

JOURNAL OF A. W. HARLAN WHILE CROSSING THE PLAINS IN 1850.

A JOURNAL OF CALIFORNIA BOUND IN COMPANY WILBURN WILSON,
JAMES WILSON, MICHAEL DUST & A. W. HARLAN.¹

1850

<i>Wed May 1st</i>	left Athens Mo. 11 o'clock A. M. & camped at Irvine Wilsons. Made about 12 miles	12
<i>Thur May 2nd</i>	traveled 12 miles & camped at Wm Wriggles worths	12
<i>Fri 3rd</i>	traveled 12 miles & camped at Freezes(?)	12
<i>Sat 4th</i>	traveled 17 miles & camped 1½ miles west of Drakesvilles, one yoke of oxen ran away. snowing next morning	17
<i>Sun 5th</i>	traveled about 15 miles and camped on a branch of Soap Creek. the best grass that we have seen. a white frost & ice ¼ in next m	15
<i>Mon 6th</i>	lay by all day. The wind blew a gale and rain came on at night	
<i>Tues 7th</i>	a drizzling rain until 9 o'clock A. M. we then started. the wind blowed brisk & cool. traveled over beautiful rolling rich prearie. took the left hand at Dodges point. went three miles further and camped at the goose pond on Chariton. rained at night. made 23 m. frosted	23
<i>Wed 8th</i>	we traveled 12 miles over beautiful rich prearie & camped on a small branch of Chariton. grass scarce a white frost next morning and all the mud on the waggon wheels froze hard	12

¹Aaron Word Harlan was one of the best known pioneers of south-eastern Iowa, having arrived at Fort Des Moines (now Montrose) as a servant in 1834. Engaged in merchandising at Keosauqua in 1837, settled on the Half Breed tract and acted as the local agent of Charles Mason, emigrated to California during the gold rush, served from the day of the battle of Athens when he was fifty-one years of age for nearly four years in the Union Army in the Twenty-first Regiment Missouri Infantry, returned to his farm near Croton and remained an active participant and intelligent witness of events until his death in his one hundredth year on the 30th day of April, 1911.

- Thur 9th* traveled 10 miles and stopped on the open prairie. boiled the tea kettles with rosin weeds. 10 o'clock at night all our cattle broek from the waggon to the N. W. we stopped them in good time. cold North wind at night, slight frost 10
- Fri 10th* we traveled about 12 miles on the main road to Garden Grove then went 4 miles of from the road down the creek to find grass for our cattle 12 here William Allen of Lee County Iowa turned back & Alfred Allen joined Lapsleys crew, put in two yoke of oxen making 5 men and 6 yoke of oxen to one waggon
- May Sat 11th* took up a ride without any road. in about 5 miles struck the road and traveled 20 miles & camped on a small stream that I supposed ran into the Des Moines, Squaw creek of 3 rivers, roads dry and dusty—a strong wind all day from the N West 20
- Sund 12th* grass being scarce we yoked up & traveled about 3 miles, fell in with Hines. stopped on a small brook. The grass rather poor. we will keep the sabbath the ballance of the day.—But Lapsleys team came along and we followed on about 10 miles further in all. 13 m to day & camped on a small branch of Grand riyer 13
- Mond 13th* this day our road lay over very rolling prairie the points thin and almost covered with red granite even where there had been no wash. we made about 7 miles headway though we have traveled 10. passed through Pisgah, a mormon settlement on one branch of Grand River consisting of some 50 or 60 miserable huts & turned down the river about a mile to graze. weather hot roads dusty & grass wilted 7
- Tues 14th* we took the plainest road. it had been made by teams turning off for grass—though it was the wrong road—we lost 4 miles by it. our road today lay over very rolling though rich prairie. a great many teams in sight winding over the prairie hills and looking over this vast expanse of prairie & beholding the energy of our people I look forward to the time that it will all be subdued, fenced with wire and hedges and every

farmer will have his own chemical apparatus—
and with a little manual labour—burn water for
fuel—we have crossed the last branch of Grand
river—made— 13 m

Wed 15th To day our road has been over gently rolling
prearie, the swales deep & muddy the axels of
the waggon often dragging in the mud. seaps or
springs along the sloughs—stock water will al-
ways be plenty and good both winter and sum-
mer. wells could be got anywhere almost. trav-
eled 20 miles and crossed one branch of the Nod-
doway River and turned of a half mile and then
drove to grass in 20

Thur 16th we left our encampment on the East fork of
Noddoway. crossed the middle fork in 5 miles—
and in 15 m more encamped on the west fork.
20 miles in all 20
rolling prearie, rich sandy soil, water plenty,
grass growing better. The wind blew a hurri-
cane all day. the dust flew like the prearie on
fire. the wild plum bushes just in bloom. one
of our oxen was snake bit in the morning. an
old settler says there has been no rain for 6
weeks

Fri 17th this morning our snake bit ox was to lame to
carry the yoke. we therefore had to drive him
single. we left the Noddoway, in about 7 miles.
crossed a branch I supposed to be the Nishna-
botany. in 9 miles further we cross quite mill
stream—The E F of Noddoway. here we fell in
with the travel from Raccoon—forty waggons in
sight at a time. went 2 miles out in the prearie
& camped. traveled in all about 18 miles 18

Sat 18th we left our prearie encampment, crossed several
small streams and the west or main branch of
the Nishnebotany, then went 2 miles out in the
prearie to camp—in all— 18 m
The wind blew strong from the North. here an
old settler says there has been no rain for 7
weeks—very dusty. Rich rolling prearie, water
plenty—seaps or springs along all the branches—
danger of cattle mireing

Sund 19th

this day we crossed several small streams—Silver creek, a few mormons liveing there—traveled about 15 miles
15
rich rolling prearie, water plenty—today we saw the Missouri River and those peculiar knobs of clay on top of the hills either eaten or washed into irregularities hard to account for. a hot day, strong S. W. wind, a great thunder storm at night. camped on keg creek

Mond 20th

we wound our way through Carter town among the hills then through Kaneville and 8 miles more to the bottom—in all— 15 m
Those bluffs are fertile and of Plutonian mechanism, in fact miniature mountains from 100 to 300 feet high covered with grass and a few trees in the sheltered places, affording a beautiful prospect. today has been cloudy & chilly with a strong east wind. we are now here at the upper ferry to the Bluffs. crossed Musquito creek. There is no good grass within three miles of Kanessville on either side

Tues 21st

to day we have all lay by waiting for Henshaw & Rollins. we are not yet organized into a company. I have spent most of the day wandering over these Romantic Bluffs

Wed 22nd

we waited for Henshaw until 10 o'clock, then went to the ferry 4 miles. by being late others crowded in and we have had to wait another day by so doing. we are not yet organized. we have had a great rain at night and continued until after 8 o'clock this morning, high wind from S E 4

Thurs 23d

it was afternoon before the ferries were in operation. our company crossed over, traveled 6 miles to a good camping ground, wood and plenty, grass better—fine rolling prearie. a strong S E wind all day 6

Fri 24th

To day we crossed Pappeau creek at noon, 15 ft wide, and ferried Elkhorn. in the afternoon went $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles and camped on a small creek. traveled about 20 miles 20
in the forenoon those cones near the Missouri on our right were in sight some distance, bearing a resemblance to the Bluffs—fine rolling prearie—well watered—we are now on the main plat

[Platte] bottom—a brisk south wind to day, all hands cheerful. we now consider ourselves fairly on the way for Callifornia

Sat 25th

our road to day has been level though some of it quite muddy. we are now going up the bottom of the Big Platt from 5 to 8 miles wide, mostly very rich but some of it sandy and some of it to wet for cultivation. on our right several miles the highland rises gentle & beautiful prehaps 80 or 100 feet high in all, but straight ahead there is seemingly no end to dead level. a part of the time [to]day there has been timber on our left near the river and ridges of sand among the timber some 15 to 25 feet high, evedently thrown there by the water of the Platt, also some considerable ridges of sand out in the open prearie. The Platt is a moveing bed of quick sand of all depths, & width from $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile wide to less than 200 yds, with banks from 3 to 5 feet high. several pools or little lakes near the river on our left we have organized into a company at last

16 m

Sund 26th

To day we have traveled about 18 miles & saw a Pawnee village on the opposite side of the River—the land and grass both good. weather pleasant and camped on shell creek. it was very high & we pulled our waggons over by hand 18

On our left rolled down the mighty Platt

A broad sheet of turbid waters
And still beyond were hills and vales
The home of the Pawnee daughters

On our right stretched forth an extensive plain
As level as the ocean

The Bluffs beyond, the mirage between
The hills all seemed in motion

And in our front was an open space
With full scope to the vision
Here in the center still rolling ahead
Was our split log division

Mond 27th

to day we have traveled about 18 miles and encamped on a clear lake near the Platt. this morning we had another great storm of rain & thunder. I waded through water near $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile. cold N W wind in the afternoon. Last night I mounted & stood guard for the first time—very cold this morning

18

Tues 28th

we traveled 3 miles to the Loup fork of the Platt & ferried, then went up said stream 6 miles & camped on the banks 9 m
 it is generally 5 or 6 hundred yards wide, filled with very white quick sand and snags. the water much clearer than the main Platt. the Bluffs back are evidently diminishing in height. The sand banks show that this stream occasionally raises to a wonderful height

Wed 29th

we still traveled up the Loup about 25 miles with a succession of sand hills on our left from 30 to 50 feet high, consisting of single cones and ridges of white sand with some flats and pools between. there is a similar ridge of them on the main Platt from 40 rods to 2 miles wide, then there is a rich valley of land between them in shape resembling a sad iron. on the north of the loup the hills at a distance appear to be clay with a few scattering oak, the first in 100 miles 25

Thurs 30th

to day we have traveled about 22 miles between the Loup and Main Platt, sometimes very sandy, some wet land and soome gentle rises of almost pure sand and a good deal of good land. high sand hills on our left hand all day. to night we are encamped on a considerable flat of good clay soil but lots of sand down about 4 feet. the high lands north of the loup are visible but not a single stick of timber. we drink water out of a small puddle full of wiggle tails 22

Friday 31st

late last evening Wm Freeman & McCown came in from hunting and reported a village of Prearie Dogs near by. next morning it was the wish of many of [us] to see them. we went and killed several. they seem to feed on grass and roots. we have seen many antelopes but as yet have killed none. yesterday and to day we have seen many Buffaloe trails—from 5 to 15 paths side by side very straight and worn deep into the ground. as yet we have not seen any Buffaloe. we traveled west for some 5 miles, then struck, the Mormon track, then South West some six miles all through sand hills. we then struck the flats near the Big Platte. I could not see south of the river but at 5 o'clock P. M. the sand hills on our rear were invisible and E. W. and N. as far as the eye

could extend it was almost a perfect level of rich black dry though rather sandy soil. we are encamped near the Big Platte. Grass is very good. I saw yesterday where some emigrants had been mowing. traveled 22 m

Sat June 1st

we traveled up the Platt near the timber and are camped in the edge of the timber. have made about 16 miles headway. in about five miles we crossed Wood river, a pretty mill stream. I have seen great quantities of the sensitive plants to day. there is a flat or low bottom near the river subject to overflow, then the land rises gradually—sometimes abrupt about 20 feet. generally rich sandy loam from 20 inches to 3 ft deep, then gravel below though sometimes clay on the surface. in short I have this day seen the largest body of good land that I ever saw resembling the second bottoms of the Miami or Whitewaters in Ohio and Indiana. The Bluffs in the north are barely visible about 10 miles distant but whether clay or sand I am unable to say 16

Sunday 2nd

to day we have all hands laid by & overhauled our loading. in ours we found all right excepting about 10 lb of bread on the lower side of one sack. done up some washing and John Gray killed a hare. some of the other companies killed Buffaloes in our neighbourhood. this is keeping Sabbath after a manner on the first of the week instead of the seventh as commanded

Mon 3rd

Started early and had not proceeded more than a half mile until a loose horse of Mitchells came galloping up and frightened a Mr. Mendenhalls team. they started to runaway—their running and the rattling of the waggon started others—it became contagious and in half a minute nine teams were under way. old oxen that had never runaway before sprung to it like quarter horses. we stopped them after a time, all well excepting Bennings team—another team run against them and knocked down three oxen. one of their horns stuck in the ground and broke his neck. two others slightly injured. the land has been generally very good, the second bottom from 5 to 8 miles wide. a considerable scope has been incruusted by salt, salt-petre, copperas, etc. and lit

erally torn to pieces by Buffaloes. quite recently we passed through a succession of prearie dog villages & one city. we have traveled about 20 miles to day & cooked our suppers and breakfasts with green willow brush. rained hard all the afternoon & most all night 20

Tues 4th

The width of the valley is materially deminished, Prehaps six miles wide here, a portion subject to overflow. we have traveled about 14 miles and camped on elm creek near the head of Grand island. this afternoon about 2 o'clock it commenced raining hard and has poured down with but little intermission in perfect torrents all night. the cattle were very uneasy all night requireing additional guarding. a double cover on the waggons but partially answers the purpose—our bedding all wet and some of our provisions also. five of our men went out on a Buffaloe hunt & killed one poor little cow to poor for use, they were caught in the rain storm and did not reach our encampment until 11 o'clock at night. the little creek on which we are, raised about 9 feet perpendicular. there is no end seemingly to the prearie dogs 14

Wed 5th

we have had a drizzling rain all day & consequently laid by. there are several varieties of Prickley pear in this vicinity (and to me) new kinds of grass, weeds, etc. There are many dead Buffaloe scattered over the plains. Some of them appear to have died from poverty and some have been shot for amusement

Thurs 6th

our cattle were inclined to Stampede so we rolled out early, went 6 miles to Dry creek. it lacked only nine feet of answering to its name, with a swift current. we set stakes & stretched ropes & chains across & built a bridge of willow brush, rolled our waggons over by hand, swam our teams across. by this time there was 60 other waggons waiting. we loaned them our chains, ropes & bridge & left. the running of a horse to day made 4 teams runaway—no harm done. we could not get to the old road for sloughs but have traveled about 12 miles through water & grass and camped in open prearie without any thing to raise a fire this morning 18

- Fri 7th* The country maintains its beauty in the valley here from 6 to 10 miles wide. the hills are getting more sandy. there are but few flowers in bloom. the plains are filled with men hunting stray cattle—almost every company have had stampedes & many waggons broken 22
- Sat 8th* to day the sand hills approach much nearer the river. the country is getting poorer and more broken. there is only a few scattering trees along the Platt. the vegetation is all new to me. we have traveled about 20 miles, camped in the bottom 20
- Sund 9th* this day we have [travelled] about 22 miles through poor country. here the Platt is about as wide as the Mississippi at New Orleans, but very shallow. by the Mormon guide we here expected to find the last timber but all had been used up by others ahead of us so we must go about 200 miles without any provisions cooked up yet all hands are cheerful 22
- Mon 10th* This day we have traveled about 21 miles & crossed the North Bluff fork for 50 yds wide. the bottoms low & wet, the hills all sand & broken. this morning our hunters came in loaded with Buffaloe meat and we have all been feasting on it. they report haveing seen many wild horses, generally fine steeds, one especially a black stallion, as something extra he came near them at first then left with the speed of the wind. those sand hills are almost covered with Buffaloe, horses, antelope, Hares, wolves, lizzards & terrapins and could be made to produce cottonwood & Black locust timber 21
- Tues 11th* To day the Platt has looked more like a common river running alternately from Bluff to Bluff, the bottoms generally low and wet. Our road has been mud and sand hills, the sand frequently six inches deep. traveled about 21 m
- Wed 12th* This morning a large herd of Buffaloe were quietly grazeing in the bottom near our encampment & others on the hills. on the south side of the river there is a lime Stone Bluff (the first rock I have

seen since we left Pizgah in Iowa) There was a respectable number of cedar trees growing among the rocks. The country here changes its appearance. limestone appears on the north side, the Bottoms high & sandy. the river is much narrower, say 600 yds, with but few islands. this evening L. B. Mitchell & Wm Philips came in loaded with Buffalo meat. I saw roses in Bloom. we have traveled about 20 miles

Thurs 13th

to day we crossed Castle Creek 50 yds wide. the bluffs on the S Side of Platte still continue rocky with a few scattering cedar bushes. the rocks show on the N side occasionally. we passed the Noted lone tree, a large cedar with most of the limbs cut off, the body much mutilated with names cut and penciled. one island with cedars of good size growing on it. I daily take my sack to gather Buffalo chips as the Israelites did the Manna. Grass is becomeing very poor. traveled 19 m

Fri 14th

I examined the rocks on the N Side of the river, found some bastard limestone but mostly soft sandstone scarce deserving the name, all of them worthless as the land around them. this evening some timber appears on top of the bluff south side, probably pine. the road for the last hundred miles has been strewed with wagon irons, cooking Stoves etc. traveled 21 m

Sat 15th

this morning I left camp before the teams to take a ramble over the cobble hills. they consist of cones of rocks of various kinds almost covered with gravel & sand and look like they were one hundred thousand years old. the word desert would form but a poor Idea of their Sterility, yet there were many flowers blooming among them. I had a view of chimney rock some 20 miles distant. (it was 33 miles) I saw several Bumble bees but no honey bees. I also saw the largest ants by 1-3 that I ever saw, also saw a new species of ant with heads & jaws 3 times as large as usual. they always carry gravel instead of dirt. we have traveled 19 miles to day & camped on the river bank among good grass 19

Sund 16th

we have kept Sabbath most of the day and traveled this afternoon 10 miles and are encamped in full view of chimney rock so often described. the country at a distance has quite a broken appearance. there are many Isolated Masses of rocks in sight in the South at great distance. resemble the ruins of Splendid edifices and as we travel they gradually change their resemblance from one building to another. we have tolerably good grass to night 10 m

Mond 17th

This morning as the fog had partially cleared away we had a splendid view of a group of isolated rocks some 23 miles west of us representing a magnificent City in ruins with streets and all its appendages. when the fog had entirely cleared away they were out of view for some miles, then in sight again. distance lent enchantment to the view but now we are near them they an ugly mass of ill shaped rocks. Philips horse got the saddle under her belly, broke and run, frightened the oxen and seven teams ran away at once. we traveled over some midling land this afternoon. traveled about 20 miles & camped in good grass 20

Tues 18th

we have traveled our 20 miles, passed Scotts Bluffs. the weather in morning very cold, rain, hail and snow. at 1 o'clock very hot. rain in the evening. miserable poor Country except where the ground is nearly level with the river and then the grass is good. some few willows now begin to appear on the islands. even here log chains are not worth picking up, our company having passed four of them & left them lying there 20

Wed 19th

to day we have passed many sand hills on our right, totally destitute of vegetation, very soft. white & clean. we have passed many cottonwood stumps but no timber. the Black hills are now in full view. we have I might say no grass to night.

The rugged Black hills now rise in view
 Beyond are snow capped mountains
 We'll leave this desert to welcome you
 For sake of your cooling fountains 19.

Thurs 20th

To day we have traveled about 11 miles and camped near fort Larimie on the opposite side of the River. scarcely any grass. the ferry has been cut loose & lost. on tomorrow they expect to have a new boat in operation. there are pretty conclusive reports of cholerea on the S Side of the River & at the fort. there are many waggons near and hourly increasing—many have gone up the river to try finding a new route, we have had a severe rain & hail storm to day

14

496 m

The Mormon guide makes the distance 522 miles

496

26 miles

less by my reckoning (we saved some in ferrying loup fork)

Fri 21st

we are still lying by waiting to ferry. they are very slow about business. The Platt here is about 400 yds from bank to bank, pretty well filled with isleands. runs I should think 12 miles an hour at this stage the bars are cobble stones yet move about like quick sand

Sat 22

I strolled about 3 miles from camp on to a high peak to view the country hereabouts & the black hills in the distance. every thing except the gar-rison buildings looked dillapidated and time worn. we have run the ferry all night & crossed 6 wag-gons before our 15 which makes 21 in all. distance about 250 yds over 12 ft water, a current of fifteen miles an hour, and but few of us have closed our eyes. we are at fort Laramie on sunday morning June 23 our cattle yet to swim

Sund 23rd

left Laramie, traveled over four ridges in 10 miles, came to a cove, or sink of considerable extent of tolerable grass. went on to the warm springs & camped & drove our cattle back to the cove. the guard went to sleep and lost 80 head of them. we have found all of them again. These warm springs are in the bed of a dry creek it treaks up in white sand and runs of quite a creek it is but little warmer than river water

12 ?

Mon 24

we left the warm springs, traveled over a country of cobble hills, crossed the beds of several dry streams, found a little of stinking water in Bitterwood creek so named from a species of willow growing there in abundance. we made a prearie encampment, no water. traveled about 20 miles. this morning the weather was clear and warm. at 10 the fog commenced accumulateing on the top of Laramie peak and soon grew to a thunder storm. this is the first time I have seen the sight. the grazeing very poor. 20

Tues 25th

This morning we left early, went seven miles to horse creek. found plenty of good water, grazed 2 hours without grass. yoked up and went 18 miles further to Labontea creek, then drove the cattle 1 mile down the creek to some grass, (water good). the road has been horrible bad to day. the clouds hung on laramie peake nearly all day. at 3 o'clock in the afternoon the sun shone out, we had a splendid view of the hillyes country entirely all in beautiful confusion. to day we found the horns of the mountain Sheep and also the mountain goat. elk horns are becoming plenty—we had seen but few since leaveing the Council Bluffs. our whole days travel 25 m

Wed 26

To day we lay by all day. the hills in this vicinity present pretty conclusive evidence of haveing at sometime been burned and am of opinion that it is from such places in times of great rains and of overflowing the bottoms has left the deposites of alkali along down the Platte. the country here is more clayey than heretofore, the foundation seems clay. the cobble stones seems to have been washed on when submerged by water then the hills raised by Plutonian agency. there are ma[n]y old dead trunks of pines & old pine trees and scarcely any young pines or cedars

Thurs 27th

we traveled over very broken country yet we wound our way through almost miraculously. crossed the Alaprelle, a pretty stream, water plenty, & went about 1 mile out to camp, grass poor. travel 20 m

- Frid 28th* To day we have traveled about 18 miles. country poor and broken in this vicinity. the crickets are quite plenty. this morning I gathered a handful of the blue bloomed perennial flax, quite plenty. artimesa makes its appearance. we crossed poosh bosh creek. we are camped on deer creek
18
- Sat 29th* we have traveled about 18 miles, tolerable road, no grass scarcely. crossed crooked muddy creek true to its name. our cattles feet are much worn out. we have but two yoke able to work in our team. W. Wilson has now been quite sick for two days—getting better
18
- Sund 30th* To day we have come eight miles to the upper ferry on the Patte and are all crossed over safe at \$3.12 per waggon, our cattle still to swim. we now find that we have been swindled in the most rascally manner and that the officers of the garrison at Laramie are concerned. we have come the longest & worst road on the poorest feed and poor prospect ahead for 50 miles. we have all agreed to write to others comeing not to cross the Platte at all hereafter. no cholerea on the road now
8
- Monday June
[July] 1st* I looked around on the wreck of waggons & other property. it gave me serious reflections. by noon, we had swam our oxen all over safe and was on the march. our road lay over a high barren country of sand. at 4 o'clock I went on a high point to our left & had an extensive view of the desert around us. some 80 or 100 miles N. W. there were high mountains and seemed to be capped with snow we went 12 miles & took a cup of tea, then went on all night. I walked day and night ahead driveing the loose stock. I counted 4 disabled oxen yet liveing, 14 that had died recently & 2 horses, besides old carcasses. here I immagined I saw the tracks of the Elephant but my eyes were literally filled with dust and sand so I could scarcely see the loose stock. we are here at the willow springs. our day & night travel amounts to 29 miles
29
- Tues 2nd* we browsed our oxen on wild sage & rue until noon, then drove 6 miles to a small branch. no grass at all though there has been some. our cattle

have nothing to eat. dead oxen are to plenty to count any more. I suspect the deaths are mostly occasioned by drinking alkali water 6

Wed 3rd

we yoked up our famishing cattle & made about 10 miles headway, then turned back to our left $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to a spring of good water, then drove our cattle 2 miles further to poor grass— the sand has been generally about shoe mouth deep. we passed the salaratus lakes. they were most of them dry leaving an incrustation of salaratus on the ground & those nearly dry had a crust on top of the water resembling new made ice very much 10 I had neglected to say we are now among the spurrs of the Rocky mountains. they are large Isolated Masses of granite interspersed over a sandy plain with seams running in every direction. I have just returned from the top of one about 1000 feet high. on 'a bench half way up there was round pebles like a lake shore peble showing that they had been washed by waves. near their bases there is great quantities of burnt or scori-fied granite showing plainly that they are all from plutonian agency

Thurs 4th

This has been an eventful day with us. there was a little difference originated between J. J. Benning & Allen of Chequest about the camping ground last night. we yoked up our teams this morning & started, Benning & Mitchell remaining behind, 5 waggons. the rest came on to Independence rock. I left the loose stock and ascended. reached the summit at precisely 12 o'clock. Just half way to Callifornia and the middle of the 19th century. I looked at thousands of names but did not see Mr. Freemonts, but I did see my old friends name, J. Ralston, June 21st, 1847. we then forded Sweet water. the captain then told us the company was dissolved. we parted like brothers, divideing out into small companies in order to procure grass for the oxen. we associated with Mr. Lawrence, Ramey & Robinson from Utica, V. B. Iowa. the mornings are warm, the afternoons very windy & clouds of dust a flying. we passed the devils gate and have mad about 13 miles headway 13

Frid 5th

This morning we lightened our load by leaving 2 axes, 1 chain, 1 yoke, some rosin, some bedding & other things & mad a cache of our pork and have traveled 8 miles & camped on the bank of Sweet water below the narrows. this is the land of game—Elk, antelop & sage hens all in sight. Wilburn Wilson killed a fine Antelope. late in the evening we saw at about 2 miles distance 2 steal and runaway with 7 horses. 8

Sat 6

To day we have traveled about 20 miles through hot sand 3 to 6 inches deep, and camped on the bank of Sweet water. the grass on the plains is thin and dried up. on the low land near the river it is about 1 inch high and looks as bare as a Kentucky goose yard 20

Sund 7th

To day we traveled about 15 miles fording Sweet water No 2-3 & 4. at No. 4 we found gold dust in considerable quantities though very fine. at 1 o'clock we turned to the left round a mass of rocks and at once had a splendid view of the Wind River mountains, the same I saw capped with snow glistening in the sunshine. we camp on Sweet water, grass short though the best we have had in a week 15

Mond 8th

This day we have traveled 22 miles over deep sand and gravel. the weather is cold as November, the wind blowing a hurricane. the air is filled with flying sand & salaratus. we passed two salaratus lakes complete incrustrated with masses of salaratus. we again camp on Sweet water, scarcely any grass 22

Tues 9th

This morning there was frost. a gentle Breese from the S W has blown to day. the weather pleasant. our road has been very rough to day. at the crossing of Strawberry creek there was a long bank of snow ten feet deep and Straw berries in bloom within a few feet of the snow drift. grass short 18 m

Wcd 10th

To day we have traveled about 10 miles & then off from the road three miles to graze on Sweet water near the mountains. there is plenty of snow along the bluff banks of the creek. we are now along side of a mass of Snowy mountains on our right. they are the same that I mentioned

twice before. I first saw them 145 miles distant. to day the wind has blowed hard, our eye are filled with dust. we are now in tolerable grazeing. all hands cheerful. my own feelings seem to [be] regulated entirely by the quality of the grass around our encampment. The Sweet Water is a small stream kept up by melting snow, generally 60 to 80 feet wide—the valley about 10 miles wide, almost entirely a sand plain, the low bottoms from 20 to 80 rods wide, well set with short dry grass that is certainly as nutritious as our blue grass. the N. side of the mountains that are on the S. side of the river are pretty well timbered with pine about half way up the stream, then the is nothing but bar cobble hills 10

Thurs 11

white frost this morning, forenoon warm, afternoon windy. there are many pretty flowers in bloom. we have laid by all day & doctored and grazed our oxen, our elevation is so great that the rays of light from the sun are visible all the night. horned toads are plenty

Frid 12

more frost. we left our encampment late in the day & crossed through the pass. this appears to have been in some age of the world a mass of lime stone interveneing between the granite formations & the whole has been burned. the lime has gradually leached away & settled down, forming these salaratus lakes & alkalie water & furnishing the material to support the coral insects & build up the reefs of florida and the west indies. about the Pacific Springs the ground was literally strewed with dead cattle & horns, say 100 within 1 mile. we traveled about 25 miles and camped on Little Sandy—there has been grass, there is none now 25

Sat 13

we yoked up our starving oxen, went 8 miles on to Big Sandy and then drove them 8 miles back to grass towards the mountains. the country is a desert that has been all burnt over, leaveing occasionally Butes of calcined clay, elevated about 60 to 80 feet above the usual sand plain. there is nothing to indicate the presence of a running stream. they have narrow winding channels through the sand plains 8

- Sund 14th* at 12 oclock M we rolled out, our oxen not quarter filled. we went on until near sunset, rested 1 hour, then 1 hour at midnight and 1 hour at sunrise, then rolled ahead. at 12 M we reached Green river making in all 53 miles in 24 hours without feed. this is going on the atmospheric pressure principle, and that all through light dust about 3 inches deep, as light as flour and at times entirely hideing the whole teams and filling our eyes & throats, and scarcely any grass here. poor prospect ahead 53.
- Mon 15th*
- Tues 16th* we left the ferry at 12 M and drove 8 miles S W on to a creek where there had been grass (none now). graves wer quite thick and ded cattle everywhere. I made soop from the washings of a number of putrid carcasses. the alkalie is very thick here and Elephant tracks have been growin more plenty for the last 300 miles 8
- Wed 17th* we have spent most of the day hunting grass & have found some at a considerable distance from the road on the same creek. alkalie is very plenty. we have made about 6 miles headway 6
- Thurs 18th* To day we have laid by (our fare is changed) good grass for the oxen and we have fine smooth gooseberries for sauce, nearly ripe, & cool water to drink from the best of medical springs (sulphur & oxide of iron) James Wilson is sick
- Frid 19th* To day we reached the Mountain side at 12 M. cool springs are plenty here. we saw a new species of pine & columbia root. The Butes in the S pass are still visible, say 90 miles distant. The roads are dry & dusty. we have traveled about 20 miles the grass is very scarce, at a distance from the road. we have again fell in with Benning, Mitchell & company 20
- Sat 20* This day we have traveled about 18 miles. the road is as rough as can well be imagined. we nooned on a large creek. there is many groves of quakeing asp along here & some small spots of good soil but the climate is to cold & dry, yet vegetation seems to flourish. the snowdrop is now in bloom & many other pretty flowers and banks of snow all about, above and below. we are near the

summit east of Bear River. the best of water & grass midling. we had this afternoon a fine shower, a strange occurrence here 18

Sund 21st

This morning at 7 oclock the musquitoes were most voraceous. we left at 8. we passed through a dense grove of fir & quaking asp & soon reached the summit. we had a glorious view of a mass of clouds below us in the Bear river valley. they soon cleared away and gave us a full view of the valley. here some few thousand years ago no doubt was a vast chasm of lake that burned with fire and brimstone. then it was a horrible pit of mirey clay and poison water. there is some mud and alkali yet but thousands of acres of good land well set in grass resembling our blue grass but more nutritious. such is the changes of time it will now soon be the home of the Sheep herd and the finest flocks in the world. traveled about 16 m

Mond 22nd

we left our encampment in Smiths fork of Bear River and traveled about 6 miles & stopped to graze. the Straw Berries are scare but ripe. some service bushes, the fruit green. musquitoes are very bad. we caught[t] a few Speckled [] from Bear River 6

Tues 23rd

we went 6 miles & stopped and razzed our wagon bed $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet & coupled up shorter, then went 14 miles over the worst of mountains. crossed many pretty rivulets. the mountains have a tolerably smooth surface pretty well clothed with grass and if there was timber here this would be a desirable country. as it is the scenery is most delightful. we are again on the banks of Bear River 20

Wed 24th

we left our encampment near Big timber & Great Bear Lake. the lake is but a goose pond. the Big timber is few Bitterwood 1 foot in diameter and about 40 feet high. we have traveled 16 miles & crossed many pretty mountain Brooks and eat yellow and red currants. the yellow are tart and tolerably good, the red ar puckery & poor things. the weather is pleasant and the scenery delightful

Thurs 25th

To day we have traveled about 18 miles down Bear river. the Bottoms are not so handsome but there is a fair supply of timber near the top of the mountains 18

we here met with a caravan of Americans, French half breeds, Indians, of two or three kinds, with mules, horses, oxen & wagons—squaws and white women, with a portable government forge, some government waggons, and no two could give the same account of themselves. in short they was a pack of whores, rogues & robbers, about 50 persons & 100 horses

Frid 26

This day we passed the celebrated Soda Springs So offer described by others, here was another motley crew. we have taken the fort Hall road, traveled about 15 miles and are camped at a big soda spring

Sat 27th

To day we traveled about 9 miles in the forenoon & laid by the ballance of the day on account of Mr. Lawrence being sick. our course is to the N. W. up a valley of some 6 or 7 miles in width in which there is several extinct craters of volcanoes that appears to have bursted up after the general burning of the country had ceased. there is considerable portion of the valley quite rich and produces a considerable quantity of flax spontaneously, blue bloomed and perrenial. the grazeing is good, water plenty 9

Sund 28th

To day at 1 o'clock Lawrences waggon was up set in 3 ft water in the Bear river valley. at 6 o'clock we passed the ridge and had a fine view of the valley of the Columbia. this evening we ar camped on its waters. we have traveled about 18 miles, water plenty, grass midling 18

Mond 29th

This day we have traveled about 18 miles. the road is pretty level but the dust is from 1 to 6 inches deep with the exception of small portions of coarse grass near the creeks. all the rest is dried up and looks as bad as the grass does in Iowa in the month of November 18

Tues 30th

This day we have traveled about 16 miles passing Fort Hall. it is situated in the middle of an extensive plain near the Junction of several small streams with the main branch of Lewis River.

it is all mud even to the roof. we stopped in the evening as usual but the musquitoes were so bad our cattle became so uneasy that we yoked and traveled two miles to where they were not quite so bad. M. Dust & J. Wilson are both getting about 16

Wed 31st

The first thing this morning was to raise all our loading on top the waggon beds & cross Raft river, some 50 yds wide. we crossed all safe, then went about 100 yds and down steep bank into a mud hole. our load being on top all slid forward into 1 foot water & deep mud below. lost part of our sugar. the rest all muddy but not seriously injured. the dust has been horrible today. we have traveled about 17 miles 17

Thurs Aug 1st

after one mile travel we came to the American falls of Lewis R. here the river is nearly as large as the Des Moine. it is precipitated over and through a ledge of rocks, falling about 40 feet in 100 yds, dashing the water into foam and forming the rainbow above and still a succession of Rapids for several miles below. it is a splendid sight. traveled about 16 m

Frid 2nd

Today we have left Lewis River and traveled about 11 miles and camped on Cassia Creek. the grazeing eat out. we lay by on this afternoon on account of Lawrence' sickness 11

Sat 3rd

This day we moved up the creek about 3 miles and laid by and grazed. the weather is very hot. the roads is extremely dusty

Sund 4th

Today we have travelled up the creek 14 miles and found a large scope of excellent grass and laid by this afternoon. here we found the Henshaws of Missouri and Beckley and Millers of Bonaparte and have spent the afternoon in visiting one another. all feel quite cheerful and sanguine in getting to Callifornia somehow or other. J. Wilson is now well again and Mr. Dust is well except the sore eyes 14

Mond 5th

after traveling about 9 miles this morning our road was intersected by the Hudspeth Cut off and we find that we have lost no time by going by Fort Hall and our teams are in much better con-

dition than those that went the cut off. we are among the mountains this afternoon again. our days travel will be about 18 miles 18

Tues 6th

This morning we left a small creek, the waters of Lewis River, and went over a ridge of moderate elevation easy of ascent and descent and took our nooning on a pretty branch that runs into Salt Lake. here is small portions of land susceptible of cultivation. there are a few scrubby Cedars from 6 to 10 feet high on the mountain sides and small parcels of snow— This afternoon we have been among Rocky Mountains worthy of the name indeed, Stupendous Magnificent and Sublime! our road is good, seeming to wind its way through Merracalously and we have traveled about 23 miles 23

Wedns 7th

This morning at 9 o'clock when on the summit of a mountain I had an extensive view of a broken Mountainous country far to the west, and still beyond at a great distance I saw an extensive range of snow capped mountains looming above the rest and glistening in the sunshine (I have left a blank to fill hereafter) we are encamped on Goose creek. I suppose it to be a tributary of Lewis river. our road has been extremely rough, our days travel about 18 miles 18

Thurs 8th

we nooned on Goose creek on short grazeing, then rolled on through a narrow chasm in the mountain side of scorified bassalt piled up in high masses on either side. then we came into an open pass. got some supper at night and then rolled on and came to some large springs at night. there was no grass and we still rolled on until 2 oclock in the morning and stopped, making in all about 33 miles and no grass yet 33

Frid 9th

we still drove on 7 miles and then 2 miles off the road to a patch of wild rye but no water. we then drove 9 miles more and have good grass and water tonight. there has been about 100 waggons jammed close together today 16

Sat 10th

Today at 11 o'clock we passed the far famed boiling springs. they are quite hot indeed but the boiling is produced by the escape of gas. they are all abot over near an acre of ground, sending off

a considerable stream. they are situated in a valley of considerable extent known as the Thousand spring valley, yet water is scarce. it soon sinks. there is a large scope of land here susceptible of cultivation though there is no chance for irrigation. I am of the opinion the gas from those hot springs could be collected and conveyed in pipes so as to answer a small community here for fuel and light. we are on the banks of Kanyan creek without water for the oxen or cooking purposes tonight. we have traveled about 18 miles road good but dusty 18

Sund 11th

we yoked up last night and came on 7 miles to some water and a little grass and today we have traveled 9 miles and lay by the ballance of the day. all the teams are pushing ahead. many are scarce of provisions and grass is scarce for the teams. we are now on the waters of the Humboldt 16

Mond 12th

late last evening there was many Indians prowling around and some 40 of them evidently meditated an attack on 4 wagons near by us but they were bluffed off and the night passed off quietly. today the weather is fine, the road excellent and grass good and we have rolled on, about 20 miles and are encamped on the Humboldt 20

Tues 13th

This morning while some Ohioans were at breakfast about a dozen Indians ran off 2 of their horses and 2 oxen they pursued them and retook their stock and 1 indian horse to boot. no lives lost. about 10 miles below the Indians killed an ox. they have their signal lights out every night it is almost as good as our Telegraph. we have come about 23 miles today and have had a shower of rain 23

Wed 14th

Today we have traveled about 20 miles down the river. frogs are very numerous and the Indians are committing frequent depredations and the emigrants confine themselves to self defence only. as yet we have had several gentle showers. weather pleasant and feed tolerable. 20

Thurs 15th

This morning our road was intersected by one coming in from Salt Lake down the south branch of the Humboldt. the river then passes through

several kanyans and we forded 4 times. Indian depredations are frequent. they shoot at the emigrants from the crags of the hills at a safe distance for themselves, and we have traveled about

12m

Frid 16th

Early this morning we learned that the Indians had stolen 6 oxen of 1 man and killed all but one of another mans team. some of our men have gone to chastise them but it is very much like running down grayhounds with Bull dogs. our road today has been over a high barren mountain and we have traveled in the day and night 25 miles. the road is dusty beyond precedent, the weather hot, and now that we are back to the river there is but little grass

25

Sat 17th

This morning our cattle had no grass and we have driven them 10 miles down the river to tolerable grass (though scarce). these mountains have all been burnt down to ash hills, some of them look hot yet. there is no system to them at all. their sides are now brown and everything looks desolate

10

Sund 18th

Today we have had a cool north wind, roads very dusty. good grass in the afternoon in abundance, but some salaratus ground, and we have rolled on about 21 miles

21

Mond 19th

This morning there was quite a frost. the day has been pleasant, the roads dusty. in passing a stony point there was several small hot springs near one of which I measured some bull Rushes over 12 feet high standing erect. we passed a good deal of saline and salaratus ground and tolerable grass and we have traveled about 20 miles

20

Tues 20th

Last night was cool to. has been very hot and we have travelled over thousands of acres of salaratus. for the last 3 days the travel has been on both sides of the river and all the indian depredation has been on the south side. we are on the North, have traveled about

18m

Wed 21st

On our way today the river passed through a kanyan and we passed over a mountain. here I saw some horned toads in reality haveing ten respectable horns (and but one head) and used

- them in self defence while the little draggons of Green river have horns on the body and none on the head. I also saw a shrub that appears never to have any leaves— we have traveled about 16 miles 16
- Thurs 22nd* This forenoon the road was dusty. in the after very sandy. the atmosphere continues very smoky. The river seems to diminish in size and we have rolled ahead about 18 miles 18
- Frid 23rd* Most of our road today has been sand from 4 to 6 inches deep, the weather hot and the atmosphere smoky and we have travelled about 17 miles. There are hundreds of persons with packs on their backs that live on rose berries and frogs having no other means of subsistence. flour has been sold at \$1 pr pound and two dollars a pound has been refused in many cases when offered. grass poor. 17
- Sat 24th* The road today has led off from the river over an ash plain and we have traveled 16 miles. the mountains lay around in low dark masses, partly Isolated and Seem Shrouded almost in Egyptian darkness, so dense and smoky is the atmosphere. Grass is very scarce and our oxen feed on willows. we have seen no Indians yesterday or today. 16
- Sund 25th* Most of the way today our road has led through a greaswood flat and notwithstanding a small shower this morning it has been very dusty and our oxen had but little else than willows for feed last night (and poor feed tonight) and we have traveled about 14m 14m
- Mond 26th* This morning after driveing our oxen 2 miles and swimming the river we took up our march over an ash plain on which there is neither weeds nor a spear of grass and but little else than a small prickly bitter shrub from 6 to 10 inches high. we traveled on until 11 oclock and watered, rested 1 hour, then went on until three oclock, watered again and then drove on until 11 at night, watered again and drove on, makeing in all about 40 miles. most of this distance the river winds its way among high lime and ash banks, small bottoms but few willows and no grass, and only a few bites now and we must go further and this place is not called a desert 40

Tues 27th

No feed for the oxen yet on the road and we have turned off to the left and crossed the big slough for feed which will take us eight miles off our way. we have found plenty of flags and some grass among running water. our day's travel will be about 14 miles. I think that I have seen more than five hundred dead horses today. I stopped at one time and counted 43 horses and 5 oxen, at another time 35, all putrid. the scene can be better imagined than described. about here there is several thousand acres of tillable land though to much potash and salt but under proper tillage could be rendered as fruitful as old Egypt. 14

Wed 28th

Today we have laid by all day and cut grass to last across the Desert, cooked up some victuals, etc. The atmosphere continues very smoky preventing any considerable view of the country. many persons are now suffering for provisions and teams are growing poor

Thurs 29th

This forenoon we filled our water Casks with what we knew to be the leachings off from the putrid carcasses of thousands of dead horses, mules and oxen, then put in our grass and at 2 o'clock rolled down 6 miles and then grazed awhile. at three in the morning went on 6 miles further to the head of the Lake or pond making 12 miles 12 The mountains all the way down the Humboldt are mere ash hills. The River has but seldom exceeded 30 yds in width. frogs have been very numerous and but few muskitoes. There is no timber but willows and but few of them exceeding 20 feet high. ducks are plenty also some wild geese and black snipes or water hens

Frid 30th

This morning at the head of the Lake or Sink I saw some 15 or 20 lodges of Indians, most of them engaged in gathering and cleaning of a grass seed or grain much resembling broom corn seed but flat. Their graneries and fans would do credit to the ingenuity of any people. they also make sugar from the honeydew. we traveled down beside this pond about 10 miles, crossed a slough and went 8 miles further, then got a cup of tea and went on most of the night through the desert

until one of Lawrences oxen gave out. then we stopped and are here near the middle of the desert say
18m

Sat. 31st

This morning all was a desert almost as far as the eye could extend. it has the appearance of haveing once been highland, then burned down to its present level. a great portion of it consists of small sand hills or cones like hay stacks and hay cocks blown up by the wind. the only vegetation is some scattering grease wood bushes. we started and went on until near noon, then watered and fed our teams again, then put the ballan[c]e of our load in one waggon and spliced teams, leaving everything that we thought we could spare, then rolled ahead a few miles further, there met with J J. Benning beside the road, he and Mitchell had sent one waggon to the river and all their oxen, men, women, etc. and will send back for the other two waggons as soon as they can. we however were able to reach the river at 11 o'clock, at night makeing about 22 miles this day, 12 of which was deep sand. I tried to count the number of wrecks of waggons, stock, etc. to the mile.

I find there is about 30 waggons to the mile for 40 miles of the road—1200. the dead animals will average about 100 to the mile for 40 miles—4000. water is being sold at \$1.00 a gallon 22m

Sund Sept 1st

Today we have laid by on Carson River among hundreds of waggons and lots of elephant tracks. I think here in one place of say 20 acres of ground that there is the remains of 800 waggons, some persons think 3000. there is perhaps 2000 along the bank of the River in 6 miles. waggons and ox yokes are valuable only as firewood and ma[n]y persons when they abandon their wagg[on]s set fire to the beds. I have seen say 50 waggons that had been fired and went out. others pile them up and then pile on their ox yokes and harness and consum all together. such bonfires are common. here in this place a meals victuals cost five dollars and a tired ox will sell from one to eight dollars. (cottonwood trees here)

Mond Sept 2nd Still laying by I went full eight miles down the river to cut grass to do our team one day on the road up the river. there has been pretty good bunch grass here on the low bottoms but it is all eat out down the river for 6 miles and for 30 miles up stream. people arrive all hours of the night. those that reach here with more than half the team they start in with are considered fortunate.

Tues 3rd This morning after halling some hay 6 miles we left this scene of devastation, takeing up on the N side of the river. after 6 miles our road left the river and went over a rocky dusty sage plain 16 miles on to the river again, and no grass scarcely, all haveing been eat out. went 2 miles further and stopped. as yet we have all our stock and we are all well. our hearts are light and so is our stock of provisions. our sugar is gone. today we eat our last bacon. our fruit is nearly gone. our supply of rice is bountiful, coffee and tea to spare. we yet have about 10 days rations of breadstuff 24

Wedns 4th This morning we went 3 miles to a large Meadow of 1000 acres, all eat off. we found good grass further up the river off from the road. here we sold an ox for 16\$. I had drove him loose for more than 1000 miles. our road then left the river for 11 miles over, deep hot sand. we are again encamped on the River. whole days travel 14

Thurs 5th Today we have crossed the river. it is a pretty stream but seldom exceeding 40 yds in width. our road has been near the river and yet very dusty. we have made about 16 miles. hereabouts the burnt hills rise up high enough to be entitled to the dignified name of mountains, but no timber as yet save a few cottonwood trees along the River, whose shade I have enjoyed several times today. it is a great luxury to me. this forenoon grass was plenty but dry. this afternoon scarcely any 16

Frid 6th In the forenoon our road was near the river. in the afternoon over a rocky sage plain and our days travel about 21 miles. today we had a shower of rain, running in streaks. scrubby Cedars on the Mountain sides near by. there is spots of

old snow and pine timber on the mountains 3 miles ahead to the right. some packers report 4 inches of new on the highest mountains on the 1st of sept. 21

Sat 7th

Today we are in the Carson valley. it consists of several thousand acres of the best of grazeing land, considerable quantity fit for cultivation, the river running through the center. bold Mountains on the west, well studded with beautiful pine timber some of which are 6 feet in diameter, many of them from 3 to 4 feet. lots of good springs, several pretty brooks. here white people could live and we have traveled today about 16 miles 16

Sund 8th

after going about 2 miles there was a succession of hot springs at left of our road. several times I placed my left hand in almost scalding water and turned up my right eye and viewed those small though everlasting drifts of snow near by. the grass has been burnt in several places. the atmosphere is smoky. The Indians all the way on Carson river shoot all the oxen they can. they also shoot at the emigrants every convenient opportunity but we think so little of it now that I had neglected to mention anything about it. we come about 6 miles and are resting the team and cutting hay to last over the mountains. a majority of the emigrants are now on foot with their packs on their backs, haveing lost almost everything. the speculators are sending large quantities of provisions to sell to those still behind us . 6

Mond 9th

This morning we had frost. the wind has blown a gale all day. we saw several men today with mules packed with provisions for their friends that are digging gold north and east of this place and we ar considerably east of the highest mountains. we have come on 6 miles more and laid by the rest of the day, preparing for the rugged mountains ahead. there will not more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of waggons that started to Callifornia ever attempt to cross the mountains 6

Tues 10th

Last night the wind blew a hurricane bareing down tents, blowing away tinware and hats generally. this morning as cold as December and brisk snow squalls this afternoon. we have traveled 12 miles 7 m of which beats anything I

ever saw before, through the Kanyan on the head of Carson river. here the scenery was most grand and imposing. the Mountains of light grey granite rose almost perpendicular to an enormous height, yet the dark green pines of several varieties and in great numbers seemes to cling to the mountain sides and flourish most luxuriantly 12

Wed 11th

This morning the high Mountains wer covered with snow, the lowland with hoar frost, ice $\frac{1}{2}$ in thick in the water pail. Two new varieties of elder and several new varieties of currants make their appearance in this locality. most of the way today has been among rugged mountains and dense pine forests. many of them seem on the decline and dying. we ascended one mountain about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles. the road can neither be imagined nor described,—a person mus[t] both see it and go over it to appreciate the difficulty. we are encamped about half way up another mountain, the last serious obstacle on our route, and have come today about 16m.

Thurs 12th

In ascending the Mountain this morning I discovered the bluebells and columbine [columbine] both in bloom 300 ft above the level of perpetual snow and within 20 ft fresh mad[e] Icicles. we soon passed among heavy drifts of old snow, the road steep and rocky, and reached the summit at 9 oclock A. M. near 1000 ft above the level of perpetual snow. even here among the frozen earth there are many flowers in bloom. from this hight we had an extensive view of a very rough mountainous country far to the wes[t]. we can now say if we have not rode the Elephant Triumpantly we have at least mounted the highest portion of the Siera Naved [Nevada] Mountains successfully. our road has been very rough, the country well timbered with pines and balsam fir. traveled 16m

Frid 13th

This morning we passed the tragedy springs and soon came to some large cedars, many of them 3 to 4 feet through. 1 tree was near 7 feet in diameter but not exceeding 50 feet in height. we are encamped this evening 2 miles west of the leek springs. there is to all appearance some

little spots of tolerable soil hereabouts. the country is a dense forest of pines and Balsom fir, The Fir largely predominating. there is a few whortle berries, some Rosberries—a new variety, and also a goosberry in great abundance, Bigger, Better and thornyer than anything of the Kind in the States. The bushes are low, the fruit almost lying on the ground. our days travel will be about 13 miles 13.

Sat 14th

Today we have laid by all day resting and grazing our stock. but little grass to graze on and none at all for the next 40 miles. I have seen several new kinds of squirrels and birds among which I saw a mountain Blue Jay, a noble Bird entirely blue, nearly as large again but in other respects resembling the Jay of the states. the Black tailed deer are here in great abundance

Sund 15th

we again took up the line of march over the mountains, our road very rough and stony, dense forests of pines fir and Cedars. Cedar trees do grow 100 feet high and from 2 to 4 feet in diameter. a few Oaks made their appearance today. The Emigrants have cut down nearly all of them that their stock might feed on their leaves and we have done the same this evening. we have had a little shower of rain this evening and traveled 14m.

Mond 16th

Today we have traveled about 18 miles. the [road] has been extremely dusty, some portion rocky. the oaks become more plenty and the forest has lost its beauty. we are this evening in pleasant valley. there is no feed here nor anything pleasant save a few very large scrubby oaks 18

Tues 17th

Our oxen had nothing to eat last [night] save a few oak leaves and we have come on 10 miles to a little town called Ringold. here we sold our team and waggon all together for 295\$. he[re] I separated from my companions and went with the team to the Diamond springs $2\frac{1}{2}$ towards sacramento City. at Ringold as at these Springs I have seen several men digging and washing gold. I can now say I am fairly into the gold diggings and will probably cease keeping a Journal

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