

Iowa to California in 1862

The Journal of Jane Holbrook Gould

EDITED BY PHILIP K. LACK

Mr. Lack, reared on a farm in Mitchell County near Orchard, Iowa, received his B.A. and M.A. from State College of Iowa and is presently teaching at the Riceville High School. Though his main fields are English and Latin, he has a fascinated interest in history, especially that involving journalistic accounts of Iowa beginning and settlement.

Jane Augusta Holbrook, born March 10, 1833, in Madison, Ohio, moved with her family to the now extinct town of Nelson, Mitchell County, Iowa, in 1851. Extant letters and writings of her mother, Eunice Augusta Newcomb, born in Greenwich, Mass., in 1812, demonstrate that the family was an educated one, capable in literary pursuits.

In 1852, Jane married at Garnavillo, Clayton County, Iowa, Albert L. Gould, son of Solomon Gould, a millwright and cabinet maker. They resided at Nelson, presumably on Jane's father's residence, the Holbrook farm in Douglas township, Mitchell County, from which place Jane, Albert and their two sons, George Albert and Frank Horace, aged eight and six, respectively, left on April 27, 1862, for California. Albert, ill for much of the trip, died February 21, 1863, five months after their arrival in California.

The Gould *Journal* will be published in four installments; the first portion appearing here is part of the exact copy of the journal made by Mrs. Eunice Holbrook, mother of Jane Holbrook Gould. Mrs. Holbrook's verbatim copy extends to July 26. She evidently did not finish copying the entire work. There is a complete typewritten copy of the journal, but it is in a somewhat condensed and altered form. Since the original has not been located or even found to be in existence, the typed or later part of the journal from July 26 to the end, October 8, 1862, will be included. Punctuation and spelling have been left as they appear in the original.

The Gould *Journal* is owned by Mrs. Milo Fink of Orchard, Iowa. Mrs. Fink, the former Dorothy E. Kruger and the grandniece of Jane Holbrook Gould, has submitted a copy of the journal to the permanent manuscript collection in the State Historical Library.

JOURNAL

Sunday—Ap. 27th 1862.—With my husband Albert L. Gould and our two boys, started from father Holbrook's and traveled through slough and over prairie in a southerly direction. At noon we found some hay in an old stack where our teams were fed; and we on till we came within four miles of Chickasaw village and camped for the night. We found grain and hay at a house near by and found ourselves quite comfortable. The mistress of the house offered us milk but our own cow gave us all we needed. Made a drive of fifteen miles to day.

Monday, 28th—Arose this morning early and breakfasted where we were. Gus Berlin went on first with our ox team. When we overtook him he had the wagon fast, under a tree which bowed itself over the road. Gus had driven under it without making due allowance for the height of the wagon cover. The men unhitched the team and fastening it to the back of the wagon drew it out, and made a circuitous route around the offending tree. To-day we passed through Chickasaw and Bradford to a little place called Horton. There we found and occupied a very pretty camping place. Made sixteen miles today.

Tuesday 29th—When we got up this morning we found the ground covered with white frost. Decidedly cool for camping out and cooking by a camp-fire, but we must do as we can. Our road is good today. Passed through Waverly a brisk town on the Red Cedar. Also through Shell Rock City, a little town and possessing a splendid water power near the mouth of Shell Rock River which empties into the Red Cedar. After driving twenty miles we camped near a house in a grove.

Wednesday 30th—This morning it was raining when we awoke; and having procured no tent yet, we had to cook in the wet. No especial improvement on the frost of yesterday. After traveling three miles we stopped and Albert got the horse team shod at Willoughby a small prairie town in Butler coun-



ALBERT, JANE, GEORGE AND FRANK GOULD

ty. During the day we passed through New Hartford on Beaver Creek and traveled several miles on what are called Beaver Bottoms, camping on the creek after traveling fifteen miles through the rain, with nothing but straw for our teams. It rained till bed time.

May 1st—The rain fell all night and beat through the covers so that we were quite wet this morning. It took a long time to build a fire. The ground was so wet, and the wind blew so hard. Started very late, were lucky enough to find some hay which Albert bought and carried in bundles till noon. Dined in a grove by the way side. Camped for night close by an old deserted house, which served as a wind breaker. Just across

the way was Fontaine Post Office. Had to go back a mile to bring hay, there being none here. Traveled twenty-three miles to day.

Friday, May 2nd—Left camp quite early. Nooned in the edge of some timber. We had to carry hay three miles for our teams. We passed through Eldora, a little prairie town in Hardin county. Camped at sundown on the south fork of the Iowa river. I made biscuits, having permission to bake them at the house near which we stopped. There we learned that we were one day behind the Mitchell Californians. Some boys came to our camp with eggs for sale which we purchased for four cents pr. dozen. Traveled twenty three miles to day.

Saturday, May 3d—Traveled most of this day in Marshall county. Nooned in an Irish settlement situated in a grove. In the afternoon we passed an old camp which we occupied two years ago in going to Pike's Peak. At 2 o'clock we started across a twelve miles prairie, not knowing it was so far. Kept going, going, going till it came dark. At last we were rejoiced at the sight of a house but the road turned off, and took us from it. About nine o'clock came to an inhabited house but the owner would sell us no hay. So there was nothing to do but to keep going till we *could* get some. This took us a mile farther. Here we stopped, built a fire, made some coffee, and buying some bread, had supper just ready when Gus came up with the ox team. He and my husband did not get ready to go to bed till near midnight. Had the company of two Pike's Peakers who camped at this place.

Sunday, May 4th—We did not feel like hurrying this morning and so got a very late start. Our fellow campers brought us a pail full of new milk. This was very acceptable as our little cow from steady traveling gave less milk than at first. Passing over a six mile prairie, we came to Nevada the county seat of Story. Passing that, we crossed the Skunk River bottom which was one vast slough over a mile wide and knee deep to the horses; with not one spot of firm earth on which they

might stop for a moment's rest. Crossed the river itself just below the mill at the little hamlet of Cambridge. Could get no hay here so went a mile beyond and camped on the prairie.

Monday, May 5th—Had an early start and traveled through a pretty prairie country, interspersed with small groves. Nooned by a farm house which was built near a creek in the grove where we stopped. Here we found the Mitchell Californians who occupied seven wagons. At night we encamped half a mile west of Des Moines the capital of Iowa. We had passed through the city which is a busy flourishing place. The State House is a good brick building. The Des Moines River is spanned by an excellent toll bridge.

Tuesday, May 6th—Started at ten o'clock this morning, and traveling thirteen miles, camped on Sugar Creek, in company with a family who were emigrating from Des Moines. They had a girl named Becky with whom Gus had half a mind to go.

Wednesday, May 7th—Left Sugar Creek early and after journeying ten miles were ferried across Coon River at Adel the county town of Dallas County. Made a drive of nineteen miles and camped near a hotel by a little creek.

Thursday, May 8th—It was late when we left our camp, and after going nine miles we stopped in order to wash, and wait for the other teams. At four P.M. I commenced and did a real large washing—spreading the clothes on the grass at sunset. Gus improved this leisure in mending his pantaloons; losing Albert's pocket scissors in the operation. Our camp was near a woolen factory.

Friday, May 9th—The other teams came up early. We went on till we came to the ferry across———— but finding a new ford we crossed it in preference to the ferry, although the banks were very steep. Dick Pritchard took the lead with his one horse turn-out; and we all followed and came safely through. Nooned on the open prairie. Camped at six o'clock one mile west of Dalmanutha a small prairie town in Guthrie

county. The timber in this part of the state is very scanty, and the prairie is quite rolling. The roads are good. Twenty miles farther from home.

Saturday, May 10th—Left camp soon after sunrise and traveled sixteen miles over good roads before we stopped to dine. This we all did by the roadside in front of a hotel. I boiled our eggs on Mrs. Jone's stove. Most of the afternoon we traveled on the Turkey River bottoms where the land is beautiful and the prairie is beginning to look quite green. At night we camped on a small creek. Our little boys brought in some plum blossoms, which were deliciously fragrant.

Sunday, May 11th—Late when we started, and we soon came to Grove City. Here we saw a live wild cat in a cage. He was fed daintly on chicken and meat. He was very fierce and would paw angrily at the stick which the boys put through the bars. Where we crossed the Turkey, we found on its banks a dozen wagons, the owners of which were "laying over" because it was the Sabbath. The women were doing up their week's washing! We went a mile and a half farther and decided to stop here and rest until Monday. It is very showery. Every family are cooking beans to-day. Wasn't it a shame! Mine were almost done when a shower came up and drove me into the wagon. The beans taking advantage of my absence burned up. Nothing was left for me but to cook more. Rain fell the whole night. This was near Lewis, county seat of Cass. It is built on a hill in the midst of a prairie.

Monday, May 12th—When we arose the sky was clear—the wind in the northwest. Traveled over a rolling prairie till noon, when we dined on the bank of a prairie creek. We drove all the afternoon along a dry ridge, where we found no water although we were in sad want of it. At last we came to a house where we were made happy by finding plenty of good water. When night came we camped on a small stream where we had to *buy* our wood instead of gathering it as usual. Our encampment had now increased to some thirty wagons. In one of the tents I hear the merry notes of a violin. A general

cheerfulness prevails.

Tuesday, May 13th—We left camp at seven this morning, and went through a section of very handsome country. One grove was exceedingly beautiful. Crossed the West Nishnebotne just below a flouring mill, near which we met a bevy of pretty little girls going to school. Stopped at ten o'clock on account of the heat. Went a half a mile from the road in order to find good feed for the teams. Found a spring which was partly filled up. Mr. Barber, Howard Parker and Gus very soon fitted it for use. In the morning Fanny Gore and a gentleman rode ahead on horseback and stopped at a hotel to wait for us; thinking we would certainly drive so far before dinner, which we should have done, had the weather been cooler. As it was, they waited and waited till three P.M. when hunger obliged her to consent to his ordering dinner at the hotel. The land over which we passed to-day is rich but rather rough.

Wednesday, May 14th—This morning the sky is clear, the weather is warm and the road good. We nooned by a prairie stream, in whose banks we found a fine spring of cold water. After driving some ten miles we came to the Missouri Bottom which is here very level. After five miles of this we came to Council Bluffs which presents a very lively aspect at this time of year, when so many teams are fitting out for the trip to, and beyond the Rocky Mountains. We camped early at this place for the night. Mrs. Warren Jones and Frankie, Fanny Gore and I climbed the bluffs at the back of the town, and got an excellent view of the whole place. When Fanny gets rich she is going to have a house built on one of the highest bluffs here. May I live to see it! Some of our company stand guard over the teams; we having heard that some of the emigrants have lost their horses.

Thursday, May 15th—This morning we made our necessary purchases here in town, and after dinner crossed the river in the ferry boat Lizzy Baylis. The old Missouri has the same muddy hue as ever. We passed through Omaha the Capital of Nebraska. The State House is built of brick and painted white.

It is built on an eminence and can be seen from Bluff City. Camped a mile west of town, on a stream which was well bridged. Large numbers of campers are here before us.

Friday, May 16th—We are to stay at this place some time to recruit the teams. Most of the women are washing. I am baking yeast bread for the first time in three weeks. It tastes good after eating crackers and biscuits so long. I got the yeast of Fanny Gore.

Saturday, May 17th—Awoke this morning to find it raining real hard. Albert and Gus went out and made some coffee, warmed over some beans and brought them to the wagon. We made a table of the large trunk, and all crowding around, made a very comfortable meal. After eating, we put the dishes under the wagon where they remained till four o'clock when the rain ceased and I left the shelter of the wagon for the first time to day. The weather had grown very cold during the day and most of the men were wet through.

Sunday, May 18th—The air this morning is very cold but pure. We were all shivering till nine o'clock when the sun came out bright and warm, so that we found ourselves comfortable once more. I went out with the children to take a walk and gather flowers. We followed a path through the hazel bushes, and seeing some of the nuts on the ground, I cracked them and was surprised to find them fresh and good. So we gathered and took to camp two quarts which made quite a feast for us all. Mrs. Cheever, Mrs. Sherwood and Mrs. Gilmore are washing—Sunday though it be. Mr. and Mrs. Jones, Howard Pasker and Miss Gore took a horse-back ride, only Howard rode a mule.

Monday, May 19th—It was fair so I washed, and the men busied themselves in general preparation.

Tuesday, May 20th—The weather was fine this morning but towards noon became quite cloudy. The train left here at mid-day. We remained to wait the arrival of Charly Wyman and family. Mr. Dana and family of Busti came up last Sunday. Mr. Walker of New Oregon got here just as the Mitchell people were starting. Just as we were preparing supper it

commenced to rain hard, and by the time it was ready, we were *slightly* dampened, and worse than all, we had to eat in the rain.

Wednesday, May 21st—Mr. Walker started out this morning although it kept raining by spells.

Thursday, May 22nd—Pleasant this morning but cool and windy. I again washed so as to have every thing clean when we start. We are beginning to look for Charley & Lucy. How I wish they *would* come.

Friday, May 23d—Very warm to day. We went over the brook and gathered some more hazelnuts. Time hangs rather heavy. I crossed the road and went to the top of a hill, from whence I could see Council Bluffs, Omaha and the ferry across the Missouri. But those we most wished to see; were not visible.

May 24—Still waiting; our wagons our only home and nothing to do—One who has not tried the experiment, can imagine how tiresome it is.

Sunday, May 25th—Our friends have not yet made their appearance. The weather is warm and fair, so I left Gus to keep *house*, and went to extend my patronage again to that hazel patch. Gathered nearly two quarts. Before I came away, Albert came to help me. The sun was shining so very warm it was quite a relief to get back to the shelter of the wagons, where we had a fine time cracking our nuts, and eating them.

Monday, May 26th—Arose this morning early and after breakfast was dispatched, I went to washing. Gus says I wash for amusement, but I contend that I must do it to keep up the romance of the thing. It is certainly too warm out here in the sunshine, to afford much amusement. Toward night I prepared supper and we were about sitting down, when Albert exclaimed, "That looks like old Frank" (Charly's horse) and in a moment "I know that is Father."—And sure enough it was Father Gould, and Lucy with him. Charlie and Hi were half a mile behind. I was so overjoyed to see them that I could hardly keep from crying. After they had come

up and supped, they pitched the tent, and until midnight we just *visited*.

Tuesday, May 27th—We did not travel today. Staid that the new comers might wash and do some shopping. In the afternoon Father, Charley, Lou and I went to Omaha. All but me for the purpose of getting their likenesses. But the light was not good, so the artist was unable to take them. Father treated us to lemonade which relished well this warm day. A bought me a great large shaker.

Wednesday, May 28th—Left our twelve days camp this morning; all in good spirits; and *glad* to be on our way. The roads were good, and so was some of the land. We passed some fine farms. Dined near a little creek and while we were eating there came along a pedler whom we invited to join us at dinner, and he very readily accepted our invitation. After dinner he gave Albert a violin string which he was in want of. Camped late at night half a mile west of Elkhorn village. There was a Mr. Bulwinkel, a rich New Yorker, camped close by us, together with a man and wife whom he was taking through with him. The men had to hunt with lanterns an hour or two for the oxen, before they went to bed. Albert and Hi are to stand guard tonight.

Thursday, May 29th—Last night we had an awful storm, attended by thunder and lightning; the wind blowing furiously. The roads were so muddy that we delayed starting until somewhat late in the morning. Traveled over some beautiful bottom land to day. We saw the Platte River away to the left, probably six or eight miles distant. Nooned on the prairie and camped at night two miles east of Fremont. Mr. Bulwinkel and we purpose traveling together. He has four fine horses and a first class new wagon.

Friday, May 30th—Left camp about nine in the morning. No need of hurrying when the roads are so bad. While breakfasting we were visited by an Indian who asked for something to eat. We gave him some doughnuts and offered him some milk which he declined. After peering about for some time he said "Coffee good—sugar too." So I gave him a

tin cup filled with sweetened coffee which he stirred well, and leisurely drank with his cakes. We asked him if he was Pawnee. He said "yes." Albert asked him if the Sioux were good? He answered "Sioux *no* good—Cheyennes *no* good—Omahas good—Ottoes *very* good—Shawnees good." He wanted the boys to put up a piece of money for him to shoot at with his bow and arrows. Gus put up a three cent which he brought down at once, and had it for his pains. We dined on the prairie and just as our table was spread it began to rain so that we moved it to a shelter. It was only a passing shower and soon passed over. Here Lou and I shot at a mark with the men's revolvers. They complimented us; saying that we did first rate for new beginners. At night we camped at North Bend on the bank of the Platte. Near us was an Indian wagon attended by twenty or thirty red men, several squaws and one pappoose. Here also we found the Scott train from Des Moines.

Saturday, May 31st—Our road to-day, running along the Platte, is level and good. Nooned on a little stream called in the Guide Book Shell Creek. Lou, Mrs. *Berridge and I went down to see Charly catch fish. He caught none and charged his want of success to not having good bait. At night we camped near a house where the Post Office is kept. In the evening Gus was fidding, when two ladies and a gentleman came to us from the house and wanted us to go back with them, and have a dance, but Albert was somewhat indisposed, so we declined the invitation.

Sunday, June 1st—Albert was quite sick to-day—not able to sit up at all. I drove one team all day. Traveled only till noon, turned off the road half a mile, and camped near the site of an old Pawnee village. Several Indians were around us. They were intelligent looking, but I *don't like them*. We are near Loup Fork.

Monday, June 2nd—After going three miles we came to Columbus a small village on the river. Here was mailed some

*—Mr. and Mrs. Berridge the people whom Mr. Bulwinkel was taking through.

letters and I did an extensive business in shopping. I bought a thimble. A mile farther, and we came to the ford ferry. A part of the stream we crossed by fording and the remainder by a rope ferry. Here we saw several Indians on ponies Nooned on the prairie near some other emigrants. I think it likely we shall travel in company with them. Camped on the banks of Looking glass Creek, a very clear and beautiful stream. Albert after angling some time, caught two fishes, the largest as long as one's finger! His appetite being capricious I cooked them for him, and he really relished them. Gus says he caught them on purpose to furnish an item for my journal.

Tuesday, June 3d—After two miles traveling, we came to a little lake or pond (very long for its width) lying on the south side of the road. Its water was very soft and clear, and very convenient for watering purposes. The Platte River, along which our road runs, is dotted with very many beautiful islands. They are mostly timbered with cotton wood, but we occasionally see some covered in part with cedar and others with elm. I wish we had a boat, so as to row out to some of these lovely spots. On the bank of the river, very near to a group of islands we took our nooning. In the afternoon we passed a lonely, nameless grave on the prairie; with a bit of board in place of a head-stone. It seems sad to think of a human being buried alone in such a wilderness, with none to plant a flower or shed a tear over the lost one's grave. We camped at night on the river bottom half a mile from the road, our opposite neighbor being a fine island. We found a sort of well, containing good water. We brought with us a supply of wood.

Wednesday, June 4th—Had an early start this morning—and a beautiful morning it was—clear, bright and warm. Traveled ten miles and stopped for noon on the bank of the Platte. Gus and Hi waded out to an island and brought a sack of chips, which proved sufficient to cook our supper, when again encamped for the night, beside our old friend the Platte. Here the men partially organized, choosing for our captain, a Mr. Wilson; because he has once been to California.

Thursday, June 5th—Arose at four this morning—and having so early a start, progressed finely. We passed another grave. The head board informed us that he died in 1861 at the age of twenty. Poor boy! We had passed quite a number of good farms today. The whole settlement is said to be composed of Mormons. If timber were plenty here, this would be an excellent farming country; and every kind of produce has a home market at high prices. Nooned near the river. Have observed indications of alkali the last two days. Today passed two or three beer shops then a saw-mill and presently a corn mill. This was a government establishment where meal was ground out to supply food for the Indians. All these places were unusual sights in this almost untenanted wilderness, but more surprising sight of all was a fine two story framed house. Toiled onward and at night came to a nice little stream called Wood River and on its banks we encamped. Some settlers seeing the train, came and invited us to attend a dance about two miles distant. A number accepted the invitation — we among the rest riding in state after horned horses. We returned to camp at midnight—having had a brief, but very pleasant entertainment.

June 6th—'Twas a hard task to arouse ourselves at four, as was requisite but we did it. Lou and I walked on by ourselves. We passed four graves in an enclosure; all of which looking equally new. Seeing a house near, we called to make inquiry and found them to be the graves of a father and three sons who were murdered by the Indians last February. They went to the timber for wood and never came home! They were found dead and one was scalped. The team for which they were killed was taken. The murderers were either Cheyennes or Sioux. We again camped on Wood River where we had abundance of wood and found grass for the cattle by driving them across a creek.

June 7th—Our roads are level to-day. The grass is of a bluish color and so poor that the cattle refuse to eat it. Nooned again on the banks of Wood River near a house. The little boys took a pleasant bath. At night we camped on the Platte.

Mr. Berridge took a spade and dug out a hole which was soon filled with water far better than the river water. Here we washed some.

June 8th—Did not start till one o'clock P.M. so the cattle were well rested. This camp was a little above and nearly opposite Fort Kearney. We heard the night and morning gun, and were in sight of the good old flag, but the river was so high that we could not get across, although we were very anxious to get the letters which we believed to be lying there. The road is more uneven than is usual in this section of country, in consequence of the numerous knolls raised by the prairie dogs. To day crossed the beds of two very deep dry creeks. Camped near a small creek where we had to gather willows for wood, and the water is very poor. Three wagon loads of emigrants were here encamped when we came.

June 9th—There is a high south wind blowing this morning which renders traveling very disagreeable by raising great quantities of dust. We nooned near Buffalo Creek. The men have seen several antelope, but have had no chance to shoot them, they are so shy. Mr. Bulwinkel saw a strange animal to-day and called for Charlie and Albert to bring their guns and shoot it. They fired where he indicated and the wind brought to us the almost unbearable stench of a skunk. We tell the boys that they supposed it to be an antelope, but they indignantly deny the charge! We had preparation for a storm but none came.

June 10th—I drove this forenoon. Albert and another went in pursuit of some antelope which we saw, but were unsuccessful. They walked five miles and joined us at a watering place. One of Capt. Wilson's cows got sloughed but received no injury. We traveled eighteen miles without food or water for the poor teams or dinner for ourselves. Some lunched on crackers—others saved their appetites for supper. We had to drive four or five miles off the road to find a camping place which was on the river. We at last had a real hard storm—rain, thunder and lightning but got wet but little. Albert stood guard but was well protected by a rubber coat. The grass at best is very

poor about here—is supposed to have been “run out” by the buffalo.

Wednesday, June 11th—Started late this morning on account of the road being so wet and muddy from the last night’s rain. Traveled all the forenoon within a mile or two of the river. Nooned on the prairie near a slough where the teams had good grass and water. Lou and I visited on a new neighbor named Church who has a sick child. They are from Humboldt county, Iowa—have followed the river most of the time since noon. At night pitched our tent within a few feet of the river. The sky was very clear at bed-time, but about one the wind began to blow. We had quite a gale but no rain.

June 12th—Left our encampment early, traveled three miles and came to a series of low sandy bluffs which extend themselves to the very edge of the Platte. Albert and the children walked over the bluffs, I drove along the base. The river being high, it overflowed the road a good deal of the way. I drove through one place so deep that our watering pail and camp kettle floated off. The latter I caught with the whip, but the pail was too far off. Gus however recovered it when he came along. The roads were very sandy over the bluffs, and was *very* hard for the teams. We found a rose colored sandflower. It was entirely new to us. Near the river found excellent grass for the cattle at noon. Passed three graves, one having a silk handkerchief put up at the head of it. Encamped near a slough,—got water from a hole dug in the ground.

June 13th—After going two miles we came to the nicest spring I ever saw. It was some eight feet across and the water just boiled up in the center, from amidst of the most beautiful white sand. The water which ran off from it made quite a creek from which we all filled our cans. Three large trains camped near us last night, so that when we started, we counted near a hundred teams; all in sight at once. We had very good roads to day. Crossed Carrion Creek. Mrs. Berridge was thrown from a horse and injured so severely that her friends sent on ahead to the next train for a physician. Mr. and Mrs. Berridge left Mr. Bulwinkel to-day. They have not been on

good terms for some time. Camped near the river and were threatened with a rain storm, but were let off with but a few drops. We have brought wood to last for a few days back, but it is gone and we use buffalo chips for the first time.

June 14th—It was not early, when we left our camping place. Had several sloughs to cross when we first started, and then came a number of sandy bluffs to pass over. Nooned in the midst of them where we found a pond of water and some poor feed for the teams. We see more cactus today than ever before. Forgot to say yesterday we passed the junction of the North and South Plattes. We follow up the north side of the North Platte. Had a good road this afternoon. Wind blew very hard. Camped on the banks of the North Bluff Fork. There was a large encampment on the east side, so we crossed over and took our position on the west side.

June 15th—Arose late this morning. Did out our washing and rinsed our clothes in the river. This is a beautiful stream with nice sand bottom. It is six rods wide and eighteen inches deep—has clear water which is a rarity in this region. Had preaching in our train in the afternoon. Had a good sermon and quite a congregation. This is the eighth day since we have seen human habitation. Had another gale.

June 16th—Had some trouble about finding our cattle this morning so we got started later than usual. Our road this forenoon lay over low sandy bluffs, the sandiest I ever saw. In our Guide Book as "Sandy Bluff, east foot." Nooned near a little creek, not far from the river. Passed another lonely grave made in the sand, on a bluff. Camped half a mile south of the road, on the bank of the Platte. This stream is getting much smaller now.

June 17th—We were all up sometime before the sun this morning; consequently got an early start. The air was cool and pleasant. Had another range of sandy bluffs to cross to day. Sand very deep indeed. Crossed several beautiful little creeks—clear as crystal. Saw alkali on the ground. Mr. Neff, Charlie and Albert went along side of the bluffs in pursuit of some jack rabbits which we saw, but did not succeed in getting any.

They are about twice as large as our common rabbits in Iowa. The Captain and his brother had a chase after what they thought to be buffalo, but they proved to be something else. Nooned at a nice place on a little spring creek. Crossed several of these pretty little streams. The banks on the south side of the river slope quite down to the water. On the other side are visible some rocks, the first we have seen since we left Omaha. Camped on the Platte. The men had to go two miles for buffalo chips.

(To be continued)

History Notes

It is well for the historian to do original research when he is still young. It gives him the feeling of a discoverer to come upon something in a manuscript, inscription, or archeological digging that nobody else has seen, or heeded, for a long, long time. Those ink spots on paper have been written, those lapidaries carved, those artifacts fashioned, by a sentient being—often simply as part of his day's work, but sometimes expressing ecstasy, anguish, or a sense of beauty and fitness. From the depths he seems to call to us to do him and his time justice; to understand how he and his people lived and what they were trying to do. Through these records a historian, if he have art and comprehension, may let the light break through from a former age to his own. Or, to state it in reverse, he may be a mirror reflecting the sun of high noon into the dark recesses of the past.

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