

NEBRASKA STATE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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See p. 2 of Introduction

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"Forty Nines" John G. Benson
From St. Joseph to Sacramento.

Introduction.

Gold was discovered in California in 1848, and when the news reached the States by the circuitous route around the Horn, the gold fever became an epidemic. I suppose there is nothing with which to compare the gold rush which took place from the States to the Pacific coast in the Spring and Summer of 1849. Tens of thousands of men, some with their families, left thier homes to make the journey in the face of the difficulties which we would (had it not been reduced to history) be inclined to think insurmountable or pretty nearly so.

The distance from the center of emigration to the gold fields was probably not less than 2800 miles. By far the greater part of the route lead through a territory inhabited only by Indians. Between the Mississippi and the Missouri rivers (except in the eastern portion of the territory) bridges were few and roads uncertain. West of the Missouri there were no bridges and no roads but trails. The distance by the trail from St. Joseph to Sacramento measured in miles was approximately 2200. In time, with good luck and conditions, five months. There was no chance to obtain provisions after leaving the Missouri River and every article necessary for the journey had, of course, to be carried.

Oxen for draught purposes were generally used. It was claimed they possessed advantages over horses and mules. The animals had, of course, to subsist entirely upon grass and water found by the road, and oxen were said to be better adapted to this kind of life. It was also said they were easier to control, as horses and mules could not be turned loose to graze or at night without being hobbled. The Indians were known to be fond of horses but to care little for cattle and this would tend to render the ox train less liable to attack by them.

These arguments in favor of oxen were no doubt valid, but would seem to have little to dowith the case, as horses and mules in sufficient numbers were not available and oxen were used of necessity, regardless of choice.

Farmers generally had, beyond their own requirements, comparatively few horses and mules fit for the trip, but nearly every one of them had a number of steers broken to the yoke and a larger number of steers and cows which could easily be fitted for service. There were, however, some horse and mule trains, and some, and probably many of the ox trains had two or more horses owned in common by the company, which were intended for scout and emergency duty and for use in rounding up the oxen should they stampede or stray away.

The usual team consisted of three or four yoke of oxen and there were generally three or four men with each wagon.

The wagon load aside from the food supply, cooking and table utensils, clothing, bedding, tent and camp equipment, consisted of axes, saws, blacksmith and other tools (each train had at least one anvil), shoes for the animals, shovels, spades, scythes, sickles, rakes, chains, rope, firearms, and ammunition, five or six months' supply of tar and grease for the wooden spindle wagons, casks for carrying water over dry and desert places, soap, candles, liniments, simple medical supplies for man and beast, etc. etc.

On the 50th day out from St. Joseph, my father, in his diary, mentions the fact that his train had reduced its average load to about 2000 pounds, which every one familiar with freighting knows was still a heavy load for better roads than they had to travel.

My father, John H. Benson, was 40 years old when he started on his journey to the gold fields, with what was known as the Louisa Company, from Louisa County (on the Mississippi River) Iowa. Before leaving his home he promised his wife he would keep a journal and make for her some note of each day's happenings on the road. They had, soon after their marriage, migrated from Virginia to Illinois (and afterwards to Iowa) part of the way by wagon and she

was therefore familiar with camp life, and qualified to read between the lines of such a record.

The account of his trip from his home to St. Joseph was sent back to her from that place, and was afterwards lost. After leaving the Missouri, the exigencies of the road were such that he knew the account would only add to her anxiety, and he abandoned the thought of attempting to send to her any part of the diary until after he had reached his destination. He did not fail, however, to make some note of each day's happenings on the road from St. Joseph to Sacramento. (He made the last 500 or 600 miles on horseback and gained two or three weeks on his train.) These daily accounts were in the nature of daily letters addressed to his wife, and cannot be appreciably read or in places, understood without keeping this fact in mind.

The sheepskin bound pocket note books in which the diary was kept came into my possession after the death of my mother when I was a young man, and while I had frequently dipped into them, and knew all they contained, by piecemeal, it was only recently that I took them up systematically and had them transcribed for my own satisfaction. After doing so, I corresponded with a number of historical societies and libraries, but found nothing of the kind with which to compare it, and it occurred to me that the account contained enough of human interest and historical value to be of interest to others.

My interest (which may be largely filial) is not more in the record itself, than it is in the fact, that (amid all the vicissitudes of the road) he kept it for the 142 days of the journey, without a single skip.

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St. Joseph, Mo.
Sunday, May 6th, 1849.

Townsend was taken with homesickness and has been badly in the dumps for two or three days, and this morning decided to quit the train and go back home. This leaves us with fifteen wagons out of eighteen with which we started. We chartered a ferry boat from about ten o'clock until sun down for fifteen dollars. As I was ~~was~~ crossing with my wagon it was with the utmost effort that a collision with a steam boat was averted. It missed us by only a few feet and the waves nearly capsized our little craft. For an instant, I thought we were gone, but the boat righted itself, and but for the shock, (which was a real one) no damage was done. All crossed safely by sun down, and are in camp on the beach for the night. We took in about six dollars for back ferrysage.

Monday, May 7th.

Today we left the sand beach of the Missouri. We entered the bottom with some misgivings as it is five miles wide and was said to be nearly impassible. The road was not good, but it was so much better than we had expected, we all praised it. We always praise all the bridges and roads we come over safely. We struck the bluff which was not steep and went on about two miles and camped on a creek with two fine springs. I feel better than I have since I left home. Made a drive of about seven miles.

Tuesday, May 8th.

We laid in camp today. Matthews and I walked back to St. Joseph to see our old friend, Townsend, before he started back home, but he had lost no time in getting away, and he was gone. I hope he may have a safe journey home, and a safe journey through life.

Wednesday, May 9th.

Today we repacked, fixed and re-arranged our loading.

Dickinson and Flack who left the train some days ago on account of a fancied grievance, came back and requested to be reinstated. A meeting of the company was called and the request was granted without a dissenting vote. At night a meeting was called for the purpose of coming to a conclusion for the march. It was ~~unanimously~~ resolved to start tomorrow at 11 o'clock. Flack and I were appointed a committee to wait on some other companies and try to form a larger train for protection against the Indians.

Thursday, May 10th.

Today at 11 o'clock we struck the march. The country was very rolling and road dry and crooked. In about three miles we came to a small run and muddy crossing. Here on ascending the bank, after crossing the stream, Mr. Dickinson's team stalled. We took one yoke of our oxen and pulled him up. He appeared to be much chagrined that his team had stalled. He had traded his old team for a green one in St. Joseph and I think he really thought he had a crack team. At about 5 o'clock we pitched our tents and herded the cattle on good grass. Traveled about 8 miles.

Friday, May 11th.

We started about 9 o'clock. Traveled on a fine road for about two miles to Mosquito Creek. Here we found some poor fellows stalled in the creek. We took four yoke of our cattle and put on one extra yoke of theirs, and pulled them out. They seemed very grateful, and the last I saw of them, they were on their way. We traveled in a beautiful country, but rather rolling. Traveled about eight or ten miles today. Before we camped we crossed Wolf Creek. The emigrants had made a good bridge. On ascending the bank, Dickinson's team stalled again. Jim Gordon pulled him out. We pitched our tents on Wolf Creek, a half mile from the road. The country is beautiful and grazing good. Here we found a new made grave. The head board gave

the name of a man from Missouri who had died of cholera in ten hours from the time he was taken. The weather is cool but fine.

Saturday, May 12th.

We laid in camp today and organized. Twenty wagons were taken in. Matthews was elected captain, Anderson wagon master. We adopted a constitution which I think was a good one, and the people generally were pleased with it. The Louisa Company retained its organization as a unit in the larger company.

Sunday, May 13th.

We broke camp at 8 o'clock. It was a glorious day. In about a mile we came to a newly made grave. The inscription on the head board was:

"Nathaniel Clark,
Age 22
Died of Cholera."

In about two miles we came to an Indian Mission which consists of six families, a trading house, and a church. It is conducted by Presbyterians. The country is beautiful. After leaving this place we met a poor fellow from Wisconsin who had lost his team and was going back. He had been 25 miles ahead and had given up. Near here was a large encampment. There were tents as far as the eye could reach. A train of thirty pack mules passed us, also several mule and horse teams. We came about 15 miles from the Mission and found an excellent spring and sufficient wood. A few minutes ago a man came into camp on horseback going back home. He had been over 100 miles out from here. He assigned no reason except he was homesick. Some of the boys told him he would go home and go to plowing corn. He said he was not particular about what he did so long as he got home. As we stopped for camp I was told a new man in our train by the name of Wallen had the cholera. I went to see him in his tent. He is very sick.

Monday, May 14th.

This morning was rainy and blustery. Mr. Wallen was too sick to ride and we laid in camp. The Bloomington Ill. company was in St. Joseph when we were and intended to cross the river the next day. (There were in the train four of our old Illinois acquaintances.) I went back to see if I could meet them, and if so to suggest we join trains. I, however, did not find them. I think I met two hundred wagons. I met, as I returned, a man going back on foot, and also one wagon returning with a sick man. Mr. Wallen died about 8 o'clock tonight.

Tuesday, May 15th.

This morning the solemn duty of burying the dead had to be attended to. Here lay a man whose prospects two days ago were as fair as any of those who attended his burial. There were three men with Mr. Wallen's wagon, his father-in-law and his brother. His father-in-law went back, and young Wallen got in with Mr. Dickinson's wagon. We struck march about 10 o'clock and drove through a beautiful prairie, with now and then some skirts of timber on the left. We traveled about ten miles and came to a small creek. Here the Bloomington, Ind. company had camped for dinner. The company consists of 39 wagons. They have a Methodist Chaplain with them, and do not travel on Sunday. They reported all well. We traveled about five miles further and found the Dayton company in camp. They reported all well. Made a drive of about 15 miles.

Wednesday, May 16th.

This morning we started out about 7 o'clock. Traveled on over beautiful prairie. No ^{timber} timber. After about twelve or fourteen miles came in sight of some skirting timber, on both sides of the road. There was no water on the road. About 3 o'clock, Capt. Olds of the Bloomington, Ill., company came up. He reported that his train was about four miles back. We agreed to meet and join trains in the

morning. That is, to travel together as separate units as long as it seemed best for both companies. He reported all well in his train, but said they had buried one of their men this side of the river; died of cholera. All are well, I think, in our camp at this time, 8 o'clock. Fiddling and dancing is the amusement of the evening.

Thursday, May 17th.

Rode out about 8 o'clock this morning. The Bloomington train came up. We traveled about six or seven miles to a branch of the Blue River called Nemaha. A beautiful stream about ten yards wide, with rock bottom. The most beautiful country of land I have ever seen. There was timber skirting up and down as far as we could see. I think the creek is about 75 miles from St. Joseph. It is one of the greatest camping grounds I have seen. One man buried here. While we were at the Nemaha we were told we could not find any wood or water for twenty miles, so we laid in a supply of water and wood, but the report was not correct.

We traveled something over twelve miles, and were not out of sight of timber. I think all well, tonight, at 8 o'clock.

Friday, May 18th.

This is a beautiful May morning. I went over to the Bloomington camp. They all appeared in good health and fine spirits. We started early and in six or seven miles we came to three new graves side by side with inscription at the head of each giving the name and residence. They had all died of cholera in less than twenty hours from the time they were taken. One who has not felt it, cannot know what it means to meet face to face with sickness and death under such conditions as surround us. We came in sight of the Springfield company. Two men were sick. Went on about two miles. There was an encampment with cholera in it. After leaving the creek we struck a fairly level country for eight or ten miles, and came to a small branch and some timber. Timber and water plenty. Before we camped we passed the grave

of an United States soldier. A circumstance occurred today which shows how far imagination can carry a person and furnished material for a bit of comedy, along with the tragedy. Mr. Dickinson's pistol scabbard had gone inside of his pantaloons without his knowing it, and had made his side sore, and not thinking of the scabbard, and trying to keep his mind off the cholera, and thinking something serious was the matter, he diagnosed his complaint as side pleurisy. He asked his wagon to stop and take him in, but before getting into the wagon he unbuckled his pistol belt, and let the cat out of the bag. We dubbed him Dr. Pleurisy, and tonight we put a bandage over the eyes of one of the boys, tied a small chunk of wood to his leg, and took him to the doctor's tent, and told him the man could not see clearly, that he seemed to have an obstruction in his step, and asked him to diagnose his case. He said he was glad we came, that he was doubly pleased and gratified, first to find he did not have the pleurisy, and second to see us make d--- fools of ourselves. Made a drive today of nearly 20 miles I think.

Saturday, May 19th.

We started out in good time this morning. Found water in places. In about ten miles came to the Big Blue River, 100 miles from St. Joseph. The stream is about forty yards wide, with low water. It came in some of our wagon boxes a little. Beautiful country with the most timber I have seen. We took dinner on the east bank. A new made grave was near the road, also one made in 1847. After dinner we decided to lay in camp this afternoon. We met here some men who said they had met some men who were carrying the information that the Indians had declared war and the United States troops were waiting for reinforcements. Plenty of water and wood. The boys passed the afternoon swimming and fishing. They caught some fish, but there is so much sickness on the road we did not eat them in our tent.

Sunday, May 20th.

We started this morning about half past seven. After reaching the high land we saw three encampments laying by. One of the encampments had the cholera and smallpox. Another had the measles. The country is beautiful. We traveled about ten miles and stopped to graze. We found a Missouri company encamped, with two men with cholera, one supposed to be dangerously ill.

I am sitting on the bank of a creek under the shade of a cotton wood tree and the breeze is blowing delightfully. I must go as the company is getting ahead of me. Passed a fresh grave to the right of the road. The day was unusually filled with incidents. One of Nichol's cows died. Cooper and Tools had a fight. We met three men going back. They could give no reason except they were homesick. We also met an ox and a mule going back, no doubt for the same reason. They were traveling at a brisk walk, neck and neck, as close together as though they had been yoked. They came within 150 yards of us, and some of the boys ran toward them, shouting and cracking their whips, but they did not even turn their heads. They no doubt, had something serious on their minds. I am to be guard tonight for the first time since leaving the Missouri. Traveled about 20 miles.

Monday, May 21st.

Today we traveled in sight of timber most of the time. Came to a small creek called Little Rocky. Here was an encampment which reported the Indians were hostile. One report had come that five men had been killed and forty wagons burned. Another report was that fifteen wagons had been burned and the men taken prisoners. We fell in with a company of 21 wagons which made a proposition to travel in company for mutual protection. After crossing the creek we passed a fresh grave, head-board gave the name and residence Louisville, Ky.

Here we stopped to graze, and all firearms were loaded and preparations made to resist attack by the Indians. After traveling about five miles we passed two men with a wagon and two yokes of cattle from Scott City, Iowa. The cattle had given out and they intend to sell the wagon and oxen, and buy mules and pack. The train which was in camp at Little Rocky came up. There are now about 80 wagons in our train which makes quite a parade, to say nothing of the dust. The water was tolerably plenty on the road, and some timber on our left. We passed a dead horse. We saw the first antelope today. Camped one mile to the left of the principal road. We have extra guards out and are corralled in the best manner to resist attack. We allowed the animals time to graze. They are now (7 o'clock) all in the corral which is made by arranging the wagons in the ~~shape~~ form of an ellipse, leaving a guarded opening at one end. The ~~front~~ tongue of each wagon is tied to the hind wheel of the wagon in front with a log chain. Captain Matthews is first in command and Captain Olds of the Bloomington Company second. 8 P.M. The cattle seem to be contentedly settling down for the night. This is good - for with about 80 tents and 600 head of stock, in the corral, there is no room for parading which I feared the cattle might take a notion to do.

Tuesday, May 22nd.

This morning was disagreeable. A cold wind in the north. We met a man whose train had camped fifteen miles ahead. Their cattle had run off. They had found some but were still out sixty head. In about 15 miles we came to Big Sandy. The water is not running, but is found in holes. We took in wood and water, and camped about two miles from the creek. This was the first day since we left the Missouri that we did not pass one or more fresh graves. We met a man going back who said that a man in his company had

accidentally shot himself, and he was taking the news to his family. We traveled about 18 miles. We traveled all day armed and equipped for attack, and are corralled same as last night, and have extra sentinels out.

Wednesday, May 23rd.

This morning was cold and the wind blew from the north. The dust is very bad. Water plenty on the road this afternoon and chances for camping good. In about ten miles from the Big Sandy we struck Little Blue. It is about 25 yards wide and skirted with cottonwood. Today we passed two fresh graves, one man had died of cholera and the other was the grave of the man who had shot himself. Traveled about 20 miles. We are corralled the same as the last two nights and have extra guards out.

Thursday, May 24th.

Still cold. Moved out early this morning. Came on about two miles and found a man with a broken down wagon. The captain and his train had left him. Seven, however, out of the company waited for him, and he made arrangements to join in with a man who had lost his team. After going a little further we came to a grave. The head board gave the name of a man from Missouri, age 23. We had some rain this afternoon which laid the dust and made it much pleasanter to travel. About noon we came to an encampment of U. S. Troops. They say the reports of the Indian depredations and atrocities which are afloat are all false and that the Indians are peaceful and no danger of difficulty with them. This is glorious news as we had traveled for three days equipped for battle with them and ~~had~~ slept by our guns at night, and this means more physical and mental strain than the mere statement of the fact would indicate. They also report that they have met 3500 to 4000 wagons and that they think some of them have reached Fort Laramie by this time. We are still going up the Little Blue, sometimes on the bottom and sometimes on the high land. Traveled about 18 or 20 miles.

Friday, May 25th.

This morning the wind was in the west and very cool. We did not make much of a travel. Wind blew dead ahead with great force, and the dust was blinding. We came to a train which traveled very slowly and no chance of passing it. We met a small party of U. S. troops going to Fort Kearney. About sun down we pitched out tents. Grass is short.

~~###~~ Saturday, May 26th

This morning is blustery and cloudy. About 10 o'clock we came to the head-waters of the Little Blue. We crossed and stopped to graze. This is said to be the last of the waters of the Blue, and said to be 53 miles from the place where we first came to it. As we lay in camp not less than a half dozen trains passed us. The grass ever since we came to this river has been short. The old grass has not been burned. This afternoon the Burlington, Iowa, company passed on to camp about four miles ahead. Two fiddlers are going in our camp. I saw two antelopes this afternoon.

Sunday, May 27th.

This morning was clear and cold. All well and in good spirits. Moved out in good time. Traveled on about four miles and came to a small creek. After crossing we found the Burlington company in camp for the day. All were well. In a short distance we came to three more companies. Nothing in particular took place. No timber, and water only in rain ponds. Two antelope were killed by men in our company. Antelope meat is said to be delicious. We expect to try it ourselves in the morning. We traveled about 20 miles. We are now near the Platte and I think all are well.

Monday, May 28th.

This is a beautiful morning. We have just finished breakfast and the dishes are washed. We tested the flesh of the antelope and pronounced it better than venison. I am now sitting on one of the

knolls of the Platte and have an extensive view of the bottom and bluff. I have just counted fifteen trains of wagons. It is now half past six A.M. About one mile from camp we got on the bottom of the Platte. It is level and sandy. In about twelve miles we came to the river. It is about as muddy as the Missouri. Rapid current and shallow banks. No timber on the south side. Grand Island in the river, is said to be fifty miles long. About six miles further brought us to Fort Kearney. It is on the level prairie. The buildings have sod walls and very flat roofs. It is a new station. We camped in less than a mile of it. It is said to be 250 miles from St. Joseph. I went into the Fort and was in the Sutler's store. It is built of sod walls; roof covered with poles, brush and sod. Dirt floor, and very muddy.

The emigrants find they are too heavily loaded. Many of them are doubling teams and are leaving part of their wagons. They are offering wagons and supplies at any price they will bring. I saw one advertisement posted;

100 lbs. of Flour	50 cents
100 lbs. of bacon	50 cents
100 lbs. of dried beef	50 cents

The boys brought two antelope into camp today.

Tuesday, May 29th.

Got a fairly early start. After five or six miles of heavy hauling through low, wet land, we came opposite the head of Grand Island. The river, is, I think, a mile wide; sandbars and little tow heads all through it. No timber at all on the south side. This afternoon I saw two featherbeds that had been thrown away; meat and beans were strewn all along the road. We traveled about twelve or fourteen miles today, and came opposite some willows on the island in the river. The water that divides the mainland from the island is but a shallow slough. We waded for wood, but found only willow switches. Camped near the foot of the island.

Wednesday, May 30th.

Just before day we had considerable rain. Was late about starting. Mr. Nichols went to an encampment and bought a fine wagon for \$10.00. Said he thought he could have gotten it for \$5.00 but did not have the face to offer less than ten. He left his on the road for fire wood or any use that might be made of it. I saw about 250 pounds of good bacon left on the road. Traveled about 12 miles.

Thursday, May 31st.

This morning is disagreeable, and very little wood. After going a short distance we came to what had been an encampment. We saw here where the woodwork of several wagons had been burned and the iron left. This is the first place I have ever been where wood was worth more than iron; where a piece of wood as small as your hand would be picked up, and the whole irons of the wagon left. I saw three men today who had burned their wagon and were going back. They had sold their teams and the wagons were of no value except for fire wood. Wood is nearly out of the question on the shore and little on the island. I packed a little armful of brush and bark about three miles against a hard west wind and rain. The wagons had gone ahead of me. Today we passed one dead ox and one dead mule. Traveled 16 or 18 miles.

Friday, June 1st.

This morning I was awakened by the sound of a rooster crowing. The first impression when I opened my eyes was that I had been awakened from a dream. The rooster is with the Bloomington Company. We started a little after the Bloomington company this morning. Met six wagons - traders with skins, etc. This was a day of scenes of abandoned property; items too tedious to mention; stoves, ~~###~~ blacksmith tools, wagons, cooking utensils, provisions of every kind were strewn all along the road. Camped about a half mile from the Bloomington company near the Platte; No wood. Traveled 18 or 20 miles.

Saturday, June 2nd.

This is a pleasant morning. Started out about 6 o'clock. Traveled about 18 miles. Came opposite a small grove and a beautiful little stream and camped. This was the only chance for wood since we came to the Platte six days ago without picking a little ~~driftwood~~ driftwood or cutting willow switches. We found any quantity of good ash wood. Mr. Toole ^{lost} his dog of which he was very fond. Ruffner and Palmer, two of our company, counted 22 buffalo on the other side of the river this morning, and left the train to wade the river. They have not returned now, 8 o'clock, tonight.

Sunday, June 3rd.

We decided to lay in camp today. We were up early and it was a busy day, casting off bows, throwing away packs, boxes, lids, etc. etc., sunning and washing clothes.

The company is considerably disturbed concerning Ruffner and Palmer. They started yesterday morning across the river for buffalo, and have not yet returned. It is now ~~the~~ sun down. Things of nearly all descriptions are scattered around the camp to be left in the morning. I am going to bury a quantity of lead and ~~mark~~ mark the place, peradventure some of the company may travel this road again and call and get it. 9 o'clock. Great rejoicing. Ruffner and Palmer have just come into camp.

Monday, June 4th.

Ruffner and Palmer had some sport and some hardships. They crossed the river safely. In some places, however, it came to their arm pits, and they had to carry their guns and ammunition on their heads. They fell in with a company of five men with horses who had crossed about the same time. They did not proceed far before they came near the buffalo, and by keeping concealed behind the hills, ~~got~~ within forty yards of them. The seven men all fired at once and brought one buffalo to the ground. Another went about thirty yards

and fell. They took all the meat they could get along with. They had no provisions and had to lay out all night, and cook their meat with grass. In the morning they proceeded up the river, and made three attempts to cross before they succeeded. The first, the river was too deep; the second, they ~~got~~ ^{fell} into the quick sand and lost all of their meat, but the tongues, which they brought with them. Ruffner also lost his gun. They finally crossed about six miles above the camp. They reported seeing a thousand buffalo and several deer and antelope and two elk.

In passing on this morning we came to an abandoned wagon. The man had died yesterday of prostration after having had the cholera three weeks ago. We passed the junction of the North and South Platte River today. Traveled about 18 miles I suppose. Camped on the bottom with running water, but no wood. The country is the ^{best} ~~best~~ we have seen since we came on the bottom.

Tuesday, June 5th.

This morning while at breakfast the camp became excited at the sight of a lot of buffalo running from the river, across the bottom, a string of men on horseback after them. These were the first buffalo we had seen, although four were killed early this morning in the hills near our camp. I went to one and cut off a mess of meat. The buffalo were numerous today. They could at most all times be seen running over the hills.

There is a good deal of diarrhoea in the camp. It is said to be the forerunner of cholera, and it naturally creates no little apprehension. We passed one tent with a man sick of diarrhoea who was expected to die.

While we were grazing this noon we could see the teams fording the river about a mile away. I should think there were two hundred wagons. We reached the ford and wagons were taken in as fast as

they came up. We all crossed in two hours by doubling teams. The river is about one half mile wide, and about two feet at the deepest. Current rapid. Here we saw the first ~~of~~ Indians since we left the Missouri. We passed all through the Pawnee County without seeing an Indian. There were quite a number of them here, with horses, all bright, fine looking fellows, very friendly, shaking hands with all they met. As we were re-arranging our teams after crossing the river, two buffalo were seen on the gallop a short distance away. The Indians put out on horseback and the next I saw was a white woman who had traveled near us today on horseback. She led off at full speed. Several of our men joined in the chase on foot. Some who had not seen the woman start thought her horse was running away with her. In a short time they came up to the buffalo, and began running around them, and shooting on all sides. I was told the woman got the first pistol shot at the game. They killed both and our boys who were in the chase on foot, got all the meat they wanted. The ~~woman~~ woman passed us in about an hour with a ~~lot~~ lot of meat hung to her saddle. I saw her husband when she was in the chase, and he appeared to be very proud. They are from St. Louis. This crossing is a new ford, and I think is about fifteen miles from the junction of the two rivers. There is ~~plenty~~ plenty of grass on this side. We pitched our tent a short distance from the ford, and are now in camp on the west side of the south fork of the Platte. There are a good many Indians in camp, - trading moccasins and skins. They live in a village about two miles away. It can be seen from here. Traveled about 12 or 15 miles today. There is plenty of grass on this side, but no wood.

Wednesday, June 6th.

We had several showers during the night. Carey is quite sick of diarrhoea. We started out quite late. In two miles we came to the Indian village. I think there are about 200 huts, made mostly

of buffalo skins. These are made round and large at the bottom, with poles from 20 to 25 feet long, coming together at the top. I should think they have a thousand horses. They seem to be possessed of the necessities of life, and to be contented and happy, and I could not help wondering what they really thought of us bull whackers, with our assumption of superiority trudging along (going somewhere) at the rate of a few miles a day. We would not trade places with them for anything in the world and they would not trade with us. Some of the emigrants were trading with the Indians for buffalo robes, a good robe for a pair of breeches or a peck of beans. It was unfortunate for us that we had thrown away all our beans before we got here. It was thought that a diet of beans was bad in cholera time, and we cast them away. About ten or twelve miles from the ford we crossed the divide. I suppose we are about twenty miles from the fork. The grazing is the best we have seen on the road. After reaching the bottom of the North Platte, we kept on the edge of the second bottom about a half mile from the river. We saw some teams on the other side of the North Platte. We counted 80 head of cattle running wild with heads in the air as if frightened. We often heard of cattle stampeding but these are the first we have seen. In looking down the river now the bottom appears to be literally covered with cattle, but there is plenty of grass for all. Traveled about 15 miles. Camped without wood.

Thursday, June 7th.

This morning we started out about 6 o'clock. There is considerable sickness. Carey is still confined to the wagon. He ate a little gruel this morning. In about two miles we overtook the Roubedeaux company. They have an odometer and reported the distance from St. Joseph to the top of the bluff was 432 miles. We traveled on the bluff about ten miles, then descended into the bottom

of the North Platte. Here in a ravine we found a great quantity of buffalo bones. We camped on the bottom after getting some wood out of the hills. Traveled about 20 miles.

Friday, June 8th.

This morning all the sick seem to be better. Carey is getting along. Started out about 6 o'clock. In about six miles we came to some ash trees on the road, and in~~na~~ about three miles further came to a small grove of cedars. We rode on two miles further and came to a fine spring. This is the most delightful spot I have seen since we reached the waters of the Platte. Here is a fine spring and near by a lot of beautiful wild roses, also a good chance for wood and grazing. Now, at noon, we are about nine or ten miles from the last camp. In a short distance we came to Ash Hollow. Here we found some traders living with the Indians. They have six huts. They have white wolves trained for dogs. The traders call it 130 miles to 140 miles to Fort Laramie. ~~##~~ We camped five miles from Ash Hollow. Good water, grass and wood.

Saturday, June 9th.

This is a ~~bold~~ rainy morning, and a gloomy one for me. Carey and Matthews are both very sick. I went about three or four miles to another camp and got a doctor to come and see them. Owen is also getting very weak. I gave the doctor two five franc pieces for the trip. We stored the sick in the wagons as comfortably as possible, and about 10 o'clock struck the mark. At 1 o'clock we came to a grave where the body of a young man had just been laid. He died of cholera. His train had stopped a few hours to let him die and bury him. They state two others in their train are sick. The company is from Missouri. At 4 o'clock we had to stop. Matthews was getting worse. About sunset I went to another camp and found a doctor. He came and left some powders to be given to him hourly. I consider his case very serious. The doctor ~~###~~

also left medicine for Carey. ^R Robinson, Palmer and I will take turns watching with them tonight. I have not spent another such a day on the road, my two mess mates both dangerously ill.

Physically I am feeling tolerably well. The doctor declined to accept anything for his trip or for the medicine although I urged him. Acts like this help to soften the hard places in the road and in our hearts.

Sunday, June 10th.

This morning is chilly and damp. We stored Matthews and Carey away in the wagon as comfortably as possible. Matthews is some better. About a mile after we started we came to two wagons, and here was a distressing sight. There was a man dead in a tent and another man in the same tent who I think is dying. This is a distressing time, as there is sickness to a considerable extent in nearly every train. It is now about 1 P.M. and a very sandy road so far today. Met a mail carrier and three wagons from Salt Lake. Their reports of the road are favorable. I saw three stoves thrown away today, and a dead horse. The boys killed a black tailed deer and the meat was fine. Camped on the first running tributary we have seen on the North Platte. A lone elm tree can be seen on the left about ~~one~~ a half mile from the road. Traveled about 13 miles.

Monday, June 11th.

Last night was a rough one. Thunder storms came on a little after dark with a very hard 'wester, blowing down most of the tents. We held ours down for over a half hour with the rain falling in torments. We made out to keep Matthews tolerably dry. Carey crawled into the wagon. After the storm was over there was not a dry blanket. I laid on a wet quilt with a wet buffalo robe over me, but kept tolerably comfortable. After driving about ten miles today we came to a grove of pines on the bluff. Here we crossed

another small tributary, and about three miles further came to the edge of the second bottom, and found a good spring. At supper Matthews ate some crackers and tea, and Carey stood up to the trough with me, and ate a bit. Traveled about 16 or 18 miles.

Tuesday, June 12th.

This morning is cold and windy. It rained considerably last night. Carey ate some breakfast. Matthews is getting better. Jim Mangham, one of our company, was taken with cholera. After traveling about four miles the train had to come to a stop. He was getting worse. All attention was paid to him that could be. The day was rainy and cold and he was past recovery. He died about 8 o'clock. He was a lawyer from Georgia. To me he was the most interesting man in our train, well informed, kind hearted, had a sense of humor, and was a fine fellow on the road. I never heard an unkind or unclean word pass his lips. I shall miss him very much.

Wednesday, June 13th.

This morning was cold. We laid Mangham away as decently as we could. After the burial we started. After traveling about a mile came to a camp with one man sick of cholera. A few miles further was another sick man. About 10 o'clock we came to the Court House or Church as it is called. I am now sitting beside it. It is a large mass of sand stone. It has much the appearance of a large state house with a dome on it. The walls look nearly perpendicular with something resembling columns on the west. They say it covers about ten acres of ground. It is two or three hundred feet high. In a short distance from it stands a small one, resembling, from the road, a large store house. I was not near it, but some of the boys were on it.

We are now, (5 P.M.) in sight of Chimney Rock. It is said to be about twelve miles from the Court House. Passed a grave on the left.

Man died of cholera. We are now camped about two miles east of Chimney Rock. No wood. Traveled about 14 miles.

Thursday, June 14th.

This is a cold morning. Wind in the north. All the sick appear to be getting better. Started out about 6 o'clock. I went to see Chimney Rock. It stands off from the bluff about 200 yards. I should think the base covers over an acre of ground. It is ~~is~~ said to be about 200 feet high. It is a mass of sand and clay. I went on the base part of it. From there it is perpendicular. It appears to be cracking and decaying away. The tower is covered with names. About 100 yards away is a cold spring. Timber can be seen in the bluffs five or six miles away. We have not had any wood for three or four days except scraps and a few chips picked up from the camps. We found driftwood here in a cove in the bluffs. We passed two dead cattle lying within ten feet of each other. Traveled about 15 miles.

Friday, June 15th.

This morning we got a late start. Here is a place an artist could use his pencil with delight. I think I have never seen such beautiful scenery as the bluffs present. They have the appearance of an oriental city with mosques and mansions in every shape and size. The trees on the top look like men on walls. In about eight miles we came to a spring in a passage in the bluffs. Here is a blacksmith shop and trading house. We traveled about 20 miles.

Saturday, June 16th.

Started off in good time. Soon came to Horse Creek. From the creek for four or five miles we rode on the bottom. Came to a beautiful running stream about nine or ten miles from Horse Creek. Good chance for camping all along. Traveled 20 miles, I think.

Sunday, June 17th.

It is a beautiful morning. Traveled eight or nine miles, and the road came to the river. Good grass and some trees here. While grazing here I was called to witness a most inhuman sight. It was the most revolting thing I have ever seen. An Indian had been buried, (as they call it) in a tree. Some of the emigrants had torn the body down and scattered the bones far rods around, the rotten flesh still clinging to them. There were four buffalo robes and two blankets, beads, deer skins, and a number of other things, which had been buried with him, all scattered about with the bones. I rather take my chance with that heathen Indian than with the ghouls that scattered his bones. Came on about five miles to Laramie Fork. Had to block up the wagon beds to ford it. Camped near the ford. Here we can see the flag of Fort Laramie and can see the trains from the north side of the Platte ferrying over at about the mouth of Laramie Fork. There is plenty of wood here, but grass is scarce. Traveled about 14 miles. I have to stand guard tonight.]

Monday, June 18th.

This morning one of the boys was sick and not able to travel, and we had to lay by. I went to the Fort. It is small; the walls are fifteen feet high, with two openings, with strong gates. It is built of chunks of sun-dried mud. It is a rough, forbidding place, with nothing to redeem it so far as looks is concerned. Near the Fort is an Ohio company trying to sell part of its property. They are going to double teams and leave half of their wagons. I am afraid they will have a hard time selling anything. Others here are trading their cattle for mules, and are going to pack. A number have already burned their wagons. Bacon, salt, tar, sugar, clothing, harness, and supplies of every kind are scattered about. There is wood enough here for fuel, and they seem to burn their wagons

for pure cussedness. Because they cannot sell them - they seem to be determined that they shall be of no use to any one else. If the abandoned wagons were left intact they might be of use to passing emigrants or some one else sometime. The road seems to bring out the worst there is in some, and the best there is in others.

What a queer lot of mortals we are, I declare. The Fort is on Laramie Fork, a beautiful stream. They say over 3000 wagons have passed the Fork. This means at least 20,000 head of animals, and I cannot help feeling anxious about feed, for we are in a dry country and short grass, and a long road before us.

Tuesday, June 19th.

Left Fort Laramie this morning. Rode out early. Up to 12 o'clock I saw the ruins of four wagons and one horse cart. Saw from one thousand to two thousand pounds of bacon scattered along the road; clothing, boxes, barrels, tools, etc. We are now eleven miles from the Fort. It is windy and dusty traveling; road sandy and grass short. In a few miles we came to where the road left the river and ascended the hill. The hill was described as having one turn which was very dangerous to pass. The wagons passed over and never knew where it was. In going up a hollow we came to a warm spring; water clear and tasted well. Scenery beautiful. This afternoon a shower fell and laid the dust. We camped about three miles from the warm spring. Near the spring the two roads from the Fort came together. This afternoon I counted six abandoned wagons; saw eight stoves, two to three thousand pounds of flour and bacon thrown away, and perhaps did not see one half that was on the road. What was on the other road I cannot say, but very likely as much. Traveled 18 miles.

Wednesday, June 20th.

This morning we are all tolerably well, and got off in good

time. After graveling about four miles, we came to Dead Timber Creek and kept on it about eight miles, crossing several times. It is a beautiful stream. Destruction of provisions continues. I should think a half dozen wagons and half a dozen stoves were left. We passed the grave of a young man from La Porte, Indiana. Excellent wood and water. Camped on Horse Creek, 45 miles from Fort Laramie. Traveled, I think, about 24 miles. Saw one mule and one ox turned loose. The grass is short.

Thursday, June 21st.

This morning was cool and all tolerably well. We started out about sun rise, as the grass was too short to stop for the usual herding. Toole broke an axle tree, but one was obtained from an abandoned wagon, and we had him rolling by 11 o'clock. Abandoned wagons, stoves, provisions, etc. scattered all along the road. This was a day's travel in the Black Hills, a successions of hills and dales. Grass thin and short. Cattle have not half enough to eat. Camped on Box Elder Creek. This is a delightful stream; grass thin and short. Traveled about 17 miles. We saw one grave. The man died of cholera.

Friday, June 22nd.

All well but cattle hollow and worn. This morning after a mile or two we struck the Red Hills country. Some of the hills in the distance have the appearance of blazing fires. We traveled in one continuous cloud of red smoky dust. This afternoon the road was good but no chance for grazing. Saw the wrecks of two wagons, one dead mule and one dead ox. Camped with plenty of wood and water, but grass short. Herded all night. I saw today the first toad with tail and horns. It resembled a turtle more than a toad. Traveled about 19 miles.

Saturday, June 23rd.

Still dry and dusty. Traveled a few miles and came to some

men in camp from Scott City, Iowa. We struck the Platte again this afternoon. Left it eighty miles back. Came to Deer Creek. Grazing very poor. Here we found the emigrants crossing the river in wagon beds, rafts, canoes, etc. It is 25 miles to the regular ferry. I understand a man and a mule were drowned here today. The country seems to be covered with camps, but little for the cattle to eat. This is very discouraging, as we have passed over sixty miles of rough country and not half enough feed. Our cattle look very badly and are getting lame. Here we found the Bloomington Iowa company crossing; also the Red Rock company. I think 500 wagons are within five miles of this place. Traveled about 16 miles.

Sunday, June 24th.

This is a busy day, fixing wagons for ferrying, etc. We lay in camp and sacked our clothing, threw away our boxes, lead and some flour; trimmed over our bacon. We left twenty to thirty pounds of it. We had previously left 360 pounds, also 800 pounds of bread stuff. Our average load is now about 2000 pounds. Here were trunks, boxes, lead, basen, iron, ~~my~~ scythes, etc. scattered about.

Monday, June 25th.

Still dry but cool with west wind. Started out for the upper ferry, and soon came to another ferry. Some emigrant had dug out canoes and fixed three together to ferry over the wagons. The cattle swim. I saw a number of boats of this kind. After a company has crossed, it sells the boat to another company. These ferry boats sell for thirty to forty dollars each. I was told one man was drowned at the crossing this morning. We came to Mud Creek. It is a rapid stream. Saw parts of two wagons and three dead oxen. We camped in a ~~man~~ scattering grove of cotton-woods on the bottom. Grass short but the best we have had for a week past. We took in three stray oxen today and left one of ours

that was lame. Traveled about 15 or 16 miles.

Tuesday, June 26th.

Traveled out in good time this morning. Came to the Mormon Ferry about 10 o'clock, and went into camp for our turn. Some of the boys went up into the mountains to see if they could find any bear. The Mormons said there were plenty of them, but before the boys reached the top they were caught in a terrible hail storm. They succeeded in hiding under some projecting rocks, but got very wet and cold. They said the ~~###~~ hail laid three inches deep on the ground. The ferry boat consist of three canoes fastened together, with two planks on each side running lengthwise for the wheels to run on. This will carry over one loaded wagon. The cattle swim. They charge \$3.00 a wagon. They can take in \$100.00 a day for each ferry. There are ten of them. They can buy all kinds of goods and tools for a song. They will leave for Salt Lake as soon as the river gets fordable, which they think will be in about three weeks. They say it is a beautiful country about Salt Lake. They also say there is a mail route from Salt Lake to the States now in operation, to run through six times a year. The river bank has the appearance of a town with the encampments. Condon and Trask traded three yoke of oxen, their wagon and contents for three horses and are going to pack. I think they will have a hard time as the horses are already thin, and they have a long road to travel. They say it is 380 miles from here to Salt Lake. We found tolerably good grazing three or four miles away from camp, and drove the cattle to it.

Wednesday, June 27th.

This morning we started ferrying over the river. All got over safely and camped on the west bank of the river. One yoke of our oxen strayed away. I am to stand guard tonight.

Thursday, June 28th.

We resolved to break the train up into smaller units on account of short grass. We may come together again and we may not. Some of the boys started out to hunt for the lost oxen. The train moved on and came to a very sandy road for five miles. The hardest travel we have seen on the entire trip. The bottom is filled with alkali sloughs. Saw two dead oxen by one of these ponds today. The ponds are said to be poisonous. The lost cattle were found and came up at noon. Here we left the Platte river. It is said we will see it no more. We passed seven dead cattle this afternoon. It is thought the cattle died from drinking alkali water. The ponds are white with what they call salaratus. We camped and found good grass one mile from the road, but no good water. Used sage brush for fuel. It answered the purpose very well. Will herd our cattle all night. Traveled I think about 15 miles.

Friday, June 29th.

This morning was dry and warm. Our cattle had plenty of grass last night, but have had no water since we left the Platte at noon yesterday. This is a day of distressing scenes, as we have had to go through the worst country I have ever seen. No grass or water. After traveling about four or five miles we came to a dry creek and a mineral spring, but the water in the spring was said to be unhealthful. I found water running in a creek below, but ^tit was so impregnated with alkali that we did not let the cattle drink, so we had to travel until about 2 o'clock before we got water making over a day and night without water. This is a sandy, rocky, barren country with no appearance of grass except along some alkali streams, and it is extremely hot today. From the time ~~we~~ we started this morning we saw dead cattle all along the way. Just

after starting we saw four yoke all lying dead near a wagon to which it appeared they had been hitched. We came to a spring and stopped, but there was no grazing. We came on about two and a half miles and found good water. We went on about three miles from the spring in the dark and camped without grass. I counted twenty-four head of dead cattle today, and one wagon partly burned; tools, etc. thrown away. This is one of the most distressing days I have seen. Traveled about 25 miles.

Saturday, June 30th.

We started this morning before sunrise and tried to find grass. Traveled about two miles and found some good grass and stopped to graze. In five miles we came to a beautiful stream. From there we traveled through a sandy, deserty place, and an alkali region. We had a small shower and the earth smelled like ash. Saw seventeen dead oxen and one dead horse; one wagon burned up. Camped on Sweetwater river opposite Independence Rock. This is a rapid stream about twenty-five yards wide, and water running up to our wagon boxes. It is said to be 804 miles from St. Joseph to Independence Rock. Traveled 16 miles.

Sunday, July 1st.

The teams have gone on. Mr. Flack and I had a curiosity to see Independence Rock. We are both on it now. It is now 8 o'clock A.M. This turtle shaped rock, I should think covers eight or ten acres of ground and is about 200 feet high. Thousands of names are carved on it. Some date back as far as August 25, 1845, and here we have an extensive view of the neighboring mountains. This rock is on Sweetwater bottom and level land all around it. We passed up the river and in about six miles passed through to the Devil's Gate. This is a cut through the mountains, with the rock on both sides perpendicular, and I should think four hundred or more feet high. The water runs through like a mill race, making a dangerous crossing.

We camped about two miles to the left above the gate. Saw one abandoned wagon near the gate. This I think is the first abandoned wagon we have seen on the road some part of which was not destroyed. Our hearts were delighted at finding first rate grass. Our cattle are running down very fast for want of feed, as they have not had enough to satisfy them more than four times since we left the Fort twelve days ago. The bottom here is about a quarter of a mile wide and thick grass; considerable alkali in the water, but I think not enough to hurt the cattle. On the left is a beautiful sight of snow on the Mountains. I would think it about three miles away, but I am told it is nine or ten. We passed five dead oxen. Matthes is quite sick with something like cholera morbus. Took sick night before last. Trask and Gordon stayed behind at the ferry to rig out for packing and have not yet come up. Toole and Cooper stopped at Independence Rock to try and recuperate their cattle, and probably will not catch up. Two more abandoned wagons this side of the gate. Traveled eight miles.

Monday, July 2nd.

This morning was quite ⁷cool. Rode out early. Destruction of property still continues. Saw three wagons partly ^rburned. Bacon, meat, skillets, ovens, shovels, buckets, etc., strewn along the road. Passed eight dead cattle. Trask and Gordon came up at noon. Camped two miles up the river. Found good grass and plenty of driftwood. Saw three dead horses. Trask and Mullen went out hunting. Killed an antelope and dragged it into camp. Traveled 11 miles.

Tuesday, July 3rd.

This morning was cold enough for overcoats. Had a delightful mess of antelope. Trask and Toole took breakfast with us and pronounced it fine. It consisted of biscuits, coffee, dried apples, bacon and venison, all my own cooking. After rolling about a mile or

two up the river, we came to an encampment where property of considerable value had been left. One wagon left by a man from Vandalia, Ills., had a writing tacked on it. "To emigrant wanting wagon, take it, but do not destroy if not taken." This is a man after my own heart. Here was left a barrel of good pickled ~~meat~~ pork, a lot of ground parched corn, meal, hard bread, bacon and things too numerous to mention. A little further was a trunk with a number of articles. A lame ox was left here. To the left can be seen snow on the mountains. Trask and Gordon started on their pack horses. We passed ten dead oxen. Came to the river and camped one mile below the ford. Grazing tolerably good.

Wednesday, July 4th.

This was a cold morning for the Fourth of July. Ice froze in our pans one quarter of an inch thick. The emigrants had not, however, forgotten the day. The encampment was very extensive and as the sun rose, there was a fusillade in every direction. No one could estimate the number of charges fired. In some of the camps anvils were fired. I understand orations were delivered in some of the camps. We stuck camp, and in one mile crossed the Sweet Water three times. Here the mountains are perpendicular on either side of the river. I saw one cast iron cook stove in good order cast away, and a number of other articles. We camped at noon on the Sweet Water. I think there must have been at least twenty encampments within a mile to a mile and a half. Counted eleven dead oxen, today. Traveled about 11 miles.

Thursday, July 5th.

Started out early this morning. In about five miles came to what is called Ice Springs. Here the ice is found not more than a foot under the turf. The water is pure and sparkling, but tastes strongly of alkali. The valley is about 200 yards wide. The

country today has a different appearance. The rocky peaks are mostly bare, and the hills are gravel and sand. Some better chance for grass but it is thin and we have to get back from the road two or three miles to find it, (the grass near the road is everywhere grazed down to the roots), but get the cattle there and they will fill themselves, if given time enough. Camped on the Sweet Water about 2 o'clock. The forest is one of the most beautiful sights I have ever seen. The mountains are covered with snow with spots of green intermingled, which makes a delightful contrast. They are completely capped with white. At home we would think they were about ten miles away, but they say they are forty or fifty miles. Traveled 17 miles. Saw twelve dead oxen, three wagons, bacon and other supplies left by the road.

Friday, July 6th.

~~###~~ Struck camp and in about three miles we crossed the Sweet Water again. Here was a village of Snake Indians. I saw a wagon outfit trading four yoke of cattle, a wagon and contents to the Indians for five ponies. They are going to pack from there on. Up to noon I saw six wagons burned or torn to pieces. Passed eleven dead oxen. The number of dead cattle seen by the road does not indicate the number abandoned as most of them wander away to die or survive as the case may be. Mull and I wandered away from the road a short distance and found some beautiful roses, also some wild gooseberries and a few ripe strawberries. Our hearts were delighted to find a patch of good grass in a little valley near the road, which, strange to say, no one had discovered. We went into camp and drove the cattle to it, and will herd all night. Cool water and sage brush for fuel. Grass is getting so scarce God only knows how those ten or fifteen days behind will make out.

Saturday, July 7th.

Soon after moving out this morning, we came to two large

banks of snow. I am now sitting on one of them, and have washed my face and hands in it. We are now in the south pass and are looking out for the summit. Crossed the river for the last time. Saw the grave of a man from Missouri, age 66. After traveling about 10 miles, we passed the Twin Mounds, and went into camp, and found some fair grass about two miles from the roads. There are a large number of camps here, and snow on either side. Passed nine dead oxen today. I would say the Wind River Mountains are appropriately names from the way the wind struck us today. Had the heaviest wester' we have had on the road.

Sunday, July 8th.

This is a cold morning. We are surrounded with snow in every direction. The Wind River Mountains appear to be closer than they were yesterday. The higher we get the more delightful they appear, as they show the white and green more brilliantly. Rode away about 9 o'clock. I am now, at 10 o'clock, in the south pass on the summit. The ascent was gradual. I turned my eyes back toward home and bade farewell to the Atlantic side of the Rocky Mountains for a season. The descent was tolerably brisk, not not necessary to lock the wheels. The summit is said to be 900 miles from St. Joseph. Two and a half miles from the summit we came to the Pacific Springs where the water is running to the west. The Spring is called "Pacific" as it is the first water on the Pacific Side. It is a mineral spring and said to be healthful. Here were some men digging a grave for a man who had died of mountain fever. As we were thinking we had gotten to one of the most healthful spots in the world, surrounded by snow and cooling healthful atmosphere, we passed four graves in less than ten miles. After traveling about ten miles we came to good grass. Camped and turned the cattle on it. We passed today, nine dead cattle, three stoves, remnants of several wagons, bacon, beans, etc., strewn along the road.

Monday, July 9th.

This is a beautiful morning. The cattle are looking good. They ran at large through the night without guarding, contrary to our usual custom. Our cattle have been looking better since we came to the Sweet Water, except one of my oxen, which is foot-sore. He is shod but I think there must be something piercing the quick, as he is quite lame. The road is good but hard on the cattle. It is gravel and sand. At noon we came to the fork in the road, one going to Fort Hall, and the other to Fort Bridger and Salt Lake. It is said the cut-off shortens the distance to Fort Hall seventy miles, but there is a barren strip from thirty-five to forty miles wide, without grass or water. I think ten to one take the cut-off. We decided to take the longer road with better chances for grass and water. Traveled on and come to Little Sandy. About 4 o'clock we camped. Had a delightful pot of soup from an antelope some of the boys had brought into camp this morning. Carey said it tasted like home. A company camped near us from Mount Rose, Iowa. They said they crossed at Council Bluffs on the 13th day of May. They are going by Salt Lake. I did not keep account of the dead oxen today as the wind was, as it has been for three days, dead ahead and blew the dust like clouds, so I kept off the road as much as I could. I was told twenty-five head of dead oxen were counted in a half day's travel. Traveled about 18 miles. I have been much disappointed in the water of the Rockies. Expected to find it pure, but most of the springs are very much impregnated with mineral and alkali. Alkali still makes its appearance along the streams.

Tuesday, July 10th.

Crossed Little Sandy this morning. It is 25 yards wide and two feet deep, muddy and rapid. The road to Big Sandy is level and good. Distance about eight miles. The land is gravel and sand,

but there is considerable good porcupine grass in spots. Big Sandy is about fifty yards wide and two feet deep. Traveled from here eight miles and camped and found some grass a mile from the road. Traveled about 16 miles.

Wednesday, July 11th.

We started out in good time this morning, and in about ten miles we came to Green River. It is not fordable. There are two ferries, one conducted by the Mormons, and the other by some men from Iowa. They charge \$2.00 a wagon. Before the Iowans had set up this opposition ferry, the Mormons had charged \$5.00 a wagon. We crossed with the Iowans. They have been here six days. They expect to leave tomorrow. Their company has gone on. They had built a boat in one day. It is safe for one wagon. The river is rapid and tolerably clear, 200 yards wide and about ten feet deep. They say the river has fine fish in it. We crossed all our wagons over safely before sunset. It is said to be 150 to 160 miles from here to Salt Lake. Four mules were drowned yesterday at the ferry.

Thursday, July 12th.

Started out early today. On the upland we found some spots of porcupine grass, but found no grass at noon. Traveled nearly 25 miles through dust and mosquitoes and came on to the Black Fork of the Green River. The fork is seventy yards wide. We swam the cattle to grass on the other side, as there was none on this side. Carey and Flack are very sick. Passed one grave today.

Friday, July 13th.

Carey had a very bad night vomiting and was racked with pain. I slept but little during the night after he had expressed the belief that he would not ~~recover~~ recover. This morning he is a little better, but still with high fever. We stored him away in the wagon as comfortably as possible. In about seven miles we came to Ham's

^a
Fork, stream 25 yards wide and 18 inches deep, clear and rapid. Good crossing. Two miles further we came to the Black Fork of the Green River again. This is not fordable. It is 60 yards wide and four or five feet deep. We traveled on for about nine miles and camped. As there was no grass on this side we swam the cattle to the other side for feed. Traveled today about 18 miles.

Saturday, July 14th.

We got an early start today. The country for eight miles from the river is a deserty place with numerous mounds composed of gravel and small stones. The mounds are barren and of various shapes. After eight miles the country bears a better appearance, the hills mostly covered with grass. We came in sight of Fort Bridger and camped. Traveled about 20 miles.

Sunday, July 15th.

I went to Fort Bridger this morning. It is a trading post, occupied by two men. One man, by the name of Sublette, a Frenchman, from St. Louis, has a white wife; the other is Bridger, a squaw-man. He was formerly of Richmond, Virginia. He has been trading 28 years. He claims he is John Tyler's sister's son. There are a number of squaws and Indians here. The Indians are the ~~the~~ Snakes. The Fort is situated on what is called Rushing Stream and it is not mis-named. The water appears to be run right from the snowy mountains. The bottom is large enough to feed thousands of cattle. It is said to be healthful. The land has the appearance of being fertile, but these people have not as much as a garden. The Fort is built of hewn cottonwood logs. Several houses and a store. I saw two hogs and some chickens and cows. It is said to be 111 miles from Fort Bridger to Salt Lake. Said to be 1027 miles from St. Joseph. I left here a letter to you to be sent by the mail from Salt Lake. Paid 35 cents postage. They expect the mail tomorrow. We lay by all day. This would be a great place for raising stock; good grass, plenty of water, no flies or mosquitoes.

FORK, a stream 25 yards wide and 18 inches deep, and clear and rapid. Good
gro

Monday, July 16th.

Our cattle look well. Started for Salt Lake. Quite cool and light showers, but plenty of good grass and water. Traveled on the old Mormon trail most of the way. Traveled about 18 miles.

Tuesday, July 17th.

Traveled through a rough country, and in about ten miles came to the Bear River where there was a large encampment of Snake Indians. Also some Utahs. The Indians are bright, intelligent, good looking fellows, but small of stature. They are very friendly. I should think there were a hundred huts, built of dressed skins on the same plan as the Sioux. The children do not seem to be in any way frightened at the sight of white men. They have a large number of good horses, of as good shape and size as you will see anywhere. One fellow has a temperance medal he wears, and gave me signs to show that he knew what it meant. They are fond of dressing and painting. They wanted to trade for hickory and flannel shirts. They use bows and arrows. Their arrows are feathered and pointed, and they shoot them with great accuracy. Bear river is about forty yards wide and three and a half to four feet deep, rapid and the most difficult stream we have had to cross. It puts one to his wits ends to keep his feet under him, the rocks are so slippery and the current ~~some~~ rapid. In about five miles from the river we came to one of the best and coolest springs we have seen on the road. Good grass on the way. Camped three miles west of the Springs. Fine grass and plenty of water. Sage brush for fuel. Some Indians brought in some antelope which the boys bought. We met three Mormon wagons from Salt Lake. They gave favorable account of the grass and road. They say it is a great grazing country. Their horses run out all winter. They said it is ~~against~~ against the law to feed stock corn as man might suffer for it. Their stock seem to be fat. Traveled about 16 miles.

Wednesday, July 18th.

This morning is quite cool. Carey and Flack, who have been sick, appear to be better. In about two miles we came to a large lodge of Indians. I should think there were 100 huts. Some of our boys traded with two Indians for five quarters of antelope. They gave them a common butcher knife and some powder and lead. Traveled today about 19 miles.

Thursday, July 19.

This is a cool morning. Froze ice one half ince thick in our wash pan, but the vegetation is so acclimated to such weather, it was not damaged. We traveled on crossing a small creek with steep banks a number of times. About eleven miles from camp brought up to ~~the~~ Webber River. Traveled on about four miles. The ford is fifty yards wide, two and a half feet deep. It is a delightful clear stream, and appears to be running right from the Snowy Mountains, which have been in sight for many days. There is more timber than I have seen this side of the mountains. It is mostly cottonwood. It resembles quaking sap. Camped one-half mile below the ford. Traveled about 17 miles.

July 20th, Friday.

It is quite cool again this morning. Carey and Flack appear to be getting better. Carey has been much discouraged. Matthews said he told him yesterday that he was afraid he was going to die, but he is in better spirits this morning. Both have been confined to the wagon for more than a week. The road was up a hollow today, and was of the roughest we have had on the trip. Crossed the Cannon Creek five times. Traveled 15 miles. Ruffner lost two of his best oxen this evening. Died of hollow horn. Matthews was taken quite sick tonight.

Saturday, July 21st.

This morning Matthews is not able to travel, and we laid by. The boys killed five young sage hens. We had a pot pie baked in a

dutch oven. We passed the day in washing, cooking and writing. We are now within 25 miles of the Great Salt Lake. Several of our cattle are sick with the hollow horn. I lost one of my best. The nights are cool, ~~MMMM~~ but this morning is very warm.

Sunday, July 22nd.

This morning Matthews was able to ride and Carey is better. Passed ~~mm~~ on up the hollow and crossed Cannon Creek five times. In about four miles we left the creek and passed up a deep narrow hollow, well skirted with quaking sap. The trees are covered with names of emigrants. It is now about 11 o'clock. I am on the summit in view of the valley of the Great ~~Salt~~ Salt Lake and the surrounding territory. It is a beautiful sight. The high peaks of mountains are covered with sknow and the lower ones with green. The ascent was not steep but the descent for a mile and a half was very steep. Had to lock two wheels of the wagons. The first who had traveled the road must have had a rough time of it, as it goes through thick small timber and the stumps have mostly been pulled up by the roots by the locked wagons as some have been today. This has ^been the roughest road yet, but we went through safely and camped in a small valley. We have any quantity of good cool spring water.

Monday, July 23rd.

One of Flack's oxen was left to die. The road this morning led over a low mountain. We had to double teams in crossing the summit. It is one mile of heavy hauling. After passing over the summit the descent is very steep and we had to lock both wheels. It is a rough road, crossing a creek several times. At about noon we came into the valley of the Great Salt Lake in sight of the City of Great Salt Lake. We passed through the city, crossed over the River Jordan and camped one mile west of the city.

Tuesday, July 24th.

This was a great day for the people in this vicinity. They were celebrating the second anniversary of their entrance into the valley. An immense amount of work and energy had been expended in preparing for the celebration. There was a cannon salute at sunrise. The marching began early in the day. The procession was lead by a band of twelve pieces, then came 24 young men all dressed in white, representing the wards of the city, each carried a banner with inscription, some as follows:

"United We Stand." "Zion of the Lord." "Liberty and Truth."
"To the Martyrs." "God and Liberty." "Truth before Gold."
"Come all who love the Truth." "Christian Kingdom."
"Truth will Prevail." "Hope." "Faith." "Charity."

Next came 24 young ladies dressed in white, with 7 white roses around their heads. They looked very charming. They carried 2 small banners, first "Zion of the Lord." second, "Hail to the Chieftian." Then came 24 old men, or Silver Greys, as they were called. Then followed a large company of people. The young men and women sang hymns as they marched. All marched to the bower, (or bowery, as it is called), and the place of the ceremonies. This bower, I think covered an area of 50 x 150 yards. There were 2 flag poles, one 100 and the other 50 feet high. They all marched around the bower with the band playing, the Nauvoo bell ringing, while the cannon and small arms were fired to the tune, the people shouting, "Hozanna to God and the Lamb". All marched under the bower and were seated. The 24 young men were seated on the right. The ~~##~~ banners borne by them were struck in the side poles in the aisle. The young ladies were seated on the left, and the Silver Greys in front with staff in hand and ribbon on top. All joined in singing a hymn, with chorus "We are the True Born Sons of Zion."

The program was somewhat as follows: First, prayer, then music by the band. The 24 young men presented the Declaration of Independence to President Young, and it was read by the Clerk. Three cheers, "May it live forever and ever." The Clerk read a hymn to be sung by the 24 young ladies. They arose and sang charmingly. The Clerk read a song to be sung by the 24 young men. A speech was read by the Clerk to the 24 Silver Greys. They stood with staff in hand. The speech was in substance the story of the settlement of the place two years ago, and of the perilous journey across the plains and mountains. He said, "Let us prove to the people of the United States that when they drove us from among them, they drove the bravest of their sons and warmest friends." Several cheers were started by President Young and joined in by the company, standing, saying, "Hosanna to God and the Lamb, Amen." A song, "Precious Liberty" was read to and sung by the Silver Greys.

John Young was called upon. In his speech he said the mantle had fallen off of Joseph's shoulders and fallen on to Brigham's, as from Elijah's to Elisha's. He spoke in strong terms of "Liberty" and said, "Damn the man who shall try to rob us of it." He spoke feelingly of the fortitude, endurance and heroism of the women, especially the mothers with children in arms, who bore their double burdens through, and cheered and encouraged the men. Mr. Bullock read a poem, "Ode to Liberty". After several others had spoken, President Young was called upon. He spoke with a full clear voice. He said two years ago at 4 o'clock they entered the valley. He was by all odds the foremost of those who spoke. He is of a commanding presence and impressed me as being a strong man.

Dinner was next. All marched in order to the tables of their wards. Strangers were invited to join in the march to the dinner. It was estimated that 6000 to 8000 took dinner. I should

think 200 emigrants took dinner with them. All were urged to sit in. I hesitated but did so after two urgent invitations. The tables were spread with the greatest plenty and in taste and quantity not to be excelled.

After dinner the flag bearers all marched out and the different companies formed with the band in front, marching around and singing, "We are the True Born Sons of Zion". As they marched they were saluted by cannon and small arms, the people shouting "Hozanna to God and the Lamb". They marched under the bower and then the toasts began. There were a number of toasts, some serious and some ludicrous.

Horace Clauson was called to the stand to tell the "Yankee Country" story. It was well told. James Ferguson was called on to tell a story on management of women. Brother Armstrong sang a song, "Old Adam". Mr. Pratt was called to the stand and made a speech, in which he spoke with warm terms of the progress of their faith. Speaking was going on when I left, and it was said there would be a number of entertainments in the city at night. I was greatly impressed with the spirit of buoyancy and determination which seemed to pervade the ~~throng~~ throng.

As I walked away from the bower, I turned and looked back. There were more people (except emigrants and Indians) 200 to 1 than I had seen since I left the Missouri River. Where did they come from? How did they get here? I pinched myself to make sure that I was not dreaming. I have seen tables set for probably 100 or more, but here were tables for thousands. But the greatest marvel is how they could, in so short a time, produce in a desert, the variety of food stuffs with which the tables were spread. Men do not gather vegetables from sage brushes or cereals from cactus. The seeds, the tubers, the roots, the fowls, the pigs, the sheep, the cows, everything, from which this abundance was produced had to

all be transported a thousand miles or more over such roads as we have traveled. Even then, how could they in so short a time with so small a beginning, have produced so much. It seems incredible. I take off my hat to those who planned and executed it.

I will try and give a short sketch of the city to the best of my observation. It is situated in the valley about two miles from the mountains at the foot of a low bluff. The land gradually descends west about two miles. Then it is somewhat flat for a half a mile to the River Jordan. The river runs from Utah Lake forty miles south of the city. It is about 40 yards wide and deep water of a bluish cast. The city is said to cover an area two by four miles. It is nearly all enclosed and in cultivation. Most of the streets are one-half mile apart, at right angles. I am informed the plat provides for additional streets to be opened later. The houses are mostly small and made of brick dried in the sun, called adobe. Some of them are built of logs. A good many of the people are living in tents, and some in covered wagon boxes. The streets are very wide. Several creeks run out of the mountains. From these water is conducted by ditches along and across the streets. It is a delightful sight to see the beautiful clear water running rapidly through the streets, and can be taken in every man's door.

The water is conducted into the fields to nourish the crops, as they have no rain here in the summer. They think they can raise all kinds of vegetation equal to the States. In fact, where the ground is rich the crops are very flourishing. It looks like a garden. Many of them tend in the same field. In the northwest part of the city is the old Fort. It occupies 10 acres of ground. The walls answer for a fence, so it is all, or nearly all, in cultivation. The little old huts form a part of the wall which is built of sod and clay. These houses are all occupied. They have three mills in

operation on one creek. Their timber is in the mountains and hard to come at. One stone building of some size is in progress. It is intended for a council house.

The population of the valley is estimated between ten and twelve thousand. The city is 24 miles southeast of the most prominent point of the Great Salt Lake. I am informed, and creditably, too, I think, by William Fairly of Montrose, Iowa, who has a father-in-law in the city, that the spiritual wife doctrine is believed in, and polygamy is practiced.

Wednesday, July 25th.

We lay in camp today. Matthews and Mull are still sick. We sold some bacon, rice, and coffee to people from the city. Carey traded with the Indians ~~###~~ for a horse. Flack took his team and wagon to an Indian encampment six miles away to see if he could trade them for horses. If he succeeds, he and the others with his wagon are going to pack. He has not returned, 8 o'clock, P.M.

Thursday, July 26th.

We started out early this morning, went into the city and sold some flour, bacon, etc. One mile north of the city we came to Warm Springs. It is ~~an~~ a very strong spring and forms a pool about twenty feet square and fifteen inches deep. The water is clear as crystal. The bottom is covered with pebble stones of a delightful greenish hugh. The water is strong ~~x~~ of sulphur and is said to be healthful. We nearly all took a bath. When you first get in the water it is uncomfortably warm, but after a minute or two it is delightful. I could not help contrasting it with bathing in the old Chesapeake Bay, where the water at first was too cold. We gave Matthews and Mull a bath. We laid them in the edge of the pool, their heads on a pillow of pebbles covered with a blanket. We rubbed them down and then left them to soak. They both expressed themselves as feeling

much better. I believe they did, but I could not help suspecting that a part of the satisfaction expressed was to make us feel better for our trouble.

About two and a half miles from the Warm Springs is a hot spring gushing out of the rock. It is too hot to bear one's hand in. It is strongly impregnated with sulphur. We crossed the stream flowing from the spring some distance below, and it was amusing to see the cattle jerk up their feet. We camped in sight of the lake. We traveled about eight miles from the city. The mosquitoes are very troublesome in our tent for the first time. One of Graves' oxen strayed away and was left. This leaves him with only five oxen, and one of them lame.

Friday, July 27th.

We took the bottom road today and in a short distance came to the beach of the lake. The beach is caused by the overflow of the lake in the wet season of the year, and as the draught proceeds, the water falls back leaving the beach dry. The beach is from 1 to 3 miles wide. The fall is so slight it appears to be perfectly level. We stopped to graze and Ruffner and I started to the lake to take a bath. We came near a place which appeared to be boggy, but saw, a short distance to the north, a place where we could get in clean. As we traveled toward it the water seemed to recede, or it appeared closer at some other point. We went on for a mile or more and saw an ox standing in the edge of the water, in what seemed to be a bend of the lake. We could see his shadow in the water, and there were scattering brush and bushes near by. We went on some distance and came to the ox but no water, and the brush and bushes we had seen were scattering weeds and bunches of grass. When we looked back it appeared that we had come through a part of the lake. We had seen the mirage from time to time on the road, but for nearness and

distinctness, nothing to approach this, and until we came to the ox we did not suspect the illusion. I think it would fool anybody once.

The train traveled on and soon came to Cummins. Things looked quite flourishing here. I got a mess of peas for ten cents. Two miles further we came to a creek and camped. Traveled in sight of the lake all day. The greater portion of the land is sandy, and there is not sufficient water to supply ~~a~~ one fourth of the land. Matthews is still sick. Traveled about 15 miles.

Saturday, July 28th.

We got a fairly early start, traveling in sight of the Lake for eight miles. The valley, I think, is from ten to twenty miles wide from mountain to lake. The road to Weber river is very sandy and heavy hauling. There is a stretch of about twelve miles without water. The grass has the appearance of a ripe harvest field. They say the stock winter on it and keep fat. On the East side of the river near the ford is a settlement of six families called Brown's settlement. Brown is from Augusta, Iowa. He has a picketed fort and a blacksmith shop. It is singular how the cattle stand the heat here. We have had some as warm days as in the States, but we have not seen an ox with his tongue out yet. We camped three miles from Brown's. This is the last settlement we expect to see. Traveled about 15 miles.

Sunday, July 29th.

This is a cool morning. Matthews begins to stir around some. The report here is that Captain Walker's company of Missouri had killed two Indians on Bear River, and had taken some horses, and that the Indians, four hundred in number, are assembled on the road at Box ~~at~~ Elder Hollow, about twenty miles ahead of us, waiting to attack the passing emigrants. We fell in with two large companies and traveled together for mutual protection. We crossed several

little branches of good water this forenoon. About sunset came to a fine spring with plenty of water. We camped here. Traveled about 15 miles. We traveled all day armed and equipped for battle. We are now in camp ~~n~~ five miles from the place where the Indians are said to be assembled. As we went into camp three wagons applied to corral with us. Two of the head men of the wagons were much alarmed. The third, a Dr. ~~§~~ Evins from Brownsville, Pa., is a very interesting middle aged man. He was a partner in a mule train and had taken sick and wanted his train to go by way of Salt Lake, but the rest of the company over-ruled him so he left his son with the teams and went with one team and two men by Salt Lake. He said he was very hospitably treated. When it was known he was sick several of the head men of the town called on him. That Young with some other men afterwards came with their carriages and took him to the lake twenty-four miles west of the city. He described this as being a beautiful place. The lake, he says, has a beautiful white sand bottom; that the water is so strong of salt one can ~~###~~ float about sitting or lying without any effort. He said the Mormons intend to build a splendid house out there for the accommodation of visitors and a railroad from the city to it. Great improvements are contemplated there. They intend to send, after harvest, a number of men to explore the best and shortest route to the Pacific. We are now, 8 o'clock, coralled in the best way to resist attack. We have extra guards out and every precaution has been taken. There will be little sleep in camp tonight. We have, however, had so many rumors on the road of hostile Indians, all of which proved to be rumors, only, I somehow feel and certainly hope and pray, this may turn out the same.

Monday, July 30th.

The camp was astir before daybreak this morning. Scouts were

sent ahead to spy out the Indians. They returned and reported that the road was clear and they could find no signs that Indians had been there. We started out, however, armed and prepared for sudden attack, rolled on to Box Elder, where the Indians were said to be, and there was not so much as a mo^occasin track to be seen. We overtook a pack transport consisting of two men, one with a pack on his back, the other with a pack on a cow. They appeared to be moving on quite cheerfully. In the afternoon we came to a very warm salt spring, and within 30 yards to the west was a very cold spring. The water of these two springs came together in a short distance. Three of us went in bathing. The east side of the water was uncomfortably warm and the west side was as much too cold. I bathed, lying across the two currents; while one part was warm, the other part was cold. One can step in on the east side in warm salt water, bathe and float a few feet and be in cold fresh water. The other boys went in about 30 steps below where the waters mingled. They said it was cold on the bottom and warm on the surface. We had good water and good grass and good roads all the way today. We camped near a fine spring; sage brush for fuel. We traveled about 15 miles.

Tuesday, July 31st.

A travel of three miles this morning brought us to the Bear River, 84 miles from the city of the Great Salt Lake. Here is a ferry kept by the Mormons. They have two skiffs boomed together to cross the wagons on, and charge \$4.00 a wagon. We swam the cattle across. It is a ^{poor} part of the country, and land thin and no timber. Two and one half miles from the ferry we came to Mud Creek, the worst crossing we have met with on the entire trip. We had to double teams to cross. Six miles brought us to a good spring, and good grass a mile or less from the road. Sage brush for fuel. Traveled 12 miles.

Wednesday, August 1st.

I was informed today that Dr. Ewins and the two men who were taking him through all joined the Mormons as they passed through Salt Lake. They have been traveling with us for some days. It is very hot today. We traveled 16 miles without water then came to some warm, brackish springs. The cattle drank of the water with avidity. The dust and heat were so bad we were nearly suffocated. The water was too bad to drink and we concluded to go on to a spring 13 miles ahead. We made some coffee of the brackish water which was not at all bad. We left a little after sun down and rode on over rough road by moonlight until midnight, and came to the springs. We made a drive of 29 miles. Man and beast very much fatigued, and entirely covered with a coat of dust, but this is nothing unusual. There have been few days since we left the Missouri River (except after a shower, now and then) that we did not travel in a continuous cloud of dust, but today was unusually bad. The general exclamation among the people is, "You will never catch me on a trip like this again," but I try to bear it with patience and not complain or make any rash promises, feeling glad kind Providence has thus far led me on in health, and I am looking forward to better days.

Thursday, August 2nd.

We lay in camp today to rest our cattle. The health of the company is generally good. Matthews is recovering.

Friday, August 3rd.

We left the Mountain Springs this morning, traveling on six miles and came to Deep Creek. Traveled down the creek for about six miles. This brought us to a delightful camping place. Good grass. Traveled about 12 miles.

Saturday, August 4th.

Matthews has taken up the whip again to drive. He laid it down two weeks ago. Had a spell of mountain fever. This is his

fourth spell of sickness on the road. We traveled on ten miles over a lever road in three inches of dust. We came to a spring of tolerable water. Grass poor. Eight miles forward brought us to the foot of a mountain. Found a good spring a quarter of a mile to the right. Good wood and grass. Traveled about 18 miles.

Sunday, August 5th.

Today we traveled through sage brush and barren country about eight miles. About noon we came to a spring but no grass. We traveled on and found tolerably good grass, about a mile from the road, and stopped to graze. The snow on the mountains seems very near today. About dark we came to a creek with good camping.

We passed today a wagon that had been abandoned with apparently everything in ~~it~~ it, - provisions, camp equipment, and all. Abandoned wagons are very common, but this is the first one we have seen left intact, provisions and all, ready to be hitched to by any one wanting an outfit of the kind.

A heavy thunder cloud hung over us this afternoon and we hoped for rain to lay the dust; but only a few drops fell. At the camp there was an outfit lying by with a man who had been accidentally ~~shot~~ shot by his brother two weeks ago. He is said to be recovering. Traveled about 20 miles.

Monday, August 6th.

We got a fairly early start, and traveled up the creek for eight miles, and camped for grazing. We are now in camp. Saw four abandoned wagons this forenoon. We are in sight of the Fort Hall road, that is, we are in sight of the dust. We can count the passing teams as the dust is rising from them, like the smoke from so many steamboats.

A scene was enacted in camp this morning which might have been set for the stage. I heard a commotion and went around the

tent and saw a man and a boy fighting. The boy was no match for the man. A woman darted out of a tent only a few steps away and landed two well directed slaps in the man's face. He made no resistance but seemed dazed. In a minute, half dozen men were on the ground. The man still stood as if dozed, looked at the woman, then at the boy, then at the crowd, put out one hand to the woman and one to the boy and said, "I guess I only got part of what I deserve". They shook hand and tried to laugh. The men cheered and the show was over. I saw two good sized tears on the woman's cheek, and the man's eyes were moist. I was told the man and the boy were brothers; that the woman belonged to another train and knew neither of them, but interfered in the interest of fair play.

Tuesday, August 7th.

We decided to lay by today and rest our cattle, as the feed is first rate. One who has not experienced it, would naturally think that living as we are, amid shifting scenes and constant changes, plains, mountains, rivers, lakes, deserts -- - our world would be very large, but just the reverse of this is true.

Aside from the thoughts of home (on which we do not dare to dwell too much for fear of that dread distemper homesickness) and what may wait us at the end of the road; our thoughts, our hopes, our fears and our anxieties are all centered about the train -- the health and spirits of the company, grass and water for the oxen and in a limited way, fuel with which to cook our meals. This latter, however, has ^{caused} caused us little anxiety since we left the Platte. We use sage brush much of the time and it has served the purpose, but we are never sure of what we will find or not find at the next camp. Rumors of hostile Indians are floating in the air most of the time, and while we pay little attention to them, we cannot altogether dismiss them from our minds, so that you can see

that the world in which we actually live scarcely extends beyond the dust of the train by day and the smoke of the camp fires at night. Nor does the time seem long as one would suppose. The days as they pass frequently seem very long, and the nights when there is sickness in Camp and when we are anxious about the oxen, but the week ends and the month ends come around surprisingly fast.

Wednesday, August 8th.

This morning our cattle looked greatly improved, and started off with a brisk step. About eight miles brought us to the Fort Hall road near Steeple Rock. The road was crowded with wagons, and the dust was nearly insufferable. We found that they had gained just one week on us by taking the Fort Hall road instead of the Salt Lake road.

They say there are two roads, one with a stretch of 52 miles without water, but fair grass; the other 28 miles without water, and poor grass. The rest of the road was said to be tolerably good, with fair grass and water. The road this afternoon was very rough and crooked. We traveled into the night and came to a creek, good water but poor grass. Traveled about 22 miles.

Thursday, August 9th.

We rode out this morning and in about two miles came to Goose Creek. There was a company lying by with a man who had accidentally shot himself in the foot, and had symptoms of lock-jaw. Traveled up Goose Creek about 10 miles and camped. Grass indifferent. I was told today that the grass has been trodden to dust in the Mary's river bottom. I hope this is not true, for God knows that traveling this road is bad enough at best.

Friday, August 10th.

We rode out this morning and soon came to some good grass and stopped to graze. Abandoned wagons, dead cattle, and horses were all along the road. Camped on Goose Creek and found some good grass within a mile and a half from the creek.

Saturday, August 11th.

We traveled today up a small branch of Goose Creek for about 6 miles, then struck out over the hills. Very rough road and no grass or water for 14 miles. This brought us to Warm Spring Valley where we were agreeably surprised to find a good spring of cool water instead of warm as the name would indicate. We found no grass. We traveled on 4 miles and camped. Grass was very scarce and no water. Dead mules, horses, cattle and abandoned wagons all along the road. This is the first day I have missed a meal by being sick. I walked nearly all day as the dust in the wagon was insufferable. Traveled 23 miles.

Sunday, August 12th.

Twenty-one head of our cattle strayed away last night. A number of other camps also had the same hard luck. 100 head or more were missing from the various camps. However, by 10 o'clock we had found them all. They were in three different gangs. Some were eight miles from Camp, in the mountains. We hitched up, well pleased to come off so well. Good water but grass scarce. About six miles up the valley we struck across a hill and in two miles came into the valley again. It is covered with coarse grass. There are a number of large encampments here. We traveled on about six miles and found some water in holes in the creek bottom.

Monday, August 13th.

After traveling about three miles this morning we came to good water and good grass and stopped to graze. We had good grass and good water all along the road today. A Missourian I met in camp tonight said out of his company of thirtythree wagons, thirty wagons had gone back.

Tuesday, August 14th.

It was a cool morning and we rolled out before 7 o'clock. Our cattle look quite well. ~~It~~ We left the main road today, and rode all day up a canyon. Good water and plenty of grass in the hills, but had to drive the cattle some distance to it. traveled about 11 miles.

Wednesday, Aug. 15th.

After traveling about ten miles today, we struck the valley at the head waters of Mary's or Humbolt River. Here is a scene to delight the weary traveler's heart. A beautiful valley spread before us with as fine a grass as heart could desire. Also a beautiful stream coming from the mountains. The valley and foot hills covered with verdure, and the mountains capped with snow. In a short distance we came to the river. It is, however, only a small branch yet. Traveled down it three miles and camped. The river here is about ten steps wide, and from six inches to six feet deep. Traveled about 20 miles.

Thursday, Aug. 16th.

This morning was partially cloudy and cool and it was fine for driving. The ~~5555~~ snowy mountains seemed very near and the broad valley spread out before us with as fine grass as one could wish. We traveled about fifteen miles and came to where the valley abruptly closed in, and the river ran through a narrow gorge or canyon. Here for possibly a mile the valley was white with alkali or salaratus. The road led over a hill and in a short distance came to the river again. We camped but found poor grass. Traveled about 20 miles.

Friday, August 17th.

The valley today had an entirely different appearance from that it presented yesterday, although we had fair grass. Traveled about 20 miles.

Saturday, August 18th.

Traveled down the valley for about six miles and struck a deep canyon. At about sunset we came to a small valley where we could camp. The grass is poor. Traveled, I think, nearly 20 miles.

Sunday, August 20th.

We started out before breakfast this morning on account of the short grass. After traveling about six miles came to some fair grass and camped for the day to rest and recuperate our cattle,

as we have had three days of poor grazing.

At the camp is a notice posted by an Ohio Company, cautioning the emigrants to guard their cattle well, as on the 15th - fifty head of their cattle had been stolen by the Indians. Captain King and a company started out to find them and suddenly came on to three Indians butchering an ox. The Indians fire with arrows and wounded Captain King and two others of his company. They returned the fire and killed the three Indians, but found none of their cattle. We hear so many rumors and conflicting statements on the road that we usually pay little attention to them, but this seems to bear the marks of truth, as the day and names are given, and the statements are specific.

Every day in camp is like every other day in camp. Extra washing and drying is done. We tinker about the wagons and try to find something which can be abandoned to lighten the load, as every pound counts. After this some spend the time in writing and reading, others play cards the whole day through. Nearly every wagon has a few books and by trading around we have something to read. Besides, I have my Bible, which I read with increasing interest, and I think these mountains and deserts help me to better understand parts of it.

Today, however, was varied somewhat for me. We had talked it over for some days and today it was decided that Drake and I would pack to Sacramento City, and look out for and make provisions for the train when it should arrive. We have two good horses. The distance is estimated to be about 425 miles. You know some of the difficulties of keeping ~~##~~ a journal on a trip like this, but you cannot understand them all, and I have made poor enough out of it, I know, but it is going to be harder now that I am quitting the wagon, for I will have no tent, no candles, and no rest for my note books except my knee, but if I keep my health I will keep my promise and make at least some note of each day's happenings.

Tuesday, August 21st.

This morning Drake and I took our horses and packs, and bid the train "Good bye". Our outfit consists of the clothese we have on, with one extra shirt and one extra pair of socks; about thirty pounds of provisions, cooking tools, one buffalo robe, four blankets, two canteens, two tin cups, one three quart bucket, two tin plates, two teaspoons. We found tolerably good grass. Our dinner consisted of tea and crackers. Nothing of particular interest occurred. Passed two new graves on the road. Traveled about 25 miles and camped.

Wednesday, August 22nd.

We put out before sunrise this morning. Traveled through alkali, sage brush, and dust. Traveled ten miles before breakfast. Found some indifferent grass. Stopped to graze and got our breakfast. We walked about half of the time and rode the other half. We traveled about 25 miles and came to a good camping place.

Thursday, August 23rd.

We got out at sunrise. We met some men who said they had met some men who had been to the Diggins and were returning. They reported plenty of gold, small pox, and cholera. At sun down we came to E. B. Nichols camp, and he invited us to supper and to stay with him during the night, which we very gladly accepted. Traveled about 25 miles.

Friday, August 24th.

After breakfasting with Mr. Nichols, we struck the road. After traveling five miles we came to some fine grass, which was certainly a treat for our poor animals. This, however, lasted only about five or six miles. We had a variety of roads today, some good and some sand and some dust. Traveled about 25 miles.

Saturday, August 25th.

Today we traveled over barrens for about fourteen miles and came to the river again. There were a large number of encampments

here, and there was considerable excitement about a new road which was said to shorten the distance to the Diggins about 150 miles, but there is a desert of 70 miles without grass and little water. We fell in with a young man named White from Norfolk, Virginia, and we agreed to travel together. Drake has been dissatisfied from the day we started out, and wanted to go back to the wagons. It was decided that he was to stay here and wait for the train to come and to gather the best information about the roads and to gather grass for the cattle should the company decide to take the desert road. Tall ripe grass can be found some miles from the road which makes fairly good x feed.

Sunday, August 26th.

White and I decided to take the cut-off and this morning we went back from the road some miles and gathered some grass for our horses for the desert trip. We then took the road and traveled about fifteen miles to a mountain spring. We will lay down, to get up at midnight to start on the first twenty mile stretch of the desert.

Monday, August 27th.

We started out at midnight to make the twenty mile stretch without water or ~~any~~ grass. I had a lonely night as White started a little before me and took the wrong road for a piece, and waited for me to come up. I took another road and thought he was ahead of me, and traveled on expecting to overtake him, but he was behind and of course did not know where I was. It was a lonely night for me in the territory of the Digger Indians who are said to be a treacherous lot, but I saw nothing of them. A little after sunrise I kindled a fire, fried some meat and made some coffee with the water I had in my canteen. I got to the watering place about 9 o'clock. Here were a number of wagons. The water is in wells that have been dug by the emigrants. It is very brackish. There are a number

of wells but the demand for water is greater than the supply. After traveling twenty miles without water an ox or a horse will hold a lot. There is no grass. I met here, Capt. King, of Ohio, the man who was in the Indian fight spoken of on the 20th. He was grazed by an arrow but shot the Indian and two other Indians were killed also, and one fled. King said he took the Indians' bows and arrows. He lost all of his oxen and joined with another wagon. At about 3:00 o'clock, White came up and we took dinner with Captain King without any charge. About 5:00 P.M. we started on another 25 mile stretch. Went on through a desert for about 12 miles, then stopped and tied our horses to a desert bush. We laid down on my buffalo robe, covered ourselves with blankets and tried to get a nap, but the passing teams kept us awake. All of the teams try to make these long stretches in the night. We laid there about four hours and got up, fixed our packs and struck the road. It was a fine night for traveling. I walked nearly all the way. The moon and stars here shine with a brilliancy unknown in the States.

About sun rise we came to a warm spring, but made no stop. Saw about twenty head of dead cattle here. Went on about two miles farther to some wells of brackish water but very little grass. We got breakfast and went on four miles farther. Here we found a hot spring and a small grass valley; also some wells of brackish water. About a half mile from the spring the water is about the temperature of dish water. When it is cooled it is fair tasting water - much better than that from the wells. We made about thirty miles traveling from 5:00 last night until 10:00 today.

Tuesday, August 28th.

I should think in the last thirty miles there was an average of five dead oxen to the mile, and some horses and mules, also at least one abandoned, burned or destroyed wagon every mile and a half to two miles. We looked about all of these wagons in the

hopes of finding some abandoned provisions, but found none. Provisions are getting very scarce. There is ten miles of this stretch called Salt Desert, nothing at all growing on it. Before day we passed a mule wagon. The mules had given out and they had taken them on to the water and grass to recuperate. This afternoon about 4:00 we set out again for a ten mile stretch. We went on about eight miles and came to what looked like an old Indian or animal trail. We decided to explore it with hopes of finding some grass. We traveled about four miles and came to a little valley with fine grass and plenty of water. This place had hitherto not been discovered by the emigrants. Our horses stood in grass up to their knees and made good use of it as this is the first good mess they have had in three days.

We~~mm~~ traveled over 75 miles in a few hours over two days and nights. We traveled nearly all the first two nights. We laid down after supper feeling very tired and sleepy. I put my robe on the thick grass and covered myself with my two blankets and overcoat. The night was very cold but I was so tired and sleepy I slept fairly well, but got pretty cold toward morning.

Wednesday, August 29th.

Started out early this morning, and traveled to Mud Creek by noon, a distance of about 12 miles, and found good grass and water. Here we found that we had been deceived in the distance to the Diggins. We met a Government train and a number of wagons near the warm springs, and were told it was nearly 330 miles. I spoke to one of the head men of the train and asked if he would take a line back from me to our train. He was a very soldierly and courteous fellow, and I got in his wagon and rode back some distance to write my line to tell the boys if they had not passed the fork in the roads, and decided to take this desert road, to put in a good supply of water

and of grass if they can find it, also told them of the little valley with grass we had discovered. We lay in camp this afternoon at Mud Creek to ^{rest} rest our horses.

Thursday, August 30th.

Last night was a cool and freezing one, and I found my blankets inadequate. Started out early this morning. Had an extremely rocky road for some miles over a high hill to a canyon. In going up the canyon we passed two tents. In one of them was a woman who had been delivered of twins last night. 6 miles further up the valley we camped with fair grass and good water. We traveled about 16 miles.

Friday, August 31st.

We passed another freezing night. Started out early. In 17 miles came to a mountain spring, and a narrow canyon, bad road, with lofty mountains on either side. Saw 2 abandoned wagons and a few dead cattle and a few cattle turned loose. We are about out of provisions. We have no bread and only about one pound of bacon left. We made diligent inquiry today of a number of trains for provisions, but obtained none.

Saturday, Sept. 1st.

After traveling about fourteen miles today we came to a pass in the mountains and found some good grass and a running brook. Here was a party of men burying the body of a man in the road. They said they did this so the Indians would not find the grave and dig up the body.

I learned yesterday that Trask and Condon who left our train and started to pack from the Mormon Ferry on the Platte, had both been sick and were only a short distance ahead of us. After riding about 18 miles we came to a creek and camped, and it is said to be 20 miles to the next water. The number of foot and horse packers is increasing day by day and the road is lined with them. The road

from Fort Laramie on was ~~strewn~~ ^{strewn} with wrecked wagons and dead animals, but in the early stages of the journey the unfortunates were able to get in with other wagons, but the time had to come when the ever decreasing number of wagons could not serve the ever increasing number of unfortunates.

Sunday, Sept. 2nd.

Last night was cool and windy, and we were up for a scanty breakfast, and an early start. Twelve miles travel over a rough road through a barren country brought us to a warm spring, and some indifferent grass. We passed over the bed of a dry lake and in ~~to~~ eight or ten miles came to a valley with fine water and grass, and beautiful trees. We have been so long out of sight of trees, except ^{far} far off on the mountains, it did our tired eyes good, and made me feel like I was on God's green earth once more. To add to my delight I met here in camp my old friend, Kealing, of Canton, Ill. He kindly asked me to take supper and camp with him for the night. It is useless to remark that I readily ~~accepted~~. Traveled 30 miles today, and did not know it was Sunday.

Monday, September 3rd.

A few miles this morning from the foot of the mountains brought us to the long desired sight of the summit of the Sierra Nevadas. It is a hard pull from the camp to within about half a mile of the summit. Eight or nine yoke of cattle are required to draw a wagon. The road, however, is wide and straight. There is a very heavy growth of pine extending from the valley to the top of the mountains. I never saw better timber. After crossing the mountain the road leads through tall pines for ten miles or more to Goose Lake. Goose Lake is 25 miles long and from two to three miles wide. Good grass and water. Traveled 25 miles or more.

Tuesday, Sept. 4th.

We had a very light breakfast and started out early this morning. The road is crowded with teams and ~~ka~~ packers. We have a

scanty day's provision left. We inquired all day for provisions and were always met with denial. Tomorrow will find us entirely out. Traveled about 22 miles over hills and through valleys, and camped with good water and fair grass. I saw today for the first time a woman foot packer. We camped near her and her husband this noon. I went over and offered her the use of my horse for the afternoon. She thanked me politely but said they were going to lay by the rest of the day. I must have unwittingly cast a wishful eye at their steaming coffee pot for she asked if we had any coffee, and when I told her we had not, she said if I would bring our tin cups she would be glad to fill them. I told her I would be glad to do so provided she had it to spare. She assured me she had. They told me that this was their second day on foot. They had sold their team, wagon and provisions, and bought two horses, with which to pack. They said the price offered for their provisions was so tempting they could not refuse. On the third day out ~~when~~ their horses both went so lame they had to abandon them, and that they were going to try to get in with a wagon. This I fear they will not be able to do unless they happen to find a family wagon with one or more women with it.

Wednesday, Sept. 5th.

Traveled until noon then stopped to cook the last of our flour. We are entirely out of bread. Passed a number of trains and inquired for provisions, but obtained none. Tonight I went from camp to camp with the same results. As I was about to give up I met a man who gave me a half dozen crackers and some dry bread for which I offered to pay, but he would accept nothing. May he be recompensed with plenty of gold dust.

By the time I returned to the fire, White had some coffee made and a little rice (which we had bought) cooked. A man came by our fire and asked if we had any sugar. We told him we had not.

He went to his wagon and brought back a handful of sugar which sweetened things up very much. May he get his share of gold. Traveled 30 miles.

Thursday, Sept. 6th.

Last night was very cold and my blankets proved entirely too light. I slept but little. We had a half pound of bacon left, and I cooked four slices of it, and finished our hard bread and moved out. I began my day's business of inquiring for provisions. Our anxiety used to be for water and grass for the oxen, now it is for food for ourselves, but this is as nothing as compared with the anxiety I felt for the poor dumb patient animals.

The Alton train had six oxen stolen by the Indians last night. Another was shot with four arrows. The Indians are said to belong to a treacherous tribe. We have seen nothing of them. We traveled until noon and came to a wagon from Cedar City, Iowa. The head man gave us our dinner and would take only 25 cents for the two. We traveled on until night. Camped with good grass and water. We bought some fish and had a good supper of fish, batter cakes and tea.

Friday, Sept. 7th.

Our breakfast this morning was the same as last night's supper - batter cakes, fish and tea. Ever since we crossed the summit of the Sierra Nevadas every one seems to be possessed of the spirit of feverish haste. Long before the stars are out of the sky all the camps are astir, and by sun rise every foot is moving and every wheel rolling. Generally the foot packers get the road first, as they have less preparation to make, and then come the horse and mule packers. The first wagon to get the road takes it, and the first half dozen wagons may belong to as many different trains. It is not all a jumble, however, the wagons of the different trains try in a way to keep in touch, and to camp together

at night. The number of foot and horse packers is very large, and this accounts in part for the difficulty in getting supplies from the wagons. Some of the packers are broke and have to sponge ~~and~~ or beg. Most of the wagons have a scant supply of provisions left.

About noon we overtook Trask of our old company. He has lost both of his horses and is in with a wagon of a Mr. Porter. I took dinner with them. Mr. Porter is quite an interesting gentleman, and requested me to travel with them during the day, and to camp with them at night. We are still traveling down the Pitt river. Traveled about 20 miles.

Saturday, September 8th.

Soon after doing into camp last night two of Mr. Porter's oxen were shot with two arrows each by the Indians, and this morning one ox is missing. The head of the Rock Island Company said the Indians had shot four of their oxen with two or more arrows. After breakfast with Porter and Trask, they sold me about four pounds of crackers and two pounds of coffee. I had the good luck to get two pounds of crackers from another man for which he only charged me 50 cents. I would have given him \$1.00 as quickly, as 50 cents a pound is the regular price for crackers. I bought ~~##~~ of another man two pounds of bacon, so we have a pretty good supply of provisions.

It is said to be about 200 miles to Lesson's Diggins. The road over the mountain today for seven or eight miles was rough as any I have seen. We then came to a delightful timber country, but grass short. Camped in a valley without water. We did not know that we would not find water at camp, and were too lavish with the water in our canteens, and had exhausted it. We camped near two wagons, one from Missouri and one from Wisconsin. We asked the old Missourian for water to drink and he refused us. The man from

Wisconsin heard him and gave us water to drink and for coffee both night and morning. (They both had the same amount of water.)

He asked me to take breakfast with him, and also sold me, out of his scanty supply, one-fourth pound of sugar for 25 cents. \$1.00 a pound is the regular price for sugar. Thank God the spirit of kindness is in some of the emigrants yet. If I had only a part of the supplies I have seen thrown away along the road, and had the heart to accept the price the poor fellows are willing to pay, I would not need any other gold mine.

Sunday, Sept. 9th.

We rode this morning for about eighteen miles through the densest timber I ever saw. Traveled in all about thirty-five miles and camped by a lake with poor grass. My horse is failing on account of short feed.

Monday, September 10th.

Last night was cold and froze ice a quarter of an inch thick. We traveled today through timber and over rough road for twenty miles. Camped on a beautiful stream. I think it is a branch of the Feather River. Tolerable good grass. The emigrants are nearly all running short of provisions. Some have no bread and others have no meat. They are killing their cattle to eat. I saw today where several had been butchered and the meat jerked. They sell the meat they do not want to the horse and foot packers, and to one another. We met this morning a party of engineers who are exploring a route for a railroad to the East. I was told that Losson of Losson's Diggins was with them, but I did not see him.

Tuesday, September 11th.

My comrade is broke. I loaned him this morning \$2.50. He bought two pounds of flour for \$1.00 also bought two pounds of rice, and I bought two pounds of flour. It is surprising to find

what a small variety of food is really necessary to satisfy hunger and keep one in shape. We traveled today through a wonderful forest of pine timber. I never knew before that such timber grew. We camped on a beautiful creek, but with poor grass. There were a large number of encampments here. We camped near two wagons from Burlington, Iowa. The head men of the wagons are brothers. They have their wives with them. They knew some of my friends at home, and I knew some of theirs. They invited me to take supper and breakfast with them. They had an extra supply of provisions. About a month ago they bought three yoke of cattle, wagon and supplies from some men who were going to pack. They reinforced their teams, loaded the provisions into their own wagons and abandoned the one purchased. I do not hope to find another such chance to fill my pack, but I knew it would be a gift and not a purchase, and I did not have the nerve to broach the subject.

Wednesday, Sept. 12th.

We started out early this morning, and ten miles travel brought us to Deer Creek with an abundance of tall grass. Here was a company of soldiers lying in camp on account of sickness. They report a lot of sickness in the mines. There were here also a number of trains cutting grass for a forty mile stretch without grass. After leaving this valley we struck a very rough and rocky, hilly road through heavy timber. We camped on a creek without grass.

I found in camp two men who were formerly with the Bloomington company. I took supper with them. We had biscuits, venison and coffee - the best meal we have had for some days. I guess I am an easy mark. Yesterday we fell in with three packers who asked to travel with us. This morning I found they were all broke and out of provisions. I loaned (?) the outfit \$2.50 and bid

goodbye to them and the \$2.50. We traveled 20 miles today.

Thursday, Sept. 13th.

At the camp last night we saw some men lying up on account of sickness. They claim they are government engineers, and are exploring ~~in~~ a route for a railway. They are offering \$10.00 ~~in~~ a day to emigrants to join them. I saw two men who said they had engaged to go with them. They should not have any trouble in enlisting a regiment out of this army of packers. I talked with one of the men. There is something mysterious about ~~the~~ their operation which I do not understand.

We ~~was~~ traveled all day on the backbone of a mountain, and camped without water.

Friday, Sept. 14th.

We started out before daybreak this morning to find water. About 9 o'clock we came to a spring. We found here another company of United States troops lying in camp on account of sickness. They had come around the Horn and were six months on the water. We rode on the ridge of the mountain until about sun down and then came to the Sacramento valley. It was smoky and I did not get a fair view of it. We had ten miles to go to Deer Creek the next water. We got to Deer Creek about 11 o'clock at night. There were a number of adobe huts here. We came to an abandoned one, went in, built a fire, made some coffee and laid down on the floor to sleep. It was the first time I had slept under a roof since I left home. We were so tired we turned our horses loose to take care of themselves.

Saturday, Sept. 15th.

We laid over today to rest our horses and ourselves. We are all tired and worn. The water and grass here are both fine. There are several adobe huts occupied by stock-raisers and traders. They employ a number of Indians, both men and women. The white men all

seem to be ~~#####~~ sickly and mopish. They have chills and fever. They have irrigation ditches, but all cultivation was abandoned when the gold excitement came. They have some fat cattle and will trade to the emigrants, one ~~#####~~ fat beef ox for three or four lean ones, depending upon the size of the fat ones, and the conditions of the lean ones. There are a number of wagons here drying beef to take to the upper diggings. The prices here are beef 50¢ a pound, ^{pork} ~~pork~~ 75¢; flour 50¢; crackers 75¢. The spirit of bouyancy which prevailed when we got on this side of the Sierra Nevadas seems to have given way to one of apprehension. Provisions are getting scarcer and scarcer. The prospect does not seem to be so alluring as we draw nearer to the goal. I met three men yesterday going back to try to hire out to the government engineers at \$10.00 a day. I asked them why they did not join them when they had the chance. They said they did not feel that way then.

Sunday, September ~~10th~~,
16th.

We started out early this morning and soon came to an Indian village. They are living in summer huts built of ~~#####~~ flag mats. The winter huts or quarters consist of a cave such as we use at home for vegetables, apples, etc. The entrance is a hole through which they crawl. Most of the men and women are naked except breech cloths. Most of them seem to be fine specimens of physical development. They were very friendly and seem to have more intelligence than the mode of living and dress would indicate. After all, dress is largely a matter of habit and fashion. A few of them had white men's shirts and some pantaloons, but those in the native garb made a much better appearance.

I have traveled about 4 and a half months and probably over 2000 miles, most of the way in what was supposed to be a hostile Indian country. Rumors and depredation were afloat much of the

time, but I have not seen a single hostile Indian. All I have met were extremely friendly.

Near the Indian village are three adobe houses, one a residence, one a trading room, and one where gambling for money was going on. After traveling about 15 miles over a pebbly, sandy road, we came to a delightful strip of country covered with fine grass and scattering oak trees. We camped near a lone settler who is ~~###~~ raising wheat.

Monday, September 17th.

We have met people from Oregon at every turn in the road, the past few days. Many of them had been to the mines and were returning. They are all profuse in their praise of Oregon. After traveling about eight miles this morning we came to a ranch as it is called, and a trading house. They have a good sized herd of horses and cattle. They offered green beef for 25¢ a pound, flour 50¢ a pound, common wine bottle of whiskey \$5.00. There is something out of joint where a pound of flour costs twice as much as a pound of beef.

We traveled on over a pretty valley for twenty-two miles, and came to the Feather River, and are now in camp five miles from Losson's Diggings.

Tuesday, Sept. 18th.

After despatching the last of my bacon for breakfast, leaving only about a half pound of flour, we set out and in an hour came to the long desired sight of the gold diggings. The bank of the river was covered with piles of rocks and pebbles and sand. One washing crew of thirty-five Indians with three overseers and a cook were at breakfast. They invited us to sit in. The breakfast was served on a big rock with stones for seats. They do not even have ~~###~~ tents or awnings, but eat, sleep and live in the open. After breakfast I watched the operations for some

time. The Indians seem to be very attentive. They do not seem to think, but go through the motions like machines. I talked with two men who had recently bought a sand bar. They were very much downcast and said thus far they had only been able to make their board. I talked with a number of others. They all said the mine was well nigh washed out. Some said they could wash \$5.00 a day; some as high as \$16.00. One man who had been here for some time and has had experience, told me he could average about \$12.00 a day. He had a young man boarding with him at \$3.00 a day, who he said washed \$12.00 one day, but averaged about half that amount.

I went to the trading tent. Pork was \$1.00 a pound, flour 50¢, sugar 50¢, coffee 50¢, whiskey \$5.00 a bottle, a shovel \$8.00, a common two gallon tin pan \$8.00. I bought a pound of ~~meat~~ pork and a pound of flour, and half a pound of sugar. The river abounds with fish. One can see them swimming all around the workmen. They say they are attracted by the fresh dirt. No one, however, seems to pay any attention to them. With pork at \$1.00 a pound one would think they would be sought after, but everything seems to be out of joint here. I had two chance to go in and try my luck at washing, but they did not look to me like a fair ~~game~~ gamble.

There was nothing to detain us longer here, and with a feeling of disappointment we struck the road about 4 o'clock. In about three miles we came to a number of Oregon families in tents; some were sick. One man was drying beef. He said he had a place up the river where he could wash \$100.00 a day; would like to take in two partners if they came with provisions or the equivalent. He appeared to be an honest but dumb fellow, and I left him with a provisional promise to return. Went on about three miles and camped.

Wednesday, September 19th.

This morning we met a large company of Oregon men going to the diggings. We passed two Indian villages. They were laying in

acorns.

acorns. They have bins or cribs made of flags or rushes, some of which hold one hundred bushes of more. The Indians are heavy set and light of color. They were naked except a breech cloth and some entirely naked. The squirrels are very ~~#####~~ numerous, but the Indians seem to pay little attention to them. They dart in and out of the Indian huts, and appear to enjoy stealing the Indians' acorns instead of gathering them for themselves. The oaks are shaped like apple trees and they are scattered or distributed so that it gives the valley the appearance of a great apple orchard. We traveled about 25 miles today. In camp tonight we met a French Canadian with a party of Canadian Indians - men, women and children. They had been to the mines and nearly all had been sick for about three months. They had buried five of their number. I talked with the Frenchmen for half an hour. There was something beautiful and pathetic about ~~##~~ the affection which seemed to exist between him and his Indians. It reminded me of what I had occasionally seen in Virginia between master and slave. Twice during our conversation he got up, went a few steps away and looked into a tent where there was a sick squaw. An Indian girl, without any sign ~~##~~ from him, brought his pipe, loaded it with tobacco and handed it to him, together with a lighted stick. He made polite obeisance and she stroked his hair with her hand, but not a word was spoken.

Thursday, September 20th.

We crossed the Feather River this morning. It was about four or five hundred feet wide, and about eighteen inches deep. In about eight miles we came to an Indian burrow. The women all seemed to have some clothing, but nearly all of the men were entirely naked. I saw two bucks marching about proudly with red scarfs around their waists but without another stich of clothing.

The road was unusually crowded with emigrants today. Most of them seem to be headed for Redding diggings. I saw a freighter trade a pistol, worth about \$3.00 in the States, to an Indian for two ounces of gold. About twenty miles from the ford we came to a ranch or farm with good house and out buildings. There was a garden and flowers, chickens, turkeys, hogs and cattle. I have seen nothing on the road which reminded me so much of Home. I could hardly resist my desire to stop and pay my respects.

Traveled about 24 miles.

Friday, September 21st.

This was an uneventful day. I, however, met a man who is taking provisions from Sacramento to Redding diggings, and he told me my old friends, Dr. Olds and William Tyson of the Bloomington company were in Sacramento. Camped with good grass and water.

Saturday, September 22nd.

Traveled about four miles this morning which brought us to Nichol's Trading ranch. Nearly all the people here are sick. The temperature in the valley is quite as hot as it is in the states in the middle of August. After leaving the ranch we had a 20 mile stretch without grass or water. We rode into the night and came to the American Fork and camped.

Sunday, September 23rd.

The valley here is literally covered with wagons, cattle, horses and tents. There is also a large number of liquor tents. Most of the emigrants I talked with seemed to be rather down-hearted and uncertain as to their movements. One fellow told me he was lying over to try and figure out why he came. I told him I felt like joining him, but didn't feel like lying over for so long a time. The men are a long haired, long bearded lot. I had my hair and beard cropped in Salt Lake City, two months ago and I am quite trim compared with most of them. I have not failed to observe

that where women are with the wagons the men are much more trim and present a much better general appearance than those who are going it alone. I have also observed that the women stand the hardships of the road quite as well or better than the men.

A few miles travel this morning brought us to the mushroom town of Sacramento. I rode at once to a store to buy a clean shirt and some other much needed apparel. I met in the store, both Dr. Olds and William Tyson. They appeared to be very glad to see me and I was certainly glad to meet my old friends. Mr. Tyson invited me home to his tent. At 11 o'clock there was preaching under the ~~###~~ trees near the tent. There was another service at 3 o'clock, which I attended, and another at night. The rumble of the balls and rattle of the pins in the Ten Pin Alley near by did not seem to disturb the preacher very much, but was quite distracting to me. I wrote and mailed today, a letter to you and one to Mr. Toole, and paid forty cents postage on each letter. My limited experience as a builder may come in in good turn. Mr. Tyson has been here more than a week, and while he could not quite qualify as an old settler, he thought he was qualified to offer advice. He said he had looked around a good deal and thought the surest and quickest legitimate money was to be made in building. He had already taken a contract to put up one building in which there was a round profit, and was figuring on two or three more, and had some small jobs to do, and he wants me to go in partnership with him, at least temporarily, till I have time to look around and says I can pull out at any time I desire. I told him I wanted time to get my bearings first, but would be glad to help him for a few days if he desired. He said he would be glad to have me do so.

Monday, September 24th.

This morning we ground fourteen tools Tyson had gotten

together, and were charged \$3.00 for the use of the grindstone. We then did a small repair job and received \$25.00 in gold coin for about five hours work. Did another small job for a man next door and received \$5.00 for about one hour's work. This afternoon I sent my horse to a ranch six miles away for pasture. I bought a loaf of baker's bread for 50 cents. I saw a five gallon jar of strawberry jam. I ordered a pint. The merchant said he intended to sell it in bulk, but didn't think a pint would be missed and he would sell me a pint if I would buy a tin cup to carry it in. I complied with his requirements.

The City Hotel was opened today and the ~~town~~ town was celebrating the event. The celebration consisted ~~wholly~~ wholly of drinking and firing small arms and cannon. It was said the drinks were free at the hotel, but the other places seem to be doing a thriving business at 25 cents a drink. The city, if it can be dignified by such a name, is not easy to describe as it is such a jumble. I do not know what is city and what is camp. I am informed that the first frame building was started here in January of this year. A large proportion of the people are living in tents. Most of the business houses are crude and roughly built. I would think half of them are saloons, gambling and sporting houses. Near the business section, one can not get out of the sound of the auctioneers crying off the cattle and wagons of the emigrants. They seem to be slow sale.

For supper tonight we had among other things, baker's bread and strawberry jam. It was the first fresh oven baked bread I had tasted since I was in Salt Lake two months ago, and with this exception, the first since leaving St. Joseph, nearly 5 months ago. As I think I observed once before, - it does not ^{require} require a great variety or quantity of foods to keep one in shape. I have not had

what one would call a square meal oftener than once a week since I left the wagons 6 weeks ago, and I am feeling well and do not believe I have lost a pound. I am hoping and praying for the safe arrival of the company, but I cannot expect it for two weeks or more.

NOTE: ---

Thus ended the diary of my father as far as I have it. He remained in Sacramento about a year and returned to his home by way of Panama.

E. A. Benson.