of civilized society. How perfectly outrageous ~~as it does~~ appear the God in his justice has sent this *terribly* calamity upon us to ~~teach~~ learn us our dependence upon him. I am now sadly afflicted with piles. The most disagreeable complaint ever ~~inflicted~~ inflicted upon man. Oh! may I be relieved and suffered, if consistent with the Providence of God, to reach the Pacific; and may I bear all these afflictions with fortitude becoming a christian. There are now some hundreds of men, women, and children upon the island, or portions of land not overflowed, who are in a suffering condition, as they are surrounded by water, and nothing for the stock to eat. Mr. Allensworth, with several others have gone to help the women and children off where they can be safe, and then we have the boat to take over again, on 27th.

~~Tuesday, the 27th.~~

Last night Mr. John M. Hurd from Hurricane, Grant County was struck by lightning, while crossing the Elk Horn about eight o'clock. He was struck on the right arm. Entered his body ~~on~~ right breast, and passed entirely through to his ankles, where it passed from him, through his boots, leaving a hole in each boot about the size of a picayune. Of course death was instant. There were several men in the boat, all prostrated but one. We this day laid him out and consigned him to the grave. May we derive a lesson from this sad catastrophe. Our company are too heedless of their obligations to one another but much more ~~we~~ miss in doing duty toward God. How melancholy that men endowed with reason, upon whom God has always showered his blessings should treat their greatest benefactor with such contempt. In one moment we may by one stroke of his justice be carried beyond the possibility of hope.

May 27th.

This day another human being has passed from time to eternity, And through heedlessness. Another admonition, that although we are beyond the vision of friends, and those who exercise an influence upon us, we are not removed from God's immediate presence. He will make manifest his displeasure when we disregard his just requirements. John R. Ross was from Potōsi son-in-law of Daniel May. We got a few teams on this day ~~finish~~ finish taking teams on to the island.

*and the 28th,*

May 29th & 30th.

We crossed to the mainland and travel twelve miles. Have pleasant camping place. There have been five deaths in and about this dirty stream within one week, four by drowning, and one by lightning.

June, the 8th.

We are now encamped sixteen miles from Wood Creek, a hundred eighty miles from Missouri. It is Sabbath evening, quiet and beautiful. Our encampment consists of sixteen wagons about seventy-five persons, twenty-five perhaps women and children. We travel in company with Mr. Kelly of Mineral Point who has wife, two sisters, niece, and brother's wife with him. Mrs. Hardy and Mrs. Kelly are very kind to us. They furnish all the milk we can use and otherwise show us much kindness. This is rather a monotonous journey, in ascending Platte River. One day will give a fine index of the journey to this point at least. Our boy's just caught a fawn and brought into camp after meeting the little fellow let him go. We are now traveling very fast from twenty to thirty miles is the average for the past week. If permitted to get safely through with this journey and to return home will be content to remain there. It is surprising how fast oxen will travel and still keep in good order. If the the Gillispie oxen were not lame we should have the best team on the road.

June, the 10th.

We are making fast progress on our journey. If not for traveling on the Sabbath, should be better pleased with the tramp. The laws of God and the laws of man are here forgotten by too many. What selfish creatures we are when prospered and blessed with health and the comforts of life. We consider it more our good luck than the bestowal of the merciful Providence. But let adversity come upon us, and we see how miserably helpless we are. There can be no happiness unalloyed except in a firm belief on and a practical adoption of the precepts and examples of Christ. The Bible so much neglected and abused, is the only sure guide and perfect monitor. Heavenly Father, may thy blessed book be more studied, may its glorious teachings be heeded and its heavenly spirit imbibed by us all, and may we never forget the blessings bestowed upon us, may gratitude fill our hearts. Thou hast given me, kind friends, the best of parents, kind and affectionate brothers and sisters, and thou hast given me for a short time one of thine own children. My sins were so great. She was taken home that I might be brought nearer to Thee and see the utter impossibility of living right and happily without a firm reliance upon Thee. She was taken from me to learn from whence all those blessings flow. Oh, may she ever be permitted from that pure world to watch over me, whether at home or abroad, upon the sea or the boundless waste, in the far west, whether with friends or among the untamed occupants of the forest. It is now cold. We have had a heavy thundershower this day and bad traveling. Our captain killed an antelope this afternoon. The prairie dogs have some very snug little villages. They are a curious little creature perched upon their little mounds they will bark at us like some little house dog. Saw three kinds of cactus, the same kind we cultivate at home. We encamped this night upon the banks of the Platte River. No wood, but willows. This is really an imposing stream. More than a mile in width with very shallow bottom, the bottom land extending some five miles each side. Is beautiful and covered with buffalo grass, the richest food for cattle I ever saw.

June 27th.

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June 27th.

We left Fort Laramie this morning and are now encamped eighteen miles westward. Since last dating this book, have passed on some three hundred miles. Have seen plenty of game. In trying to kill a buffalo I got lost and lay out from early morn the eighteenth to even of the nineteenth. Mr. Kelly and myself got lost from the train and traveled some fifty miles. We killed two antelope. Were nearly killed in turn by mosquitos. Never did I see any before. The air was completely thick with them. By roasting some meet upon the buffalo chips without salt or anything else I got along fine/ for thirtysix hours. The wolves howled pitiously about me but I did not fear them or the Indians. On the seventeenth I also got lost and was out till nearly midnight before reaching camp. I wounded three buffalo but got none. The prairie dogs, antelope, hare, and buffalo were all plenty.

Fort Laramie is situated south of the Platte between the bluffs or hills. It is made of adobe brick and looks very ancient. We have passed some very curious bluffs. Castlebluffs on the south side of the Platte resembles some old buildings nearly decayed. Chimney Rock is quite a curiosity standing two hundred and fifty feet high and not much larger than a church steeple. The "Ancient bluff ruins" and Scott's Bluffs are quite grand. Scott's Bluffs was so named as a young man by that name was killed there by the Indians and buried upon its summit. Where we are now encamped is a very hilly place, and resembled the country around Harpers Ferry. We have a most beautiful spring of pure cold water, a great and rare luxury on this road. We are now some twelve hundred miles from our destination. Shall we ever reach that destination? I sent a letter to brother Allen yesterday. Oh, I wish that I could receive some from my dear friends, but patience. Wait two or three months and then what anxiety in opening the silent messengers. What news may then greet me? Perhaps the death of parents, brother, or sisters, or some dear friend. This is certainly a wild adventure, but excitement has become an indispensable accompaniment of my life and will be helping to make time pass pleasantly until reinstated again in a home.