

New Mexico Historical Review

Volume 20 | Number 3

Article 5

7-1-1945

From Lewisburg to California in 1849 (cont'd)

William H. Chamberlin

L. B. Bloom

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmhr>

Recommended Citation

Chamberlin, William H. and L. B. Bloom. "From Lewisburg to California in 1849 (cont'd)." *New Mexico Historical Review* 20, 3 (1945). <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmhr/vol20/iss3/5>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in New Mexico Historical Review by an authorized editor of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact amywinter@unm.edu, lsloane@salud.unm.edu, sarahrk@unm.edu.

FROM LEWISBURG TO CALIFORNIA IN 1849

(Notes from the Diary of William H. Chamberlin)

(Continued)

Edited by LANSING B. BLOOM

CHAPTER XV

Monday, Aug. 6.—Found an abundance of beans for our stock this morning, and concluded to remain for the day. Indeed, ourselves as well as animals require a day for resting and recruiting; but some of the mules took it in their heads to stray, and kept us running all day in search of them. A mule completely jaded and unfit for service, will frequently wander miles from camp during a night. Had bean soup for all hands to-day, which luxury we cannot afford more than once in two weeks. Franklin came up to-day with a company of emigrants; he had lain on the mountain without water, expecting to die. We knew this company would be along to-day, or we should have gone back after him.

Tuesday, Aug. 7.—Started at 12½ o'clock this morning, purposing to stop at daylight to feed and breakfast. While we were packing, another pack company came up, and took possession of our deserted camp. Did not find a blade of grass, or bean, until 4 o'clock p. m., when we came across a little grass, growing upon a sand bar in the river. We stopped and unpacked twice during the day, to rest the weary animals, and intended encamping several times, without feed, but fortunately did not. Distance, 35 miles—1835.

Wednesday, Aug. 8.—Remained in camp until dark this evening, when we packed up and started. Instead of rest to-day, which we so much need, we were kept on the look-out and in search of our animals all the while, which seem determined to leave us at every opportunity, and seek better fare or better masters. Thus far, however, we have been fortunate, having lost but the one, carelessly left behind, several hundred miles back. The channel of the river has become very wide, more than a mile in many places, but at present is at its lowest stage, although it increases gradually as we near its mouth. The growth of cotton wood and other timber, has continued about the same,

throughout its course. But nothing can exceed the barren, godforsaken appearance of the country, on the north and south side as far as the eye can reach; one sterile hill rises after another, and mountain after mountain, the desolation of the scene unbroken by a single tree or living object. The heat of the day being so intense, we are now compelled to travel at night; the sand in the road is very deep, which makes travelling very laborious, and it is hot enough to scald the legs of the animals. What would seem strange, although so near the river, we frequently suffer for want of water; the underbrush and weeds prevent our getting to it. For the last two or three weeks, we have seldom encamped within less than a mile of the Gila, and it was often with a great deal of difficulty that we could get at it, besides carrying the water that distance.

Thursday, Aug. 9.—We unpacked about 1 o'clock this morning and rested until daybreak, when we repacked and continued our journey. At 10 o'clock a. m. we halted to prepare breakfast, which occupied an hour's time. Here we found a bush shelter from the sun, which had been put up by some advance company. The day is excessively hot. After breakfast (if such it can be called) we started. Passing over several low, barren sand hills we emerged upon a sand plain, stretching off to the south and west as far as the eye could reach. Never will I forget the sensations that come over me when I first gazed upon this scene. The crossing of the Colorado, and the desert beyond, had long been the subject of speculation and dread. From the information we had, we had every reason to expect many difficulties and troubles in passing this important point in our journey, but nothing could exceed our anxiety to realize it, for we imagined that once beyond the jornada, the greatest obstacle in the route would be overcome and we would soon reach the settlements of California. Well, on our right we could see the course of the Gila river, flowing westward, marked by the line of cotton wood on its banks, and the mesquite timber stretching for some distance over the plain. On the south we had the broad, barren, sandy plain, which we know to be the valley of the Rio Colorado, although we could not distinguish the river or its course; and on the west, nothing but a high and apparently desolate waste, bounded the horizon. A hazy atmosphere hung over the scene, on fire, as it were, by the intense heat of the sun, the rays of which are reflected upward by this immense mirror of sand; all combined to form a picture at once grand, gloomy, and fore-

boding. Our road kept within the range of the mesquite timber, and we had traveled but a few miles when we found some beans. The condition of our animals obliged us to stop and unpack, which we did about 1 o'clock, and two hours were spent in gathering the beans for the mules. Towards evening we found a suitable encamping place in a grove of mezquite; had an abundance of beans and some coarse grass on the border of a lagoon, which connected with the Gila. Here we found a small company encamped who informed us that we were within two miles of the junction of the Gila and Colorado rivers. This was joyful news to us for we could turn our backs upon the Gila now, with as much pleasure as we first beheld, drank and bathed in its cool and limpid waters, which have since gradually changed into a broad, heated, turbid and brackish stream. In the course of our journey along the river we have forded it upwards of one hundred times, and many times the apparently impassable mountains which bound its course seemed to bid defiance to the efforts of our weary animals and selves. The Yumas Indians had stolen several mules from these men, which is an irreparable loss to them. There is a village of them on the north side of the river, directly opposite, but not in sight. We had scarcely reached camp before we were visited by a number of them. We exchanged one or two animals with them, but did not better ourselves much. Distance, 40 miles—1875.

Friday, Aug. 10.—Howard and myself walked down to the upper crossing about a mile below the junction. The majority of the emigrants have crossed at this point, while some have gone down a few miles to Gen. Kearney crossing. We found some fifteen or twenty men here, busily engaged in ferrying over their baggage, and employing Indians to swim over with the mules. They had a wagon body which they had managed to make water-tight, and answered the purpose tolerably well, although it is a slender boat in this "torrent of waters." The Colorado is here about 350 yards wide, deep enough to float a "man o' war," and a very swift current. In crossing the boat is carried down half a mile by the stream, in spite of all the force that can be put upon her. The banks of the river are pretty high, and covered to the edge by a thick growth of cotton wood and underbrush, so that it is impossible to land on either side but at the present places of embark and debarkation. After crossing with a load they are obliged to tow the boat up stream by hand, with a great deal of labor, crawling along the bank over roots,

wading or swimming for the distance of a mile, to make sure of the point on this side. There are about fifty Indians standing about, watching for every opportunity to plunder. They have heretofore carried the packs of emigrants over upon small rafts, made by lashing together several bundles of reeds; in this way they supplied themselves with clothing, blankets, tobacco, etc. This interference with their business has somewhat enraged them, and they have already given the emigrants a great deal of trouble, stealing their animals and robbing them of their baggage, provisions, money, etc., and in some instances attacking and killing several. They are the most expert swimmers I have seen and remarkably strong in the water. They frequently carry a bundle of clothes upon their heads—to keep it dry—with the lariats of three mules in their hands, which they manage with most surprising dexterity in the swift stream. Their usual plan of stealing is while crossing with the baggage on their rafts or swimming over with animals, when they reach the middle of the stream they turn down, and the current in a few minutes carries them far beyond the reach of the loser, when they land and hide their plunder in the thicket, until the emigrants have left the river. Property to the amount of thousands of dollars have been taken from the emigrants in this way. In endeavoring to get into the bank of the river about a mile below this crossing, in an almost impenetrable thicket, I accidentally discovered one of their pens for hiding animals, etc., but it was empty. The Yumas are a fine looking tribe, with well formed bodies and regular and rather handsome features. They have a great deal of money amongst them, and I saw as high as \$30 in gold coin paid for a single blanket. They wear no clothing but the breech cloth except the few articles of dress they have procured of travelers, in which they attire themselves rather awkwardly. What would one of our eastern ladies think if waited upon by one of these "lords of creation," with but a shirt and a coat to cover his nakedness, yet looking as dignified and vain as an enlightened gentleman who has nothing but a good suit of broadcloth to recommend him to their notice! A foreign dress has a surprising effect upon the character of the Indian, at once arousing his vanity and self-esteem. After seeing "how things were to be done" at the crossing, and engaging the "boat," we returned to camp. About 10 o'clock we packed up and started down. The boat was still in use and we could do nothing but cross our mules. We hired some Indians to swim over with them, one, two and three

at a time, for which we gave them blankets, tobacco, etc. We were cautious, however, to first station a man on each side of the river with our best shooting rifles, some distance below the ferry, to kill the redskins should they make an attempt to steal the animals. Part of our company crossed over to receive the mules, while the rest of us remained to start them in and watch our baggage. A small mule belonging to Franklin became entangled in the lariat and was drowned. The Indian brought it on shore and in a short time every part of it was carried away. The first butcher cut out the entrails and lugged them off, as the most delicate part, and the last took the head of the ill-fated animal upon his shoulders and trudged away, well satisfied with his share. Although we came very near losing three fine mules, this was the only actual bad luck that happened to our company. When night set we had all the animals safely over, but our baggage yet remained behind; we were obliged to divide camp and keep a guard on each side.

Saturday, Aug. 11.—The moon arose about 2 o'clock, when we commenced crossing our baggage, and by 12M, we had all our "traps" safely landed on the western bank of the Colorado, after ten hours of the most fatiguing labor. We immediately packed up and went out a short distance from the river, where we found a pond of water, an abundance of beans and some grass.

Sunday, Aug. 12.—Visited by the Indians. They had nothing to trade except jerked mule meat, which we purchased, glad to get it. The few squaws we saw were remarkably tall, and heavy in proportion. They might well be classed with the race of giants. At this point we expect to leave all water and strike out upon our journey across the desert. Accordingly, we filled all our water vessels—gourd, canteens, haversacks, etc. My air pillow, which had done good service in the purpose for which it was made, and was used as a life preserver in swimming the Colorado, now served as a canteen in which we packed four or five gallons of water, and altogether, we must have had about 20 gallons. We also packed a lot of mezquite beans. Everything being in readiness, we started about 4 p. m. We traveled west, across the river flat, until we reached the high ground; then south, crossing a number of high rough ridges, putting it towards the river. The country began to change in appearance, and we soon found ourselves "up to our eyes" in sand; the surface rolling and perfectly bare of vegetation except a small species

of brush, which found its way up through the sand, appearing to defy sterility. The drifting sand had closed up the trail in many places. Night closed in upon us and after many fruitless attempts to follow it, we concluded to stop, which we did about 10 o'clock, tying our animals up to the bushes before mentioned. We lay down to rest and sleep, but in vain—the hot atmosphere and heated sand bed prevented anything of the kind. The animals sank to their knees in the sand.

CHAPTER XVI

Monday, Aug. 13.—The early dawn of morning was the sign to be “up and doing,” for no more time was to be lost, after launching out upon the desert. We were bivouaced upon a ridge of sand, and a continuation of sand hills stretch out to the W. and N. W., bounding the horizon in that direction. On the east is the river flat; the stream is not in sight, but the bottom is covered with mezquite timber, and this can be seen off to the south as far as the vision reaches. After packing up we descended to the flat, where we found some small pools of water. We watered our stock and replenished our canteens. We were no little surprised to find a cornfield here, and shortly afterwards saw the Indians coming out of their huts with baskets, to gather their day's supply of corn, melons, etc.; they said they belonged to the Marapopa [Maricopa] tribe. Judging from the barren appearance of the soil I could not have believed that it would produce, especially at such a distance from the river. Here we found a trail running along at the foot of the sand hills, which we followed, not knowing whether we were in the right or wrong road. About 9 o'clock we found some beans, and stopped an hour to rest and feed our animals. About 12 o'clock M. we came to the well, where we unpacked, watered our animals, and prepared breakfast, or rather, breakfast, dinner and supper in one meal, for we have eaten nothing since we left the Colorado. A little coarse bread, weak coffee and an allowance of mule beef is highly relished. There is as much water in the well as we can use, but it is scarcely fit to drink, (or would be considered so were we in a more enviable position.) Started at 1 o'clock and again stopped at 2 p. m. to feed upon beans, which we found in great abundance. The road to-day has been good, rather solid, which makes traveling comparatively easy. When we again started we left the wagon road to the right and

followed a trail. At 3 o'clock we found another well containing a small quantity of brackish water, and a dead mule; which probably had been left behind, and fallen in in its attempt to get to the water. We drank as much as we wanted and again pursued our journey. Our general course is now nearly due west. Night set in upon us, but we did not stop until 10 o'clock p. m., when the darkness prevented our following the trail. We tied our animals up to the small bushes and laid down to rest. I had become drowsy from loss of sleep and fatigue, [so] that I frequently slept on mule back, and waked up when about to fall off. I could not shake off the feeling, which was truly wretched, although I made every effort to do so.

Tuesday, Aug. 14.—The moon arose about 2 o'clock, when we packed up and started, driving at the rate of 4 to 5 miles per hour. Our canteens now contain our entire stock of water. The sand is pretty heavy in places, and in other parts the road is very solid, the earth being of a gravelly nature, and destitute of vegetation throughout. About 7 o'clock this morning we reached the third well. It is situated in a large, deep ravine, but the supply of water was so scanty that we could get but a quart apiece for our animals, and none for ourselves. This place is a perfect Golgotha—the bones of thousands of animals lie strewn about in every direction; and a great number of carcasses of horses and mules that have died lately, pollute the atmosphere. Deserted wagons, harness, saddles, etc., add to this destructive and sickening scene. After draining the well to the last drop, we concluded it would be better to go ahead than to wait for it to fill up again. It was with great difficulty that we restrained our suffering animals from rushing into the pit headlong. By their incessant nickering and unwillingness to leave the place, it seemed as though the little we gave them increased their thirst. We drove along at a fast rate until 9 o'clock a. m. Our stock of water is almost out, and we have eaten nothing since yesterday. We do not know how far we are from water, but have concluded to "take a piece" at all hazards. This emptied some of our canteens entirely, and there is not now more than three pints of water in the company. The heat has been almost insupportable, but a slight breeze has just sprung up. Repacked and traveled at a rapid pace. By 11 o'clock our water was entirely gone, and some of us were suffering from thirst, uncertain when we should reach water. It operated so powerfully upon Maj. Green that he became almost frantic,

and what the consequences would have been had we not reached water shortly afterward, God only knows. About one o'clock we saw a small trail leading off to the left of the road, towards what seemed to be some small trees and shrubbery; but we had so often been deceived by "mirage" during the day—frequently imagining we saw trees, water, etc., in the distance—that we scarcely knew what to do, whether to follow the trail in hopes of finding water, and lose the time if we failed, or, continue ahead as fast as possible. After a short deliberation we determined to pursue the former course. Our joy can scarcely be imagined when, after traveling a short distance, we came upon a pond or stream of water. Had it not been very warm the consequences might have been fatal to some of us, for we drank a large quantity of it. We now gave the mules as much as they could drink, but some of them had rushed into the pond and "helped themselves." We could not account for this large body of fresh water at this place, having never read or heard of its existence. (We have since learned that it was "New River," a stream that miraculously opened up in this desert waste during this summer).⁸⁰ But for this God-send, hundreds of emigrants must have perished, many of whom, like ourselves, were poorly supplied with suitable water vessels. As it was, we heard of several that were lost and died from thirst. That it did not exist before this season is attested by travelers and Indians, who have been acquainted with the route for many years. It could not have been passed by unnoticed, for in one place it runs across the main traveled road. I think that it is a branch of the Colorado, or rather, an arm of that river. The bed of the stream indicates that it existed before. The point at which it leaves the main stream might have been closed up by the washing of sand, or the shifting of the current, which is very common in these western waters, and again opened by an unusual rise in the river. This is but a supposition; the true source has not yet been discovered. We saw a number of ducks and other wild fowl, when we first reached the water. Up to this point we have traveled twenty-four hours since leaving the Colorado, and concluded to unpack, have something to eat, and rest until evening. Shortly after we encamped a company of Sonorians came up, on their way home from the gold mines of California. We could talk but little Mexican, but learned

80. Others seem to corroborate the strange emerging of this stream in the summer of 1849. See Foreman, *op. cit.*, 283, 330.

from them that there were a great many Americans in the mines; that mules were worth from \$100 to \$300, etc. They showed us a quantity of gold dust, and said it was very abundant out in the diggings. Since leaving home we had seen or heard nothing from our place of destination, and we had almost forgotten the principal object of our journey. We had thought that we were on the safe side of the jornada, but learned that we had yet a "long drive" before we reached Cariso creek.⁸¹ After a long search we found some beans about two miles from camp, where we took our stock to feed. The day has been very hot and the mezquite affords but poor shade. Distance (since last noted), 75 miles; 1950 miles out from Fort Smith.

Wednesday, Aug. 15.—Left our place of encampment at dark last evening and drove along at a very rapid pace. Met great numbers of returning Seniorians. Crossed a stream about ten yards wide—New River, (of which we were not aware at the time), and so deep that it swam some of our smaller mules. Some persons encamped on the bank said it was a running stream of fresh water, and that we had better stop. Having traveled only 4 or 5 miles, and our canteens being yet full, we concluded to go on. About 10 o'clock we crossed a lagoon of salt water. The darkness prevented us seeing, but we knew that the Salt Lake must be but a short distance on our right. Yesterday we were much deceived by "mirage;" that is, a large lake of water surrounded by trees and shrubbery, constantly appeared before us, receding as fast as we neared it. Our animals being greatly fatigued, we were obliged to stop at 2 o'clock a. m. and tie up to some bushes. I was very glad of it, for I had suffered all night from drowsiness, and a more disagreeable feeling can not be experienced. We lay down with empty stomachs. Our entire stock of provisions is now reduced to about 3 day's rations, and we have already felt the gnawings of hunger. I was too much fatigued and sore to sleep, during the two hours that we lay down. When the moon rose, about 4 o'clock in the morning, we packed up and started in a N. W. direction. About 9 o'clock a. m. we entered the mountains. Armstrong abandoned his riding horse this morning, and more of our stock show strong symptoms of "giving out." Our canteens are empty and we are obliged to push for water. After a hard struggle we

81. The distance from the last "well" to Cariso Creek seems to have been "about thirty miles." *Ibid.*, 284.

reached Cariso creek, but found no water. The sight of the dry bed of a stream would not allay our thirst, and we made all haste up it until we reached the head, where a small rivulet is formed by the water oozing out of the ground in several places, flowing a short distance, and then disappearing in the sand. In our eagerness to reach water, it was the best man, or rather, the best animal foremost. We were scattered all along the way, and the last of the company did not get up for two hours after the first. We reached this point at 11 a. m. The water, though clear as crystal, has a peculiar and unpleasant taste. We ate a piece, but we could find nothing for our animals to feed upon. There are a large number of Sonorians encamped here, resting their stock, before they undertake crossing the desert. They have several hundred head of fine horses, which they have no doubt stolen on the way, for it would seem poor policy to purchase animals in California to carry to Sonora, where they are said to be very cheap. They gave us glowing accounts of the gold diggings, and had large quantities of the dust in their possession.⁸² This appears to be a general encamping place, but the stench arising from the number of dead animals strewed about is almost sickening. Packed up and

82. Very possibly these were some of the Sonorans who were heading for California when John C. Frémont came this way about six months before the Lewisburg party. It was from them that Frémont first learned that gold had been discovered in California. All Sonora was alive with excitement. "These Sonora Mexicans were on their way to the diggings. Frémont acted with characteristic impetuosity. Mariposa might be the best property after all. He leaped to the conclusion that gold would be found on his new lands, and promptly engaged twenty-eight Mexicans to work for him. He was to grubstake them, and they were to contribute their muscle and skill, and the gold was to be equally divided." After he reached California, Frémont established his home in Monterey, from where his holdings lay across the San Juan valley in the foothills to the east. "The Sonora miners had been sent to Mariposa without delay and were busy prospecting and extracting the gold from the river gravel . . . As soon as the news spread that Frémont's Sonoran helpers were washing out gold literally by the bucketful, a rush of other prospectors took place to the region. Shortly, two or three thousand were on the ground . . . But the Sonorans, as the first comers, had an advantage over others. They washed out the gold in such quantities that it was sent down to Frémont's home in Monterey, so Jessie tells us, in hundred-pound buckskin sacks, worth not far from \$25,000 each . . . Unfortunately, the Sonorans did not get on well with the American newcomers. They left near Christmas for home; and as Frémont was too busy with politics at the moment to go to Monterey to divide the gold, he sent the miners the keys to his storeroom there. They made the division themselves, and took not a single ounce more than was their just share." Allan Nevins, *Frémont, the West's Greatest Adventurer*, ii, 422, 432, 434, 436-37. Such confidence manifested by each in the integrity of the other was certainly remarkable and noteworthy. As we shall see later, the Sonorans employed by Frémont were still working at the Mariposa diggings when the Lewisburg party arrived there.

left Cariso creek at 3 o'clock p. m. Traveled up a narrow valley in a N. W. direction. The mountains on either side have a barren aspect, and the only vegetation in the valley is the mezcal plant and a few stunted, prickly bushes. Seeing some palmetto trees on our right, we judged we should find water there, and we were not disappointed. There are several springs, but the water was very bad, beside being polluted by the dead horses and mules that lay in and about them. We were obliged to encamp for the night, and left our animals to browse upon the few bunches of bear grass that grew around. Satisfied that we are now across the much dreaded desert, we lay down early and enjoyed the most comfortable night's rest we have had in a long time. We also experienced a decided change in the atmosphere. Distance, 48 miles—1998.

Thursday, Aug. 16.—We felt the shock of an earthquake during the night, so sensibly that we were all awakened by it. At day-break we packed up and started, our mules all the while crying and nickering from the pangs of hunger. The poor, worn-out creatures are to be pitied, having had no food for nearly forty-eight hours. Continuing up the valley three leagues we reached a fine green spot of grass containing a few acres. The earth is spouty—an abundance of water, but not very good. Here we unpacked, and our animals set about satisfying their appetites with a great deal of avidity. We did not fare so well; could find no wood, except a few small green willows—but it mattered little for we had little to cook. After the loss of a great deal of time and breath, we succeeded in boiling a pot of coffee. There are two or three Indian families living here, who say they belong to the San Felipe tribe. We saw the ruins of Maj. Graham's camp, part of whose camp were obliged to go into winter quarters here, on their way to California in '47 and '48.⁸³ They had thrown up adobe and mud huts, some of which are remaining. His troops suffered a great deal from cold, want of provisions, etc. At 2 p. m. we started for San Felipe, where these Indians told us we could procure breadstuff, etc., and the distance was 4 leagues. We

83. The officer here mentioned must have been Major Lawrence P. Graham who, after the signing of the treaty (in February 1848), was ordered from Chihuahua to California with a contingent of the First U. S. Dragoons. The diary kept by Lieut. Cave Couts seems to be the only account extant of that march. Bancroft, *New Mexico and Arizona*, 479, tells us that, because of the drunkenness and incompetence of the commander, the troops suffered considerably. See also Foreman, *op. cit.*, 303, 327. The camp must have been occupied in the winter of 1848-49 instead of 1847-48 as Chamberlin has it.

ascended and descended several long, narrow valleys and ravines, and crossed two or three mountains. The sky had been overcast with clouds during the afternoon, and towards evening a slight rain commenced falling, which in the course of an hour saturated our clothes, and made us feel very uncomfortable. This is the first rain that has fallen upon us since leaving the vicinity of the Rio Grande. Hill Dixon⁸⁴ this afternoon abandoned his fine horse, which he had procured from the Apache Indians, the animal being totally unable to proceed. Night came upon us, but finding no water or grass we determined to go ahead. We have already traveled more than four leagues since leaving camp, but we had our information from the Indians, who knew but little about distance. It was very dark, but the trail being distinct, we succeeded in keeping it. About 8 o'clock we saw a dim fire ahead, and at 9 o'clock reached it. This proved to be San Felipe. The first thing we knew, our mules were into the unfenced corn patches, helping themselves, and the Indians hallowing and dogs barking, endeavoring to drive them out. Although the animals were very weary we expected a "stampede" every moment. The darkness was so intense that we could not see a single mule, nor each other. Where to go we knew not; but, after a great deal of trouble and vexation, groping about after our mules, etc., made an Indian to understand that we wanted him to guide us to grass and water, which he did. Here we unpacked, and turned our stock loose at the mercy of the Indians and the weather. We again lay down with empty stomachs in wet clothes; the air cold and still raining. Distance, 21 miles—2019.

CHAPTER XVII

Friday, Aug. 17.—In the morning we found all our animals. The grass being good they had grazed around camp all night. The village of San Felipe consists of a few miserable looking huts, built of reeds.⁸⁵ The inhabitants cultivate a little corn, a few melons, etc.; altogether not more than one American, his wife, two children and

84. Dixon was one of the "Louisiana party" and is first mentioned in this diary on May 4, *supra*. Apparently he was a brother of James H. Dixon of the same party who on June 21 was elected to be captain until they reached the diggings. (*Supra*, entries of June 21, July 15.)

85. Foreman (*op. cit.*, 297) says: "At San Felipe all the travelers rejoiced at the first sight of green foliage after crossing the all but interminable desert and they tarried here to revel in the luxury of good water and food."

a pig could subsist upon. They also live upon mezquite beans, prickly pears, etc. We had hoped to procure some provisions, but they had none; we made them every kind of offer but in vain. During the day we saw them butcher a poor mule, which had been left behind by some travelers. They knocked it down, and then each fellow jumped upon it and cut out a piece to suit his taste, without skinning, dressing or anything else. Had it been jerked, or even decently dressed, we should have come in for a share; but as it was, we could not "stomach it." A heavy, cool rain this afternoon. In the evening we purchased a small quantity of coarse, sandy flour, brought to camp by the Indians, at \$1.00 per quart; also some black, dirty molasses, made out of reeds, at 75c per pint. Some of the squaws visited us, wearing clean and pretty neatly made calico dresses, bare headed and bare footed. They are not beautiful by any means. We remained here to-day to procure provisions, but we will have to leave with sacks as empty as we came. We have not eaten a full, satisfactory meal since leaving the Pismo Indian settlement, and have been on less than half rations most of the time. A large number of Sonorians passed to-day, on their way home.

Saturday, Aug. 18.—A very heavy dew fell last night, which wet our blankets. This is the first dew that has fallen upon us since leaving the borders of the States. Here we heard the echo from the report of a gun, for the first time in the same distance. Started early, without breakfast, and traveled through a long, narrow valley, covered for some distance with a luxuriant growth of grass and several clumps of cottonwood trees. There is some pine timber upon the mountains, and grass, giving the country a fresh and pleasing appearance to eyes so long accustomed to sterile mountains and barren wastes. The atmosphere is cool and comfortable. This entire change in nature has sensibly affected our spirits, and they brighten in proportion. Passed several Indian huts, at one of which we procured some peaches, but they were not ripe. During to-day's journey we saw the first California oak, which grows abundantly on the hills and in the ravines. We crossed a mountain of several hills and descended into another larger valley, in which is situated "Agua Caliente," which we soon reached; and encamped beneath the shade of a fine oak. This place, more familiarly known as "Warner's Ranch," consists of a few old adobe buildings and Indian huts, situated at one end of a broad, beautiful valley covered with a fine growth of green grass

and timber. Here we can see the road leading off S. W. to San Diego, and another west to Pueblo de los Angeles.⁸⁶ The inhabitants have some corn, mellons, etc., under cultivation, and several small vineyards, but the fruit is yet unripe. There are both hot and cold springs here. The water of the former is said to contain valuable medicinal properties. The inhabitants wash their clothes and bathe in it. The latter is excellent water, and the coldest I ever drank. This is certainly a beautiful and romantic spot. Vegetation is said to continue verdant the year around. This is caused by the altitude of the place, being visited by heavy dews and occasional showers. This is not common to any other part of California. Mr. Warner was driven from his ranch some time ago by the inhabitants, and has not yet regained possession. There is an American here living with the Indians, from whom we purchased some coarse flour at \$2 per *alamo*, or about \$12 per bushel.⁸⁷ The population is a crossed race of Indians, Californians and Mexicans. They speak the Spanish language, imitate the Mexicans in dress, and are very much addicted to gambling, which seems to be their only employment at present. This is a general stopping place for travelers, and there is now a large company of Sonorians engaged in jerking beef to last them home. There are no cattle, no meat of any kind, to be had at this place. This evening the Indians held their annual feast in honor of their god, whom they personify by worshipping the eagle. They kept up a hideous noise, singing, dancing, bellowing, howling, grunting, dog barking, guns firing, all night. Some of us slept but little. Distance, 18 miles; 2036 miles from Fort Smith.

Sunday, Aug. 19.—If we could have procured a supply of provisions we would have remained here several days to rest and recruit. Having the promise of some flour, we waited until noon for it, but being disappointed we packed up and started, at the same time loath to leave the place. Traveled in a western course, on the Los Angeles road, gradually ascending for some miles, over a good mountain road, and then descending until we found grass and water and a suitable place for encamping. Met sev-

86. It is interesting to find Los Angeles still being called a "Pueblo" as late as 1849. It had been founded in 1781 as a civilian town with the impressive name, "El Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de los Angeles."

87. Chamberlin's ear did not catch the Spanish word correctly. Instead of *alamo* (cottonwood) doubtless the word used was *almud*,—a dry measure equivalent to less than a peck.

eral squads of returning Mexicans, all of whom confirmed the report as to the abundance of gold, having proof in their possession. Distance, 10 miles—2047.

Monday, Aug. 20.—Had some difficulty in finding part of our mules this morning, they having gone some distance on the back track during the night. Our road through the mountains is good; a few wagons have passed over it. The hills are covered with underbrush, the ravines are well timbered and the small valleys have good grass. Towards evening we reached a fine, open valley and encamped near a California ranch, in a peach orchard. The fruit unripe. Had fine water, good grass and but little wood. Distance, 22 miles—2069.

Tuesday, Aug. 21.—Purchased a few alamos [*almudes*] of flour of the Indians by the way. Passed a cattle ranch, but could not buy a beef from the indolent creatures who had them in charge. A fine descending road through several small valleys, but finding no grass, (being now in the stock range), we did not stop until we unpacked for the night, on the margin of a beautiful lake some 12 miles in circumference, covered with wild fowls, and a vast herd of fine cattle grazing on the shore. We stopped early and being very hungry, (having eaten no meat for a great while), we looked with longing eyes upon the fat yearlings running about within rifle shot. Some of us went to the ranch to purchase, but found it deserted. Returned to camp, decided to kill a beef, and soon put the matter into execution. Ten minutes after the knife passed its throat we had fresh meat cooking in the pans, on spits, on the coals, and every other way we could cook it. Panful after panful was fried; piece after piece roasted, until we had completely gorged ourselves, actually not knowing when to be satisfied. It was a "glorious" supper. Long after dark found us around the fire, with spit in hand, roasting "the last piece" again and again, before lying down for the night. By this time nearly half the yearling had disappeared—a pretty good lunch for eleven weak bodied men. This will scarcely be believed by persons that have never experienced our "fix." While in the midst of our bounteous repast the man in charge of the ranch, with several peons, came dashing up to the camp on horseback, attracted by the buzzards flying around the blood and offals of the slaughtered animal. We expected "gos," [*sic*] but after explaining to him the necessity of the case, he was very well satisfied, and charged us but \$4, which we considered moderate. We "turned in" with satisfied appetites, for the

first time in a long while, but found that we did not rest much better than when upon an allowance of weak diet. Distance, 25 miles—2094.

Wednesday, Aug. 22.—Packed the balance of our beef along. Nooned at a California ranch, where we obtained green corn, melons, etc. The general appearance of the country as usual. Found a small patch of grass and a running stream, where we encamped. Distance, 15 miles—2109.

Thursday, Aug. 23.—Started at daylight and traveled over a rolling country for several miles, when we crossed a beautiful valley, down the centre of which flows a small river of pure, cold water. Thousands of fine cattle were feeding upon the flat. We stopped to noon at 8 o'clock, after crossing the river. There is a ranch on the bank, but we could buy no provisions there; they told us that we could get all we wanted at the American ranch, a few leagues ahead. We had been directed to "los rancho Americano" several times before. At 1 o'clock we repacked and at 3 encamped at Mr. Williams' ranch.⁸⁸ This gentleman was formerly from Wilkesbarre, Luzerne, county, Pa. From what I could learn he left Pennsylvania about the year of 1820, and came out to the Rocky mountains, where he followed hunting and trapping for a number of years. A few years ago he settled upon his present location, which is said to be the finest ranch in California; that he was then worth nothing but the clothes upon his body, but now owns eleven square leagues of land, 35,000 head of cattle, 1500 horses and mules, and a great many sheep. There is a flat of very rich land several miles in extent, well watered, which he proposes laying out into a town and farms, to be settled by Americans. Mr. Williams is apparently very much of a gentleman, freely selling what his ranch affords to emigrants at moderate prices, and giving gratuitously to those in needy circumstances. It is said that during the war he furnished the American army and navy with horses and cattle, for which he holds a bill against the United States government to the amount of \$250,000; also that Col. Fremont made an offer of \$200,000 for the ranch. Whether it was accepted, or why

88. This was probably Isaac Williams. H. H. Bancroft does not mention him, but John W. Caughey, *California*, 238, in his chapter on "Mountain Men," tells us: "No pretense has been made of calling the entire roll of the mountain men who penetrated to California . . . The fur trapping of many . . . is so overshadowed by their later activities that they are seldom thought of as trappers. J. J. Warner and Isaac Williams, for example, are better known as California ranchers."

the sale was not made, I have never understood. Nearly all the emigrants by the southern route pass this ranch, and more or less have dealings with Mr. Williams. Contrary opinions have been formed as regards his character, generosity, etc.; some say that he has kept a strict account of all that he has given the needy emigrants, with the intention of presenting it to the U. S. government, etc., etc. Mr. Lane from Paris, México, arrived here in advance of us, on his way to the mines.⁸⁹ He started from home with nine wagons and upwards of fifty mules. He was obliged to abandon all but one wagon and a barouche, which he sold to Mr. Williams, and has but fifteen mules left. He is an American who has resided in Mexico for a number of years, and a very clever man, but I fear he has lost more on the way than he will make in California. Here I saw a new method of "doctoring" sore backed mules, animals for which Mr. Williams had exchanged with travelers, being almost ruined by the chafing of pack saddles. The "caballada" was driven into the corral and the patients, one after another, lassoed, thrown down and firmly tied. Several young Indians then went to work, gouging the dirt and corruption out of the sores with their fingers, then they fill up the cavity with fresh slacked lime, and let the animals run; and in a short time, it is said, the sore will be healed up. It is a most cruel operation. I saw as much as a quart of maggots clawed out of a single sore. The hills in this vicinity are covered with the burrs of the wild clover, the stock of which has disappeared. Poor stock will fatten upon these burrs in two months. There is also an abundance of wild oats on the hills, which is excellent feed. The almost incredible number of cattle that range these hills and valleys, their size and condition, prove that this portion of California at least, is one of the finest grazing countries in the world. The horses are not so large as American. They are never accustomed to any other feed than the range, which accounts, in part, for their ability to perform long and fast journeys. An American horse does not "come out" or show well until broken or trained. The Californian is the reverse; when tamed his spirit is broken and his beauty gone. The Californians are cruel horsemen. The high mountains on the north of the valley, and the south end of the Sierra Nevada range, have a white appearance, which is said to be natural lime of good quality. The cli-

89. No other mention of this Lane has been found.

mate here is delightful, the day being warmest from 7 until 10 o'clock in the morning, after which the ocean breeze cools the atmosphere, making the remainder of the day pleasant. Distance, 20 miles—2129.

Friday, Aug. 24.—We continued our course this morning, and stopped near Mr. Reed's ranch. Hill Dixon and myself visited him. Mr. Reed came out from the state of Missouri in the year 1844.⁹⁰ He now owns a well stocked ranch, a large vineyard, and has a comfortable house to live in. He is a young man, has a California wife, and during the war her brother tried hard to take his [Reed's] life. He gave us a great deal of information in regard to the country and the mines, whither he had lately been. We sat down (had almost forgotten how) to dinner with him, gotten up in regular California style—tortillas, frijoles, and a sort of hash made of jerked beef, onions, red peppers, etc. We cleared the table, although abundantly spread, and thanked our host, for he would receive no pay. We returned to camp, pack up, went about two miles on the back track and encamped on a small stream, near a rude Mexican mill and several California and Indian ranches. We turned our animals into a large wheat field, off which the grain had been very imperfectly gathered. This was the object of our return, and they appear to fare so well that we have determined to remain several days, for the purpose of recruiting them and ourselves. Here we can procure beef, flour, bread, tomatoes, onions, melons, etc.; but at pretty extravagant prices, excepting beef. Distance, 12 miles—2141.

Saturday, Aug. 25.—This morning we purchased a beef, butchered, and busied ourselves in curing it. We are once more in a land of plenty, comparatively, which makes us feel right comfortable. Washing our clothes and visiting the neighboring ranches to buy vegetables, learn Spanish, etc. This afternoon an eclipse of the sun took place. Having no almanac, it came upon us rather unexpectedly. Lots of melons and tomatoes in camp to-day. We enjoy the feast, expecting a famine to follow.

90. Not identified, unless possibly it was "Hugo Reid" who, in 1852, wrote contributions to the *Los Angeles Star* which later (1926) were reprinted with the title "*The Indians of Los Angeles County*. (Caughy, *op. cit.*, 611.) Wm. H. Ellison (ed.), *The life and adventures of George Nidever (1802-83)*, 116, tells us that in 1846 William Workman "and Hugo Perfecto Reid purchased for debt the mission of San Gabriel."

CHAPTER XVIII

Sunday, Aug. 23.—This day forms almost a blank in my memorandum of events. We enjoy it as a day of perfect rest, for which it was designed, but by us so long misused, through necessity or indifference. We have nothing to care for but our stock, which are doing finely upon the wheat. The valley is covered with a thick growth of black mustard, now ripe, and of good quality.

Monday, Aug. 27.—During the night we were annoyed by several skunks prowling through and about our camp, over our beds, etc., no doubt attracted by the fresh meat. They were unwelcome visitors, but we were obliged to show them all due courtesy—"lay low and keep cool," was the word, "or you will smell thunder, if you don't hear it." To-day the Virginia and Texas mess overhauled us. Dr. Winston and Capt. Fitzhugh have gone to San Diego, thence to San Francisco by water; Capt. Dixon, Green and Howard on a visit to Mr. Reed's and Rohland's.⁹¹ Day warmer than usual, but pleasant compared with what we have already passed through. Schaffle sold his gun to a Sonorian for three ounces of gold dust. The mill here is a curiosity. The stones are about two feet in diameter, and fed by a raw-hide hopper, which "chops" the grain at the rate of two bushels in twenty-four hours. The water works consist of a rough wheel, the power of which operates directly upon the stones, without extra gearing. It is attended by a woman, and two more are engaged in washing the grain and spreading it out on blankets to dry.

Tuesday, Aug. 28.—To-day was spent in perfect idleness, lounging about camp, sleeping, etc., and as the mind generally sympathizes with the body, I have nothing to note.

Wednesday, Aug. 29.—Packed up and started this morning. Our mules show the effect of good feeding, being very much improved in spirit, if not in body. Stopped at

91. Without doubt, this was John Rowland who, with William Workman, had headed a party of American migrants from New Mexico to California in 1841; they thought it prudent to "move on" because of the state of alarm aroused by the expected invasions from Texas. Caughey, *op. cit.*, 254, tells us: "They left Abiquiá in September, followed the usual trade route, the Old Spanish Trail, across the Colorado, through southern Utah and Nevada, and over the Mojave Desert and Cajón Pass to Los Angeles, where they arrived some two months later. The party drove along a flock of sheep for food and traveled much of the distance in company with the annual band of traders from New Mexico." Next year (1842) Rowland "went back to New Mexico to fetch his family." Ellison, *op. cit.*, 116, states that "Workman and Rowland secured the La Puente rancho, the title to which was confirmed by the Mexican authorities in 1845."

Mr. Rohland's and purchased flour (sifted) at \$8.00 per 100 pounds. Mr. Rohland was formerly from Harmany, in the neighborhood of Pittsburg, Pa. He is of German descent and would be known amongst a thousand as "one of the Pennsylvania Dutch." He has been in the country a number of years, intermarried with Spaniards, and now enjoys peace and plenty. He owns a large ranch, well stocked, good buildings, a mill, and a beautiful garden and vineyard. We had the privilege of helping ourselves to the delicious fruit, which is certainly of the finest quality I have ever seen. There was an emigrant here, depending upon the charity of Mr. Rohland, who was so reduced by the "chill fever" that he could scarcely walk, and had no medicine to check it. I gave him some quinine, with directions to take it, for which he was very grateful. The country is of a rolling nature, pretty well watered. We crossed several streams, past two or three ranches, and reached Pueblo de los Angeles about 2 o'clock p. m. We inquired for accommodations for "man and beast," but they could not furnish the former. We concluded it best to go together, and accordingly encamped outside of town, on the bank of a stream of pure, cold water. Distance, 20 miles—2161.

Thursday, Aug. 30.—Concluded to remain here to-day, for the purpose of supplying ourselves with provisions for the remainder of the journey. A heavy dew fell during the night, and this morning we are enveloped in a dense fog. There are a number of American emigrants encamped here. Los Angeles is handsomely situated in the midst of a fertile, well watered country, surrounded on all sides by hills. There is no timber in the immediate neighborhood, except the small willows that grow upon the bank of the stream, on the south side of town, which is about 25 miles distant from the ocean. The buildings, with one or two exceptions, are one story adobes; many of them being plastered and white-washed, give the place a tolerably genteel appearance. Before the gold mines were discovered this was the largest town in California.⁹² Nine-tenths of the inhabitants are Spaniards, but a number of Americans are about settling in the place. Several American merchants that have been established here for some years, have realized handsome fortunes. Money is very abundant, and I saw a great deal of gold dust exchanged for merchandise. We purchased Chili flour at \$12 per hundred pounds, equal, or if any difference, superior to American; coffee,

⁹². The population had grown from c.1,000 in 1830 to c.1,800 in 1840; in 1850 it had dropped to 1,610.

25c per pound; sugar, 37½c; tobacco, \$2, and saleratus \$8 per pound; tin cups, \$1.50 apiece; frying pans, \$5, etc. Saw sewing silk sold for its weight in gold. Liquor sold for two bits a drink; salt, \$1 per pound; common knives and forks, \$10 per dozen, etc. Doubloons circulate more freely than sixpences do in Pennsylvania. There are several pure Castilian families in the place, who are of a fairer cast than Americans. The soil is very productive in the vicinity. Wheat produces from 40 to 75 bushels to the acre. It is sown in January and ripens before the drought can injure it. The hills are covered with wild oats, and the valleys with clover, mustard, etc. About the first of December, or after the first rain falls, vegetation starts, and the country assumes a universal coat of verdure, which lasts until July of next year. All kinds of fruit and vegetables flourish; apples, pears, peaches, oranges, figs, apricots, grapes, melons, etc., etc., are abundant in season.

Friday, Aug. 31.—Started this morning; passed over a rolling country for some distance; our course due north. Enjoyed the cool sea breeze, which increased almost to a gale. We are within a few miles of the ocean. Crossed a mountain and again turned our faces northward, up a large valley, in which a countless number of cattle were grazing, apparently without an owner—not a house or man in sight. Saw some timber, live-oak, sycamore, walnut, etc. Encamped in a vineyard and turned our mules into a wheat field, near an Indian ranch, with the permission of the owner. If we were not “in clover,” wheat for our animals and grapes for ourselves were equally as good. We paid the Indians for the fruit we used, of course. Had a fine grape pie for supper. Distance, 20 miles—2181.

Saturday, Sept. 1.—While at Los Angeles, I weighed 157 pounds, a gain of 7 pounds since leaving home. Maj. Green weighed 160 pounds, a loss of 58 pounds in the same time. So much for “high living.” We were advised by some Americans at Los Angeles, to take but 12 or 15 days’ provisions, cross the mountains into the valley of the San Joaquin, and proceed directly to the nearest mines, as a much shorter route, and the Maraposa being reported the best diggings in the country.⁹³ This morning we found that we were upon the coast road, which is not our route. A Spaniard gave us direction, which we followed. The trail led over a level plain, covered with a dense growth of clover, and we soon reached the mission of San Fernando.

93. See note 82, *supra*.

This place is almost deserted. A few Indians inhabit the dilapidated buildings, which were built by the Catholic church for their use and comfort. These California missions were once in a flourishing condition. Thousands of wild Indians were gathered around them, instructed in the "Holy faith" and taught to cultivate the earth. Each mission had its vineyards and fruit garden, a large tract of land under cultivation, and countless numbers of cattle, horses, sheep, etc. Good order, peace and plenty once reigned over these beautiful spots. The "Padre" had entire control of the concern and was revered as "prime ruler" by his devoted subjects. But all things have changed. The priests have left, nunneries are deserted, the Indians are scattered, and many of them have fled to their wild haunts in the mountains, and the buildings are fast going to ruin. By what I can learn, these changes have been brought about by revolutions in the country, altering the government of the missions, restricting the power of the Padres, etc., and finally, the country falling into the hands of the Americans, and the discovery of the gold mines, have made complete wreck of these once popular institutions. Although I am far from being a believer in the reign of the Roman Catholics, or rather their doctrines, I can not look upon those missions, and hear the story of their rise and progress and downfall, without feelings of regret, that they have not been sustained. The principal building in the mission of San Fernando, containing the church, convent, Padre's rooms, &c., is a noble edifice, although the architecture is very rude. It is two stories high, built of adobes, plastered and white-washed. The roof is covered with fluted tile. The windows are crossed with iron bars, its arches, pillars, belfry, statues, fountains, paintings, &c., give it an imposing appearance, and it must be acknowledged a well constructed edifice, for this country, where building material is so scarce. There are several Spaniards in charge of the building, yards, cornfield, &c. We purchased some pears and melons. There were a number of Indians keeping watch over the cornfield, each one perched upon a small scaffold, above the tops of the corn. Shortly after leaving the mission we entered the mountains, following a small trail up the ravine, to the head, where an apparently impassable mountain seemed to obstruct our further progress. There was no alternative, we must either scale it or take the back track. It was not more than 500 yards high, but very steep, and the trail scarcely visible. After one of the hardest struggles I have witnessed on the

route, our mules reached the summit with their loads. The descent was almost as difficult. Shortly afterwards we encamped in a ravine, beneath the shade of some large sycamore trees; good grass, but little water. Saw a "grizzly" upon the mountains, but he was not within rifle shot and we could not get at him. Distance, 20 miles—2201.

Sunday, Sept. 2.—Very cold last night. We now feel the need of the blankets we were obliged to throw away; we have but one apiece left. Shortly after starting we entered a small valley. A great many cattle in it, and we were led astray by their numerous trails. This detained us an hour or two, but finding the cassa, (Spanish name for house or home), we were righted on our course. Here we entered the mountain again, and crossed a very high range, so steep that we had almost "to lay down upon our backs to see the top of it." The trail was beset by rocks, stones and bushes, and our travel this afternoon has been a continual ascent and descent. "Old Sol" poured down his rays upon us without mercy. Altogether it reminds me of the days of toil and fatigue we experienced upon the Rio Gila. We did not reach water until dark, which we found in the bed of a deep, dark chasm in the mountains. Here we encamped and turned our mules loose to browse amongst the rocks. Saw another "grizzly" to-day and several deer. Distance, 20 miles—2221.

Monday, Sept. 3.—Continued amongst the mountains in a N. E. course and had a hard day's travel of it. The trail is so indistinct in places that we could scarcely follow it. The fact is, few but Indians have ever passed over this road, and it is utterly impossible for wagons to travel it. Saw a small valley on our right hand, at the distance of a mile, the entire surface of which was as white as snow. We suppose it to be a deposit of salt, likely the dry bed of a salt lake. Met with a number of bear and deer to-day, but they were all at a distance from us, and we could not lose time to run after them. We encamped in a beautiful oak grove on the edge of a small valley, well grassed. A spring of good water near camp. One of the company shot a large catamount a few rods from camp. Distance, 20 miles—2241.

Tuesday, Sept. 4.—Hill Dixon and myself start in advance of the company this morning, for the purpose of killing game. We saw nothing but three deer very high up in the mountain. The valley in which we encamped gradually narrowed into a ravine, down which ran a stream of clear, cold water. After descending this ravine for

several miles we emerged upon the broad valley of the Rio San Joaquin, at the extreme south end. Here a solitary Indian family lives. They cultivate a few vegetables. It would be difficult to describe the desolate, barren appearance of the plains before us. We could discern the mountains that bounded the valley on the west. Not a tree, shrub, spear of grass, or drop of water was visible. If ever vegetation existed here it has entirely disappeared. The day was exceedingly hot, atmosphere hazy, and in the distance the air and horizon appeared to blend into one. We were almost afraid to "launch out" upon this wide waste. It seemed to us more forbidding than the desert of the Colorado. We had been instructed to keep down the valley on the west side of the Tule lakes, which we followed, but since have abundant cause to regret. The trail leads down the east side, and is the route usually traveled. We started in a N. W. direction, traveling over a level plain for about 10 miles, when we reached the head of the first lake, after stopping once on the way to rest. Saw a few antelopes, but could not get within shooting distance of them. Here we found several sickly Indian families encamped, living upon fish and muscles. The border of the lake is thickly beset with tule (bullrushes), making it difficult to get to water. It is literally covered with wild fowl. There is a small Indian trail down the west side of the lakes, but there are so many made by wild animals that we find it impossible to keep the right one. These Indians are anxious to have us go across the slue and travel on the east side. We could not understand the reason, and did not heed their warning and advice. We traveled until dark, finding no water or grass, and not being able to get to water, we stopped for the night and turned our mules loose to browse upon the tule, for there was neither grass nor bushes. But they were immediately attacked by myriads of mosquitoes, which did not make their appearance until sundown. To prevent their running away we were obliged to stand and hold them. We procured a little water to drink by cutting our way through tule and mosquitoes. No wood to cook, and have eaten nothing since early morning. We are again out of meat. We lay down, but to sleep was out of the question. The mosquitoes attacked us in perfect swarms, apparently intent upon having our very "life's blood." As much as ourselves and animals needed sleep and rest, we thought it best to pack up and travel, which we did at 8 o'clock p. m. Being very dark we did not pretend to follow the trail. The mules were hard to

drive, being very hungry, and still annoyed by mosquitoes. At 1 o'clock a. m. it became pretty cool, the mosquitoes left us, and we lay down to rest. Distance, 38 miles—2279.

CHAPTER XIX

Wednesday, Sept. 5.—We had two or three hours comfortable sleep; but the poor mules, having nothing to eat, were noisy and restless. At daylight we packed up and traveled two miles, when we found a little salt grass and an opening to the water. Here we unpacked. We gathered up some dry weeds and managed to cook some bread and coffee. This is the first we have eaten for 30 hours. Left this point at 1 o'clock p. m., following a well beaten trail, which led us in a N. W. direction, leaving the lake in the N. E., and a mountain between us and the lake. After traveling about 15 miles we became satisfied that we were upon a wild horse trail, and bearing too much towards the mountains to the west. The range between us and the water still continued, and increased in size. Persons who have not witnessed it can scarcely form an idea of the sterile appearance of the country we passed over to-day. We have not seen a tree or living shrub since entering the valley. We are at a loss for a time what course to pursue. Our animals were beginning to fail; we had no water in our canteens, and knew that we could not again reach the lake before night. At last we concluded that our only course was to strike N. E. across the mountains, and reach water as soon as possible. Having no trail, we found traveling very difficult. The earth is dried up to a perfect dust, and every few steps the mules sink to the knees, in places where gophers, coatis (coyotes), and other animals have burrowed beneath the surface. When we reached the dividing ridge we were lucky in making the head of a ravine, down which we traveled in a winding course. We knew we were going towards the water from the numerous small wild animal trails that led in the same direction. Night came upon us, we lay down in the ravine without water, food or grass. Distance, 25 miles—2304.

Thursday, Sept. 6.—Reached the lake at eight o'clock this morning; unpacked, watered and grazed our animals and ate a piece. The atmosphere so hazy that we can see but a mile or two. We have concluded that the mountain which we went so far out of our course to avoid, is the dividing point between the first and second lake. Col. Fre-

mont and other travelers who have never seen them represent the Tule as one continued lake, about 70 miles in length. Instead of this, it consists of three, in the form of a crescent. Col. F. also said that this part of the valley, lying west of the lake and San Joaquin river, is an almost perfect desert, which thus far has proven true. We again started at 1 o'clock p. m., our course N. along the shore. The earth is very soft, resembling dry ashes or quicklime, into which the mules sink almost to their knees at every step. Encamped at dark and turned our mules into the tule, which their hunger forced them to eat with avidity; but they were soon attacked by millions of mosquitoes, and it was with difficulty we prevented their stampeding. Never did poor mortals suffer more than we from the attacks of those insects—fight the mosquitoes, and hold our animals by the head, was all we could do, having nothing we could tie them to. Not one of us slept a wink during the night. Distance, 20 miles—2324.

Friday, Sept. 7.—Finding it impossible for either man or beast to rest, we packed up and started long before daylight. Drove several hours, when we came to the end of the lake, and were obliged to strike N. E. to a slue for water. Here we nooned and returned to the trail, upon which we continued in a N. W. direction until night, and again turned N. E. several miles for water, over a flat cut up by slues. Not finding any, we encamped without water. We had been instructed to cross Lake Fork, a river pulling in at the south end of the lakes. After deliberating upon the subject, we concluded that we were past all the lakes and that it would be necessary to return to the foot of the lake to cross the fork. Distance, 20 miles—2344.

Saturday, Sept. 8.—Annoyed during the night by a band of wild horses running around camp, trying to entice our mules off. We have already seen a lot of them. They are certainly the wildest animals I ever saw. Returned to our trail about 22 miles, which proved a very unwise move, being unable to cross a slue. Here we nooned. Again moved up over our old trail and encamped where we nooned yesterday, losing a day and a half, and hard marching at that. Distance, 20 miles—2364.

Sunday, Sept. 9.—Still thinking that we had passed all the lakes and that the rise in them had filled this slue with water, we determined to continue along until we should head it, and then strike a due north course to the San Joaquin river. We soon rounded the slue, and thinking difficulties and perplexities at an end, we bore north over

a perfectly barren plain for about 10 miles. Saw several large herds of antelope. We were deceived by the singular phenomena—mirage. We thought we plainly saw the course of the much desired river, even the trees on the banks. Our surprise and disappointment cannot be imagined, when, ascending a gentle rise another Tule lake lay before us, directly across our course, extending east and west as far as the vision can reach. Here was an end to our brightened prospects; for we had already imagined ourselves encamped on the bank of the river, with plenty of wood, good water, fresh fish, and but two or three days' journey from our destination. Our situation is enough to alarm us. Many of our animals are apparently upon their "last legs." We have not full two days' rations or provisions left. Some days ago we began to fear that we would not reach the mines in the expected time, and confined ourselves to half rations, which we again reduced to quarter rations, and upon this fare we subsisted for several days—nothing but bread and coffee at that. This amount of food will not sustain us, and do our necessary work. The jaded condition of our mules obliges us to walk a great portion of the time. For the same reason we packed but 12 days' provisions from Los Angeles, which we were told would be an abundance; and no meat expecting to kill game. But this is a poor dependence. We cannot hunt without stopping, and this would be a loss of time, and but few of us have guns left. Starvation or mule flesh stares us in the face, but we will no doubt prefer the latter. To kill and eat one of our faithful animals, that has brought us thus far, seems rather revolting, but we look upon it as a thing certain, and have already selected the first victim. This lake like the former one, is bordered with tule, and is literally covered with wild fowl of every variety, amongst others the pelican, swan, goose, brunt, ducks, herons, curlews, plovers, snipe, etc. They are so abundant that there is an immense deposit of guano along the shore in law water. The water we have to use is the essence of this deposit, and is really disgusting, although we had become accustomed to bad water. I had the good fortune to shoot a pelican, which we sat about devouring upon the spot. We skinned the bird, cut it in pieces, made a fire of dry tule, and each person taking a portion, roasted it to suit himself. We wallowed it about in the smoke and dirt, the rushes not making heat enough to cook it. Alas! after all our trouble the "bird" was too strong for our weak stomachs; however, it fully sufficed for dinner, without eating it. Those who

happened to swallow a bite were sickened. I never wish to dine on pelican again. The name of the infernal bag-throttled creature is enough for me. We decided to travel west along the lake. Wild fowls cover the water in many places for fifty acres in extent, and their incessant screaming would terrify an army, almost. Towards evening we encamped, without food or grass, as usual, and after partaking of a "cup of guano tea," we lay down to meditate upon our troubles and misfortunes. But nothing (except mosquitoes) can long keep sleep away from the eyes of the wayworn traveler. Distance, 20 miles—2384.

Monday, Sept. 10.—Started before daylight, without breakfast, following the course of the lake, which led us in a due west direction. Several of us waded out into the lake in search of muscles, the empty shells of which we saw upon the shore. Found none, which was another disappointment. Killed a duck or two and ate them, which only served to arouse our appetites. Armstrong shot at a wild colt, and wounded him, but he got off, the blood running from him at every step. If he could have succeeded in killing him we would have had a fine supply of fresh meat. During our march this afternoon I attempted to walk along the shore of the lake and shoot some ducks, but was so weak that I could do nothing, and was glad to get on the back of my mule again. Toward evening we discovered a gang of elk, drinking at the edge of the lake. They all ran off toward the mountains on seeing us except one buck, which remained in the water for some time. Hill Dixon, having a good rifle, and being acquainted with the habits of the animals, placed himself in ambush near the trail of the others, and as he came along he fired and mortally wounded him. He ran about two miles when another shot from Hill's rifle brought him to the ground. He wounded another, but we did not follow him into the mountain. We dressed the buck and packed the meat taking it into camp upon two mules. The dressed quarters would at least have weighed 400 pounds. This stroke of good luck dissipated the idea of eating our mules. The meat was excellent, resembling young beef. We enjoyed a rare and bounteous feast this evening, and I think it was seldom that men were more in need of being full fed than ourselves. Supper lasted from dark until 10 o'clock. Distance, 15 miles—2399.

Tuesday, Sept. 11.—Did not start until 10 o'clock, being engaged in cutting up and packing our elk meat. We have reached the western end of the lake, and our course is

now north. Passed an Indian village of about 30 huts. They stay here during the dry season and live upon fish, wild fowl, muscles, etc.. They also collect the seed of a species of grass that grows along the lake here in abundance. It resembles flaxseed, somewhat, being of a glutinous nature. They parch and pulverize it, and it makes a very good flour. We tried to purchase some of it, being out of breakstuffs, but they would sell none. We endeavored to hire a guide here, but failed. At this place we came upon the trail of five California carts, which came from the Mission of San Luis, and went to the mines, loaded with merchandise. Encamped at the end of the lake; no wood or grass, and the water still very nauseous to the taste. We spied what we thought to be a pole sticking in the ground about half a mile from camp. On going to it we found a number of small poles placed around an Indian grave, and the one we saw standing upright. Glad to get firewood we robbed it completely, not stopping to discuss the question of right or wrong. Again beset by myriads of hungry mosquitoes. We neither rested nor slept during the whole night. Distance, 15 miles—2414.

Wednesday, Sept. 12.—Started early, but soon lost the trail, the country being literally cut up with paths of wild animals. Saw a great many wild horses, elk, antelope, wolves, rabbits, etc. The horses generally run in large "caballadas," hundreds or more together. On first sight of us they toss up their heads and manes, snort and prance about for a moment. They then start at full speed for the mountains, always in single file. A cloud of dust marks their course, for they seldom stop until far out of sight. It is a beautiful show. They are all colors, and many of them noble looking animals. They frequently come near camp after dark, and course around it at night, endeavoring to entice our mules away. The Spaniards are in the habit of coming into the valley at a certain season of the year, to lasso horses. This art must certainly require very fleet and well trained animals. We had not traveled long this morning before we came in sight of timber, which we hailed with joy, being the first we have seen for eight days, or since we have been in the valley. When we came up with the timber we found it to border on a deep, muddy stream, running south towards the lake. This we afterwards learned was Lake Fork river, which we should have crossed. We were anxious to get over, but could find no fording. It appears that we are never to see the end of our troubles and perplexities. By a more extended calculation,

we had expected to be at the mines before this time. We are now out of provisions and more than 100 miles from the diggings. But we will not despair while "we have the wide world before us and Providence for guide." Distance, 16 miles—2430.

Thursday, Sept. 13.—After failing to cross the stream yesterday, we traveled 8 miles in a N. W. direction, and encamped on the border of a swamp, where we found good grass and tolerable water. This morning we returned to the river, being pretty certain, although not sure, that we could cross at that point. We retraced our steps, and after a long search in vain, we gave up the idea that we should cross there, and concluded to shape our course N. W., until we should reach the Rio San Joaquin. Returned to the place we had left this morning and encamped, making the loss of another day. Very discouraging. Distance, 16 miles—2446.

(To be concluded)