JOURNAL

Veni Vidi Ha! Ha!

(Ex arribus asinum, but not always, a friend by the wag of his tongue! Aug. 29th) Sept. 5th -- Esto perpetua! Kind readers, quid rides? "Veni Vidi Ha! Ha! Iht! Sava bo fidem! -- The last is for those who best understand; the first was a morsel for the world!

Sept. 7: Peccavi!

Pa-he-minny-minnish

- Curly hair

A year ago I dreamed this dream
That to my famished soul gave food;
An angel pressed her lips to mine
And whispered, "child! be good".

[Written over the above at a later date in pencil are the following lines:]

Tis but a dream
That fades, or
shrinks to nothing
where reality shines
its strong light
upon the scene.
Ha! Ha!! Ha!!!
Yet we all remain
willing & unwilling
servants to Madame
Fate

Journal for 1873.

"Wolf's Rest"
Tuesday -- July 1st

On the 9th of last month I commenced this journal: wrote one page only, when my journalizing was kindly interrupted by having that one page torn out! It was a very unassuming and considerate act, and I feel duly indebted to the author! Said page recorded the anticipation of quite a remarkable event for "the Medicine"--viz. the Solemnization of the first marriage in Frontier County!

Our Justice of the Peace officiated; and on the next day, Sunday, June 8th, quite a number of the "creek people" were gathered here at "Wolf's Rest" to see Mr. Andy Barrett and Mrs. Nancy Wheatly joined in the "Holy Bonds of Matrimony"! Both of them are half-breed Indians; and the bride-groom is better known as "Andy, The Half Breed"; or the Wonderful "California Horse-Tamer" than Mr. Barrett.

I have known the bride for some time, and think her quite a nice woman.

Strange to say just one year from the commencement of this book, the 7th of June, I commenced my first journal of the West, and not 50 yrds. from the place I was then writing; only the first page of that book is headed "Teepee Chees Cheela", and now I may write Waugh Seecha [Frenchman] Cha Teepee [wooden lodge or house] as the kind of shelter I can claim! Also on that day one year ago, I saw the Horse-Tamer for the first time. He was with that "Saratoga Man's Outfit" [Sidney Barnett]. The party that passed here on the 7th of June for the purpose of lassoing buffalo. I did not expect to see him the principle actor at a wedding out here, in a year's time! There was not a woman in 30 miles of us then--and only one cabin on the creek! Now there are quite a number of nice little houses; and we of Wolf's Rest, have arisen to the dignity of two sleeping apartments and a dining-room (alias, kitchen)!

There were five or six Ladies present; 20 or 30 gentlemen, and 10 or 12 Indians. We got up a right good dinner, for the prairie; and every thing passed off charmingly (I Hope!!!). I was kept very busy, being the prime minister for the whole "out-fit." I had been out of bed but two days and was so weak I could scarcely stand, yet I think I did my duty to people and things

that day--even to prompting the bride at the all important moment! Standing a little behind the bride I had a fine opportunity to hear the congratulations! The styles were quite varied! Our humorous Judge [Samuel F.] W[atts] really surprised me with his rhetorical eloquence! Wish I could remember just how his congratulation was worded.

July 2nd

What a wide gap there seems to be in my existence since I left off journalizing!

May 4th was the date of the last jotting in my old journal! And it is now July 2nd--two months, lacking two days!

It seems two years! Mon Dieu! it has been a life-time of pain and suspense!

I had every thing packed and was dressed myself, expecting to go West to my friend, as promised. It was a mistake. I will not go at all now. Enough about myself! Let us see if we cannot find a more pleasant topic. I hear the North Platters are in preparation on anticipation of quite a brilliant commemoration of the 4th of July. One year ago today and we were getting ready to start into the Post on the morrow! Ma foi! what has one year done!

[John Y.] Nelson, of [George Pfouts] Belden fame called to see me a week or so since. I was quite anxious to meet him; nor do I find myself disappointed in my expectations. He is an original of no mean order; and on the whole, a kind hearted man, I think.

What must I do with myself today? I have been chopping weeds in the yard. A wild turkey comes every morning to fight the Dr.'s [Carver] tame one. He, the wild gobbler, has proven himself master, and struts about the correll in fine style. We will

not shoot him. Day before yesterday, Pa called me out to see a beaver quietly feeding on the bank of the creek. I went in about 15 feet of it. The sleek pretty creature did not seem at all frightened; but went on pulling and eating the weeds and wild roses, as though no interloper upon his primeval wilds was near.

Made a fine shot at a rabbet this morning, as I was coming from the field. I have made twelve shots at rabbets this spring and killed eleven. I wounded one, but as I did not get it, I count the shot lost. Two of the number I killed at 100 yds. and four or five, between 75 and 80 yrds. Killed one on the jump, which is reckoned right good for rifle shooting.

Wolf's Rest
Twilight, June 3rd [sic]

I have been sitting alone in the gathering gloom! Alone, save the shadow-forms stealing up from the dead, but unforgotten past! Familiar voices mock my lonely heart with the far-off echo of their remembered sweetness, until the tortured spirit cries out in its wild, impatient agony! Yet this is weakness!

"For what art thou, more than they fellows,
that thou shouldst not weep?"

Peccavi [I have erred]! Yet, do I alone remember? Fata obstant [obstinant fate]! 87E [One] eELa [year] LX8 [ago] &872X1& [tonight] -- The Sun was brighter and Heaven's blue seemed bending bluer above me! Such is life!

"Fate leads the willing and drags the unwilling." Better be led than dragged.

Afternoon -- 4th of July

I have been celebrating "the 4th" in rather an odd manner: All the fore-noon and noon I was digging a spring. Up to my elbows, and over my boot-tops in mud. I worked away until I got down to the clean gravel when I put a barrel in and then baled until the water looked entirely pure. Then my Indian friends came: viz. the bridal pair, Weepola and her children -- after they left, I raked the yard a while -- and now I am sitting on the ground at "my cabin door", trying to write by way of company-- what a scrawl! My fingers feel stiff, and I am so nervous I feel more than half foolish.

One year ago today I was one of quite a merry party in at the Post. We were watching the horse-race about now!

I was quite ill and weak, bodily -- but with all I was freeer from care than I had been in many long months!

I could laugh with a careless spirit one year ago! I was "driving dull care away", and looking forward for brighter days! Am I alone to blame for the change that has come?

Wolf's Rest -- Thuresday, July 10th

Every day, now, is an anniversary to my weary Life! This Stormy warmth of July is fraught with many memories! And do I alone remember? Whom do I ask? The winds? Their sympathy gives as much unto my lonely life as aught else, now!

I have been very ill for the last five days. Unable to leave my bed -- and alone the most of the time! It is my wish, however -- I could not bear the presence of any one -- Save Madame [Mrs. Palmer] -- and not even her, at times!

I know I am daily growing more and more bitter and synical-- despite my efforts--for I have and do try to think better of all the paste and sham that must pass current for reality in this

dear world of ours! But I am sick unto death of it all! Sick, even of myself -- myself who seems to have lost heart, hope, body and soul -- lost all, only an infinite power of being disgusted!

One year ago I fancied I had found that which would make me count the hours of Life jealously -- perhaps I had -- but it has slipped from my grasp -- or has been thrown away in madness -- God only knows which! Enough for me to feel that existence is a burden borne in a darkness that no hope lightens.

I feel as if I shall never go South, now! Mamie dreamed that the walls of my room had fallen in!

Evening, of the Same day

I have just written a note to Mrs. Dr. C[arver]. to be carried by Herbert to "Raven's Cliff", where Mrs. C. is now living. "The Doctor" having go [sic] in to the [North] Platte, H[erbert] is to spend the nights during his absence with Mrs. C. The lady and her younger son [William Pitt Carver] came out to the Medicine near a week since. It seems strange to see them all living at the "Cliff" -- all unknown, and undreamed of, this time last year! And much later than this.

Wolf's Rest

The 11th of July - Who, besides my self thinks of this day, with strange memories tugging at their heart-strings, when "Just one year ago today" comes back with visions of tear-ful sun-shine, dewy plains and shadowed hill-sides?

And yet the doubt that I feel is my work I fear! Pshaw!

I saw Mamie's face, dark and haggard with care or sickness, last night. I dreamed someone whom she liked, bent and kissed my lips; and I saw her thin, sad features struggle into a smile. Is she ill? My poor child! A storm is gathering: we had a fearful storm last night! What a drag my life is!

I hav'nt the heart to write. I can not sit up over a half-hour at a time.

"Wolf's Rest"
Oct. 26th 1873

What strange freak, or capricious impulse has seized me this morning that I should be possessed with a desire to again pen a line in this long neglected journal? Certainly not because of a wish to register thought. Ha! Ha!

My thoughts?

I do not care to place them where
The light of day would strangely rest--
They find a fitter home within
The dungeon of my silent breast.

I ceased to write in my journal because I was weary of the weakness of my own words. For the same reason I shall again let my life be as a sealed book! Until when? Until death shall stiffen the fingers now writing these words; or until some hope brightens the rayless sky of my sunless life.

With head uncover'd--cold hands clasp'd,
I make no sign -- yet watch and wait.
The wild prayer hush'd upon my lips
That tells my God how desolate--

Follow Journal of 1873
thru Oct. 6th



Medicine Valley
Wolf's Rest,
Wed. afternoon - Feb. 24th 1875

I have broken the Seal of Silence! For one year and four months I have kept the vow registered on this page, inviolate!!

There has been no record of anything -- "my life has been as a sealed book!" And through all these weeks and months, I have been waiting for "some hope to brighten the rayless sky of my sunless life," that I might again turn to my journal and tell the "glad tidings"!

Have I waited in vain -- and at last violated my vow? I think not -- at least things are not so bad as that! I believe a goodly number of "hopes" have "dawned" upon my life! But as they did not rise with any special splendor -- did not just dazzle or startle my with their new-born brightness -- giving, rather, that "dim uncertain light" which left me somewhat doubtful as to whether the hue was true gray, or cheerful dun, I have as a consequence, been left utterly in the dark as to the "propitious hour" when I might again seek this gentle companionship, and say to my friends, "Come read
'The noble thought" that "produces
Noble ends and uses!"'
A - hem!

Then why should this day be the favored one? The gods are dum on the subject -- hence my silence! -- only let me give one reason of the "earth earthy"

The snow is two feet on the level! I cannot get out to the hills, and having exhausted every available source of labor and amusement as pass-time, I remember that I, being neither dead or hopeless, have still a friend in my journal!

Wolf's Rest,
Friday - Feb. 26th 1875 -

I have not ink! -- The foregoing was written in mixed "Japanese Water Colors" -- This ditto - it blurres miserably - but what is one to do? No ink for sale within fifty miles -- and no hope of communication under two weeks -- the snow still making prisoners of us all -- and -- and I must write "Tho' The Heavens fall!"

The Nebraskian makes me the fortunate recipient of a very delicate compliment -- I trust I am duly grateful! ----------

I have been "packing" snow to-day by the bucketfull - melting it - and then putting it away in every available tub, keg and pan for future use! -- I feel like (or rather I ought to feel like) writing a poem to the "Beautiful Snow" -- I have been in such familiar contact, and under such romantic circumstances!

I believe I would be encouraged to try it -- but the subject is so new -- giving young aspirants such a fair field wherein to sow the costly seeds of originality -- that I shrink in abject fear from the thought -- I have no originality to sow -- I must needs tread a beaten path -- leaving subjects of such startling newness as "Beautiful Snow" or "Mary had a Little Lamb" to those who wouldst "proudly do" and "nobly dare."

My Den - Wolf's Rest,
Tuesday mor. - March 9th '75

I wanted to go up "Brush Creek" this morning -- but, owing to the numerous (dis-)encouragements of mon bon Herbert, I decided to remain, shall I say at home, or in camp? What's the difference, since I have no home -- in fact, I don't know the meaning of the word -- whether it is a synonym of Heaven, or its fiery antipodes!

Sometimes, when I feel soft and womanly, I have tender dreams of a possible future -- When the blending of my wayward life with somelife, truer and braver than mine, will soften my pride, and make my wild heart gentle with tender dreams of "fair days to come" when I shall forget the fever and fret of worldly ambition in the quiet and and security of home!

Pshaw!!! ------- ----------

"Sworn to no master - of no sect am I;
As drives the storm, at any door I knock,
And house with Montaigue, and now with Locke"

Ah, I wonder if any body will ever tame La belle Ena? Gardez bien! Ha! ha!

I wonder if my dear friend cher ami wanted, really wanted me to come? Why yes, of course --- I like my new arrived friend mon nouveau venu ami ever and ever so much!----- He will not misunderstand me, I'm sure!

And that's been my greatest trouble!

Afternoon - Same day

I feel blue - tired - "discouraged", this afternoon!--- Scarcely realize that life is worth the living! --- How these dull moments will come to us - like clouds to an April Sky

Sometimes I have half a mind to "pull up stakes" and go to C------ as I've promised! And that? N'importante! Unimportant Since it is a trifle, after all! A trifle? Yes --- but these kind of trifles make up the sum of living!

Night --

Why am I making so many jottings in my journal today? --- Is it that I want to talk to myself, or somebody else?

Ah, that would be telling -- but, after all there would not be much to tell. --- -----

Ena, ma chere, my dear you won the name of "Sans Souci" without care in the by-gone life -- how would Sans Coeur without heart answer now? -- No, it is not as bad as that -- at any rate my "friends" have no reason to name me thus!!!

O! Such a washing (not changing the subject?) as we (Herbert and I) did yesterday! It was the maiden effort with both -- or, to be more explicit, we made our debut among the interesting society of "Soap-Suds-Slingers"---

Made an entree entrance worth telling about, as well! ----- 60 pieces - but we had a washing and wringing machine to help us "onward and upward!" Don't think we'd have had so much to brag about if these modern improvements had not done a telling part -

My Den
Wed. afternoon - March 10th

I believe I will learn to be a "house-keeper" after all that has been said and done! Made three mince - pies this morning! My first attempt! Now the next thing on the programme is bread!

a good friend

I must learn that all-important art! ---- Un bon ami of mine has given me a cook-book -- that, together with a Duch Almanae, I make my constant study -- guarding them jealously, as my most treasured treasures! --- -----

almanach = almanac

I wonder when I will get the mail? -- I almost fear to get it -- least I am called away by some of that ever-lasting law-business.--- I am tired of the world and its crowding cares! I want to rest here a while, until --- until when?

Pshaw! ------- --------- -------

My Den -
Friday - March 12th --

Missed one day in my journal, and did not know it! ---- ---- I've been out hunting ducks -- and feel half blind from fatigue and the sun -

I've been sitting here thinking -- and my willing pen would soon stamp the wayward words that tremble on my lips for utterance!

O! I can't write -- how my hand twitches --- and yet I must say something ! I got a letter that has made me miserable since yesterday evening - I did not read all of it until after 9, P.M.---

Did I tell a false-hood? -- n'importante!

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And we are friends? -- ah, yes -- what then?

Pshaw! ----------

Why steals a half-regretful pain
Across my wayward breast
When ere I think of thee, as tho'
We might have been more blest?--

As tho' we'd lost, by some mischance --
Or by some turn of Fate,
Something that might have made to both
A life less desolate! ---

Friends? - we're friends -- I seek your eyes
And find my answer there --
But still -- and yet I cannot wish
To make the name less dear! ---

Friends? -- what is friendship?- may I come
E'en as a tired child
And tell you all the changeful thoughts
That torture and beguile? --

Tell you, without a fear or thought
Of harm, or future ill
All of the follies, dreams and hopes
That hold my moodful will?

And we are friends -- ah, yes -- what then? --
What test can friendship stand?
And yours -- 'twill vanish at the touch
Or lifting of the hand! --

Forgive - mon ami - let me plead
A waste of ruined years -
A fair young life whose heritage
Has been a weight of cares? -

The bitter scoff - the haughty doubt -
'Tis not for love now fled -
For all to true, love stood my scorn
'Til pity's self was dead!

And I now pause, and think it o'er -
This changeful life of mine -
Why should a half-regret steal in
And bow my soul to thine? --

Enough! I lift a smiling face,
Cold in its dauntless pride,
Unto the darken'd Future, and
Dare all it may betide! ---

Yet, friend or foe - come good or ill
I'll not forget the dream -
The "might have been" in days now lost
'Mid things "that only seem."

---

I had commenced these lines on Friday - it is now about 11 - I expect - Saturday night -- and I have just caught up my pen and I a "moment of time" wrote seven verses more! ---- Sudden inspiration -- a -- hem!

The most sensible thing I can do now, it to go to bed -- and I'm going! -----

Sunday - hour uncertain -
March 14th '75 -

It is certainly afternoon - I have been agreeably entertained this fore-noon.-- After I had washed the breakfast dishes, etc, etc., and fairly gotten through with the usual house-hold "chores" (Yankee!) I sat down to - what? To anticipate the arrival of an expected guest! Delightful employment!--- A-hem! "Yon yehr!"

I am going to read! -- Let the -- the --- the writing go to the Devil le diable!

Wolf's Rest
M'ch 18th '75

Three years ago tonight we arrived at Ft. M^c^Pher----- or rather M^c^Pherson Station --- Three years!

What have I won or lost in that time? N'importante - since "No life lives forever" ----------

And whether the lost years are garlanded with the olive leaves of peace and prosperity; or wear the somber shadow of the cypress bough, what matters it? --- Since good or bad; blest or unblest they are lost -- all buried alike in that vast tomb from which no good angel will ever roll away the stone -- from whence there is no resurrection! All things in the Past are alike to me -- the day of shadow and the day of sunshine -- no more pain or pleasure is given from the memory of one than the other! They are both lost -- both dead! I feel only the dum pain of a vague regret, felt, naturally I suppose, for whatsoever has been possessed and is lost beyond recall!

Philosophers have reasoned and poets have sang of the pleasures of memory -- telling of the wise and the simple who revel in the reflected brightness of a happy "by-gone".--- If this be truth, why am I a stranger to the knowledge? -- An alien to this fair world of memory? I feel mocked when men speak of the pleasures of memory!-- my past has not been without some sun-shine -- why does not the reflection light some hour of solitude -- some dark hour -- for instance, this -- when there has been storm without and storm (thought-storm) within?-- But, ma foi! what matters it, since quiet has come? -- quiet within and without! Went out to look at the sky just now -- it is moonless and starless -- yet not murky.---- Hope the day will not be so "orful" as this one has been! ---- ---- I feel blue - like there was some unexpected trouble in wait for me-- Well, Madame Fate has led me an odd route so far -- or, not to have people say I pack on to the back of fate my own waywardness, I have ---------- ---------- --------

pshaw!

Made two shots today, and killed five ducks -- so much for A. E. P(ersevering) R---------! Crawled about in the brush until I am as lame as a dog (that does not limp!) Shot three ducks at long range, and wounded the trio, or triplet -- what a time I had running with the dogs -- and encouraging them to take to the water and bring me my game! And cold -- whew!

Wonder how long I will keep this sort of life up -- or -- or when -- or why -- or how???

There, after such a crush of brilliant questions --- addressed to Night -- Darkness and "all the Powers that be," I suppose --- I reckon I had better go to bed -- and woo sleep with visions of ducks to be! Why not? I know of nothing that interest me more, at present. -------

Friday afternoon
March 19th -----

I have just gotten off my mail; a band-box with five Bills; and a last year's news-paper, for Curtis Ranche --

I would have gone myself, if I had not have had one or two good reasons for keeping away. --- Shall meet Mr. P---- on his return, however, and hunt ducks down the creek --- time for me to be going I reckon.

Night -

I suppose it is 11, at least -- have been reading aloud to ma mere et pere -- my mother and father

I went to meet Mr. P----- but he had gotten a box, bundle of papers, etc.-- for me, sent out by my friend G. W. D. -- and so we did not hunt any -- besides he met me just beyond the field -- did not stay long at Curtis Ranche, as Bert and Mr. B. were both away.---

Band-boxed ducks --- I wonder if they would stand well in the market as rare game, rarely put up?

I am half sorry for the cross letter I sent off today -- but it was needed -- people commence par etre dupe -- on finit par etre fripou! O! les chats -- let it all go for what it is worth -- which is not much I suppose -- I am going to bed -- may my sleep be dreamless! Such fearful visions as I have had here of late -- ugh! They haunt me even yet! I saw Col. D----'s face last night-- with its villianous beauty all unchanged -- and the same fawning smile and snake-eye bent on me in the manner that was my special disgust! ----- The foul-mouth gentleman!

Bah! why should I stoop to hate him -- I had my revenge!-------

Let us talk about ducks -- better worth it than people. -- No ducks for me today -- but "heap-er-ketch-um" tomorrow. Going way down the creek.---- How I'm blotting this ----- good-night!

"Wolf's Rest"
M'ch 21st --- '75 --

Sunday morning! Fair and almost balmy -- it is the first hint we've had of spring's approach!

Two months ago I got flowers -- fair spring flowers -- from my southern home! And today the air is heavy with the perfume of

magnolia blooms, and the mocking bird is singing her sweetest song around the old home!

I believe I am lonely today -- home sick, or heart-sick --- --- Mamie says they miss me -- that Spring Hill only needs the presence of its "Blue-eyed mistress" to make it the most charning as well as the most beautiful place on earth!

I wish I was there -- just for today -- but to go back to live, never! --- --- They would crowd around and flatter and fawn as of yore -- yet eager to see the bitterness of some regret show itself that they might triumph over my fallen pride. I have turned from them all with all they could offer, to make a life for myself --- and if I fail -- atleast none of my friends shall enjoy the knowledge! --- Yet why am I writing this stuff. -- Is it that I want to talk?

I have been sitting here for an hour -- I did not want to think -- but, ah, ma chere journal! Thought is a persistent companion -- whether he bears on his swift wings the light breath of Hope's sweet flowers; or the heavy shades of the deadly Upas -- broken dreams and dead ambitions, that stretch out their skeleton fingers across the hushed waste of a sorrowful Past! ----- ----- But what is this? Sentiment, morbid or mawkish? Did I dream that someone said I had not sentiment? -- "No Sentiment" -- which means, I suppose, no impulse, heart or passion!

Happy State! --- and good evidence of the presence of brain -- eh?

Monday -- 22nd M'ch -- '75

I feel like a bankrupt who has lost his reckoning by going to sleep at the wrong time. --- ---

Afternoon --- I have been walking in the warm sunshine -- the quiet warmth and serene brightness has acted like a charm. -- My head is better, and my heart too, I expect! I feel like thanking God for making the world -- and less like anathematizing its bipedal inhabitants! The "Blues" are "bad medicine" -- why are we not above the weakness! (gr.)

I've been out to our "Sugar-plantation!!!" What would the negroes at home say to it? Ha! ha! I can see them -- holding up their hands and exclaiming "Well! Well! bless de Lod!" And then lay down and roll and laugh at the absurdity!

24th March -- '75

I believe today is Wednesday.

Why have I opened this journal? I have nothing to write. I am sick today -- in mind and body. My head is hot and my heart is cold -- Paste! what of that, since I've Learned to live, and ask no more!

I went up The Curtis yesterday to hunt ducks -- we had a dinner in camp -- it 'minded me of old times -- when I lived in a tent and cooked by a log-heap -- sitting on the ground to eat my "grub" -- viz. a "flap-jack", buffalo, and a pint-cup of strong coffee. --

And today -- what have I done today? -- Nothing! Came near fainting in the heat this morning. -- Went to carry "sap" in the sugar-camp ----- but it was too much for me. --

We freeze one day and roast the next at this season. I certainly should write some letters to send tomorrow -- but, the strange lethargy of a painful indifference is upon me again -- and what a dum, odd pain it is to feel that one's life is scarcely worth the living -- and that the so-called duties and requirements of life are but pitiful attempts to complete the farce!

Ah, well -- these dark hours will come --- so will the sunshine, such as it is, after a time.

Night - about 11, I suppose -

I open my journal to say it is not Wed., but Thursday ------ one day poorer (or richer) than I deemed myself! ---- I wonder if I have made a fool of myself here lately? (I know I have, in times not lately!) But, this is out of the common order. -- On the whole, it is pleasant -- pleasant to believe in something ---

What a fearful night! -- The wind howls and moans like some stricken thing -- full of pain and rage! -- And the prairie is afire -- South-east and west! The red glare burns luridly enough against the sullen skies -- I like the storm -- and yet, as I closed my door just now, and turned to the solitude of this little cabin, the passionate desire arose in my heart for something human -- something kind -- some warm hand that mine could grasp and feel a fellowship of souls or heads or hearts -- I did'nt care which!

Ah, Mamie -- to have you with me, would be too much real, solid comfort! Too good to be true. ---

I must go to bed!

Wolf's Rest - March 26th 1875

Friday night! --- Three years ago tonight we pitched camp on the Medicine -- our first night in camp on the prairie!

Wolf's Rest - Wed. 31st --

Herbert has gone into the Platte -- and I am waiting the result, with some anxiety and a good deal of annoyance! Unexpected letters -- recd. the morning before he started (yesterday mor.) and of my hurried answers, I retain but a troubled memory. I will wait -- and "not be foolish," as a certain cross little friend of mine, admonishes -- and, hunt ducks, to "while away the dreamy hours"!

Friday afternoon -- Apr. 2nd

I wonder why I have never told my little contrary friend mon petit contraire ami "it was time to go!" I send off (or use to) every one at the proper hour, without a moment's hesitation. -- Night before last, or rather Tuesday night, I gave the old-time order for retreat, and the recipent remarked that it 'minded him of "old times" --- when I would suddenly start up and say "Come! it is time to go --- I wish you pleasant dreams!"

I remember Mrs. C------- said when I "got in the North I would not dare send young men off that way -- or they would never come again."

Phew! what a woeful catastrophe! But I dared it neverthless -- and as "fortune favors the brave" escaped the predicted misfortune! Ah, well -- no danger of my being misunderstood in this case, -- it is refreshing to have that trust!

Herbert is expected back today. -- I am waiting! What is patience? "Wait a wee -- an' dinna wearie!"

"Wolf's Rest"
Sunday -- Apr. 4th 1875

Herbert got in about noon, yesterday -- I did not see him until later, however. -- Went duck-hunting in the morning, and was delayed by seeing and unprecedented quantity of game, and having the worse possible "luck"! I got but one shot -- with which I killed one duck and wounded two! My wonderfully wise dog rushed gallantly into the water and caught up the dead duck -- and then stood "stock still"! I called -- and coaxed -- raved and commanded -- but all to no purpose! --- There he stood, holding the duck aloft and gazing mildly at me -- a perfect picture of benign stupidity!

Meanwhile the ducks, the wounded ducks, were making use of the time employed in this interesting little by-play, to make a hasty exit --- and when at last I turned in desperation to go for my game myself -- it was not to be seen -- but into the brush I went -- and into the water too -- about a foot and a half deep -- but all to no purpose! I believe I am very good tempered after all, for when I at length waded up to that canine quadruped it was with the full intention of using my ram-rod until his hold on to life would be very small indeed.

But he in his utter innocence of my anger gave me such a gaze of blind confidence, that it dis-armed me utterly! I took the duck, "made no sign" and started homeward! Saw wild turkies, geese, etc. but "no luck"!

Monday mor. Apr. 5th '75

I am trying to keep in doors today. -- Made myself sick "tramping" so much last week.

I suppose I may get my mail tonight. -- I trust I shall hurt no hearts! Hearts are queer things anyway. They are more restless than a , a sand-crab on a broad beach! Some times I scoff at the idea of anyones doing them lasting hurt! And then again I thing again, and the subject does not seem scoffable! Someone has said, who is it? - that "it is best ot love wisely, no doubt -- but to love foolishly is better than not to be able to love at all. Some of us can't: and are proud of our impotence too." --- ----

All of that is very wise, no doubt -- but as to those who can't, I believe the number to be very few, if the right chord is touched -- of course there are quite a number of true brutes in the human family -- that live, fatten and die -- with no notion of any want save what a brute-appetite engenders. -- Not that I blame or scorn -- but simply mention that class as a distinction. -- But, as I said, I believe the number who can't love to be, comparatively, very few --- and I know --- pshaw! what do I know? Scarecely worth the telling I expect.

Made the acquaintance of Dr. B----- yesterday. Passed the day pleasantly -- and ended it by taking tea "out", quite unexpectedly to my self.

Do I dire la vérité in this? Paste! but we must not forget to be polite. --- Nothing, mon ami, only une petite traverse -- need I say why?

I wonder if there are any passions, hopes or dreams in Life that do not grow to be as husk or worm-wood -- after a time? Nous verrons -- "belle Ena"! Only

"Wait a wee -- an' dinna wearie --"

Monday night -
Apr. 5th '75.-

My duck

--- ---

Wednesday evening
Apr. 7th ---

The above jotting for Monday night will always remain what it is now --- a blank -- a profound nothing!

Can't mem. what I was going to say about "my duck" -- nor yet what individual I could have been alluding to in such an affectionate manner -- nor yet why my journalizing came to such an abrupt terminus.

I was sick all day yesterday -- and really very sick last night-- am improving today I suppose -- but can scarcely sit up yet.

Bilious attack. - What does some one say in a last letter about getting ill again, etc. -- "instead of making some one of the many happy, who want to give me their lives" -- Where's the letter? -- I must refresh my memory with a second reading. --

Only let me add -- what a most doleful day! Rain - storm - mud! Heavens! many such would give no notions of "Insan-side"

Sunday afternoon -
Apr. 11th 1875.

Today has been one of the long days we some times read about. There is a charm in change - but we've had a little too much of that sort of charm today! Freezing and blowing - Snow - Sunshine - sleet and hail - all by turns - and nothing long!

I tried to stay in doors - stood it bravely until about 11 A.M. -- when I gave up! The day would never go, if I did not get out for a while! So I put on my over-coat, big hat and boots; and telling madame not to wait dinner, too, my gun, (alas!) called the dogs and started down the creek. I did not "go hunting" - but, I "saw some ducks" and killed two!

Suppose some of my fashionable Christian friends could have seen me -- the picture - viz. - Time - noon: Place - a low-spreading valley with looming hills, and an inviting duck-pond! Scene - a slight figure crouching darkly amid the "bending willows", motionless, yet alert, until the unmistakable quack of a duck mingles with the voice of the rushing wind!

Then the figure moves forward -- creeping cautiously -- a slouched hat sheltering the eager face from storm as well as sight and the deadly gun grasped firmly! Creeping - creeping, while a muttered imprecation at the luckless dog that dares to move ahead is the only human sound that breaks the stormy solitude!

When -- bang! whirr! The silence is broken! The ducks "flewed" and the faithful dogs making a line of foam in their eagerness to

reach the pritty game! What would some of my Christian, fashionable friends, have said, I repeat? Holy horror! My redemption would be rather slim if they had the giving!

Now if I was a Christian like any one of the many ladies who go to church, fashionably, because it is the fashion, why there might be some chance - but, as the case stands - why, where's the use of hoping? ------- --------- Expect I'll get letters tomorrow. -- If I can only hear from Mamie! If she will only live -- and we can be together once more! --

Wed. might -- 14th Apr. --

Believe I shall quit journalizing -- Where's the use? -- I feel "kinder" disgusted tonight -- whith (with an H!) myself!

Saturday - A.M.
Apr. 24th 1875.

Driven to desperation "by all the gods that be!" The wind howls! The rain beats! The cold "sneaks" and I am hopelessly "correled". ---- "Close herded", for today, certainly --

Wolf's Rest
Sunday - Apr. 25th '75.

The "Beautiful (???) Snow" is upon us. Commenced smowing about noon yesterday - and snowed until this morning. The hills are as white, or whiter, than they were in Jan. -- And oh, the mud and wet and -- horror! I have been cleaning things ever since I got out of bed -- trying to make our huts livable! Is that a word of my coinage? -- Or have I seen it some where before? N'importante --

but I wish I could coin a word that would in some degree express my present state of mind -- the vocabulary at my command being utterly inefficient.

Wolf's Rest,
Tuesday - 27th Apr. 1875 -

The shadows are gathering. -- Night, sleep and forgetfulness will soon be here! -- And I am tired - too utterly weary to think, only in a disjointed, half-comprehensive way.

I remember yesterday!!! Will the memory ever become hateful to me ? Patience, wayward child! Time will tell.

Wolf's Rest
Saturday - May 1st 1875

The first of May -- The tide ebbs and flows! Taking away and bringing! This restless turbid tide! I am on a shoal - or drifted into still-water - or is it an eddy? I watch the ebb and flow, and "bide my time"! Herbert has gone to the Black Hills with Col. Mills' "out-fit". Left here today, three weeks ago. Have heard from him once. Sixty miles north of North Platte -- camping at "Sand Beach Lake". I feel interested in that direction -- and await further news impatiently.

Mr. Ballantine left the medicine, also, last Tuesday -- gone to Lincoln. His return, or the time of it, is uncertain. We had five men here last night -- besides Mr. Palmer. Judge Watt - Mr. Simpson (the mail-carrier -), The County Clerk of Red Willow, and our two "hired men" -- It was delightful - the mixture!

Killed the prittest duck yesterday evening I ever saw -- delicate head - crested, and as varied and brilliant in hue as a pea-cock.

"May day"! How different from the May days I use to know! We always had a ball or party. I wonder how much uglier I have grown since I got the bouquet - compliment, by vote, at the May Ball in B------- six years ago tonight? I look in the glass to see a face almost utterly changed from the one I recall - I wonder if it is very much uglier? Selfwill, ill-temper, suspicion and pride leave traces that are not pritty -- how should I expect to escape?

Sunday - May 2nd '75

The principal events of our existence are independent of our will. Our designs are at the mercy of Fate - or circumstance -- which shall we name it? ----- I am haunted today with the memory of Jennie. Poor Jennie! How I have lost you! Without a word of warning. Nothing - but silence between us. silence, unbroken by a single word from tongue or pen. Silence! --- I know Death has sealed your lips and stiffened your hands. The tender, faithful hands that have so often caressed mine! What an end is this?

The world gives us so little that is true -- so little that is faithful! And your love - your heart - both true and faithful were mine! I knew it - proved it - depended on it - and I have lost it! How? ----- -----

Wolf's Rest - May 3rd -----

Today one week ago I broke a promise - made to my self - changed a principle of long standing - threw away a fancy that had grown to be a pride, to launch a very small, but richly freighted, barque on that broad sea which the wise have named Faith. Will the hungry waters swallow up the frail craft! ------- --------

Tenting on the Bluffs
Saturday night - July 10th 1875

I cannot sleep tonight!

My watch tells the hour as one! What am I to do with the time between now and daylight? I cannot reason myself to sleep -- have tried it and given up the task.

Am in one of my wrong moods tonight. "Dark thoughts of darker things" fill heart and brain! The utter nothingness of Life - yet so crowded with vain hopings and helpless misery!

I feel rebellious tonight! Bitter questioning as to the why of all of this crowds from my brain worthier thoughts.

I know this dissatisfaction is very unwise, if not very weak! --- But "grave Reason" cannot always "have her sway!"

I fight ennui as I would, or should, the devil! -- But, there is a thought worse to battle than ennui -- this incubus of Life - blindness, spirit-blindless, is more than I can bear, or brave sometimes!

Am I really but a plaything of Destiny? or do I walk unfettered? And if unfettered, why has Nature done her work so poorly? Why lay the burden of a double curse upon her human children? - Denying them even the Self-protecting instinct of the brute, yet giving a mental capacity for infinite and intense suffering?

Yet all of this - these thoughts - these questions - how unwise if not unworthy!

How much better, if not wiser, the humble, unreasoning faith, that tells us this is God, and tells no more! A Divine Wisdom, that "out of very faithfullness causes us to be troubled".

I know all of this! -- I know what is reason, and what is madness! But what are we to do with the great want and asking of the heart? That restless power which cannot reason?

Hear the wild pleading, Mon Dieu, --- the hungry cries sent up from the unfathomed depths of its passionate unrest! ---------- And will the want never be answered? -- Or, is there no angel of Peace to calm the troubled waters? Will the thirsty lips ne'er drink at the fountain of some sweet Rest, where the restless feet will cease from wandering, and the fevered brain grow cool and calm in its bosomed shade!

Dreams! Dreams! that ever haunt me, as the weary traveler of the desert is haunted by the memory of sheltered springs and mossy brooks! --- How weak I am to "pour out these wild words"! I'll "no more of them! Silence shall reign, if not sleep!

Tenting on the Bluff -
Sat. -- July 24th '75

"The mills of the gods grind slow, and grind most precious small!"

I don't know if my rendition of the quotation is correct; but that is my feeling on the subject, at all events!

Tee-pee -- On the Bluff -
Afternoon - Aug. 14th 1875

"If I be I"

--- --- ---

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Ending Of The Old Life !!

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( It ends with an ! point!* )

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(*I discover my mistake -- It ends unfinished!)

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Beginning Of A New Life --

(Some time after.)

Deepwood,
Medicine Creek, Neb. --
Tuesday after-noon - July 24th
1877 -

I intended to commence this yesterday - but did not. Why have I not journalized before?

Because events have crowded upon me so that I never felt that I had time to "catch up."

I hav'nt time now. -- If I tried that I should give up at once. To protect my journal against such a fate, let me turn my back on the Past. ----------

"Vidling" started for O----- Sunday afternoon. Nothing has happened since then, only

Mamie caught a snake in the house - really caught it, for she saw it making for a hole and grabbed it by the tail, and crushed it with her heel! --- And

The cows have tried to get in the field and failed -- and

No hogs have been seen --- and

The"mail-man" came by - and

Mr. Milan has gone to Stockville on the "Little Injun," and we expect him back shortly.

Deepwood
July - Thur. 26th 1877

I am afraid I will keep but a poor journal, "now-a-day" if I keep any at all. ---

Vidling came back from the Platte yesterday and upset all of our

plans. -- Did not go to O-----

Went off yesterday eve - to the Rep. valley with Mr. Beer. -- Quite an unexpected crowd here yesterday. 1st "Vidling" -- then 2nd and thirdly Mr. Beer and Mrs. Curths. ( do'nt know how to spell the name!) - (We were all in a turmoil - and I baking biscuit with box-elder wood!! - Thanks to Vidling!---) Fourthly, fifthly and sixthly, Mr. & Mrs. Doing and their olive-branch.

I wonder how long I can write? -- Write - with such a precious, toddling "Bother" as I have to keep me company! ----

Ah, well! Let me try and look back! -- I have kept no written account of mu life since Aug. 1875 - What events raise above the common level of that great, dead plain-leaving land-marks that no lime can ever efface? --

---------- ---------- - ----------

Oct. 5th 1875 - I married David Coulter Ballantine. We were married at North Platte, Neb. ---

Feb. following, we visited Mr. Ballantine's home in Lincoln, and I became acquainted with my new relations. We returned after a month's stay. That summer the sheep were driven to Lincoln. -- I went to North Platte in July. -

Aug. Monday night - 21st 1876 our baby was born. The papers spoke of him as a "beautiful, ten-lb. boy." Three weeks after we visited the Medicine - bringing Mamie with us. (She arrived from the South 9th Aug. 1876). We staid three days, Vidling, baby and I. --

Then we left for Lincoln - leaving Mamie with Ma. We staid the winter. Got back on the Medicine the last day of March.

April 21th - Sunday night - 1877 - I lost my mother! For one week after we came she seemed well. Taken suddenly ill, and suffered great agony for three weeks. But I think she died almost free from pain! How I thank God for this thought. And more -- I believe she died ------- what can I say? Were angel-voices whispering to her half-freed spirit the "beautiful story" she tried to tell me?

My mother was buried on "Sun-Set Hill," the 1st day of May. - What can I say? - I have lost the most unselfish friend, the truest, the tenderest, that I have ever had, or ever will have. One that was and would have been, the same to me, whether I was worthy or unworthy - always the same --- always true and utterly unselfish! What more can I say of my loss? -- Death has taken frome me, what Life can never give again.

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Sunday eve - July 31st 1879 -

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Deepwood - Aug 2nd '77-

My journal promises to abound in dates and blanks. ---------

I am all alone this evening - except Baby, of course - . (Asleep!)

Mamie has started out on horseback, alone, for Stockville. Coulter (pere!) has not gotten back yet. - Will be here this evening

or tomorrow, I expect. -- We have gotten on without him nicely! Too busy to be lonely! Too busy to think. I wonder how many of us realize what a blessing work is? ----------

My dear, faithful "Brown Eyes"! I hear from her almost every mail (our mail - once a week!) -

Baby gave me a fearful fright today - got out of the house and was under my horse's feet, almost, when I found him. So many snakes slipping around. Had a big fight with one at the creek today - shot it and "Jack" killed it in the water. Caught a wild-cat in a trap yesterday. I shot it. Have lost one of the geese - suppose the cat had caught it.

Aug -

Deepwood, Medicine Creek,
Aug. 21st 1877

Our baby's birthday! One year old to day! Our precious, beautiful boy! Our dearest measure on earth! ------- I have no time to journalize these days - (I am forgetting how to write!) Work -- work! all day and every day! But I thought I must write it some when that this is our Baby's birthday!

O, my fair, sweet treasure ! My own, my baby! How would thy mother crown each birthday of thy precious life were hers the power! Ah, what an I saying! -- May a Hand as kind and far more wise than mine crown each passing year with some beautiful immortal gift! Some fair spirit. jewel that shall shine above and beyond the things of time! ---

Deepwood -
Sept. - Sunday - 1877

The season of "the wailing wood, and falling leaf" is again with us. - All nature is beautiful - but it is the beauty of Death - is it that that makes me heavy-hearted? I do'nt know - I only know I should be cheerful and thankful. - Our baby is so well - and such a brave handsome little fellow.

Herbert went away last week, on a little tip - or perhaps a big one. His plans were uncertain.

Deepwood Wed. night -
Jan. 2nd 1878-

I write the date of the New Year for the first time. --

I now commence this journal anew. I think it is in a different spirit. Here-to-fore, I have not been entirely "one with myself" - utterly true, as I should have been -- hence I have found no strength in this mode of self-communion.

Let me not try to do too much at once. When we would build up a noble purpose we cannot hurry the work.

I have fallen far short of my intentions today. I have given away to unworthy anger and foolish words.

I pray for a wiser power. May my report of myself tomorrow-night be a better one.

Thursday night - Jan. 3rd

I have had a heavy day's work - am very tired - but must give a line or so to myself, by way of encouragement - do I need it?

I should not, for I have improved, I think - Have had more petty cares, and more cause for anger, today, than usually falls to my share - and I have worked bravely, and almost been as calm, as my Ideal. - I thank God that I am able to work and I pray him that I may continue to try to do right - not because I wish any praise or love for it, but do it simply because I believe it to be right.

Bed-time - Fri. night - Jan. 4th -

I believe I have no actual need for self-communion tonight. I do not merit praise - nor blame. I think my intentions to my self. I need to make-known my intentions to my self. I need to give them form and expression. They will then doubly impress me.

It is not well to confide good resolutions to a friend - it does not matter how dear the friend may be. No one ---- ----- what shall I say? If we fail - if we fall short, the very knowledge of our intended success, makes our failure more disgraceful, in the eyes of another -- and even if we succeed in the end our success is robbed of its dignity. Another should not be made familiar with our weakness, even tho' we make it governable.

May I have a good dream, and see my mother, tonight.

so great, and I believe that there is more money to be made in them in end. It is this with the through cattle. They commence rounding them up in January and February in Texas getting ready for the drive. The life is nearly driven out of them by the time you get them on your range, and if you have a severe winter, you must expect some heavy losses. You can buy through Texas at Ogallala for about 8.00 yearling heifers 9.00 yearling steers, 11.00 to 12.00 2 year old heifers 13.00 2 year old steers. Cows from 11.00 ro 13.00. You can buy cattle raised on the range here half breeds Yearlings 12.50 to 15.00 heifers & steers 2 year old heifers and cows at 17.00 to 20.00 There are oportunities that you may do better than this. Mr Tom Lambeth bought last summer 100 cows with 100 calves at their side for 2000 dollars, and sold them this winter for 3000 dollars making 1000 dollars on them.

A small herd say 100 head is attended with no expense ~~on~~ that is comparative expense, but 500 head can be attended with about the same expense as 300. 300 to 500 is small enought to start with. A man-~~can't~~-~~make~~ must farm, make butter, and work around to start on less.

It is absurd to think of putting up hay to feed 500 cattle. We only put up hay to feed such as are poor. if we find one on the range that we think will not go through the winter we drive it in and feed it we may have 15 or 25 head that we feed. Sometimes more and sometimes less

If you come out and get a ranch and are at all the expense attending the business, you should have one half interest in the original stock, increase and profits.

I do not know of any place in Kansas where you can keep any cattle without close herding. I do not keep any herder. You and Ed can take care of 500 head except about

/pg./ 130

one month during the Round up. I hardly know what to answer you as to the cost of Living and taking care of 500 cattle. Every case is different ~~but~~ /following marked out: but by watching every corner and economising in everything I believe that it might be down for 500 $ but you could easily let it run up to 1000. If you come out and stay with us awhile, I think you will get a better idea of the cattle business./ but usually about 2 $ per head

If you will come out and stay with us awhile Ithink you will get a better idea of the cattle business than from anything I can write. We will be glad to have you come, and to bring Mat with you. it may be that change may benefit her.

Sorry to know of Mays suffering. We have had a great deal of sickness this winter. Our baby has been suffering with cold all winter.

Ena sends love, and hope we will see you out here

Very Truly Yours
D.C. Ballantine