Overland to the Gold Fields of California in 1852

The Journal of John Hawkins Clark, Expanded and Revised From Notes Made During the Journey

Edited by Louise Barry

I. INTRODUCTION

JOHN HAWKINS CLARK, prior to the day he set out for California, had been for many years a resident of Cincinnati, Ohio. Born near Elizabeth, N. J., on April 28, 1813, he was eleven years old when his family moved to Ohio. He grew up on a farm and attended school during winter months till he was sixteen. He was then apprenticed to an uncle in Germantown to learn bricklaying and plastering. In the spring of 1830, after a disagreement with his uncle, young Clark set out to see something of frontier life. After working at St. Louis a short time he went by steamboat up the Mississippi to St. Anthony’s Falls (present Minneapolis, Minn.); then to Duluth, at that time a small trading post; and from there to the pioneer town of Chicago. Returning to St. Louis he worked till fall, then took passage for New Orleans and spent the winter working on a plantation.

Once more in Cincinnati in the spring of 1831, he settled down to master his trade. On January 30, 1835, he married his cousin Margaret Allen. Until 1848 he made a living for his family as a contractor. He spent several winters in the mountains of Kentucky and West Virginia securing logs which were rafted down the Big Sandy and Ohio rivers to Cincinnati for steamboat construction. In 1848 he entered the coal business but sold out in the spring of 1852.

The gold rush to California was then at its height. Clark and a neighbor, Capt. Andrew Brown, formed a partnership early in 1852 with the idea of conducting an overland expedition to Sacramento.

1. John Hawkins Clark was the eldest of the four sons of Jeremiah and Rachel (Hawkins) Clark, both natives of New Jersey. The family moved in the spring of 1824 to Ohio, settling first on a farm near Oxford.

2. Margaret Allen was born March 1, 1814, at Elizabeth, N. J., daughter of Caleb and Elizabeth (Hawkins) Allen. She died in Clay county, Kansas, on November 21, 1897.

3. Ten children were born to this couple, but only four grew to maturity. Information on the family’s history was furnished by George A. Root, for over fifty years a member of the Kansas State Historical Society’s staff. Mr. Root is a grandson of John H. and Margaret (Allen) Clark—son of their daughter Emma, and Frank A. Root.
They advertised for passengers and immediately booked twenty at one hundred dollars a head. Godfrey C. Ingrim, a member of the expedition who wrote his "reminiscences" in 1905, lists the following as members of the company: David Allen, John Ryan, John Spilman, John Valentine, John Wilson, the Risley brothers, the Clark brothers, — — Sloan, James Knight and Ora (?) Green. These, with Clark, Brown and Ingrim account for fifteen of the party.

In the journal under date of May 7, Clark states: "We are twenty persons in number, mostly young men, and all from Cincinnati except two Canadians who joined the company while coming up the river." Under June 14 he records: "One of our men left us today. . . . This man joined us at St. Joe. . . ." Only a few additional references are made to the personnel of the expedition. They had unusually good luck, for Clark in his last entry says "we brought every man and every horse and mule safely through the long and tiresome journey."

Clark's family remained in Ohio during the five years he spent in California. Prospecting, which he and his partner tried for a few weeks, did not bring the hoped-for wealth. The rush of gold-seekers, however, created a housing and business boom and Clark superintended the construction of a number of buildings in Placerville, Cal., and surrounding towns. He helped to rebuild Placerville after a destructive fire in 1856. Much of the money he earned as a contractor went into unlucky mining operations. A ranch which he and Godfrey C. Ingrim had started in Bear valley in 1853 failed after a few years, and in the latter part of 1857 Clark decided to return to Ohio. The journey this time was by the ocean route and across the Isthmus of Panama.

Shortly after returning to Cincinnati Clark brought his family to Kansas. They lived for a number of years in Atchison where he was a route agent on the Central Branch Union Pacific railroad. About 1870 the family removed to a farm in Goshen township, Clay county. Here Clark served as the Fancy Creek postmaster for the last decade of his life. He died December 26, 1900, aged nearly eighty-eight years.


5. Ingrim speaks of Ryan and Spilman as Irishmen from Ohio and says they were brothers-in-law.

6. Of Valentine, Ingrim comments that he was formerly employed by John H. Clark in Fulton.

7. Ingrim says that John Wilson was a Virginian.
II. The Journal: April 22-September 4, 1852

The 22d of April, 1852, the day of my departure from Cincinnati for the "golden land," found me on board a St. Louis steamer. "Twas early in the morning when we pushed out into the stream, and I for the last time walked out upon the deck to take a last fond lingering look of home, the place of my boyhood, the scenes of my earnest endeavors in later days to accomplish the dreams of my young ambition. More than all this, I was leaving all that was near and dear to me for a "wild goose chase" overland to the shores of the great Pacific. It was not without some little regret that I parted from the shores of the Queen City and left my future fortune to fate, and this thought troubled me some: "If a man cannot make money in this new and fertile country where can he expect to woo the fickle goddess with success." Was I not after all going upon a fool's errand? Those and kindred thoughts troubled me some, but with as stout a heart as I could muster I choked them down and resolved upon doing the best that in me lay towards accomplishing the fulfillment of my long dream.

Smoothly and pleasantly did our good boat glide down the beautiful Ohio, passing fine farms and happy homes, children at play upon its green banks looking happy and contented. I had often been up and down the river, but on this trip everything looked more interesting than usual. It was my last trip for years—it might be my last; some accident by flood or field might overtake me. Four years, my expected absence, was a long time; and what changes might occur in the affairs of life during that time; and of what importance they might be to me were questions for which I had no answer. Yet hope, that bright particular star of my existence, shone brightly upon my pathway, promising to lead the way to the El Dorado where man could realize the dreams his fancy had so often painted.

Nothing of importance occurred on this, our first day's travel. Stopped at Louisville a few minutes and at sundown passed over the falls. We were now fairly on our journey. I sought my berth to sleep and perhaps to dream of my lonely wife and children I had left behind.

April 23.—The ringing of the breakfast bell awoke me from sound slumber. After breakfast while walking on the deck my attention was called to a suit of clothes without an owner. No one could solve the mystery. Hat, boots, coat, pantaloons and pipe lay there. They

8. Published here, with minor deletions, as printed in the Topeka Mail, North Topeka, May 25-October 12, 1888. Editorial notes have been added for clarity and for comparison with other overland journals.
told of something wrong—perhaps the end of some unfortunate. The mystery remained unsolved and the incident was soon forgotten.

April 24.—Passed down into the Mississippi. The change from the Ohio to the "father of waters" is always interesting, new scenery breaking the dull monotony of steamboat travel for awhile. But it soon gets to be on this river the same old story of snags and sand bars, a wilderness of woods and low lands. A near approach to St. Louis, however, brings the high lands and hilly country to view. The Mississippi between the mouth of the Ohio and St. Louis is a very rapid and dangerous stream.

April 25.—Our wagons are upon the hurricane deck and this morning were discovered to be on fire. The covers were thrown overboard and the fire soon extinguished. There is always a lively time on board when a fire takes place. Made the port of St. Louis today.

April 26.—A very wet and disagreeable morning, but all was hurry and confusion; horses, drays, mules, carts, merchandise, white men and negroes filled the entire space between the landing and the first row of buildings. How or in what manner a person was to make his way through such a medley was not easily explained. His only chance is to "jump in"; he will no doubt "turn up" somewhere. After a hard day's work amid rain and mud we had transferred our goods and chattels from the good steamer G. W. Sparhawk to Clipper No. 2, bound for the Missouri river and St. Joe. We were happy in being among the first to engage our passage on this steamer, for by so doing we received good rooms which we could not have done a few hours later. Here we began to see the rush for California; a string of adventurers like ourselves came thronging on board until every hole and corner in this spacious steamer was full to overflowing.

April 27.— . . . still in port, and now have time to look at the great city. St. Louis is a marvel of activity and since my last visit a few years ago has grown beyond all expectations, and with the great west behind it will no doubt continue to grow until our own Queen City (Cincinnati) will be left far behind in the race for commercial importance.

April 28.—Still in port and the cry is, "Still they come." What are we to do with so many passengers? We were loaded yesterday, but a steamboat, like an omnibus, is never full. Sundown and we are off, and glad of it. We travelers are generally in a hurry.

April 29.—Our boat was wallowing in the turbid waters of the Missouri long before daylight, and when I walked out upon the deck
a new scene presented itself. I had never before traveled on this river. Everything was new and strange; the low lands and dark, dismal forest had but little charm to engage the passenger’s attention, and if he took the river into consideration a more unpleasant scene would be hard to contemplate. Driftwood, snags, sand bars and the muddy, troubled water made up a picture long to be remembered by those who for the first time sailed upon this great river.

April 30.—We have made tolerably good headway since leaving St. Louis. There is a sameness of travel on this river I never before experienced; once in awhile we are stuck on a sand bar; and then again we are hard on an old snag that takes a good deal of hard work and some swearing to part company with.

May 1.—Nothing of special interest on this day’s travel. Snags, sand bars and the ragged shore were all that presented themselves for our consideration.

May 2.—Passed the wreck of the steamer Saluda, whose boilers exploded while lying at the wharf at the city of Lexington, causing the death of 100 human beings. The boat is a total wreck and marks of the terrible catastrophe are still plainly visible on the shore. The sight of the wrecked steamer caused some uneasiness amongst our own passengers. We are on an old worn out boat and the officers are foolhardy and desperate, caring for nothing but the gold they are making. This is the largest crowd that ever traveled up this river on one boat and any little excitement might produce a disaster of some kind.

May 3.—Passed the wreck of a steamer recently sunk. Many California bound passengers suffered by the accident.

May 4.—Some accident to the boat’s machinery during the night; stopped for repairs but were again in motion early in the day. Passed another boat to-day which, like ours, was full of passengers for California.

May 5.—Someone threw a pet dog overboard to-day. The poor fellow swam for dear life, but like a mariner without a compass swam a good deal contrary to the right direction. The result, loss of life and limb; and as the poor little fellow disappeared beneath the Missouri’s turbid waters his mistress sank upon the cabin floor in a fit of despondency and refused to be comforted until she was informed that the old boat was about to blow up. That settled it;

9. The steamboat Saluda exploded her boilers at Lexington, Mo., on April 9, 1852. An estimated one hundred persons, including many Mormons, lost their lives in this disaster—one of the worst ever to occur on the Missouri river.—Lloyd, J. T. : Steamboat Directory, and Disasters on the Western Waters (Cincinnati, Ohio, J. T. Lloyd & Co., 1856), pp. 277, 278.
her grief subsided and she was herself again. Seven o'clock p.m. and the lights of St. Joe visible in the distance. Happy are we to conclude our tedious journey up this miserable river. Unloaded our goods and camped in the bottoms below the city.

May 6.—This is one of the principal points immigration has chosen for leaving the Missouri for the overland journey to California and Oregon. Oxen, horses and mules are brought in from the surrounding country to sell; the merchant has anticipated all the wants of the emigrant and has everything needful for an "outfit." We soon availed ourselves of the opportunity to purchase all that was necessary to complete our stores and were then ready for the overland journey.

The city of St. Joe is a very lively place just now, full to overflowing with California bound immigrants. Thousands of dollars are here spent annually by those who cross the plains. To finish our outfit we bought one yoke of oxen, a span of mules and many other "fixins" and made preparations for starting across the plains.

The Missouri river has to be crossed to-day. There are several boats and among them one steamboat to ferry over the crowd that is waiting their regular turn; to wait until all who had secured regular tickets to cross over meant the loss of two or three days, and as we were all ready and not wishing to lose any more time we cast about us to see if there was no other way to cross the big muddy. As good luck would have it we discovered a small wood flat [boat] lying at the bottom of the river two feet beneath the surface of the water which the owner was willing to let if we would raise it to the surface, caulk and otherwise fit her up for the service. Many hands make light work. We soon had the boat in trim and commenced to load our animals. In this, however, our progress was very slow, for as soon as we got one mule on board and our attention directed to another the first one would jump overboard and swim ashore, to the great delight of the many who were looking on. After several turns of the kind, and finding that we gained but slowly in our endeavor to freight the boat by the single additions, we concluded to drive them all on together. In this we succeeded admirably, for on they went and we put up the railing to keep them there. A shout of victory followed the putting up of the bars; a victory was gained over the frisky mule and the order given to "cast off," but before

10. Other important points of departure at this date were Independence, Mo., Fort Leavenworth (in present Kansas), and Council Bluffs, Iowa.
11. Mrs. Frizzell, arriving at St. Joseph a few days earlier (April 28, 1852), wrote: "... the banks of the river & all around the town were white with wagons, & tents."—Frizzell, Mrs. Lodick, Across the Plains to California in 1852 (The New York Public Library, 1915), p. 9.
the order could be obeyed the fiends in mule shape took it into their heads to look over the same side of the boat and all at the same time. Result, the dipping of the boat to the water's edge on one side, which frightened the little brutes themselves and they all, as with common consent, leaped overboard again. Three times three cheers were given by the crowd on shore. So much fun could not pass unnoticed or without applause. Of course there was no swearing done, for nobody could be found that could do justice to the occasion. Finally the mules were got on board, securely tied, the lines cast off and the riffle made. This was our first trip. We had so much trouble with the mules that it was but reasonable to expect a quiet time with our oxen; in this, however, we were mistaken, for they seemed to have caught contrariness from the mules and were, if possible, more stubborn than the mules themselves. Sufficient to say, we got the horned brutes on board and landed them safely on the other shore. The balance of our property was soon crossed over and we camped for the day to "fix up" things. Here is a general camping ground, and as it is on the verge of civilization anything forgotten can be obtained by recrossing the river.

There are many musicians belonging to the different encampments surrounding us, and after supper all commenced to practice the sweet tunes that were to enliven us while sitting around the camp fire on the far off plains. In addition to the vocal and instrumental music the frogs in the surrounding district, as if animated by the festivities of the occasion, set up such a croaking as I think human ears had as yet never listened to. Those who were not present can perhaps judge of the discordant sounds with which the old woods rang. Never shall I forget the hoarse bellow of the portly frog or the sharp twang of the wee ones, mingled as they were with soft strains of instrumental music. If Babel was worse confounded than I was on this memorable night I do not wonder at their leaving off building the tower, for never before had I listened to so many different sounds. This concert lasted until near midnight, when all was hushed except the crackling of the log fires as they were every now and then replenished by the watchful sentinel as he kept watch and ward over the sleeping multitude. Many and varied were the feelings I experienced on this the first night of my pilgrimage in the wilderness I was about to encounter. Sleep at length came to rescue me from uneasy thoughts of home, wife, children and friends.

May 7.—It took [nearly] all day to put up our wagons, adjust the harness, break the oxen, store away our provisions in the different
vehicles of transportation, count out the cooks, drivers and train
master. We are twenty persons in number, mostly young men, and
all from Cincinnati except two Canadians who joined the company
while coming up the river.

About six miles from camp to the high lands through a wilder-
ness of woods, mud and water. After a hard day's work through
mud knee deep we pitched our tents upon high land near a spring
of good water and wood in abundance. Near our camp is a solitary
grave with but one letter upon its head board. Here was food for
reflection. Could it be possible that the occupant of that grave was
an immigrant like ourselves and had got no farther upon his journey?
Yes, it was possible and very probable, too. The sleeper slept well,
nor did he heed the hurry or anxiety of the thousands who were
pressing onward, maybe to lay their bodies only a few miles fur-
ther on.

May 8.—Bright was the morning and light our hearts as we
rolled out of camp on this, our first day's journey of 2,000 miles.
Our train consisted of one team of six yoke of oxen, one team of
four horses, one of four mules, and a light span of two horses; four
wagons and twenty men, horses, mules and oxen, all in good shape.

"What will they be at the end of this long journey?" is a question
easier asked than answered. As far as the eye can reach the road
is filled with an anxious crowd, all in a hurry. Turned out at twelve
o'clock to let our teams to grass, which was quite abundant all
along the line of our day's travel. One o'clock we are again on the
move. A charming day, beautiful country and good roads made
travel interesting. Camped at six o'clock; wood and water to carry
some distance, but plenty of good grass.

May 9.—An early start this morning over a good but hilly road.
At two o'clock were in sight of the mission, an institution for teaching
the natives the arts of civilization. Houses, barns and fences, and
some land in cultivation; a cheerful sight in this wild region. Our
progress was stopped to-day by a small stream spanned by a small

12. Clark wrote in his autobiography: "When surely [sic] over the [Missouri] river we
began to fix up things; put the wagon together, made the oxen, mules and horses; slow away
provisions, appoint each man to do a certain duty, for a certain period of time. The man who
cooked for two weeks, was to drive oxen for the next two weeks, and the man who had been
driving oxen was to take his place. Teamsters, guards and all concerned, were to change places
every two weeks. This arrangement prevailed to the end of our journey. Everything was put
down in writing and the signatures of every man attached. I do not think a more orderly
company ever crossed the plains. With but few exceptions there was no grumbling, no
quarrels and no disobedience to the rules laid down before starting on the long and weary
road."—Clark, John H., "Autobiography," MS. in Root collection, Kansas State Historical
Society.

13. This was a Presbyterian mission for the Iowa, Sauk and Fox Indians, established in
1837 and discontinued about 1868. The principal building was a 32-room, three-story
structure, built in 1846. The mission was located one and one-quarter miles east of present
Highland, Doniphan county, Kansas.—The Kansas Historical Quarterly, v. X, p. 848.
bridge. Here was not the d—l to pay, but instead a large Indian sat at the receipt of customs demanding $1 per wagon for the privilege of crossing over. California should be full of gold if the immigrant expects to get back all his outlay in getting there: $5 per wagon and fifty cents for horses, mules and oxen for crossing the Missouri river at St. Joe; and here again, $1 per wagon for passing over a bridge fifty feet in length, costing perhaps $150. This stream is called Wolf river, and crossing in any way except by the bridge would be a hard job. We presented a $5 gold piece but it was refused; he must have "white money with the bird on it," so eight silver half dollars were hunted up and we passed over. The Indian was making a "good thing," not less than 1,500 wagons passing over to-day. No "nigger in the wood pile" here; white men are at the bottom of this speculation. What a glorious time the Indian will have spending those white half dollars for rotten whiskey.

May 10.—Saw the first dead ox on the road to-day, and passed two or three graves, the occupants of which, it is said, died of small-pox. Met a young man with two small children returning to the states; said he had buried his wife and one child just beyond. We felt for the poor fellow as he every now and then turned his look toward the wilderness where lay his beloved ones, over whose graves the wild wolves would make night hideous with their dreadful howls as they struggled with one another for choice seats at the feast of human flesh.

May 11.—Had some emigrant neighbors near us whom we intended to visit but for the rain, which fell in torrents. This was the beginning, but we would know more about it at the end of our journey. To stand watch on a pleasant night after a day of hard travel was hard enough, but to stand in mud and rain was still harder. However, we watched the weary hours away. About midnight our neighbor approached our campfire and told us that his only child had just died and he had come to solicit aid to bury it.

14. Lobenstine reached this crossing two days earlier, on May 7, 1852, and wrote: "... we arrived at Wolf Creek, across which the Indians have struck a bridge, for the crossing of which they charge the emigrants a high price. It is, however, a great convenience to the former, the creek being about thirty feet wide and from three to four feet deep. The Indians, who built the bridge, have put up their camp there."—Extracts from the Diary of William C. Lobenstine, December 31, 1851-1852 (Printed Privately, 1920), pp. 17, 18, T. E. Potter, May 30, 1852, wrote: "The only bridge at Wolf River was owned by a person living at the Pawnee (?) Indian Mission nearby, who charged $5 for each wagon that he allowed to cross. Such was the crowd of people and so exorbitant the price that our party joined with some other trains and built a new bridge. . . . There were four such bridges built in two days."—Editorial note by E. Eberstadt in Sawyer, Lorenzo, Way Sketches (New York, Edward Eberstadt, 1920), p. 20. Mrs. Frazzell, crossing two days after the Clarke party, on May 11, 1852, wrote: "We now came to Wolf Creek, a small stream but very steep banks, the Indians have constructed a kind of bridge over it, & charged 50 cts per wagon, there were several of them here, quite fine looking fellows, not near so dark as those I had seen, but of the red copper color, said they were of the Seneca & Fox tribes."—Frazzell, op. cit., p. 18. The crossing of Wolf creek preceded arrival at the mission which was a few miles west of this bridge.
We promised that in the morning his wants should be attended to. We had an empty cracker box which we made answer for a coffin, dug a grave in the middle of the road and deposited the dead child therein. The sun had just risen and was a spectator to that mother's grief as she turned slowly but sadly away from that little grave to pursue the long journey before her. We filled the grave with stones and dirt, and when we rolled out drove over it. Perhaps we had cheated the wolf by so doing—perhaps not.

This was a lovely morning and a beautiful country lay before us; nothing to make us sad save the occupant of that little grave we had left for the immigration to trample beneath its heel. Westward the star of empire moves, but leaves many a sad remembrance behind. As a general thing the roads are good, but the rain last night made deep and heavy wheeling. Had to unload our big wagon and carry the stuff over a soft spot in the highway.

May 12.—Met some wagons returning to the states. The people with them looked tired and jaded, and had lost some of their number by smallpox. They said this was a hard road to travel and tried to induce us to return with them. Later in the day we passed an encampment where it was said there was a case of cholera. The road is good and the country charming; the blackbirds hover in flocks along our pathway, making us glad with their presence. Camped near a small lake, grass growing to the water's edge; wood to carry some distance.

May 13.—Passed the grave of an immigrant, just buried, the wife and children still lingering over the new made grave, the company with which they were traveling having moved on. A more desolate looking group than that mother and her five children presented would be hard to find. An open, bleak prairie, the cold wind howling overhead, bearing with it the mournful tones of that deserted woman; a new made grave, a woman and three children sitting near by; a girl of fourteen summers walking round and round in a circle, wringing her hands and calling upon her dead parent; a boy of twelve sitting upon the wagon tongue, sobbing aloud; a strange man placing a rude headboard at the head of the grave; the oxen feeding near by, and the picture as I saw it was complete. We stopped to look upon the scene and asked the woman if we could be of any service. "I need nothing," she replied, "but advice—whether I shall pursue my journey or go back to my old home in Illinois." We could advise nothing; the journey onward was a long one and it was something of a journey back, with no home when
she got back. We passed on, but not without looking back many times upon a scene hard to forget.

Camped for dinner and while eating it the bereaved woman and her family passed by. It was a comfort to know that she was well supplied with means to accomplish her long journey. This afternoon passed a grave; no name or sex; a fresh grave surrounded by the green prairie.

May 14.—Camped last night on the bank of the Nemaha river, and this morning were called upon to bury a man who had died of cholera during the night. There have been many cases of this disease, or something very much like it; whatever it may be it has killed many persons on this road already. Yesterday we met two persons out of a company of five who left St. Joe the day before we did; two had died, one left on the road, sick, and the two we met were returning.

There are many camps on the banks of this river; many are sick, some dead and great numbers discouraged. I think a great many returned from this point; indeed, things look a little discouraging and those who are not determined may waver in their resolution to proceed. This afternoon we passed the graves of a man and woman; the former was marked for seventy-four years.

May 15.—Started early to make the Big Blue river, but rain soon commenced falling and retarded our progress so that we lay up short of the mark. Camped before sundown one mile from wood and water; good grass, however, which reconciled us to the many other little inconveniences which we experienced. No hot coffee nor warm bread; a “cold snack” and well-filled pipes our only comfort.

May 16.—The wind commenced blowing and the rain to fall just before daylight. It was a tedious journey of six miles from camp to the Big Blue river; the wind and rain from the northwest, and as we were going in that direction had to “face the music” of the elements in all their disagreeableness. Six miles in six hours and we are on the banks of the Big Blue. Here we set fire to a pile of driftwood, cooked our dinner and smoked our pipes. On the east bank of this river is located a private postoffice, a drapery shop, hotel and a ferry, the business all under one roof. If we mail a letter we pay $1; if we take a dram of good whiskey, seventy-five cents; a square meal, (?) $1.50; if it is a wagon we want carried over the river, $4, and no grumbling. The proprietor is doing a rush-

15. Evidently the “Big” Nemaha. The best crossing later known as Baker’s Ford was located in the S6¼ sec. 29, T. 1 S., R. 12 E., present Nemaha county, Kansas. Near this crossing was an excellent camping ground, possibly the one referred to by Clark. (Location of crossing from tracings of land plots in Kansas auditor’s office.)
ing business. During our stay of two and a half hours he crossed forty wagons, his clerks were busy handing out whiskey and the cooks getting out bacon, biscuits and coffee. How many letters he received for transportation during the same time I am unable to say, but our company handed in fifteen or twenty. The “boss” has a good thing just now; how long he will be able to keep it depends on the overland immigration.16

Rather than pay $4 per wagon for being ferried we concluded to ford the river, which we did without much trouble or danger. Took in wood and water and pushed out onto the open prairie. Passed twelve graves to-day, most of them located on the banks of the Big Blue river.

May 17.—A late start and a cold one; it is very windy and cold yet. We had been advised not to carry much clothing as the weather on the plains was so mild that we did not need it. Our experience is that a good, warm overcoat is a very comfortable thing to have about. Passed Cottonwood creek17 and two newly-made graves.

May 18.—Cold and windy yet; not a man slept warm last night. Crossed Little Sandy creek.18 Four bare walls of a blacksmith shop standing on the west side. The owner, I think, had “vamosed the ranch”; the encouragement given to honest industry on the banks of the Little Sandy river was not sufficient to induce him to stay. Overtook a train in distress, several persons being sick and one dead.

May 19.—An early start in hopes of reaching the Little Blue river19 to-day, but were disappointed and had to lay up short of the mark. Saw two bears feeding on the carcass of some animal they had killed. The loose hunters on the road immediately gave chase but the “varmints” were used to the tricks of travelers and

16. Frank J. Marshall established a ferry and trading post at the crossing of the Big Blue river, a few miles below present Marysville, Kansas, in 1849. This was at the famous ford known as the Independence, Mormon or California crossing. Two years later, Marshall built another ferry at what is now Marysville, to accommodate traffic on the new military road between Fort Leavenworth and Kearny. The Clark party crossed the river here. Travel was heavy and both crossings were in use in 1852.—The Kansas Historical Quarterly, v. X, p. 350; Andreas, A. T., and W. G. Cutler, History of the State of Kansas (Chicago, A. T. Andreas, 1888), p. 918.

17. Cottonwood creek crossing was a little northeast of present Hanover, Washington county, Kansas. G. H. Hollenberg’s ranch was located there in 1857, as a trading post was also known as the “Cottonwood ranch.”—The Kansas Historical Quarterly, v. X, p. 357.


19. Ware gave the distance between the Big Blue and Little Blue rivers as twenty-eight miles.—Ware, Joseph E., The Emigrants’ Guide to California, reprinted from the 1849 edition (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1923), p. 15. Other travelers estimated the distance variously from twenty to twenty-eight miles. Up to this point the Clark-Brown party had made slow progress. Ingram, in his “Reminiscences,” wrote: “for the first two weeks we made but little head way for it rained considerably and that made the sloughs very soft and our teams being green and not being used to working together when they would get into the mud they would come to the conclusion that the work was too hard and stop. So the consequence was we would have to get into the mud and push our load out.”
vanished over the hills, leading our hunters a wild chase of four or five miles contrary to the line of travel. They shot no bear and came to camp tired, cross and hungry. Bacon, dried beef, hard tack and coffee soon restored their normal condition and all were happy again.

May 20.—Out again for the Little Blue river in hopes of a more bountiful supply of the staple articles of an overland journey—wood, water and grass. From an elevation we first caught sight of the river and a beautiful sight it was, the river winding through groves of thick timber and small under growth, the branches dipping into the clear, silvery flood below, presenting a picture of quiet repose altogether in accordance with our wishes. Happy were we to rest beneath such grateful shade as was here presented for our comfort. Here, too, was wood, water and grass in abundance. Another bear was seen to-day, but made his escape. One of our men, an old bear hunter from the wilds of West Virginia, is badly disappointed in not being able to catch a bear and has promised to kill the next bear he sees or break his rifle over a wagon wheel. After supper drove our stock over the river to good grass. It was a satisfaction to see our cattle on good feed once more.

May 21.—We were surprised this morning with the bluster of wind and the discomfort of rain; the wind blew a gale and the rain fell in torrents. We are elected to remain in camp all day. Towards noon the rain slackened up a little and some of the boys went hunting, some fishing and some gathering wood. This was a day of discomfort, and could our friends at home have seen us as we sat huddled around the camp fire, smoked out, burned out, (and I was going to say rained out) they would have been greatly amused; but, as it happens, man is neither sugar nor salt, and it would take a good deal of rain to wash him out entirely. The hunters came in without game and the fishermen without fish. Should we have much such weather as we have experienced to-day we shall not call our trip a pleasant one.

May 22.—Being in the Indian territory we keep a sharp look-out for our stock. A good many cattle have been stolen lately. We are told that a number of white men are prowling about and it is an easy matter when stock is not well looked after for them to drive it a few miles off the road, where they are safe from pursuit. Our road now traces the Little Blue valley. Nothing of importance occurred to mar the happiness we enjoyed in traveling through this beautiful and fertile vale. Did not notice a newly-made grave to-day.
After camping tried to catch some fish but failed in the effort; there is plenty of fish in the river and plenty of game on its banks, but for want of skill or good luck have as yet caught nothing.

May 23.—Passed the grave of a man found murdered. How strange that man will commit murder at all, and still stranger when he does it in a desolate country where there is so much need of aid and comfort from one to another.

At noon camped near a train of Rocky mountain traders coming into the states loaded with furs. They were the first we had seen and excited some little curiosity from their rusty looking appearance. Men, animals and wagons looked as though they had spent their existence in the bad lands of the great northwest. In our immediate vicinity lay the ruins of an immigrant train—broken wagons and scattered goods, men running here and there, women wringing their hands and children crying. I asked one of the unfortunates, “What happened?” “The devil and Tom Walker; can’t you see for yourself?” he answered. “I can see Tom Walker, but the devil I can’t see,” I replied. “Well, look over there,” he replied, pointing to the train of peltries, “if you can’t see him you can smell him.” That explained the matter; the Rocky mountain train had quite a number of green hides, poorly cured, and a dreadful smell was the consequence; this the immigrant oxen objected to and concluded to run away, and making a strong run of it upset wagons, ran over some of their drivers, spilled women and children, bags of flour and other articles upon the highway. It looked like going west under difficulties; some of the wagons had lost their wheels, some had broken tongues, others had covers smashed, and nearly all had some injury to repair. We passed on to good camping and turned our stock out to better pasture than we had before seen.

A word here to all who expect to cross these plains: never get into trouble with the expectation of getting help; carry nothing but what is absolutely necessary, and mind your own business. There is but little sympathy for anyone on this road, no matter what may be his condition. Everyone thinks he has trouble enough and conducts himself accordingly. However, if one is stuck in the mud and there is no way of getting around, over or under, he may get a lift

20. Mrs. Frizzell, passing this spot on the same date recorded: “... there was a head put up, & this information upon it, that a man was found here on the 17th, horribly murdered, with wounds of a knife, & buckshot...”—Frizzell, op. cit., p. 17.

21. On May 24, 1852, Mrs. Frizzell’s party met “a company of fur traders with 16 wagons & loaded with buffalo robes, they were very singular in appearance looking like so many huge elephants, & the men, except 2, were half breeds; & Indians, & a rougher looking set, I never saw.”—Ibid.
JOHN HAWKINS CLARK (1813-1899)

From a photograph of the 1890's.
TWO VIEWS OF FORT BRIDGER, WYOMING

(Upper) The outfitting station and trading post of James Bridger as it appeared to the Stansbury expedition in 1849. The post was destroyed by the Mormons in 1857.

(Lower) Fort Bridger, U. S. military post, taken about 1866, some years after creation of the military reservation on the site of the old trading post. Black's fork of the Green river is in the foreground. From a rare photograph in the Root collection.
at the wheel, but then he is cursed for having a weak team or for overloading or maybe for bad driving.

May 24.—Had a very sick man last night but was able to travel this morning. Left the Little Blue river today and with some little regret. We had fared well while traversing its serpentine course; wood, water and grass in profusion. Our route today lies between this river and the big Platte—a rough, hilly and barren country; no wood, scarcely any grass, and but little water that we could use. We were anxious to make the distance from one river to the other before camping, and drove hard to accomplish it, but were destined to be disappointed. Night came when we were ten miles short of our wishes and had to go into camp without water, wood or grass. This was the first time we could not in some way, get grass for our teams; we were tired and hungry ourselves, had plenty of provisions, but how to cook it was the "rub." Most of the boys carried canteens and each had a little water remaining which was put into the coffee pot and a fire built with the remains of a bread box. We supped on hard bread and coffee and retired to rest after a day of toil and fatigue.

May 25.—Rolled out very early this morning to make the Platte valley; we must have wood and water to make breakfast, and we must also have grass for our animals. The morning was drizzly, dark and gloomy; the country desolate and forbidding; yet we pursued our way around and over the sand hills that border the Platte river with as cheerful thought as we ever possessed, for well we knew there was comfort just ahead; we also knew that the sun would again shine and we would have bright and glorious weather, and other objects more interesting to look upon than the gray and barren sand hills that loom up so gloomily on our pathway. At ten o'clock we are in the bottoms of the Platte valley 22 up which we travel a few miles and camp upon the river bank and opposite an island. The water of the Platte, like the Missouri, is thick with sand which gives to it a muddy appearance, forbidding to the look, nevertheless good and sweet water; it is thought to be more healthy than water found in springs along the line of travel. Many immigrants were camped on the shores of this river, many busied themselves fishing, hunting, running and jumping, playing cards and dancing. Boys will amuse themselves one way or another; many wrote let-

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22. Travelers on the overland route usually struck the Platte river in the vicinity of Grand Island, Neb.
ters at this camp, intending to mail them at Fort Kearney. Caught some fish and took a rest for the balance of the day.

May 26.—Out early this morning, and our pathway now lies in the valley of the magnificent Platte river. What a beautiful and pleasant looking stream; for several hundred miles we are to follow its meanderings, camping opposite its banks, fishing and bathing in its cooling waters, we promise ourselves much comfort while we keep it company, for it is indeed a lovely looking picture, studded with beautiful little islands of every shape and size, some single and at times clusters of them, always covered with grass and sometimes timber. While looking and viewing this broad sheet of water as it comes rolling down from the great west one almost feels that it comes from fairy land. Picture to yourselves a broad river winding through green meadows covered with grass which grows to the water’s edge, beautiful little islands setting like gems upon its bosom, on some bright morning when the sun first spreads his golden rays over the same, and tell me if you do not see an “enchanted land”; and this, too, is the far famed “hunting grounds of the west.” It is upon these grounds that the wild Indian has reveled in his might, lordly over all animate beings within his reach. Here has he lived and hunted and fished, generation after generation, little dreaming that a race of “pale faces” coming from the “rising sun” was one day to despoil him of his home and his hunting grounds, and that his race would fade and become a shadow of the past or living only in history recorded by his enemies. Already has the white man taken upon himself the charge of this beautiful country. Yonder warlike establishment tells them they have masters and must submit to be ruled by a people of another race; and so it is. “Manifest destiny” is spreading the white race broadcast throughout the fair fields of the great west, shedding the light of science, of civilization, and of religion, covering the dark savage superstition of the native race in the grave of the past.

Fort Kearney\(^{23}\) lies five miles from our camp, and while marching towards it this morning it presented quite an interesting appearance; but, on a near approach, the charm we felt on first seeing it gradually faded, and when we arrived on the spot, found instead of clean looking buildings, a number of rusty looking houses without paint or whitewash. A post-office, hotel and store are located here; a smith shop is free to all who have cause to use it—a great convenience to

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23. Fort Kearney was located on the Platte river in 1848. It was named for Col. Stephen W. Kearny of the United States dragoons.—Willman, Lillian M., “The History of Fort Kearney,” in Publications of the Nebraska State Historical Society (Lincoln, 1900), v. XXI, pp. 226, 228.
many. Our friends who had the stampede on the Little Blue, can here avail themselves of this shop to repair their damages. Many sick immigrants are taken to the hospital and treated by the army surgeons—and persons without money are frequently assisted. Everybody stops here long enough to satisfy their curiosity. It was quite a lively place when we passed; an hour or two and we were satisfied; drove on some six or eight miles and went into camp near the river and opposite an island, to which we drove our teams and from which we procured wood for making supper. Here is a ford and many are crossing to the north side. We prefer to remain on this (the south) side. Some have an idea there is more grass on the north side; I guess there will be stock enough to consume all the feed on both sides of the river. In looking about among our neighbors this evening some of the boys found a wagon where whiskey was for sale, and made a purchase of the article, brought it into camp and passed it around; when fairly under way, it kept going, going, and as the auctioneer would say, “gone.” However, the liquor did but little damage as there happened to be more water than whiskey in the purchase, and but a limited quantity of both; no ill effects from its use was perceptible, but no more whiskey in camp was allowed after this. Fiddling and dancing was a recreation that most all of the immigration indulged in; we had plenty of it to-night. Two of us sleep in each wagon, the remainder in tents; we have slept quite comfortable as yet, sometimes perhaps a little too cold; the nights are always cool on the plains.

May 27.—At eight o’clock this morning we were upon the road; grass was scarce and we were traveling to find it. It must be remembered that this is a cold spring, and May comes early in the season for grass. A month later, and perhaps grass would have been more abundant; as it was, so many cattle, horses, mules, and sheep were cutting it down as fast as it grew. It was only here and there we could find a locality that had not been grazed; when we did the grass was good. Our most and greatest anxiety is to get good feed for our teams; it is upon their ability to perform the journey

24. The St. Joseph (Mo.) Gazette, June 9, 1852, quoted as follows from a letter dated at Fort Kearny May 19: “The number of wagons that have passed here up to Sunday the 10th, is fourteen hundred—the first train passing on the 26th April. The general health of the emigrants is good, although there have been some few cases of small pox. The grass is very poor, or in fact, I can hardly say it is grass at all. . . . [Signed] C. W. L.”

25. The Clark-Brown party thus continued to follow the “St. Joe” road, Geo. C. Ingrin, member of the expedition, said of this crossing: “the Platt here is 1½ miles wide we did not cross the Platt here but at the old Calaforna Crossing we traveled up to South fork of Platt crossed that. . . .” The two trails were very close to each other in this area. Wrote Ingrin: “Some times my friend Clark and I would stray off from the train and get on some high point so we could see the travel on the north side of the Platt many times I have counted 300 hundred [sic] wagons in string.”—Ingrin, G. C., “Reminiscences.”
that we all rely. Another train of Rocky Mountain traders passed down to-day, consisting of some ten or a dozen wagons drawn by five and six yoke of oxen each; a hard looking set. Men, oxen and wagons all partook of the same peculiarities, the color of faded tan bark. The negro had brightened to a dull yellow, the American was smoked to a dull yellow, and dull yellow was the normal cast of the Mexican. The train appeared to be heavy laden.

One of the boys and myself rode ahead to find good feed but were not fortunate enough to find much; waded the Platte river to an island, canvassed surface and concluded to drive our stock to it where by sprouting and grazing they managed to get something.

May 28.—We are now in the buffalo region and the boys anxious to capture one. An early breakfast and two or three of the men were off on the hunt. We had quite a time hunting our stock this morning. Timber, high weeds and grass grew so thick upon the island that it was hard work to push our way through and over them to where our cattle were feeding; delayed starting in order to give our hunters a chance. Eight o'clock and we are off; the roads good, level and straight as an arrow. Twelve o'clock came and went but no hunters in sight. Buffalo or no buffalo, we must make a day's work. Six o'clock and tolerably good feed so we concluded to put up; still no hunters. The train had traveled twenty miles and the hunters had to do the same, independent of the extra strides hunters usually put in when on a “wild goose chase.” We were now really apprehensive as to their whereabouts; however, we had not settled in camp but a few minutes when two of them put in their appearance; the other had been left on the road, tired out. One of the boys was dispatched with a horse to bring him in, which was soon done. No buffalo meat for supper to-night.

May 29.—We were determined to hunt good camping ground for to-night and also for the morrow, as it is very necessary that we should lay by on the Sabbath day. There are many things to attend to; washing is once in awhile to be done; our firearms need brushing up and there are a variety of little things to look after; one has some little gift from someone at home and it must be seen to; another a Bible which is stowed away somewhere. The most of us have little pictures of our sweethearts and wives and they must come in to share a part of our attentions. This was quite a warm day and we and our teams suffered much from the heat. Camped near the river; good grass and plenty of water, of course, but no wood. This was about the first time we
could get no wood. Wood or its substitute we must have; there is no getting along without coffee on these plains. We had read in "the books" that people traveling over these plains had "sometimes to use buffalo chips," and it took us but a little while to come to that conclusion ourselves. We gathered them by the basketful, by the armful and by the handful, and as they were plentiful I guess we gathered a wagon load, set the heap on fire and cooked our supper. The "chips" worked like a charm and are really a godsend for the traveler in this part of the country—a staple which would be hard to dispense with. It is now no longer wood, water and grass. The inquiry when camp is announced is whether or no there is "plenty of chips." If there is we can stay, but if not we must move a little farther on. Sometimes a man goes ahead to hunt a camping ground and if nothing is lacking when he finds one he turns his horse loose and commences piling up chips. When the train comes up it stops before the largest pile and the teams are unhitched. Men, women and children are sometimes seen gathering chips—the men in their arms, the women in their aprons, and the little boys and girls will sometimes be seen carrying them on their heads. The horses, oxen and mules get so used to camping where there is plenty of them that it is hard work to get them past a spot where they are thickly strewn; and if a heap has been left unburned at any place near the road our oxen will make for it and there is no stopping them until they are alongside. The chips are a substitute for wood, and were it not for them I hardly know how the traveler in this part of the country would get along. Where there is an abundance of chips there will also be seen thousands of skulls and bones of the buffalo, the ground in many places being white with them. The smooth, white forehead is much used by the immigrants for transmitting news. If anyone is lost from his train the company with whom he has been traveling will write on the forehead of these skull bones the name of the company, date of camping and other information pertinent to the question and set the head up on its horns in some prominent place by the roadside. They are also good targets for the marksmen; a little black spot made with powder and bullet holes set close around are often seen. During the immigration buffaloes are scarce on the line of travel; at least we have seen none as yet.

May 30.—Remained in camp all day overhauling things. Weather very warm. Some of the boys are again on the hunt in hopes of killing some game, but returned about noon without success. However, they did bring in a prairie dog, the first we had seen.
Were visited this afternoon by a number of Indians who came riding into camp on horseback. They looked somewhat imposing, being well mounted on good horses. They proved to be part of a band of Sioux who had been at war with the Pawnees and were now returning up the river. They came into camp for something to eat, which we gave them.

May 31.—Intended to do a good day’s work to-day, but whether we did or not our teams and ourselves were quite worn down at night. The weather is oppressively hot and but for the wind we would suffer much. Nothing of interest occurred to-day; it was travel, travel, travel, amid the dust of a thousand teams, some before and others behind, all like ourselves hurrying onwards.

June 1.—I wrote this on the highest point in the neighborhood and the highest we have yet seen.\textsuperscript{26} The view from this spot is very extensive. As far as the eye can reach the broad river can be seen stretching far away to the east and west, the wide bottom lands covered with a carpet of green which gives to the scene a color rich and beautiful to look upon. And then there is another picture. Look at the long line of immigrants, stretching as it were from the rising to the setting sun; and when one does see it, as we do at this moment, he cannot but wonder where such a mighty multitude of men, women, children and animals are marching to. Echo answers “where”; but ask of the throng and they will tell you “California and Oregon.” Yes, California and Oregon have lured that crowd from many a happy home, and here they are, this beautiful morning, marching to those beautiful shores whose golden sands have set the world on fire.

Remained on this peak until time admonished us to be traveling. Neither time nor the tide of immigration waited for us, so taking another look at the panorama before us we left the mountain top and pursued our journey. A long and tiresome walk brought us to the noonday camp.

June 2.—An early start this morning. The South Fork of the Platte river is to be forded to-day,\textsuperscript{27} and as it is an interesting feature in our day’s work we keep ourselves and teams together. Nine o’clock and we are at the river; there are many people on the banks and in the river, which at this point is from one-half to three-fourths of a mile wide and from six to twenty-five inches in depth. The depth of the water, however, is no indication of the trouble there is in fording this stream. The bottom is quicksand; horse, mule or ox

\textsuperscript{26} Probably O’Fallon’s Bluff.

\textsuperscript{27} There was no fixed crossing place. It changed frequently during the season.—Ware, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 18.
standing still three minutes will sink so deep as to be unable to ex-
tricate itself without help. There is, perhaps, more fun, more excite-
ment, more whipping, more swearing and more whiskey drank at
this place than at any point on the Platte river. Many loose cattle
were being driven over when we crossed, and the dumb brutes seemed
to have an inclination to go any way but the right one. Loose cattle,
teams, horses, mules, oxen, men and boys, all in a muss; the men
swearing and whipping, the cattle bellowing, the horses neighing
and the boys shouting, made music for the million. It was an interesting
scene. It reminded one of something he had never seen nor heard
of before, and if he is an actor in the play he is so much excited that
a looker on could hardly tell whether he was on his way to California
or going back to God's country. One would think by his actions
that he had lost his individuality and had become half horse and
half alligator; sometimes pushing at the wagons, at others whipping
the stubborn oxen, then splurging through the water to head some
curious old cow who had taken it into her own sweet will to go
contrary to the right direction.

Having but few cattle, our troubles were comparatively light; we
gave the teams all the water they would drink before starting and
then whipped them through. When safely landed on the other shore
the captain passed around the "big jug." It must be remembered
that we took brandy along for the sick folks. If ever brandy does
good it is perhaps when one gets into the water and stays there long
enough to get chilled; the most of us had waded the river and came
out chilly.

June 3.—Some rain last night and good traveling to-day. The
road leaves the river, and crossing the highlands makes a cut off to
the river again at Cedar Bluffs. This hilly country is a desolate
looking region. There were many in camp to-day and in every camp
either sick or dead people. Put up three miles from the river, to
which we drove our cattle and from which we carried water for cook-
ing. Grass is getting scarce and our stock fared badly.

June 4.—The high lands approach the river at this point so close
that we are forced to leave the valley and take to the hills again.
After a five mile drive we strike the headwaters of "Ash Hollow,"
which we follow down to the main valley of the Platte. Nothing we
have yet seen can exceed the beauty of Ash Hollow. 28 It was a

28. Stansbury, who traveled through this region July 3, 1849, described Ash Hollow thus:
"We encamped at the mouth of the valley, here called Ash Hollow. The traces of the great
tide of emigration that had preceded us were plainly visible in remains of camp-fires, in bleached
trees covered with innumerable names carved and written on them; but, more than all, in the
lovely morning as we entered it; birds were singing joyously amid
the branches of beautiful trees; flowers were everywhere blooming,
making fragrant the air we breathed; women and children were
gathering wild roses and singing some sweet song which put us in
mind of other times and other localities. There were many camps
in this valley; the shade of the green trees was truly inviting, and a
stream of clear, cold water and plenty of wood made it a desirable
place for a few days' rest. From the head of the valley to where it
opens out on the Platte bottoms is perhaps two miles, one side of
which is an abrupt bluff 100 to 200 feet high. Thousands of birds
have their nests high up in these perpendicular cliffs and clouds of
them are hovering about filling the air with their chattering noise.
On the opposite side the land rises with a gentle grade and is covered
with a variety of timber, ash being most prominent, hence the name,
"Ash Hollow."

Just before leaving the valley we visited a graveyard pleasantly
situated on a rising mound. There were four newly made graves
and three of older date, the occupants of which were, perhaps, stran-
gers, coming from different parts of the world to lie down and sleep
together in this quiet place. Although a most beautiful valley death
had been busy; only a few days ago four of the occupants of this
quiet little graveyard heard the birds sing and saw the beautiful
flowers growing. Sickness and death have marred the pleasures of
our journey thus far, but how long it will continue to do so Prov-
dence only knows. Wherever there is a little shady grove where we
might stop and view the beautiful scenery as it presents itself in
many places, our spirits are dampened by the sight of fresh earth
piled up in an unmistakable form, showing that beneath it lies the
inanimate form of some being who, like ourselves, delighted in view-
ing nature in such beautiful forms as it everywhere presents itself in
the neighborhood of our travels.

June 6.—Compelled to travel today, Sunday though it is; the ab-
scence of grass makes it necessary to move. At three o'clock we
struck good grass. We are always happy when we find plenty of
feed. One of our hunters brought in a fine deer, and now while I
am writing the cooks are doing their best to get up a big supper.

June 7.—This morning the weather was quite cool and the laid-
away overcoats were again hunted up. Yesterday we met three men
returning to the states. These three are all that are left out of a

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total absence of all herbage. It was only by driving our animals to a ravine some distance
from the camp, that a sufficiency for their subsistence could be obtained."—Stansbury, Howard,
An Expedition to the Valley of the Great Salt Lake of Utah (Philadelphia, Lippincott, Grambo
company of seventeen men who left Ash Hollow a few days ago, bound for California. Sickness commenced soon after leaving the Hollow, and by the time Fort Laramie was reached fourteen of their number were dead. The remaining three concluded to return and from them we gleaned the above facts. A true story, no doubt. The road has been thickly strewn with graves.

June 8.—Awoke this morning just as the rising sun was flooding with its golden light that giant monument of the plains [see Footnote 29]. I had seen its beauties and its grandeur fade in the dim and darkness of night, and now I saw it again in all the beauteous splendor a rising sun could impart.

Off early; some of the boys started to visit Court House Rock, but after traveling an hour or two concluded it would not pay. The object of their visit appeared no nearer after a five mile tramp than it did at starting. People get wonderfully mistaken sometimes in distances measured by the eye. Optical delusions are frequent on the plains. Camped a few miles below Chimney Rock 29 and in full view of Scott's Bluffs. 30 Chimney Rock stands some three miles to the left of the road. I visited it to-day and should think it near 300 feet in height and perhaps thirty or forty feet square, holding its size, or nearly so, its entire height; it is a wonderful specimen of natural ruins. Much sickness on the road.

June 9.—In hopes of reaching Scott's Bluffs to-day and made an early start to accomplish it. About 9 o'clock we met an old black cow returning to the states; she appeared to have had enough of this wonderland and was returning to pastures green and more plentiful than she has had for the last hundred miles or so, traveling day by day in search of a bare subsistence. Some of the boys thought the journey too long and too lonesome for a single traveler, and after much coaxing induced the old thing to turn back. But no sooner had we camped than her alleged owner made his appearance, and recognizing her old and familiar form claimed his children's pet; a sad blow to some of the boys who hungered for milk in their coffee. Took up for the night about one and a half miles west of Scott's Bluffs. For forty miles we had caught frequent glimpses of these celebrated rocks, and their appearance when first seen impressed one with the idea that he might be approaching a great and magnificent

29. Court House and Chimney Rocks were notable landmarks on the road. The former is about five miles south of present Bridgport, Cheyenne county, Nebraska; Chimney Rock is about two and one-half miles south of the town of Bayard, Cheyenne county, Nebraska.—Mor-


30. Scott's Bluffs were some twenty miles from Chimney Rock. Ware, op. cit., p. 19, gave the distance as nineteen miles; Stansbury, op. cit., p. 52, placed it at over twenty miles.
city. Court House Rock stood a temple upon the plain, Chimney Rock had the appearance of a watch tower from whose lofty height a watchman could command a view of the surrounding country; and last, though not least, in the extensive view, stood Scott's Bluffs, like fortified ramparts to guard the safety of millions. Here are castellated walls and ramparts, towers and domes, built in that grand and massive style which only nature knows so well how to plan. The natural ruins of this neighborhood are on an extensive and grand scale, wonderful to behold, and what makes them of more interest is the strong resemblance to decaying monuments erected by the hand of man, making one believe, almost in spite of himself, that yonder ruin is the handiwork of man. It is only on a near approach that the delusion wears off, yet there still lingers a curiosity to examine, to see if, after all, there are not some chisel marks, square joints or plumb corners that man can claim; but there are none. It is all the work of nature's master builder, but when or how placed in their present form science alone can tell.

June 11.—David 31 started out this morning on a deer hunting expedition, and David was successful; a fine buck was David's prize, but somehow or other David had got in the rear of his train and when the deer was killed had to call for help; that was done by a signal invented for the occasion. A horse was despatched to bring in the game; but the animal not being a pack horse, refused to carry it. There was a fix; but David with a little help and more energy, succeeded in bringing in the meat upon the back of "Major." Camped early to give the cooks a chance. If we did not feast this day it was not David's fault; neither was it because the game was unsuited to our taste, for the way it disappeared after being cooked, was a caution to those on duty, and had to dine at the second table; but I am happy to say there was enough for all and some to spare. David was looked as an expert and voted a glass of brandy from the "big jug."

Sickness appears to be increasing if one may judge from the number of new made graves he sees by the road side. Yesterday we passed the grave of a lady, to-day saw her husband buried and their children left to journey with strangers.

June 12.—Fort Laramie 32 lies ten miles distant. To make it and

31. This was David Allen. G. C. Ingalls, "Reminiscences," says: "Had a fiddler in the company by the name of Dave Allen."

32. Stansbury, op. cit., p. 52, gives the distance from Scott's Bluffs to Fort Laramie as fifty-one miles. Ghent, op. cit., p. 133, states that forty days was considered a good journey between Independence, Mo., and Fort Laramie. The Clark-Brown party, traveling from St. Joseph, Mo., covered the distance in thirty-six days.
find good feed was the height of our ambition to-day. The Platte river bottoms are here quite narrow and grass very scarce. The cactus grows in great abundance and in many shapes and forms; some trees very beautiful, some of the species grow to the dignity of trees and bear fruit, resembling in shape and taste a green watermelon.

Fort Laramie is located at or near the junction of the Platte and Laramie rivers, near the banks of the latter and about one mile from the former. We crossed Laramie river over a bridge just above the junction of the two streams for which we paid three dollars per wagon—teams and passengers free. Camped on the Platte river as usual; here we again wrote letters for home. Fort Laramie is a great place in the immigration season; a good many wagons are left at this point, many coming to the conclusion of getting along without them. Many pack their goods from this point; a hard way to travel, I should think. A hotel, store and post office are located here. I saw about 150 officers and men belonging to the Fort; all appeared to be well behaved, and I think ready and willing to help the unfortunate. The hospital, I am told, contains many sick immigrants.

We are now at the head of the great open valley of the Platte river. If this stream was only navigable where a smoking there would be in the great valley. How sorry I felt it was not so: a great lift it would be to us poor wayfarers to steam it up this river and land beneath the shade of the great Rocky mountains. Could only console ourselves with the pleasant expectation of one day seeing the "iron horse" on his race with time go thundering up this great highway on his course to the Pacific.

If one could write a true future history of this great valley, what an interesting story he could make of it; but as only a few speculative thoughts can be allowed, I will say that the greater part of this immense valley is susceptible of cultivation. From the first of May

38. Fort Laramie was originally established by fur traders William L. Sublette and Robert Campbell in 1834. It was first called Fort William; later, Fort John. In 1849 the government purchased the fort from the American Fur Company and it became a U.S. military post.—Hafen, L. R., and F. M. Young, *Fort Laramie and the Pajute of the West*, 1844-1886 (Glendale, Cal.; The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1928), pp. 24-31, 69, 140-142.

An interesting comparison is the description by Thomas Turnbull who arrived opposite Fort Laramie on the North Platte (or, Mormon) trail on June 8, 1852: "got opposite... Fort [Laramie] about 4 Oclock, it stands in a valley surrounded by hills covered by small cedar, the Laramie Fork runs into the Platte here... The Joe Road crosses the Fork & we still go along on this side of the Platte about 90 Rods here apart we can cross this Ferry if we wish, to go on the St Joe route... it is a wild looking River here runs very swift... at the opposite side of the Ferry there is a Blacksmith & wagon makers shop the Garrison & Houses are built with Spanish Brick number about 12 Houses the Garrison is about 2 miles from the Ferry... Hundreds of Pones, Horses, Oxen, Mules & Wagons around here..."—"T. Turnbull's Travels From the United States Across the Plains to California," in *Proceedings of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin at its Sixty-First Annual Meeting* (Madison, 1914), p. 170.
until the first of July, the native grass will sustain 100,000 head of horses, mules and oxen; to say nothing of the great herds of buffalo that may at the same time graze upon its pastures.

These wide bottom lands will soon be filled with an enterprising population. Cities and towns will flourish and a great railroad will run along its entire length bringing in and carrying out the product of her own and distant localities. I can now, in the year 1852, with just a little stretch of the imagination, see the distant smoke of the "iron horse" as he comes stretching up the valley on his mission of peace, of civilization and of convenience.

A friend who has been looking over my shoulder while the above was being written says: "Your head will be cold long before one-half of such stuff you are writing will be realized." . . . I am more sanguine of the future of this great country west of the Missouri river. . . .

June 13.—Left camp and traveled up the river to good grass. Feed is getting scarcer all the time. A great many cattle have gone over the road and of course have had the benefit of fresh pastures, but our stock has done well as yet.

June 14.—Remained in camp to-day to shoe our horses and fix up things generally. One of our men left us to-day, having found an old acquaintance on the road; was anxious to join his friend and finish his travels in other company, so with mutual benefit we parted. This man joined us at St. Joe and has been a trouble to us and to himself ever since. He shouldered his pack and walked off, and as he had but few friends in camp he "left no lingering look of fond remembrance behind." For one I felt for the poor fellow as I watched him on his winding way, receding in the far distance among the black and rugged hills. Although a wicked and a sinful man, the tear of sympathy would start at the glimpse of distress and a kind and cheerful word he always had for the unfortunate; and now as I see him, perhaps for the last time, may peace be with him.

At dinner we were visited by a party of native Americans, and as they were on a mission of peace added greatly to the pleasures of camp life. It was a change in our dull routine, and but for the slight difference in our looks one would have sworn we were brothers of the same mould. We immigrants had been so long on the plains and lived so much like Indians that now, while sitting round the camp fire, passing the pipe from mouth to mouth, from white man to Indian, a stranger would have sworn we were all of the same tribe as we smoked together. So we dined and a good time was had. But
I must say that a little envious feeling was manifested towards that happy brother who had the extreme pleasure of sitting by and now and then helping to dainty bits (pork and fried bread) a "dusky daughter" of the far west who happened to be one of our visitors. It was rather hard to let one man monopolize so much pleasure, but we were getting used to "hard things." The lucky fellow was left alone in his attentions to the fair one, who seemed very grateful for the devotions of the gallant immigrant. Whether the fellow will remember this as the happiest hour of his life I cannot say, but from the efforts he made to please and his polite farewell I am half inclined to believe she made a lasting impression.

When dinner was over and the pipe again went round we exhibited the pictures of our sweethearts and wives; these appeared to be greatly admired by the "stalwarts," but the lady Indian passed them by with supreme indifference.

June 15.—The Black Hills \(^34\) were to be encountered to-day. Having heard a good deal about the travel through this country we were anxious to realize the difficulties to be met with. We are to follow the Platte river 150 miles over this rugged, hilly country. The river cannot be followed only on its general course; it is now quite a narrow stream, rapid and very crooked. For days we see nothing of it, then again we are upon its banks where it goes rushing, foaming and thundering over great rocks or between high and nearly perpendicular walls of stone, almost a terror to contemplate. This region is very interesting; we pass many curious shaped mounds and ruin-like looking places that would in the states attract a great deal of attention.

June 16.—Left one of the most beautiful camp grounds we have as yet occupied. The trail lay down a beautiful valley and opened out on the banks of the Platte river; nothing more wild in all of nature's wild scenes that we have as yet visited can exceed this spot—a rushing torrent, foaming, whirling, leaping over great boulders, jarring the earth upon which we stand and making such a noise as would make thunder itself ashamed of its puny efforts.

This afternoon our road lay across an elbow of the river and over a grassy plain, at the end of which we saw a little white tent, and at a near approach found that it contained within its canvas walls a sick man in the last stages of cholera. We called at the tent door

\(^34\) The Laramie mountains west of Fort Laramie. "The limitation of the term Black Hills to the particular chain now thus named in South Dakota, is of recent use."—Thwaites, R. G., ed., Early Western Travels, 1748-1846 (Cleveland, Ohio, The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1906), v. XXVIII, p. 244.
and asked if we could be of any service. He replied, "No; my time is nearly out and I feel beyond any power of help, but am willing and ready." We passed on, but memory will linger long upon the scene of the white tent and its sick occupant. I had almost forgotten to say that the sick man had two attendants who had, as they told us, "attended to his every want," and at the same time dug his grave alongside his dying couch, "to have it handy," they said.

We have been eating fried bread ever since leaving the Missouri river and some of the boys are very tired of it. How to bake bread is a question that has often been discussed. Some say on a board before the fire; others tell us a hole in the ground and a fire over it is the way to do it, and still others tell us the way to bake "white man's bread and to be decent about it is to bake it in a cast iron Dutch oven, and then you have it." This afternoon one of the boys came into camp with one turned bottom side upward over his head. All hands shouted "Hurrah for the bake oven! Hurrah for the man who found and brought the bake oven into camp; we will now have good bread." The poor fellow who found the oven said, as he threw it from his head, that he had "toted it five miles and would not do it again if he had to eat slapjacks and hard bread all the way to California." "Why, d—n the thing, there is a hole in the bottom," said one who had turned it over. "Yes, I'll swear there is two of them." Sure enough, there were two bullet holes as near the center of the unfortunate oven as the marksman's skill enabled him to place, and through those two bullet holes vanished all our present hopes of good bread. It is but fair to say that the holes had been plastered over with mud, and the finder, not scrutinizing it closely, had been deceived as to its soundness.

June 17.—We were within eight miles of La Butte river this morning and some of us hurried ahead to catch trout, but ill luck as usual attended our efforts. No fish for dinner to-day. However, we had a good bath in the mountain stream and that was something of a luxury this hot weather.

Took our last look at Laramie Peak this morning, having seen it for 150 miles. When first discovered its top was covered with clouds, but as we were in sight of it for several days we saw it in all its varied aspects, situated in the midst of the Black Hills but towering high above them all. It is a mountain patriarch whose hoary head, white with everlasting snow, gives one a good idea of

35. Probably La Bonie creek.—See Ware, op. cit., p. 21.
mountain grandeur. We left it as we saw it, capped with clouds, and snow in many places far down its rugged sides.

Our teams came up as we were fishing and it being twelve o'clock, took dinner. One o'clock we are again on the move. One mile from the ford we passed the grave of a man just hung; it appeared that the culprit committed an unprovoked murder yesterday, was caught in the act, confined until this morning when he was tried, found guilty of murder in the first degree, and "hung upon the spot." The fellow kicked against the proceedings with much argument and wanted to be taken back to a civilized country before being tried; but as he had committed murder on the plains, he should be tried on the plains, and if found guilty, should be hung upon the plains. The murder was proven fair and square, the jury prompt in its verdict, sentence pronounced immediately and the hangman's rope finished the job. We felt like giving three cheers that justice, quick and sure, was so promptly administered. Conservatives and law loving people may take exception to such proceedings; but let such come out into a wild country like this and expose themselves to any whim the ruffian may take to shoot or otherwise dispose of him and he will, I think, be as ready to take the law into his own hands as the most of men do on these plains. 26

June 18.—The sublime, the pathetic, the outrageous and the ridiculous follow each other in quick succession on this road. This morning in advance of our train caught up with an old lady trudging along after her two wagons. "Well, how are you getting along?" I asked. "Oh, terrible bad," she replied; "one of my grandchildren fell out of the wagon yesterday and both wheels ran plum over his head; oh dear! I shall never forget yesterday!" Thinking the accident a painful one for the old lady I changed the subject; in the

26. Godfrey C. Ingrin, member of the Brown-Clark party, described the circumstances of this hanging in detail: "there was a large train two days ahead of our train that was owned by a man by the name of Brown. Brown's wife was with this train. Brown was behind with a drove of cattle. There was a young man by the name of Miller in charge. There was two young men. Brothers by the name of Tate. Their drive was in the front train that did not like Miller. Mrs. Brown told Miller the boss that he had better lay over until her husband came up with the cattle. He (Miller) told the drivers to stop and unhitch. One of the Tates told Miller that he was putting on stilts. Miller told Tate that it was Mrs. Brown's wish, that he would stop the train until Brown came up. One word lead to another. Tate called Miller a son of B. Miller grabbed one of the whip's and said he would not take that from no man and struck Tate with (the) whip. Tate's brother Layfett [?] run up behind Miller and stuck a knife in his back as he fell nearly cut his head off. As soon as he done this he went to Miller's wagon took Miller's pistol and knife and took the road to California. As fast as the trains came up they were stopped until there was a crowd to pick from to send after Tate in [a] short time 15 men started in pursuit and overtook Tate at a creek called Lahont, and arrested him. He told them there was no law on the plains, as fast as trains came up they stopped until they had a big crowd. As soon as Brown's train came up with the witness there was a jury picked out of the crowd and a judge and a man on each side as a lawyer. He was given a fair trial found guilty and hung on a tree at 12 oclock and buried close to road, with a large head board describing the crime and hanging. His brother said he would be the death of every one of the jury. He was tied up to one of the trees and whipped. Our train came up the next day. I turned this from a man that was at the trial."—G. C. Ingrin, "Reminiscences."
meanwhile several little fellows that were in the wagon were making
a fuss, climbing up on the side boards, swinging to the roof of the
cover, and otherwise discomforting themselves. The old lady ever on
the watch called out to "Johnny" to behave himself. "Do you want
to fall out again and be killed, Johnny?" "Is that the boy who got
run over yesterday? I thought he surely must have been killed."
"No, it did not quite kill him, but it made the little rascal holler
awfully." I thought that boy's head must have been a very hard
one; or, possibly there might have been a very soft spot on the road
somewhere. I asked the old lady if the children fell out of the wagon
often. "They fall out behind sometimes when the wagons
are going up steep places, but that don't matter much you know, for
then there are no wheels to run over them," she replied. As this old
lady is something of a character I am inclined to give something of
her history; as a washwoman I became acquainted with her in St.
Joe, Missouri. She told me that herself and husband joined the
Mormon church in England, moved to America and Salt Lake, where
her husband died, and she, becoming disgusted with Mormonism
stole away and returned to St. Joe where she had resided ever since,
making a living at the wash tub. When the California fever broke
out she determined to go to the Pacific coast, and saved money suffi-
cient to equip two wagons with teams and provisions. She crossed
the Missouri river the same day that we did and here she was, safe
and sound, without a broken head in the "outfit," which consisted of
three women besides herself and five boys, big and little, including
a son-in-law and a grandson.

Passed many new made graves today; they line either side of the
road and in number, fearful to contemplate. Hunters more fortunate
than ourselves killed a buffalo and made a free market of the meat.
I care but little for wild meat of any kind and consequently a poor
judge of its merits. Went into camp and good grass in plenty, we
are all right.

June 19.—Nothing of importance occurred on the march to-day.
The features of the country have a good deal of sameness; up hill
and down, sometimes a short narrow valley, with level roads, are
met with.

June 20.—Laid by to-day. Some of the boys are fishing, some
hunting and some washing. Mosquitoes have been very troublesome
today; have been bothered but very little with these pests so far.
We are camped on the low land near the river and the timber which
accounts for our being troubled with them. Saw many teams pass-
ing upon the other side of the river, and all hunting for grass. They informed us that feed had been very scarce for the last hundred miles and they were bound to travel until they found it. It seems almost incredible how long ox teams will travel without food; day after day they move along on rations that would make the heart sick to contemplate were it not for the everlasting hope of finding something better further on the road.

June 21.—Rained some as we went into camp this evening and continued until after supper. We have had but little rain on the road—almost continual sunshine.

June 22.—Eight miles to upper ferry of Platte river; started early to make sure of getting over in time to build our campfire for the last time on the banks of this stream. "More haste less speed" is an old saying that we realized to our hearts' content this morning, for in crossing a deep and muddy ditch our ox team went contrary to good conduct and broke the wagon tongue, leaving the wagon half upset in the worst mud hole on Platte river. We were now in a fix, and if the wagon was not a "fixture" it appeared to be, for with all our ingenuity we could not move it. The most of our men and all the other teams were ahead and out of call. As we had done once before, so we had to do now—unload all our freight before we could extract the wagon. After an hour's labor in mud and water we had made things all right except the broken tongue, which we expect to get mended at the ferry. All set for the ferry, which we soon made and bargained for the transit of the whole outfit by paying the sum of $32; these plainsmen do not forget to charge. All have to ferry their wagons, but most of the immigrants swim their stock. Many cattle have been lost at this point and the ferryman has a record of fifteen men drowned within the last month. The boatman had, I think, located this ferry on a difficult place in the river in order to force custom over it.

There is a big crowd of people here and a great deal of stock is being driven into the river. They are driven in promiscuously and allowed to find their way over as best they can. I saw many of them drown in the swift, whirling and turbulent stream. Some men in their anxiety to get their stock over wade in after them, and as the records show, many are drowned. I saw one man go down and

37. According to Chittenden the location was a little above the present Casper, Wyo.—Chittenden, H. M., The American Fur Trade of the Far West (New York, Francis P. Harper, 1885), p. 476. Ingrain of the Clark-Brown party wrote of this crossing: "there was some Mormons that had a ferry here; they charged five dollars a wagon and men had to swim their teams or stock."—Ingrain, O. C., "Reminiscence."
another would soon have followed had he not been rescued by a negro who, as he heard the cry of "another man drowning," jumped upon a big mule, and then, mule and man, over a steep bank four feet high into the foaming current. Then came the struggle for life—now on top and then beneath the surface. The drowning man was making desperate efforts to save himself, the whirling and shifting current often preventing the negro from making a sure grip at the unfortunate man's head. Now he has him, now he has "lost his grip," and now he is again reaching for a sure hold, and fortunately, he has it. The mule and his rider and the half drowned man land on a sand bar half a mile below, and the excitement of the hour is over.

The negro, when the alarm was given, was busily strapping his pack upon his mule. Now again he is busy getting off on his journey, and as he is about to start he is detained by an old gentleman who tells him that this crowd of people cannot afford to let him proceed on his journey without showing their appreciation of his heroic conduct. Then calling the crowd together he dwelt upon the heroic deeds recorded in ancient and modern history and declared none of them more heroic or more deserving of praise than the one they had just witnessed, and ended with the proposition of giving the dusky hero "three cheers and a tiger." It is needless to say that three cheers and the loudest "tiger" that ever was heard upon the banks of the upper Platte river were given, and with a low bow of his woolly head the negro turned and resumed his journey toward the setting sun. "Honor and fame from no condition rise." He had acted well his part and is now as "happy as a clam at high tide." God bless him.

We crossed the river at 12 o'clock, went into camp and fixed up our lame wagon. An old Canadian plainsman had located at this place, improvised a blacksmith shop, hired a smith and was ready to do anything in his line on "reasonable terms." We gave him a job of welding a piece of iron one and a half inches wide by one-fourth of an inch in thickness, for which he charged the reasonable (?) sum of $8, or about $1 a minute. We took the iron, and in driving it into position it broke again in the same place. As it happened we had a smith with us he said he would fix it, so giving $5 more for use of tools and a handful of coal we were fortunate in getting a good job. "Reasonable terms" have some significance, even out here.

June 23.—We leave the Platte river for good to-day, but before leaving must take a long, last look down this magnificent valley. We may never again have the pleasure of traveling over thy green
meadows or viewing thy monuments that every now and then stand as giant landmarks to the weary traveler. Although it has been a long and toilsome march beside thy turbid waters, we have spent many a delightful hour in viewing the grand and extensive scenery that borders thy coasts for so many hundred miles. There has been but one drawback to pleasures we have experienced within thy borders—sickness and death. The turf of thy green pastures covers thousands of weary pilgrims; the little dots of fresh earth that are to be seen here and there and all along our pathway show that thousands have perished within thy borders upon either shore. Death has been busy. There are graves at the crossing of every stream, graves at every good spring and under almost every green tree; there are graves on thy open and widespread plain and in the mountains that overlook thy swift rolling flood; in the quiet and secluded dell where the birds sing and make such beautiful music there are graves; young and old, innocent and wicked, all have found a resting place in thy lap; indeed, thou has been the “valley and the shadow of death” to many.

It is estimated at this camp that from 2,000 to 4,000 people have found graves since leaving the Missouri river. Of course the number is merely guess work and so will it ever remain. One person could not find one-half of the graves were he to look for them, but he would find enough to satisfy his curiosity.

From this point to the topmost heights of the Rocky mountains is our next stage of travel; the road takes immediately to the highlands. We go up, up, up; for seven long miles, a dreary, desolate region, innocent of any kind of vegetation that can in any way be made available for food for our hungry teams; this is called “rattle-snake hill,” but why so called I am unable to say; we saw none; it would be very hard on the snake if he was obliged to make this hill a home. After traveling eight or ten miles the road becomes crooked, rough and flinty; the face of the country a broken mass of natural ruins; colonnades of stone from four to twenty feet in height, and six to ten feet square, dot the earth in a straight and continuous line for miles. What freaks in nature, or what time in the world’s past history these rocks had been so placed, would be hard for the average California pilgrim to determine. “Avenue Rocks” is another curiosity; a range of rock describing a half circle with a gateway through which the immigration has to pass on its way to what it hopes to be, a better land beyond.

This is the land of the mirage, of “delusions,” of the sage brush,
and the alkali waters; a land of wonders and of hardships; a land to be avoided or left behind as soon as possible. Saw many dead cattle on the road; the poisonous water and the great scarcity of feed begins to tell on the poor brutes. Passed many graves on our journey of thirty miles, the biggest day's work we have as yet accomplished. Eleven o'clock p.m. and we are in camp at "Willow Springs" a name suggestive of a more cheerful outlook than any other place we have seen to-day. This is the first good camping ground since leaving the Platte river; there are a great many here and still they come, for come they must, as no good water can be had for thirty long miles over the road traveled; at least we could find none. We have a sick man on our hands to-night.

June 24.—Our sick man is so much better that we are traveling again to-day; he says "this is too bad a country to die in and he will try to postpone that (to him) important event for other days and a more cheerful locality."

While traveling over a heavy sandy road to-day saw immediately in front of us, a beautiful tree fringed lake whose tiny waves broke upon a shore of clean white sand, a strip of green verdure in front and on either side of this beautiful vision, stretching far and wide, were "greener fields and pastures new" in beautiful contrast to the dreary plain over which we are now toiling. No pilgrim to the shrine of the Prophet. No crusader to the Holy Land. No prodigal son returning to the comforts of a distant home, were more eager than ourselves to enjoy the comforts, the luxuries and the pleasures so soon to be ours. But alas, the beautiful scenery before us vanished in a moment and "Like the fleeting spirit of a dream" was gone forever. A treeless, waterless waste, and a weary road, was now all that greeted our saddened eyes. "That weary road" we followed to a cheerless camp, where water, wood and grass were conspicuously absent; we carry a water barrel and sometimes as we did to-day, carry water; no grass here.

June 25.—Rock Independence and the Sweetwater river are eight miles in the advance; some of us started on ahead to get a view of this celebrated rock. Saleratus lake lies on our way; it is merely a mud hole of some four or five acres across in extent. The water had fallen by evaporation and left a crust of four or five inches of crude saleratus of a yellowish color, and, like the desert around it, had a forbidding appearance. This substance is used on the plains in making bread; we gathered some of it. The great rock lies

38. "Willow Spring is a noble spring of cool, pure water; it is a good camping place. . . ."—Ware, op. cit., p. 22.
just before us and we were eager to get upon its back. This great boulder is all in one piece, about one-eighth of a mile in length, one-fourth of its length in breadth and is, I think, about 150 feet in height. It is oval on top and is of easy access; we were soon upon its back. The view from this elevation is a very extensive one; if we look toward the east we can trace our line of travel for thirty miles over an unbroken wilderness waste, a desert plain abounding in alkali lakes, poisonous unto death to whatever living thing that may partake of their waters. The bones of hundreds of cattle lie strewn here and there over this pestilential district. Like Lot’s wife, we have looked back over the plain; she with regret at leaving a beautiful home, we with high hearts, glad to escape destruction. As there are generally two sides to the same story, so there are two different views from the top of this great rock, we will now look forward and as it is the direction we have to travel, may see something more cheerful to contemplate.

Do you see yon huge range of mountains some four or five miles to the west? Well, do you see that it is split asunder from the bottom to the top, a narrow and perpendicular opening of some 400 feet through solid granite rock? that little opening is called the “Devil’s Gate.” By looking very closely at the bottom of that opening you can discern a little silvery thread of water issuing from it. Now follow it down as it winds from side to side through green meadows; as it approaches the great rock upon which you stand; it is now almost beneath your feet, but still follow it; is it not beautiful as it pursues its “winding way” through the strip of green verdure which line its banks until it is lost to view behind that bare and rugged mountain which borders the head waters of the Platte. This river is truly a “diamond in the desert.” Look which way we will, it is a desert country, with high, lofty mountains rising abruptly from the level and sterile plains whose boundaries lie far beyond your vision. I hardly know of a more interesting spot than that on the top of Rock Independence. It is upon this elevation that one gets such a view of mountain, plain and river; such mountains, such plains and such a river are not frequently to be seen.

There were many persons upon this rock when we visited it; some musician had brought a violin and discoursed sweet music to those who participated in a dance upon this mountain stone. Our teams

39. G. C. Ingram of the Clark-Brown party wrote in his “Reminiscences”: “rock independence is a large granite rock that is very hard, so much so that a cold chisel had no effect on it hundreds of names was painted on the sides of it with tar by the emigrants; this was a great practice on the plains every buffalo skull along the road side was covered with the names of the emigrants, when you came across a tree (and that was not often) you could see the names written and cut in the bark.”
were among the multitude that were passing, admonishing us that
we, too, must be traveling, so taking a last look at the interesting
panorama before us, hastened onward, leaving this great rock under
whose broad shadow so many weary pilgrims had found relief from
the scorching rays of a desert sun, but before leaving dropped a
silent tear at the side of a little grave whose occupant, a little girl,
now lies sleeping beside. This “great rock in a weary land” a more
permanent tombstone could not have been erected; neither could
human hands have built a more durable one; there it will stand until
the “angel’s trumpet” shall call that little sleeper to gather flowers
upon greener fields.

Forced the river at this point, passed round the shoulder of the
great mountain and joined the little Sweetwater, and camped upon
its left bank, one mile above the “Devil’s Gate” and I am happy to
say, on tolerably good feed.

June 26.—After supper last evening myself and a companion con-
cluded to go down and get a closer view of the Devil’s Gate. After
walking a mile, fording the river and floundering over great rocks
and small ones, came to the great gap, which is in the neighborhood
of fifty yards wide, 400 feet in height and one-third of a mile
through. The low tide in the river at this time enabled us, by leap-
ing from rock to rock, to reach the center of the passage. Weird,
grand and gloomy rose the huge walls on either side, while the little
river, mad and furious, went tearing, hissing and foaming between
the great angular rocks that had from time to time fallen from
above and which now laid partly submerged beneath the angry
waters, produced a noise, confused and tumultuous, that would have
rivaled pandemonium itself. While contemplating this wild scene of
disorder, we had forgotten the outside world and wist not that
night, with its sable curtain, was enveloping us in darkness. It was
only by the light of the friendly moon that we found our way out
of this misnamed wonder—the Devil’s Gate.

Why this great opening should be so called I cannot comprehend;
the very name suggests something very uncomfortable, and an un-
easiness that many do not care to contemplate. While we were
within those walls no odor of sulphur was perceptible; no grumbling
of suffering humanity was heard; the master of the house, if there
was any, was conspicuously absent; no inscription over the door
warning all who would enter to “leave hope behind.” On the con-

10. “Devil's Gate, five miles above the Rock, is a singular fissure through which the Sweet
  Water forces its way. The walls are vertical, four hundred feet high, and composed of
  granite.”—Ware, op. cit., pp. 23, 24.
trary, the air is cool and refreshing; the establishment well ventilated; a full supply of water; with a healthy drainage of all the surplus. No power, but the power of the rod with which Moses smote the rock in the wilderness, could have sundered this great mountain and made it one of the wonders of the great American desert.

For 100 miles or more our road follows the meanderings of this river of the desert. A high and lofty range of mountains border the north side of this stream; to the left of the road lies the outstretched desert as bare of vegetation as the mountain rock to our right. I should have said "as innocent of grass as the mountain rock." The whole country is covered with the everlasting sage except the narrow strip of verdure bordering the Sweetwater. The road is dusty and we every now and then pass pools of alkali which make it very interesting to those who have loose cattle to drive. Camped at five o'clock near the river; poor grass, indifferent water, and no wood; but plenty of hungry teams. Many graves line the road we have traveled to-day.

June 27.—Onward, amid the sands of a seemingly interminable desert, the little strips of verdure along the river affords but a scanty sustenance to our hungry teams. Ten o'clock and we ford the river for the second time; at eleven we again ford it; the stream was so contracted at this place that we had to raise our wagon beds to keep the water from spoiling our stores. Twelve o'clock and the little river is again forded and now as we find better grass, go into camp. The river has been very crooked on the line of this day's travel which explains the fording of it so often. Passed many a huge boulder to-day covered with names, some of which dated many years back, which looked as fresh as the work of only yesterday. The hangman has again been at work; two graves near our camp; one contains the body of a man murdered, the other the body of the man murderer. An early camp gave me an opportunity to climb to an elevation overlooking the surrounding country. To my right is a wilderness of mountain scenery, wild, weird and forbidding; to the left and south a desert with here and there an isolated butte rising abruptly from the level plains whose boundaries lie far beyond our vision. From the west comes the little river with a fringe of green grass, a "diamond in the desert."

While preparing to leave this spot my vision was all at once greeted with the sight of a city resting upon the crest of the mountains to my right. Forgetting all else, home, wife and children, my
companions on the road, and forgetful of self, this vision of beauty, of grandeur and magnificence, pervaded my whole being. "Imperial Rome," (as I had been accustomed to think of it) sitting upon its seven hills, never outshone the grand picture before me. Palaces and dome-roofed churches, castles and towers, lofty walls and far reaching streets, standing clear out against the blue sky, a phantom city, above a desert waste, heedless of all my surroundings. I cannot say how long I was detained by this wonderful apparition; ten minutes perhaps, maybe twenty, I cannot tell; I only know I had lived almost a lifetime entranced with this manifestation of an almost unknown phenomena. Like the lake of clear waters, surrounded by trees and green meadows, I had seen a few days since, this capital city of delusion passed away and the rugged world, with its stern realities, I had again to contemplate.

June 28.—A company in our neighborhood lost forty head of cattle last night. The animals had been placed upon good grass but in the vicinity of alkali ponds, hence this great loss; the water in the river (as may be supposed running through an alkali district) is hardly drinkable. That found in the small lakes poisonous unto death to whatever living being that may partake of it. After leaving camp and traveling some two or three miles and rising a gentle slope described the Wind river range 41 of the great Rocky mountains, covered with snow. How grand they looked as pile above pile, their white peaks pierced the clouds and rose grandly above into the clear, blue sky, shutting out, as it were, the world itself beyond. There were dark masses of clouds resting upon the broad face of the great mountain but none so high as the everlasting peaks that rose so proudly above.

We were now in sight of the great ridge that divides the Atlantic from the Pacific. Nearly half of our long journey was accomplished and we could now see the great halfway mile stone and would soon be resting within its shadow. A woman whose husband had died a few days ago was deserted by her friends and left to travel among strangers; she was seen on the road to-day. Bravely the little woman and her three children pursued their way unmindful of the heartless crew who had left her behind; however, she soon found friends.

Fورد the river again to-day; put up near its banks and drove our teams into the mountains to feed. A company from Ohio visited us this evening; they were invited to a dance and accepted the invi-

41. The Wind River or Snowy mountains in Fremont county, Wyoming.
tation. A social time was had but I am sorry to say our long and wearisome journey prevents much agility with the "light fantastic toe."

June 29.—Over a hilly and broken country, the snow covered mountains the great feature in the landscape, if we may except the fresh made grave. I would that I could omit this latter feature in our every day’s wanderings, but silence on this subject, it seems to me, would be a neglect of sympathy for those who have "fallen by the way" and if, with a rude passing by I neglected to make a note of it, I should not be doing my duty to those friends who will wait and wait, until the heart grows sick for news of absent ones who are scattered along this great highway, sleeping in unknown graves.

June 30.—Poor grass, poor teams, and consequently poor travelers. Rolled out this morning early in order to make the Pacific Springs, where good grass was said to be in abundance. At two o’clock entered the South Pass of the Rocky mountains; 42 snow on every hand; the wind blew a winter’s gale, drifting the loose sand in clouds through the air. The Pass is quite level; so much so that it is hard for the traveler to locate the exact spot he can call the summit. After traveling a few miles, dodging great piles of snow that lie here and there, we began to descend and soon reached Pacific Springs; from them the water flowed westward. We were now upon the Pacific slope and felt rather lonesome. Took a walk upon a rising mound and from there bid farewell to the Atlantic. We have thus far traversed the water’s course from the Missouri to the Rocky mountains; we now bid it adieu to follow the water’s course from the same great mountain as it speeds its way to the great ocean of the west. It has been a hard task to climb to the elevation we now occupy. We were elevated on more ways than one. To say the great mountain is beneath one’s feet, and to have it there, is something; we felt a kind of proud satisfaction in walking to and fro. gazing at what we had toiled so hard to overcome. The atmosphere on the summit of so high a mountain is very cold; our camp fire has to be a large one, and to keep warm heavy coats are worn.

Dead cattle lie thick upon the road to-day; poisonous water and a scarcity of feed is killing them off by hundreds. It looks very hard to see the dumb animals go staggering along until strength forsakes their feeble bodies and they fall; five chances to one they never rise again. With a look of resignation they give up. If they are poisoned their misery is soon over; but if only starved and worn

42. From Stanbury’s calculations, the distance from Fort Laramie to South Pass was 286 miles.—Stanbury, op. cit., pp. 273-275. The altitude at the highest point was about 7,400 feet.—Horn, op. cit., p. 29.
out, they linger until the dead hours at night when the ferocious wolf
finishes the work man has neglected to do.

Saw a man and wife lying dangerously ill this afternoon; they
had partaken of too much poison. Little children lingered around
the tent door while anxious men and women were doing their best
to restore the almost dead unto life. Anywhere else, such scenes
would call the tear of sympathy, but here upon this road, I am
sorry to say, very little regard is manifested for any trouble that
may happen to man or beast. One day while traveling alone and
in advance of our train I overtook a little girl who had lingered far
behind her company. She was crying and as I took her into my
arms discovered her little feet bleeding by coming in contact with
the sharp, flint stones upon the road. I asked “why do you cry, do
your feet hurt you?” see how they bleed.” “No,” said she, “nothing
hurts me now; I lost my father and mother yesterday and I don’t
want to live any longer.” Then again a burst of anguish escaped
the sensitive child. I remembered my own little girls at home and
wished this little one was with them that they might comfort and be
to her as sisters and that she might also have another mother who
would deal kind and gently with the little orphan. I had placed
her in a wagon and while having heard the coarse, rough voice of a
woman chiding the little thing for giving people so much trouble
in looking after her, I turned and said: “My good woman, deal
kindly with that little girl; she needs sympathy, no scolding;” but
the only satisfaction I received, was, that people on this road ought
to have business enough of their own to attend to and let her’s alone.
Some days later, while passing a camp of emigrants, I was surprised
by a little girl running up and catching me by the hand, saying “how
do you do, don’t you know me?” I looked down and saw it was my
little friend of a few days ago. “Oh,” she said, “I have got another
good mother; come, come and see her.” Sure enough she had found
a sympathizing friend in the person of a young mother who had lost
an only child upon the road. The woman with the willing consent
of her young and manly looking husband had promised the little
orphan to be her mother. Ruth to Naomi, never looked more beauti-
ful than that kind woman when she pressed that little orphan to her
breast and called her her own. Death loses much of its sting when
angels soothe our sorrow. I went on my way rejoicing that I had
met humanity in its most lovely phase and that the good angels
are not always absent, even on this road.

July 1.—The absence of grass was a very interesting feature in the
landscape to-day. Our teams travel slowly; made but a few miles and put up without feed.

July 2.—Off early this morning as we must have feed or abandon our wagons. Have traveled seventy-five miles without seeing enough grass to stay the hunger of a lame mule. Those who pretend to know say it is forty miles yet to where an ox could get a living if he had nothing else to do. Wild sage covers the whole country, and for what purpose I cannot imagine. Some say it is more for ornament than use, but where the ornament comes in is a question with the most of us. A crooked gray stick about four to five feet high, with some branches and a diameter of one to two inches; in the absence of wood we manage to cook with it. It is about ten days’ travel to Salt Lake, where it is said grass grows plentifully.

Passed the forks of the road to-day. The right hand road is called the “cut off,” but why I cannot say. It is a continuation of the same road and on the same parallel with the road we have been traveling, passing to the north of Salt Lake and so on to California and Oregon; the left hand road leads to Fort Bridger, Salt Lake City and the great Salt Lake valley. A man stationed at the forks of the road is trying to persuade the emigrants to take the right hand trail. “Gentlemen,” says he, “men, women and teams are starving on the Salt Lake road. There is no grass for a hundred miles, the water is poor and poisonous, and if by any chance any of you should live to see Salt Lake the Mormons will rob and steal everything you have got, take your women and send you out of the country as bare as you came into the world.” The grand secret of this man’s persuasive eloquence was that he was the proprietor of a ferry and wanted as much travel over it as he could get. As we were not of the number he could persuade we proceeded on to Little Sandy river, where we went into camp.

July 3.—Twenty miles to Green river, which we made by three o’clock. Ferried the teams and traveled down the west bank to good feed. We intend to stop in this camp until after the 4th. Good feed, plenty of wood and excellent fishing, and as we are two or three miles from the main road we will not be bothered with neighbors.

July 4.—The mosquitoes are so bad that we are obliged to leave our last night’s encampment—leave the good grass, the tall timber

43. The trail to the right was Sublette’s or Greenwood’s cut-off. It was much used in the 1860’s, according to Ware, being a direct route to Bear river, in Utah, there joining the trail again for the journey northwest to Fort Hall.—Ware, op. cit., pp. 35, 36. Ghent, op. cit., p. 149, says this route “saved some fifty-three miles to the Bear River, but as the fifty miles from the Big Sandy to the Green was without water the route was generally avoided.”

44. Dewolf described this ford in 1849 thus: “Green river ford is about 15 rods wide & when we crossed it it was three feet deep, it is so handsome a stream as I ever saw, the water is of a greenish color but very clear.”—“Diary of the Overland Trail 1849 and Letters 1849-50 of Captain David Dewolf,” in Transactions of the Illinois State Historical Society for the Year 1855 (Publication No. 32), p. 208.
and the grateful shade. 45 It is the 4th of July and we expected to remain in camp and "celebrate." Our college friend had promised an oration, but that enemy of the human family was too much for us. The mosquito holds the fort and we are obliged to retire. Traveled twenty miles to Black's Fork of the Green river. The high elevation and the snow covered mountains with which we are surrounded make the weather very cold and a big fire is a necessity to-night.

July 5.—This is a day of rest to ourselves and to our hungry teams. Grass is plenty and the quality good. The boys are fishing, hunting and otherwise amusing themselves as best they can.

July 6.—With a good rest and well fed teams we traveled twenty miles. While preparing supper were visited by a storm of wind and hail lasting perhaps fifteen or twenty minutes—long enough to extinguish the fire, fill the cooking utensils with ice and demoralize the cook. The road to-day has been desolation itself; barren lands and lonely looking mountains meet the eye at every step, but aside from its desolate look and cheerless aspect it is a very interesting part of the world. Great mounds of earth rise up before us in all the various forms of architectural monuments. Here stands a magnificent church, there a castle, and yonder a monument as massive as the pyramids; it is only on a near approach that the dome of St. Peter's vanishes into thin air and Washington's capitol, with its lofty dome, becomes a ragged ridge of massive rock.

July 7.—Fifteen miles to Fort Bridger, 46 which we made by 3 o'clock. This place is situated on a plain surrounded by high mountains; a goodly stream of pure, cold water meanders through the valley, affording plenty of good fish as well as nourishment to the plain whose surface is covered with green grass of a luxuriant growth which affords plenty of good pasturage to hundreds of horses and cattle of whom Col. Bridger is said to be the owner. The residence of the colonel is of logs and forms a hollow square, the doors and windows opening into the court, to which we were admitted by a massive gate. 47 The cause for thus building a fort or fortified resi-

45. Lobenstein traveling in this same vicinity, on July 1, 1852, made this entry: "Left this encampment after having put in a horrible night with mosquitoes, bound for Fort Bridger, twenty miles from this spot."—Lobenstein, op. cit., p. 46.

46. Fort Bridger was established by James Bridger in 1843 as a "trading fort."—Alter, J. Cecil, James Bridger, Trapper, Frontiersman, Scout and Guide (Salt Lake City, Utah, Shepard Book Company, c1892), pp. 179, 182.

47. Ingram, in his "Reminiscences," wrote: "Col. Bridger had two large log houses in one he kept a store such things as the trappers needed which he exchanged for furs and skins. Bridger had two squares and several half hrets I saw him there, he was really and [sic] odd old genius he called the trappers the free men of the mountains, he said that they came in twice a year for supply, after they bought their supply they would have a good time getting drunk and gambling, they would stay until they were dead broke, some times they would gamble off their supplies and have to get trusted for supplies when they got trusted for supplies that they always came back and paid up. their was quite a number of them there when I was there."
dence was, I suppose, for defense against Mormons and Indians; the former appear to be always at variance, and the latter may become enemies at any time. Clothing, powder, lead, tobacco, whiskey and many other articles of merchandise are kept for sale within its walls. Horses, mules and cattle run at large and come and go as they choose, but make the fort their headquarters. The colonel is situated for making a large fortune independent of the trade with trappers and Indians. He is generally prepared to accommodate the pilgrim with a fresh horse, a yoke of oxen or a drink of whiskey. Our stay was short, but while there had the curiosity to examine his premises close enough to learn that the colonel was lord and master of two yellow skinned ladies and the acknowledged father of any number of boys and girls whose tawny complexion and intelligent look forbade the idea that they belonged exclusively to either the race of white or Indian. The family rooms of these ladies differ but little from the regular wigwam of the wild Indian. Dried meat, the horns of an antelope and a tomahawk garnished the walls; buffalo robes, bear skins, dirt, ashes, dogs and children were scattered promiscuously over the dirt floor.

The free men of the mountains are very numerous in this part of the country, many of whom never visit the states. Many have been driven from civilization for crimes which would make it dangerous for them to return, and many remain in the mountains from choice. The numerous privations and hair-breadth escapes which they experience appear to wed them to a country where they can, without let or hindrance, roam at pleasure. Many are met with whose heads are as white as the snow on Fremont's Peak, yet they feel like prolonging the romance of their lives until their feeble bodies are no longer fit for the chase and they lay themselves down to that sleep which on earth knows no awakening. We saw many of these men; they have a bold, fearless, dare-devil look; appear to be always on the alert. The habit of watching has become second nature and it is hard to surprise an old one with either words or movements; the rifle or revolver is always at hand and with them they are ever ready to defend themselves from any attack however sudden it may be.

July 8.—Our path to-day was over a very mountainous country. 48

48. "From Fort Bridger there are now two routes as far as the Humboldt or Mary's River, where they again unite. The old road strikes Bear River, follows down its valley by the Soda Springs to Fort Hall, whence it pursues a south-westerly course to the Humboldt. By this route a northing of nearly two degrees is made, and the road, consequently, is much lengthened.
Now and then green valleys and pure, cold water made us cheerful and contented; good grass here and there, but still scarce.

July 9.—Before leaving camp this morning we were visited by a lone pilgrim, a jolly, rollicking, pleasant faced young man of about twenty-five years; a good talker and, according to his story, a fast traveler, born and brought up somewhere in York state. He had taken a notion to visit California and Oregon, and having no money and being impatient of delay had started without it and beaten his way over steamboat and railway lines; reached St. Joe, Mo., about the middle of May; there he borrowed a small boat, worked his way over the river as a deck hand and landed on the high road leading to the great west and the Pacific ocean. From camp to camp, from train to train, he borrowed, begged or appropriated a sufficient supply of daily grub to keep him in running trim. His hat had fallen by the way; his coat, too warm to wear and too heavy to carry, was laid aside; shoes ground to dust and scattered to the four winds, and here he was, active as a cat and as fresh as an Amboy oyster, hatless, shoeless and without a coat, sunburned, travel stained, his long black hair wrestling with the morning breeze, he was a fit subject for the painter's pencil or the wild strains of the spring poet.

July 10.—Frost lay quite heavy on the ground this morning. We are now traveling over a mountainous country. Some of the ranges, it is said, are the highest on the road and covered with snow all the year, yet there are many little sunny valleys and springs of cold water, producing food for our teams and cheerfulness for ourselves. We camped near the Red Forks of Weber river. There are many mosquitoes here but the cold air of night will soon stop their humming.

July 11.—Bears are said to abound in this locality, but we have seen none. Our road is up and down and over great ridges; grass scarce and hard to find. Camped in a beautiful valley at the end of our day's run.

July 12.—Twenty miles from Salt Lake City, but the hardest road, we are told, on the whole route, a part of which lay up a small creek with seventeen crossings.49 I had never before seen such

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49. "From (Fort Bridger) . . . some difficult climbing to Bear River to the north was necessary; then the route led through Echo Canon. The Weber river was ascended and Salt Lake City was reached by way of Emigration Canon."—Hubert, A. B., Forty-Niners; the Chronicle of the California Trail (Boston, Little, Brown, and Company, 1921), p. 190.
a road; rocks to the right and left of us; rocks big and little, but by careful management we got over the road without an accident. Another mountain between us and Salt Lake City. It is not four miles long, yet long enough to take our teams nearly all the afternoon in reaching the summit; then locking the wheels of our wagons we began to descend the steepest, roughest and most unchristian-like road that man ever traveled. Good luck attended us and we alighted in safety and camped at the foot of the hill, where we had a full view of the tide of immigration as it came tumbling down the steep incline. Sometimes the wagons would take the lead and drag the teams after them until brought up by some great boulder, when wagon, oxen, women and children would tumble together in one confused mass, amid the wreck of which would soon be heard the cries of women, the screams of children and the swearing of men.

July 13.—Seven miles yet to the city of the Mormons, five of which we are to travel through a deep, dark canon whose walls are hundreds of feet in nearly perpendicular height, snow capped and wintry looking. Eight o'clock and we are on the borders of the great valley. Quarantine ground lies at the gate of this canon and here is a hospital, or what pretends to be one, established by Governor Young, where all, both great and small, Jew or Gentile, are obliged to report. Those who are well are privileged to continue their journey, but what they do with the sick or disabled I am unable to say. I saw none, and as the hospital building is barely large enough to hold the doctor, a barrel of whiskey and a few decanters, I can safely say there were no sick or disabled emigrants within its walls. The doctor was busily employed in dealing out whiskey and appeared to have a good run of custom in that way, but how many sick emigrants he attended to I did not stop to inquire.

Salt Lake City lies a few miles to the right and immediately on the verge of the valley, and thither we pursued our way over a good and beautiful road. It was a lovely morning and the busy hum and sight of civilization was charming, especially to those who, like us, had traveled so many hundreds of miles where the marks of civilized life were so few and far between. At twelve o'clock we made our way into the city of the great Salt Lake. The first thing I noticed was the little canals of water traversing every square, or nearly every square, in the city. The water is clear and cool and of sufficient volume to supply all the wants for which it was introduced. Every family has a good, large lot, and this water is mostly used for

50. Brigham Young, the Mormon leader.
irrigation. There being little or no rain in the summer season, people are obliged to water the earth to make it productive.

Salt Lake City has about 5,000 inhabitants, I should judge, and is beautifully situated on an inclined plane facing the broad valley and the west and immediately at the foot of the great range of mountains that borders the east line of Salt Lake valley, running north and south some 250 miles. Salt Lake lies in the northern portion of the valley and is about fifty or sixty miles long by thirty or forty miles in width. We made no stop in the city but pushed on to good grass and good water six or eight miles north of town, where we camped, intending to stop a few days and rest ourselves and recruit our teams. There are thousands of pilgrims in camp around and about us, who, like ourselves, are stopping for awhile to fix up things, swap horses, mules or oxen, see the city, get acquainted with these strange people, their manners, customs, etc.

July 15.—This should be a pleasant and desirable country to live in and in time will be densely populated. The Mormons are, I am told, extending their settlements through the country and in time will make it a flourishing part of the world. Coal, iron and perhaps gold are to be found in the mountains. Salt Lake valley is the great feature in this part of the world; the tired traveler as he emerges from the dark mountain gorges into the open valley is ready to hold up both hands and exclaim, “How beautiful!” How many thousands have rejoiced and cried for joy on first beholding this, (to them,) the land of Canaan; the poor, weary and disheartened have here found friends and comfort. The Mormons are ridiculed and disliked by many, yet they are good to their kind. When it has been known that companies of Mormons were in destitute circumstances, their stock giving out or that the snow was filling the pathway and they required help, their brethren were ever ready to send out men and teams to bring them in when all hope by their own exertions had failed.

It is admitted by all that the Mormons are a brave people; indeed, any people who can leave a civilized country and comfortable homes and journey hundreds of miles over an almost unknown country, overcome savages, cross deep and rapid rivers and climb the highest mountains on the continent to have a peaceful home can honestly claim to be a brave people. If these people should continue to prosper as they have in the past they will soon become great. Salt Lake valley and the neighboring country will sustain an immense population. Many of these people are now comparatively wealthy—fine
AN EMIGRANT TRAIN OF THE 1860's

"Emigrant's Echo, 1867," was the notation on the original photograph in the Root collection. Echo Canyon was a picturesque but hazardous section of the emigrant's route between Fort Bridger and Salt Lake City. Members of the Clark-Brown party passed this way fifteen years earlier. Note that this is principally an ox-train. Two "period" chairs are visible in the first wagon.
The ambrotype from which this picture was reproduced is one of two in the Root collection showing Placerville scenes. Both were probably made the same year. John H. Clark helped rebuild the town in 1856 after a destructive fire (see p. 325). A sluice is in the foreground.
farms, well stocked with horses, cattle and pretty women. What
more they want to make them happy would be hard to tell. Salt
Lake City is the great half-way mile stone and resting place for the
California pilgrim. We enjoyed ourselves greatly; our teams were
on good grass and we were luxuriating on all the good things we
could get hold of. These were plentiful with the good people and
they were ever ready to exchange of the fat of the land for such
things as the emigrant could spare.

As we intend to remain in the valley a few days the boys are de-
termined to make the city their home for the time being, conse-
quently myself and one or two others are all that are in camp. Our
teams are to look after or perhaps the balance of us would be there
too. Salt Lake is a curiosity at all times, and especially during a
heavy emigration to California and Oregon. It is one fourth of July
holiday; nobody appears to be at work and all are anxious for a
trade. The Mormons are ever ready to make something off the
traveler, and the traveler is very anxious to exchange his lean and
worn out stock for fresh ones. However, the trading is mostly done
by the Mormons, who give what they please for the emigrants’ teams
and demand as much for their fresh stock as their consciences will
allow.

July 17.—The neighbors came into camp anxious to purchase cand-
dles, soap, tea, sugar and matches, all of which we can spare a little
and get a good price. We buy of the neighbors all kinds of vegeta-
tables and get some of the smartest looking women among them to
make our bread. Vegetables were quite cheap when we first came
in, but have raised fifty percent since. In looking around among
the neighbors to-day I found an old acquaintance in the person of an
old lady, who, with her husband and one daughter, joined the Mor-
mons in Cincinnati and came out to Salt Lake; in a year or two the
husband became disgusted with the church and with the president
in particular; he concluded to leave, the old lady and daughter re-
main ing behind, both of whom are now the property of an old chap
who boasts of being able to support two women and have something
left at the end of the term. As the women do most of the work on
the farm I guess the old man is about right; they appear to be com-
fortable, but it looks like a rather mixed concern to see mother and
daughter both wives of the same person. Matrimony is a big thing
in this country, and would astonish the outside world if it knew all.

As I was on a visiting tour among the neighbors, I called at a
house where three women belonged to one man. These women were
all young and all had children. The father of this young brood is a yankee from the state of Maine, a sailor by profession; he was in the west at the time of the departure of the Mormons for Salt Lake and concluded to join his fortunes with their’s and come too. Before they had arrived at their destination he had married two wives and soon after getting here was sealed to a third. Being a shrewd kind of a fellow he had located a farm in this neighborhood and, as he told me, was trying the experiment of building up a farm and raising a family. He has now a good farm well improved, and well stocked with cattle; three wives and nine children and not a soul on the place over twenty-seven years of age. If his “experiment” is not a success, I do not think it is his fault. I asked him how he managed so many women and how he kept track of so many children. “Oh that is easy enough; I give them plenty of work to do and if they have any difficulty among themselves that is their business, not mine; I don’t bother with it. As to the children, I keep a record of the number, date of ages, etc., and the women do the rest. Every child is supposed to know its own mother and that makes it easy on the women.” “Are there many in the neighborhood that have more than one wife?” I asked. “Yes there are a good many; but then there are a good many who are green enough to get along with only one. Poor fellows, they have to do all their own work and have a hard time of it.” “Does the church encourage plurality of wives?” I asked. “Oh yes, they tell us to marry early and often; ‘multiply and replenish the earth’ is a Bible command, you know, and we are trying to live up to it.” “I suppose you know it is not lawful to have more than one wife,” I said to him. “No,” said he; “I don’t know any such thing. The Bible and the church is law enough for me and I don’t care for any other.”

July 19.—Went this morning to mail my letter and to see the city and Brigham Young. The city is quite an ordinary looking place; may compare with the country towns of Illinois and Indiana or Missouri. The buildings are mostly frames with now and then an adobe, or sun-dried brick. The court house and one or two other buildings are of burnt brick. The city is clean, snug and cosy; the people plain and very common kind of folks. My desire was to see the great man, Brigham Young, and to compare him with the Brigham I had often heard preach twenty-five years ago when he was but a common man and an ordinary preacher. I had not long to wait; he came out of a business house and stopped on the sidewalk with some friends long enough for me to see that with age, he had
grown stouter and broader and his hair more gray, otherwise he appeared to be but little changed.

Brigham Young is a king among men; smart as the smartest; ambitious as a politician, bold, daring and aggressive; unscrupulous and tyrannical; born to command and he has made the most of his abilities and his opportunities. His word is law to these people and they obey without a murmur. No other man perhaps could have led them so far from civilization and planted them so happily in this far-off, beautiful and fertile valley. They owe everything to his guidance and his wisdom; they plow, sow and reap. Under his watchful care their heroism and industry are inspired by his master mind. Without him they would be lost, but with him they defy the laws of their country, trample under foot all decency and all the virtues of an honest life. For him they would steal, rob and murder. They have an organization they call the Danites or “destroying angels,” ready at any moment to fight Indians and all the outside world. They strictly believe that Brigham is a prophet of the most high, and his teachings will, if followed, insure them a good time in this life and a glorious one in the life to come.

Like Moses, Brigham has led his people into a glorious land; a land desirable in almost every point of view; a land for flocks and herds, for grain, vegetables and fruit, a half-way house between the Atlantic and Pacific; a store house for all the mountain region north, south, east and west; a Palmyra in the wilderness. For beauty and comfort it has no rival and no equal in all this broad land.

I have learned that the government intends to regulate the matrimonial affairs of this people. If the attempt is made, heroic measures will have to be resorted to. These people will fight like Turks rather than give up the religious privilege of keeping many wives. The church has encouraged the institution and almost made it a sacred duty for man to take as many wives as he can possibly accommodate.

Remained in the city all day, mailed my letters, got a good dinner, and returned to camp.

July 21.—Fixing up for another tramp. I guess we shall be off to-morrow.

July 22.—Having bought fresh teams and sold some worn out stock we are now about ready for the road again, and as we have all horse and mule teams expect to make faster time.51 Our road

51. "The day after we arrived [at Salt Lake City] we traded four yoke of cattle for two mules—even up to our Oxen was foot sore and wore out. . . . We named one Jo Smith and the other Brigham Young and they were a daisy pair."—Ingris, G. C., "Reminiscences."
for the next fifty or seventy-five miles lies within Salt Lake valley; made twenty miles to camp and good water.

July 23.—Weber river five miles distant. Some of us left camp early to fish in that stream, but, like many a former effort to catch fish in these rapid running streams our enterprise was a failure. Weber river is quite a stream as it issues from the mountain gorge, but loses itself beneath the soil before reaching Salt Lake. Good farms and many improvements line the way of our journey; camp fifty miles north of Salt Lake city.

July 24.—Still traveling up the valley, the mountains to our right and Salt Lake to the left; camped this evening upon the banks of Bear river. This is quite a stream, fordable in low water. We could have passed over quite comfortably had not the Mormons dug great holes at the crossing to keep us from doing so. These Mormons are a thrifty set. To ruin a public ford on a great highway and establish a ferry where they could charge three dollars per wagon for crossing a stream fifty yards wide, was a stroke of financial policy not to be ignored by this enterprising people.

Three rivers empty their waters into the great Salt Lake; the Jordan, Weber and Bear rivers. The former rises in or at the south end of the great valley which it waters its entire length to its termination at the great Salt Lake. Weber river enters the valley from the mountains east of Salt Lake and fifty miles north of the city. Bear river rises in the mountains of the same name east and south of Fort Bridger, winds around and through the great mountains and enters Salt Lake valley at its extreme northeast corner. There may be other streams that flow into the great Lake, but those three must be the principal ones.

On our travels yesterday and to-day met many people going to Salt Lake city; the 25th of July is the anniversary of the settlement of Salt Lake; a great day with the Mormons, when all who can, gather to the city where a kind of jubilee is held and everybody eats, drinks and makes merry; preaching, singing and giving praise to the Lord for his great mercy in delivering them from the Gentile world and establishing the only true church in this (to them) the land of Canaan. The Mormons have used us well enough and therefore can have (for ourselves) no fault to find; but I am sorry to say,

52. "It was sixty miles through the Mormon settlement. All through this settlement they could irrigate their land from the little streams that came down from the mountains the land laid just sloping enough so it was just right for the water to cover it nicely. the settlers raised grain corn and vegetables and as long as we were in the settlements we could buy all the milk, butter and vegetables we wanted at reasonable rates."—Ibid.
there are many hard stories related of these strange people that would in any other civilized community be hard to believe.

July 25.—Crossed Bear river this morning on boats provided by the Mormons,53 three dollars per wagon, the usual rates for such service in Salt Lake valley. But we had the privilege of swimming our horses and mules thrown into the bargain, a privilege we were not very thankful for, but glad to make our departure from this part of the world with as little delay as possible; did not stand upon trifles. Visiting Salt Lake valley and city was something like taking in the Irishman's show; it cost nothing to get in, but a good deal to get out. Passed out to camp at the north end of the valley and on the side of the great mountain that overlooks the great Salt Lake and the valley beyond. From this point we take our farewell view of the great basin. A more magnificent scene can hardly be imagined than is now before us, the broad and extended valley surrounded by lofty mountains. The great Lake glistening beneath the broad rays of a July sun presents a scene hardly to be forgotten.

July 26.—Traveled all night and are laying by to-day. The scarcity of water for the first twenty miles out of Salt Lake valley was the cause of our doing so. This night travel is a bad business; breaks in upon our system of work and is hurtful to ourselves and teams; night is the time for sleep and rest. Had a full moon during the night but the dark and sombre shadows of the great mountains made gloomy traveling. Rough, stony roads, up and down hill, winding round great rocks, threading the steep mountain sides, is not an interesting way of traveling in an unknown country; however, we made about twenty miles but went into camp tired, hungry and sleepy. A stream of sluggish water six feet wide and five feet deep, lined with green willow, stretching its serpentine course through a narrow valley covered with sage brush. Lofty mountains loom up in all directions. Snow here and there upon their rugged sides look down upon a hard looking set of travelers.

July 27.—Soon after leaving camp we passed the sink of the stream above noted. All the streams in this neighborhood sink into the sands of the desert. Twenty miles to a stream of pure cold water; it came, leaping and tumbling down the steep side of a great mountain whose far-off summit was covered with snow. This stream was alive with mountain trout. It looked rather odd to see men go up hill to fish. We made our camp near the shore of this creek, turned

53. "From the crossing, the emigrant road pursues a W. N. W. course, until it intersects that from Fort Hall."—Slabosky, op. cit., p. 87.
our teams out to poor feed and poor prospects of getting any better soon. This is a rough, barren country, very mountainous, ill-shaped and desolate. Passed an old acquaintance on the road to-day; we had helped to bury his only child at the beginning of this journey; he was now again the father of a "bouncing boy" a few days old, and was, as may be supposed, a happy man. The nights are quite cool in this high region of country; wood scarce and a long way to carry.

July 28.—Twelve miles to Decatur creek 54 which we made by 11 o'clock in the forenoon; passed up some six miles and went into camp. Our great trouble is how to get feed for our hungry teams; we drive from one to three miles from camp to find it, but it is always a little better "farther on."

The stream like the one we left this morning is filled with fish, the only redeeming feature about the whole country. The streams of water in this neighborhood have but a brief existence; they rise in some mountain summit, flow down into a valley, run a short distance over the desert sand and sink from sight.

July 29.—Five miles to the junction of the Salt Lake and cut-off roads. 55 It will be remembered that we left the cut-off one hundred miles east of Salt Lake valley. The emigration is now all on one road; this continues to be a hilly and rough country. Our pathway down to Goose creek valley was so steep that many persons attached small trees to their wagons as a help to let them down easy. We were in too big a hurry so let our wagons slide with the two hind wheels rough-locked; we gained the bottom as soon as the best of them, but our drivers and teams got mixed up somewhat and a great deal demoralized. One driver started down hill on the wagon box but landed at the bottom on top of the lead mule; another slid off his box sideways but kept going down, down, until the bottom was reached.

Goose creek rises somewhere to the southwest of our present camp and running northeast mingles its waters with the Snake river of Oregon.

54. Clark probably meant Decassure creek, which was another name given to Raft river. See editorial note of E. M. Ledyard in Loomis, L. V., A Journal of the Birmingham Emigrating Company (Salt Lake City, Utah, 1928), p. 72.

55. Probably the junction of the Salt Lake trail with the California or Fort Hall road, rather than with the cut-off. Hudspeth's (Hudspeth's, etc.) or Myres' cut-off branched from the main trail on the other side of Fort Hall in the vicinity of Soda Springs, passed south of the fort and joined the California road near the last crossing of Raft river. The usual junction with the Salt Lake trail was some twenty or thirty miles farther along the road. Dutton, traveling on Hudspeth's cut-off, mentioned joining the California road shortly after crossing the Raft river, then, after a journey of twenty to twenty-five miles coming to the Salt Lake trail junction.—Dutton, Jerome, "Across the Plains in 1850," in The Annals of Iowa, Third Series, v. IX, p. 470. George W. Read gave the latter distance as thirty-one miles.—Read, Georgia W., ed., A Pioneer of 1850: George Willis Read, 1819-1880 (Boston, Little, Brown, and Company, 1907), p. 77.
July 30.—The main road of this valley is with but few exceptions very good; the exceptions, however, are the most miserable we have as yet encountered; especially at the crossing of tributary streams. At some of them had to leave the main road and travel miles to avoid getting stuck in the mire and slush of the valley. A mule we purchased in Salt Lake has a habit of lying down on every damp spot he travels over. In passing through a mud hole this afternoon he took it into his head to lie down and rest; a wagon standing in the middle of a great mud hole with one mule before it standing up and another with his head just above the surface was a scene not often witnessed in Goose creek valley. What good feeling the mud and water gives the brute is a mystery known only to himself.

July 31.—Left Goose creek valley this morning and over a mountainous country to camp in a dry valley, destitute of water, a scarcity of wood and some good grass; by digging from four to six feet we found plenty of water.

Aug. 1.—Passed Dana’s train from Cincinnati this morning. This train had the start of us two weeks; was now laying up and the men discouraged and disorganized; they will now be more so than ever seeing that we are getting along so much faster. Camped at the end of a six-mile journey; better grass, plenty of wood and excellent water. Wood, water and grass are all staple articles on this road.

Aug. 2.—Passed over mountains to the head waters of Humboldt river. This river, I believe, was discovered by the German explorer Humboldt.56 The old philosopher left his name in a wild country, but to him it may have been an interesting one; good grass, plenty of water and the wild sage for fuel. We camp at the spring from which issues this river of the desert; the spring is six feet in diameter and six feet deep.57 At the bottom lies a big sheet iron stove thrown there by someone who had got tired of hauling it, I suppose. We are now encamped at the headwaters of the dreadful Humboldt of which such hard stories have been circulated on the road. The Indians it is said have committed many outrages upon this river, are very wild and treacherous, killing pilgrims and stealing stock.58 We hear a good deal more than we can believe. If there are not men enough on this road to defend themselves from Indians, it is time

56. Fremont gave the river this name in 1845. It was earlier known as Ogden’s river (for Peter Skene Ogden), also as Mary’s river. The latter name appears in many early overland journals.

57. Humboldt wells.

58. “From the forks of the [Humboldt] river to the ‘sink,’ the mountains are peopled by a race of Indians of the most thievish propensities, requiring, on the part of the emigrant, utmost vigilance, to prevent their stealing and killing their teams, &c. Their practice is to disable cattle, so as to make it necessary for the emigrant to leave them on the road.—Be always prepared to resist their attacks.”—Ware, op. cit., pp. 82, 83.
we all knew it. There is more danger of bad water and a scarcity of grass, than anything else, I think. Our present camp is a very pleasant one; a broad valley stretching westward with low-lying hills on either side is more suggestive of peace and quietude than the wild yell of the savage or the midnight howl of the prowling wolf.

Aug. 3.—A dark, cloudy morning, but good roads to the north fork of the Humboldt, twelve miles from camp. Camped for noon and while eating dinner an old cow passed with an arrow hanging to her side; this looks something like Indians. The owner told us the Indians had stampeded his stock last night, some of which they had got away with. We shall be obliged to keep our stock more careful after this.

Aug. 4.—Heavy rains to-day; a very unusual thing it is said at this time of year in this valley. Saw many newly-made graves on the road to-day; we were in hopes that the immigration was getting better, but sickness and death still lingers on our pathway. The wheeling has been heavy, and our teams when night came, were very tired. Our camp to-night is a comfortable one; grass quite good, water not the best, our wood the green willow that skirts the river’s edge. This is a country of sage brush and alkali water; the little river winds from side to side of this broad valley, a sluggish and lazy stream. Our road runs from point to point, touching its elbows once or twice during a day’s travel. Snow here and there on the summits of some of the higher mountains, but generally a great way off from the line of travel.

Aug. 5.—The terminus of the first valley of the Humboldt river is reached to-day. This, the eastern section of the valley is said to be seventy-five miles in length and here, too, is the junction of a southern road from Salt Lake city.\(^5\) No wagons, I believe, are hauled over this road; the road is too sandy and the water too scarce to make it comfortable to travel by wheel. Our road this afternoon is up a steep mountain side seven miles long; the steepest, roughest, and most desolate road that can be imagined. The mountains that border this valley are looking very old. I think they must have been the first created, bald and hoary headed, ragged and torn to pieces, have a decrepit and worn-out look, suggestive of old times and old associations. It makes a man lonesome and homesick to contemplate their forlorn, deserted and uncanny appearance. Stunted and scattered cedar trees, broken down by the snows and wild winds of the winter season, gives them a sort of ghost-like appearance that

\(^5\) Probably the end of the Hastings cut-off from Salt Lake City.
makes one shudder to behold. The mountain we are crossing to-day stands at right angles with our road and cuts the valley of the Humboldt into two separate divisions, making an upper and lower Humboldt valley. We camp to-night on the summit of this great mountain; tired, hungry and disappointed, we pitch our tents beside a spring of good water, but of so scant a volume that we can give no drink to our thirsty and half famished animals. This has been a hard afternoon to ourselves and teams; seven miles of a continuous rise and many places so abrupt that it took all the strength of men and teams to overcome the difficulties of the way. We were more fortunate than many of our neighbors; we lost no stock in making the summit of this difficult road; we counted eight or ten horses and two or three mules that failed to make the journey. The scenery at this place is wild, desolate and forbidding, without a spark of romance to enliven our spirits. Everything about us has a look of stubborn fact that is as easy to realize as to count one's fingers. No wood, no grass and but a scanty supply of water; all is rock, rock, rock, as bare of vegetation as a sterile rock can be; some little sage brush grew near the spring; these we gathered and warmed our coffee.

Aug. 6.—Left our mountain camp quite early; it was now all down hill for some eight or ten miles and over a terrible rough and stony road to the Humboldt river which had left its usual course to avoid the great mountain. The weather is getting very warm in this valley; our teams and ourselves have suffered by the heat and dust; camped on good grass, water warm and poor, and our wood the green willow.

Aug. 7.—Stony Point is a spur of a ragged-edged mountain that loses itself in the valley of the Humboldt over this spur and down again to a twenty mile desert to the great meadows of the Humboldt; here we camp to give our teams feed and rest.

Aug. 8.—Remained in camp to-day; the grass too good to leave until our weary and hungry teams are satisfied; a warm and uncomfortable day.

Aug. 9.—Out early, good roads and recruited animals. It is in this neighborhood that this valley—the Humboldt—assumes to its fullest extent that destitute, desolate and barren appearance for which it is so notorious. The valley is from five to fifteen miles in width, the little river like a serpent, windits slow length from side to side, skirted by a narrow strip of grass, and a mere fringe of green willow that shades its waters. Were it not for the grass and

60. Lassen's meadows named for Peter Lassen, early California rancher.
green willow, the river would for most of the time be lost to view. We travel for days and days nearly up to our boot tops in fine sand and dust and when the wind blows with any degree of force, the air as well as the road is full of it. The sun at such times sends but a faint and sickly ray to cheer the weary pilgrim upon this, the most uncomfortable looking road we have as yet traversed. As this river is so crooked we camp only at its elbows; our road for the most part, runs from point to point; we traverse its southern shore for most of the way, and have as yet crossed no tributary stream. There are springs and streams of good water that have their source high up in the mountains, but the thirsty desert swallows every drop before reaching the road or the river.

Aug. 10.—Another desert of twenty miles without wood, water or grass, the road knee-deep with sand and dust and were it not for the high mountains on our left, with snow here and there upon their sides and summits the scene would have been desolation itself. There was just sufficient air stirring to raise the light dust which filled the air we breathed, and darkening the sun, made gloomy traveling; but looking upwards to the snow-capped hills as they seemed to preside over this scene of desolation we hurried on with more cheerful steps and at last reached the river's brink with thirsty stomachs and wearied limbs, but only to drink of the warm, sluggish and half-poisonous water. A little below they were burying a person who had died while the passage of this dreary stretch was being made. A hot and darkened atmosphere, a desert plain, a small and sluggish stream of water with a burial upon its banks, gave no one a very favorable impression of the cheerfulness of the scene around him; yet, there was not wanting a lively one, for the famished teams as they came in, one after another, plunged into the middle of the stream to slake their thirst and cool their wearied frames, made quite a lively time.

Aug. 11.—Our journey begins to tell on the strength of our animals; hot, sultry and disagreeable; made a few miles to a little spot of green grass.

Aug. 12.—Traveled twenty miles to-day and put up on poor grass, poor water and green willow; it is hard telling which make the best fire—green willow or green sage-brush.

Aug. 13.—A desert of twenty-five miles has been traveled over to-day and under a hot, broiling sun. Its scorching rays appeared to penetrate through our hats. Our feet coming in contact with the hot sand felt like burning up. Our great want, now is: water!
water!! water!!! good spring water, good well water, good snow
water, good river water. Our dreams are of water, clear and cold,
spouting from the earth like a geyser; the mountain streams that
come tumbling over the great boulders, making a noise like the rush
of "many waters," are a part of our midnight visions. Our ears are
sometimes greeted with the groans and grumbles of the old ancient
well sweep as it lifts the "moss-covered bucket" full to overflowing
with the sparkling water. We remember every good spring we ever
visited, whether away back in the old home in the Jersey's or in
more recent years, while wandering among the lakes and dells of the
far off Minnesota's. It must not be inferred by reading the above,
that we are now destitute of water—far from it. We are somewhat
like the cast away sailor when he had "water, water, everywhere,
but not a drop to drink." We have a river to draw from, but such
water—warm as fresh milk, and impregnated with alkali and a taste
of salt to such a degree that we cannot use it until after the poison
is killed by heating. We boil all the water we drink, and then it is
barely fit for use. Sometimes we find a spring near the river's edge
and among the tall wild grass, and if it is full of snakes, frogs and
other reptiles, it is all right. We drive them out, and take a drink
ourselves; but if the water looks black, and we can find no water
varmint, not even a snake, we let it alone. It would be like the
Disciple's pot, "there would be death in it." Bad water and hard
grub, makes one or two of the boys grumble some; they cannot see
why we cannot have "fresh steak once in awhile," and for variety,
spring chickens once or twice a week. Soup and fresh vegetables
would prevent scurvy; there are many things they could name that
are "conspicuously absent from our daily fare." However, I must
say that the boys, as a general thing, have stood up to the inevitable
bravely. We continue to have as good coffee as the water will make;
our hard bread keeps good and the domestic manufacture is very
fair, considering our inability to make it to suit all hands. We have
good bacon, sugar, rice, dried fruit, etc. If we had as good feed
for our animals as we have for ourselves, we should be content.

Aug. 14.—Another stretch of eight miles over a sandy waste. This
deep sand and heavy traveling is killing our beasts. Hard indeed
must be the feelings of humanity that has no sympathy for the poor,
patient animals as they toil on, day after day, through sand knee-
depth, suffering for the want of good water, and when the toil of
the day is over are often turned out to feed on nothing but green willow
or perhaps tear from the dry earth roots from which the grass has been nipped by some more fortunate horse or mule.

In passing through a long, deep mudhole to-day our Salt Lake mule, as usual, laid down to take a rest, and as it happened the wagon to which he was attached was a long way behind, and consequently no help at hand. How to get the mule out of the mud and water and proceed on our journey was a question with the driver and myself hard to solve. However, we had but little time before a young and sturdy-looking chap rode up on a big strong mule and made inquiry as to what we were doing in that kind of a fix. Our driver gave him all the necessary information as to the habits and antecedents of our delinquent mule and wound up by telling him that the captain had purchased the brute at Salt Lake and that he had been a trouble to us ever since, and for his part he wished the d—d thing was dead. The young stranger laughed at the young man’s calamity but promised for a drink of good brandy not only to help [him] out of his present difficulty, but to cure our tricky mule of the bad habit of laying down on every soft spot he met with on the road. It is needless to say that a bargain was soon struck; our festive mule was stripped naked, one end of a lariat belonging to the stranger was passed around his neck, the other end to the horn of its owner’s saddle and away he went, dragging the unfortunate mule through the slush and water almost at a 2:40 gait. However, that kind of locomotion did not suit our delinquent friend; he soon began to hunt for his feet and in spite of the rate of speed he was traveling was soon up and on all fours, alongside his tormentor. The fun was now up and our friend had the mule back, hitched him up and drove through a stretch of a half mile mudhole without any further difficulty. A good swig of brandy from the big jug and our bargain concluded; the stranger went on his way rejoicing and our driver drove into camp a happy man.

A mule is a mule, the world over I guess; their peculiarities are many and so different from all other animals that man is often at a loss to comprehend them. At what period in the world’s history he made his advent upon earth it would take a better historian than myself to say; “no pride of ancestry and no hope of parentage,” a living phenomena of man’s inventive genius; good to do the bidding of his master, hardy in the performance of his task, easy to manage and not expensive to keep. As a rustler I have not seen his equal; he can strip a cottonwood in less time than a truant school boy can shed his trousers at the edge of a swim pond; very particular about
water, would rather go dry all day than touch water that a horse or
an ox would delight in, but when hungry will eat anything within
reach; tear the roots of grass from the astonished earth after the
blades have long since disappeared; have known him to attempt a half
worn-out boot belonging and attached to a weary and sleeping pil-
grim. Except the grease wood and sage brush there is nothing edible
that I know of that he will not eat; in some respects he is an un-
gainly and rough brute, his ears out of all proportion to his heels;
head rough and ungainly but with an eye as mild as a lamb and
twice as innocent, except when he is out of humor, when they are
dangerous even to look at. It is said that a "mule never dies"; I do
not know how that is as I never saw a dead one, but have seen his
heels very lively when I thought their owner half dead with hunger
and hard work. Take him all in all, the mule is a peculiar animal,
good and bad, according to his whims; "but, with all thy faults we
have thee still."

A cloud-burst occurred in the mountains yesterday, the only guess
work of the amount of water fall is in the amount of debris brought
down by the rushing flood; great boulders ten feet in diameter rolled
out of some of the ravines on to the level valley lands, a distance of
hundreds of yards from their starting point, while gravel, mud and
slime covered the plain from one to two feet in depth; it was in that
mud and slime that our Mormon mule refused to travel.

Aug. 15.—Traveled all night over a desert to make the great
meadows of the Humboldt. Dust and sand as deep and as disagree-
able as ever. Were it not for the wild sage and grease wood those
who travel on foot could escape a great part of the dust, but as the
sage and grease wood stand so close and are so tall that it is im-
possible to pass through or over them, are compelled to keep the
beaten path, traveling or rather wading through the deep dust like
oxen pushing through the deep snow. Our night's journey kept us
until 8 o'clock this morning when we went into camp, turned out our
teams and ourselves to breakfast. No grass yet; hitched up again
and moved down to good grass and better water; both water and
grass are only good by comparison. The spring from which we draw
our water is located at the river's edge and consequently is not much
better than river water; but it is a spring and therefore some help
to the imagination. Thousands of persons are filling their water
barrels at this spring to enable them to cross the forty miles of desert
yet to overcome before reaching Carson river. Some of our animals
have fallen to the ground since we have turned them out; poisoned
by alkali maybe; if not by alkali, have been by hard traveling and short feed which amounts to the same thing. To see our animals stumbling and falling to the ground is not very agreeable to contemplate; we shall give them a day’s rest and if possible, get better water for them to drink.

Aug. 16.—We are now at the end of our journey of the Humboldt river. Here she sinks 61 beneath the sands of the great desert, but before she is lost sight of forever, her waters spread out into a lake some six or eight miles in length by one and a half in breadth and were it not for its surroundings, would be a respectable sheet of water. 62 We are now encamped on the north side of this lake on a meadow as extensive as the lake itself. The grass is coarse, tall and heavy; what it lacks in nourishment is made up in abundance. We cut this grass and load our nearly empty wagons to furnish feed for our teams while crossing a forty mile desert stretching from the sink of the Humboldt to Carson river. As will be seen, by looking on a rude map of this country, the Humboldt and Carson rivers run in nearly opposite directions; the Humboldt from the east, the Carson from the west. The former rises on the elevated lands west of Salt Lake while the Carson has its source high up among the summit of the Sierra Nevada range of mountains that lay to the west.

Aug. 17.—We are now done with the Humboldt river. To-morrow morning we leave it (and, I had almost said) we hope forever; but there still lingers a desire to again traverse its meandering course through the great desert, but I need hardly say under more favorable circumstances. Were the Indians not troublesome the journey of the Humboldt could be easily made when there are but few people on the road. What grass there is, is very good and would sustain a moderate amount of travel. The water of the river and the springs near it is bad, but a party that had plenty of time could supply themselves from the neighboring mountains with the pure article. From the mountains east of Salt Lake to the Sierra Nevada on the west; from Oregon and the country east of it, to near Arizona on the south, this whole country is one vast basin. No rivers find their way to the sea, being walled in as it were, from the outside world. There are not wanting many beautiful scenes and cheerful locations, but as a whole, it is a cheerless and uncomfortable country, fit only for savage men and wild beasts.

Our camp to-day is in the full glare of an August sun; hot, sultry and wearisome; the range of broken and semi-round mountains that

61. Humboldt sink. Evaporation played a large part in the “disappearance” of the river.
62. Humboldt lake.
line the southern shore of the lake, adds to the desolate look that prevails everywhere within the reach of our visions. A prominent formation left by the storms of centuries on those ruined cliffs is called "the old man of the mountains." There he sits through the summer's heat, the winter's frost and snow, watching the centuries come, watching the centuries go; bald headed and eyes as bright as when the morning stars sang together. His appearance so venerable that if he had been found in the mountains of "Ararat" would no doubt have been taken for either Shem, Ham or Japheth. Long before the builders of the pyramids settled upon the banks of the luxuriant Nile this old man of the mountains began his weary and silent watch of the ages, waiting for this day and generation to see pass in review before his wondering gaze such a multitude of animated beings that his old eyes had never as yet seen or dreamed of. Still more astonished will the old man be when in a few more short years he sees the column of smoke by day, and the eyes of fire by night, come thundering down the sandy wastes of the Humboldt river and go swiftly by in a whirlwind of smoke, dust and cinders. Wait a little longer and the developments that are sure to come in the near future will so craze the ancient patriarch that he will fall from his high estate and his dust mingle with the crumbling ruins of the ancient land mark he now so proudly dominates.

Aug. 18.—To-day we make the last grand effort of this wearisome trip; this is considered the hardest bit of travel on the route, and consequently more preparation is made for the journey. We have grass and water on board for our teams which is now universally carried, the distance about forty miles. Very few animals that have made the travel of the Humboldt could endure the journey without some nourishment. Started about four o'clock in the morning, weather unusually cool and the roads good. About ten miles out the dead teams of '49 and '50, were seen scattered here and there upon the road. Very soon, however, they became more frequent and in a little while filled the entire roadside; mostly oxen, with here and there a horse and once in a while a mule. Wagons, wagon irons, ox chains, harness, rifles and indeed all the paraphernalia of an emigrant's "outfit" lay scattered along this notorious route, reminding one of the defeat of some great army. In many places the teams lay as they had fallen; poor beasts—they had struggled on over mountains, plains and through the sands of the barren deserts for days and weeks with but little or no food, but still with strength sufficient to make this their last effort to gain a haven of rest. Good
water and plenty of food lies just beyond; but alas, strength failed and here they lie, and sad memorials of a grand crusade to "the land of gold." Although dumb brutes and created for the use of man, I could not help but deplore their sad fate as there they laid in mute silence, marking our course through the great desert they had not the strength to cross.

Camped at ten o'clock in the forenoon, made coffee and gave our teams a little water and hay; while eating our dinner one of our stragglers came up and declared he had made one of the greatest discoveries of the age. He being a candid kind of a fellow, all hands were eager to hear of so great an event. "What was it?" was asked. "A dead mule." "Impossible" we all exclaimed; "a mule was never known to die." "Did you see the dead animal yourself?" we asked. "Yes I did, and I also saw a fellow tickle his heels with a long pole and he never budged and that is the surest sign on earth." We gave it up; a mule that could stand to have his heels trifled with and not resent it must surely be a dead one. After an hour's rest we were again on the road and traveled until near sundown. Camped and boiled our coffee with broken wagons that had been left on the road, gave our teams the remaining hay and water and pushed on again. So far our road has been good but from this out, ten miles, it is deep and heavy sand and consequently heavy traveling; as much as our fatigued teams can do to make any show of progress. But patience worketh many hard questions, and as we have a respectable supply as yet, I think it will last us through. Nine o'clock and as dark as hades; our teams just crawling and for fear they would stop of their own accord we called a halt, gave each animal a pound of hard bread and moved on. Ten o'clock, a bright, blazing fire that shot heavenward through the gloom in our rear, arrests our attention; it is a company of ten wagons which their owners despair of getting through, have concluded to desert; so hauling them up, side by side, set fire to the concern. A huge blaze of ten or fifteen minutes' duration, startled the astonished wilderness, revealing a long line of pilgrims, progressing slowly, but surely, toward the end of a hard day's work. The great fire has gone down and darkness again reigns triumphant. Could we but catch a view of the river with its volume of pure, cold water, 'twould be of some comfort. We are now within two miles of our destination and our teams have caught the fresh scent of pure, cold water, and it is as much as the tired pilgrim, who is on foot, can do to keep up. Eleven o'clock
and we are on the banks of the long-sought-for river 63 and more than all, at the end of a long and toilsome march. I never saw a dumb brute so eager for water as ours are to-night; they thrust their heads in water nearly up to their eyes, so eager are they to slake their thirst.

The passage of this desert would be no hard matter to old and experienced travelers well fixed, but to the untutored pilgrim, with worn-out teams, poor feed and bad water, it is a matter of some importance; the men who burnt their wagons for fear of not getting through were very foolish. In the morning they could have returned and brought them through with leisure. The men of '49 and '50 had some excuse for losing their teams and other property; the trail was new and the hardships unknown. They got into the difficulty and got out of it the best they could. To say that a train of wagons ten miles long and dead animals in sufficient numbers to pave a road the same distance, looks like a hard story, yet the pilgrim of '49, '50 or '52 can easily comprehend its truth. Most of the dead animals now lying on the desert have laid there since '49 and '50; the pure air of the desert has almost preserved them in their natural forms.

Aug. 19.—Moved over to an island and camped beneath the shade of tall timber. If ever man can appreciate large, tall timber, it is after traveling over a long and wearisome road in the absence of any kind of shelter, and where to hide one's self from the scorching heat of the midday sun he has to stoop and stick his head beneath stunted or slender willow or crawl beneath a wagon to lay amid the dust and sand to cool his heated and tired frame. Our camp is now in the green woods and beside a beautiful river. We can here drink and drink to our heart's content without fear that the poisonous waters will do us any harm. While traveling down the Humboldt, weary with fatigue and thirst we could take no satisfaction even at the river's brink, knowing that the more we drank of its poisonous waters the greater risk we ran of getting sick. It is a satisfaction to see our animals plunge into this stream and drink; for we know that the cooling and healthy beverage comes from the snow-capped peaks of the Sierra Nevada. Though so clear, so pure and so refreshing, it is destined to sink beneath the sands of the great desert. It seems a great pity that such a fine and noble river should lose itself in a country so barren and where good and pure water is so

63. Carson river, named for "Kit" Carson by Fremont in 1845.

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valuable. It is said that the Humboldt and Carson rivers sink within sixty miles of each other.

Remained in camp all day resting our teams and getting ready to move on the morrow; hunted and fished with some success; there is plenty of mountain trout in the streams and a variety of game on its banks.

It has been more healthy since leaving Salt Lake valley, yet there are graves here and there all along our route. A little grave yard containing half a dozen graves lies near our present camping ground. The occupants must have died while crossing the desert or immediately after; poor fellows; after all the toil of the long journey, here they lie in silent graves beside the beautiful river they toiled so hard to reach. Yet they have lived their life, and fulfilled their fate.

My greatest anxiety has been for the welfare of those who have been intrusted to my care. Several anxious mothers and sisters are now waiting to hear the result of this journey. If I should lose any of their boys, I am afraid I should be blamed for neglect of duty. Yet it is a hard matter to control the wild, wayward and the un-thoughtful youth.

Aug. 20.—We are on the road again this morning. It is now up stream instead of down; road good and good grass and plenty of tall timber skirting the banks of the river. Camped in a beautiful location; everything appears to wear a more cheerful aspect. We are now almost within the shades of the great mountain that divides us from the land of gold.

Aug. 21.—Made twelve miles of a desert road and put up on good grass. There is some desert country on this river, but only here and there a spot, and when they are once crossed good grass and good water are always found; and then the grateful shade beneath the tall timber is so inviting. Plenty of game of both birds and animals and good fish in the sparkling river. Our hunters and fishermen are busy all the way up.

Aug. 22.—Made twenty-four miles to-day and camped in a beautiful grove of tall timber. The road to-day has been full of footmen who have left their teams in order to make better time in getting over the mountains. The boys are getting in a hurry and anxious to be at work in the gold mines; in rather too much of a hurry I am afraid.

64. Another route from the "sink" followed the Truckee river to California. It was somewhat more popular.—See Ware, op. cit., footnote on p. 36.
Aug. 23.—Crossed the river for the second time and put up for
noon in a shady grove and beside the swift running stream. The
boys having killed a large rabbit and some wild fowl, determined to
have a pot pie; it was something of a job to make it, but made it
was, after a fashion. But if anybody could tell what it was, or how
it was made, he would be much wiser than those who ate it; for
never before did anyone see such a conglomeration of fresh meat,
fish, bacon and hard bread; but it was a change in the dull routine
of our every day fare, and that was something. Chinamen were
mining for gold at this place; they told us they were making from
two to six dollars per day to the man. We did not believe the story.
Here is also a trading post where vegetables, canned fruits, bacon,
flour, mining implements and bad whiskey are kept for sale. It
is but a small affair and established for the accommodation of the
few miners who are at work in the neighborhood and any transient
custom that may happen by.
Left the river at this point and crossed over the high lands and
over what is called Lime hill, composed of a white chalky substance
but as far as I could see resembled lime in nothing but its looks.
Met the river again at sundown and camped upon its banks.

Aug. 24.—We are now traveling through a beautiful country; land
good and plenty of timber, and grass in abundance. This neighbor-
hood will soon contain a large population; people are just beginning
to settle its fertile lands. It is said that cattle can be kept in this
valley all the year round upon grass alone. Passed some warm
springs this afternoon.

Aug. 25.—We are now traveling beneath the shadow of the great
Sierra Nevada; camped at noon near the mouth of Humboldt canon
and on a tributary of Carson river. It is up through this canon we
are to climb the great mountains; a dark lane-like passage, walled
on either side for hundreds of feet perpendicularly, is not an inviting
road to travel; but as there is only this one trail in the neighborhood
to make the ascent we bid adieu to the open country and follow a
small winding stream (a branch of the Carson river) that leads us
upwards and onwards over great boulders, crossing the little stream
every now and then and sometimes following its bed to avoid the

65. Carson river.
66. Possibly Genoa, Nev.
67. "Through this canon is the roughest road, I am persuaded to think, that ever a wagon
travelled over. The west branch of Carson river runs through this canon, which
you cross six times in passing up. At places there is just barely room for a wagon to pass
through between vertical rock, perpendicular 300 to 400 feet high. Other places you will
have to ascend and descend a solid smooth stone for several yards, almost perpendicular;
and again you must make your way for miles over rocks of an intolerable size for a wagon
to pass over. . . ."—Horn, op. cit., p. 50.
great rocks that have from time to time, fallen from the heights above and nearly filled the entire passage. The afternoon’s work was a hard one, but by industry and perseverance managed to make five or six miles. It was now nearly dark and a little wider space in the valley offering us room enough to spread our blankets and put up for the night. Huge rocks that had fallen from above lie around and about us. The little river is bounding from rock to rock, making a terrible noise as it vibrates high up on the rocky walls above us. It is here that the Indians have done some mischief, and might have stopped the entire travel by unbalancing the great rocks above and filling the narrow passage. Weird, wild, dark and noisy is our camping place to-night. The little valley about fifty yards in width is almost choked with big pine trees and boulder stone, some of the latter as large as a good sized house and gloomy enough to frighten a mule. The moon is shining on the outside world, but it never has, or ever can, penetrate this dark recess.

Aug. 26.—Eight o’clock and we are on our winding way over great boulders, fallen timber, and here and there a few rods of smooth roadway. The higher we ascend the more noisy the little stream becomes, leaping from rock to rock, mad with haste and foaming with impatience; clear as crystal, cold as ice, “a thing of beauty and a joy forever.” Nine o’clock; a break in the mountain wall on our left; we cross over a bridge and bid goodbye to the dark canon and the mountain stream. We are now in the sunshine and the outlook is more pleasant; but the road—if it can be called a road—is the worst on the continent I guess. Rocks four feet high and so close together [they] fill the entire roadway. We unhitch our teams, lead them through and over them to a place of smooth earth, then go back, pull [off] our coats and lift our wagons from rock to rock, a distance of several hundred yards. Again we are on a smooth surface, hitch up and drive on to “mountain camp.” Here is a meadow; a meadow in the mountain.68 We drive our stock into this meadow and build our camp fire for the balance of the day and night.

Aug. 27.—Teams well fed and to make a good day’s work started early; the way tolerable for two or three miles. Passed near a beautiful lake fringed with green grass; wild ducks and other fowls were flying about or disporting themselves on the little islands that set like gems upon its bosom. Soft, pleasant and tranquil, lay this beautiful sheet of clear, cold water. Immediately after passing the

68. Hope valley—so called by emigrants.
lake above described we came to the foot of an immense elevation. We first looked at the high, steep and rough mountain road, then at our teams, and lastly we looked at one another. However, it was no use looking; the work had to be done. To throw off our coats was the first move, to unhitch part of our teams and attach them to others was the next move, and when all was ready we began the steepest journey we had ever before attempted. The starting point was quite smooth and gradual, but the way soon became very steep and rocky; indeed, the rocks monopolized the entire surface of the great mountain, first one way, and then another, zigzag fashion. We slowly made our way towards the summit; every rock we lifted our wagons over made one the less before us. After two hours’ hard work lifting at the wheels, whipping our tired teams, and using language not becoming church members, we gained a resting place and well did we need one. If ever we had worked it was in the past two hours.

After a short rest we are again on the move; the way is now more smooth but very steep and crooked; a man to every wheel, and one to every horse and mule; a few steps and then a rest. As may be imagined, our progress was very slow, but as it was a sure one our teams and ourselves keep up a steady courage. Eleven o’clock came to a dead halt at the foot of a large, flat rock, smooth and so very steep that it is impossible for our teams to even stand upon it, much less to climb and haul a wagon over. Unhitched, led our animals around and above the steep incline, then attached a long rope to the end of our wagon tongue and hauled them up. The big end of our day’s work was now done; the worst for the day was over; made a few more hundred yards and stopped for dinner. At one o’clock rolled out again; the road is now passable, but here and there a steep grade to worry our worn-out teams. Camped for the night near the shores of Mountain Lake where the mules and horses fared well upon good mountain grass. This is a beautiful location; high, towering peaks surrounding a beautiful lake upon whose shores the green grass grows so beautifully and where the tall pine trees give such a welcome shade. There are many pilgrims lying around and about us feeding their teams and making preparations for climbing the second and last steep grade over these great mountains. The American river has its source in this neighborhood and winding round, through and over the great rocks of the Sierra Nevada, discharges its waters in the Sacramento river, near the city of the same name.
Aug. 28.—We soon got ready for our mountain excursion and started upward amid the tall pines and large rocks; the latter impeded our progress at first but the higher we ascend the scarcer they became until the way was quite smooth; yet it was a steep way to riches and "a hard road to travel." We left camp at 8 o'clock in the morning and at 10 o'clock passed on and above the snow line, great banks of which lay here and there along the roadway. At 12 o'clock we reached the summit of the road through a gap in the high ridge; three miles in four hours is not fast driving, but fast enough to kill our nearly worn-out animals. Thank fortune, we are now safe on the summit of the great mountain that has heretofore been a subject of so much anxiety.

Here is mountain scenery to our heart's content. Great banks of snow, large and sterile rocks encumber the ground, making crooked and winding roads for the tired pilgrim as he has ever and anon to turn this and that way in the pursuit of his journey. We have been three days climbing this mountain and have averaged perhaps eight or ten miles a day, making the distance from the Carson valley to the summit of these mountains from twenty-four to thirty miles. From the summit west to the Sacramento valley, it is said to be an hundred miles. Our road after leaving the summit inclined slightly to the west for some four or five miles; at the end of this journey went into camp near sundown at Tragedy Springs and drove our teams down into a great recess of the mountain to feed.

Aug. 29.—Our mules and horses managed to hide themselves this morning and were nowhere to be found until too late to move. We have all the way rested on the Sabbath when we could do so with comfort to ourselves and in justice to our animals. This camp was too cold for comfort, and could we have found our teams would have continued the journey. Here we began to notice the big timber; trees from six inches diameter to eight and nine feet through; tall, straight and comely; mostly pine, but here and there a cedar. Of the latter, I measured a hollow trunk eight feet inside.

Aug. 30.—Left camp early; road more down than up hill; stopped for dinner near a new-made grave, its occupant having been murdered and robbed a few days since. Put up at Camp creek; plenty of good wood and good water, but no grass for our teams.

Aug. 31.—Our teams fared badly last night and were poor travelers to-day. Our road up and down hill—more down than up, however. Made fifteen or twenty miles and went into camp. Here we found hay for sale at twenty-five cents per pound. Bought some for
our exhausted teams, but I am free to say, not enough to satisfy the hungry animals. Good horses, good mules and good oxen are everything on a journey like this. Job in his day, immortalized the horse and clothed his neck with thunder; but he was silent on the mule, and for what reason I am unable to say. If he had made this journey and had used the mule as a motive power, he would no doubt have done him justice and left to succeeding generations his testimony of the mule's virtues. For our part we love the patient and hardy animal; their ears do not seem half so long as they did at the commencement of this journey. In every way they appear more endurable; if one gets stubborn and kicks our hats off once in a while we let him kick, but are very careful to stop in his way no longer than we can get out of it. Oxen are very reliable, patient and enduring. Thousands of them have made the entire trip and stood it nobly; but they are more liable to get lame than either the horse or mule. They will drink the poisonous water at every opportunity, and many of them are lost in that way; but with good watching they will make the trip. One would think a dog would make the journey very easily, but of the thousands who made the attempt very few succeeded in getting through. Those who had valuable ones let them ride. I know of no dog that has made the entire trip on foot.

Sept. 1.—Left camp early; road good but very dusty. At four o'clock we caught sight of the city of Placerville; at five we put up at the Ohio House. Our teams are well fed and ourselves are eating a square meal. We are now in the center of the mining district. The change from the mountain wilderness to a city of five or six thousand inhabitants took us somewhat by surprise, but by careful conduct met with no disaster. Placerville is essentially a mining town, full of life, full of people and full of business. Our contract with the boys is to land them in Sacramento City or we should make this the terminus of our journey.

Sept. 2.—Again on the road but a rough, mountainous country to travel over. Three miles out we pass Diamond Springs, another mining town, but a very small one. Three miles farther upon the road we meet with "Mud Springs," still another mining camp and full of activity.

Sept. 3.—At ten o'clock from our mountain road we caught our first view of the great Sacramento valley. The scene was magnificent. There it laid, spread out as it were, beneath our feet as far as the eye could reach, north, south and west, a land of beauty and a
joy forever; a land of sunshine, of plenty, and of comfort. Stopped
at the 10 Mile House.

Sept. 4.—Only twelve miles to the end of our destination. Our
road now is side by side with the American river, a somewhat dif-
ferent stream than when we crossed it in the mountains. To our left
stands Sutter's Fort, an ancient and dilapidated-looking concern, all
gone, or going to decay. To our left is a grave yard where monu-
ments and tombstones stand like out-door sentinels to the entrance
of a great city. Soon the spires of churches and the masts of ship-
ning become visible. The breeze now brings the busy hum of the
city together with the voice of the steamboat bell, all old but fa-
miliar sounds. How earnestly did we gaze at the sight and signs of
civilization; from the first of May to the first of September we had
been wanderers in the wilderness; everything we heard or saw ap-
peared new. It was indeed a new world and we were, in reality, in
the midst of it. We had, as our looks indicated, crossed a continent,
but in crossing had nearly lost our nationality, for to the unpracticed
eye we looked more like Hungarians than American citizens. It was
only by the voice that the universal Yankee nation would have
recognized us as brethren of the same race. At 12 o'clock we entered
the city of Sacramento, dirty, dusty and hungry, our teams and our-
selves worn down with fatigue and looking for all the world like the
remnant of a disorganized army that had just escaped destruction.

In closing up I am happy to say that we brought every man and
every horse and mule safely through the long and tiresome journey.
We are now in California. No more traveling day after day; no
more standing watch by night. It is here that we separate from our
companions. The bond that held us together on the long and toil-
some road is canceled. Each individual has his own way to choose
and travel, whether for good or evil, time only will disclose. A shake
of the hand and a good-by and the company of C. and B. are
separated.