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Walker D. Wyman

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F. X. AUBRY: SANTA FÉ FREIGHTER, PATHFINDER AND EXPLORER

By WALKER D. WYMAN

SOMETIME in the early forties F. X. Aubry, a Canadian by birth, came to the booming town of Independence, Missouri, and soon became known as a merchant of "great enterprise," connected with the Santa Fé trade.¹ He must have possessed a stirring personality for an admiring contemporary wrote of his "medium stature and slender proportions, with keen eyes, iron nerve, great resolution, and indomitable perseverance."² Another believed that his intelligence and sagacity and his success in overcoming difficulties of every nature proved how completely Aubry had adapted himself to the life he loved so well.

Aubry had come to the scene just in time to see overland freighting become a great business. The trade with New Mexico had increased manifold after the occupation of northern Mexico by the Army of the West. The lowly ox and the great prairie became an integral part of westward expansion, and the Santa Fé Trail—a wide roadbed some eight hundred miles in length through an unsettled country—became the path of empire over which guns, groceries, and dry goods rattled to New Mexico from Missouri river towns.

1. *Missouri Republican*, September 11, 1854. This testimony was given under oath in the trial of Major R. H. Weightman for the murder of Aubry. The name was often spelled "Aubrey."

2. George D. Brewerton, "In the Buffalo Country," *Harpers' Magazine*, vol. XXV, p. 456.

By 1847, or before, Aubry was engaged in freighting goods to Santa Fé. The conventional freighter made but one trip each season, starting in the spring after the grass was sufficiently high to subsist the cattle or mules, and returning before snow and cold weather made freighting difficult or impossible. But Aubry started making several trips each year, thereby establishing his "Lightning Express." The first merchants to arrive in the spring made as high as one hundred per cent on the goods sold in Santa Fé. Aubry would hasten back to Missouri and would be enroute again by the time the regular freighters were on the way. There seems to be no evidence that he caused others to adopt his procedure, but rather he remained as the only one consistently to follow winter freighting.

In April, 1847, Aubry left Independence for the first trip of the year; by September 9 he was ready to leave Independence again; and on Christmas Day he started back to Missouri. In spite of the cold and the snow he made the trip in fourteen days. The *Reveille* reported that he left his wagons behind at the Arkansas river and rode the remaining three hundred miles in three days. Three mules were killed enroute. The government express, which had started three days before he left arrived several days after he did.³ His reputation was rapidly being made.

The *Independence Expositor* harbored no worries over their prominent citizen when he left for Santa Fé in early March, 1848. "We have every confidence," the editor wrote, "in the dauntless zeal and indomitable enterprize of Mr. Aubrey to overcome every obstacle."⁴ Having left a number of "fleet-footed" saddle mares along the way he immediately made arrangements for a rapid return. A wager was made that he could not make the trip in eight days—"and many were the boots, and numerous the hats, to say

3. *Missouri Republican* quoted in the *New York Tribune*, January 25, 1848; also *St. Louis Reveille*, January 17, 1848. The *Reveille* believed this the quickest trip ever made.

4. Quoted in the *Reveille*, March 20, 1848.

nothing of the 'tens' and 'twenties' which were hazarded upon Aubrey's intentions."⁵

On the night of May 19 he started from Santa Fé. Within eight days he was in Independence. Newspapers and later writers have proclaimed this event without any degree of incredulity. The Indians had detained him more than a day, he reported, so he had actually covered the distance in seven days. The six men who accompanied him from Santa Fé had fallen behind before they had gone three hundred miles. Alone on that eerie trek he walked forty miles, for three days he was without food, and for only three or four fleeting hours did he succumb to the desire to sleep. Three horses and two mules, so the newspapers said, were left along the trail as mute evidence of his relentlessness. Albert D. Richardson in his *Beyond the Mississippi* says that Aubry won the wager of \$1,000, but at the end he was so stiff that he had to be lifted from his saddle.⁶

However, if the testimony of the *Missouri Republican* (September 24, 1848) is to be accepted, this spectacular ride was to be eclipsed by one in the following year. "This trip," the *Reveille* clarified, "transcends the history of travelling." Six horses [and he "always preferred using the very best saddle stock"] having been left along the trail with various caravans so as to be available at strategic points, sank in sheer exhaustion during this ride. For only two and one half hours, so the account goes, did he sleep. When he arrived in Independence he was helped from his horse and carried inside the Noland House. To the editor of the *Reveille* he brought a letter from someone in Santa Fé. This message, dated September 12, delineated his character and the nature of his most recent exploit in one sentence: "Allow me to introduce to you [that is, to the In-

5. George Brewerton, *op. cit.*

6. The accounts of this trip are given in the *Reveille*, June 5, 184; *New York Tribune*, June 12, 1848, quoting the *Missouri Republican*, June 3, 1848; and in several secondary works. Richardson refers to a trip made in seven days but gives no date. I assume this was the same trip.

dependence editor] the man to whom the telegraph is a fool.””

In the latter part of October, 1848, Aubry was enroute to Santa Fé in lumbering freight wagons, proceeding in a leisurely manner. The Indians stole some of his mules and killed one of his men near Cow Creek. He pushed ahead by the Raton route (the north branch of the Santa Fé Trail by way of Bent's Fort) after extra animals, while the train came along in its crippled condition. When Aubry returned to them later the intense cold had killed seventy-five mules and the Indians had caused the disappearance of nearly the same number. However, by the middle of February he was back again in Independence with news of Santa Fé up to December 16.⁸

These disasters caused by the cold may account for Aubry's shift of freighting routes in 1850. In the middle of February he left Victoria, Texas, with eighteen wagons, for Chihuahua. Later he reported that the road he traveled could be shortened by one hundred miles, and that, in his opinion, the advantages of this route were so great that all the Chihuahua and much of the Santa Fé trade would take this course.⁹ This optimism must have cooled, for the next year he was running the Santa Fé Trail again. In early spring he left El Paso del Norte. Going by way of Santa Fé, accompanied by ten wagons and forty men, he headed for Independence. At Cottonwood he left his train behind and dashed the remaining two hundred miles in two days on his famous yellow mare. According to the *Missouri Republican* (July 8, 1850) he rode the last hundred and twenty-five miles of this distance in twenty and one-half hours. It was in something of a tone of awe that this newspaper concluded, “[he] moves with almost electric speed.”¹⁰ Within seventy-seven days after leaving Santa Fé for this

7. *Reveille*, September 24, 1848. A. E. Adair wrote in the *Odessa Democrat* (Missouri), February 23, 1917, that Aubry took his food and sleep in “broken doses,” eating between periods of three hours sleep.

8. *Reveille*, February 13 and February 17, 1849.

9. *New Orleans Crescent*, quoted in *Missouri Republican*, March 14, 1850

10. *Missouri Republican*, July 8, 1850.

trip Aubry drove past the public plaza again. This was just twenty-one days less than any previous trip.

After having come from Independence in March and April of 1851, Aubry started back on April 23. In this trip he tried to cut off distance as well as find a route which would eliminate the Cimarron desert with its expanses of sand, void of water and vegetation. At Cold Spring they left the trail, proceeding in a northeastern direction much of the time over a dry sandy plain. After he was satisfied that no new route could be obtained and having but one gallon of water in camp, the party turned northward to the Arkansas. When they arrived at the river the animals had been without water for two days and the men for one day. "They had traveled through sand and hot sun, and had to drink the blood of the Antelope," remarked the *Missouri Republican* a few days later. From Cottonwood on, Aubry rode a hundred miles per day. Newspapers told that just eighteen days after leaving the New Mexico capitol he galloped down the wide streets of Independence.¹¹

Later in the same year this freighter attempted another short cut. He expected to find a crossing much above the one at Fort Mann. A correspondent of the *Missouri Republican* wrote that Aubry's "travelling enterprize and endurance exceed, perhaps, those of all other men living. He has made three trips across the Plains in one year, with loaded wagons. The mail last month, with all its advantages for moving speedily, had to leave nine-tenths of its burden behind; while Aubry came through with heavy teams, and without the loss of an animal. . . [he] has gained the highest admiration for his daring qualities and unscrupled achievements, as the electric traveler."¹²

On New Year's Day, 1852, this Mercury of the plains was out from Santa Fé with a large amount of specie. The heavy snow and twenty-below-zero weather did not prevent him from attempting a new route. His safe arrival on

11. For a day by day account see the *Missouri Republican*, May 19, 1851.

12. *Missouri Republican*, February 2, 1852.

February 5 caused the *Missouri Republican* to pay him the tribute: "no season or weather stops him; and whilst he leads large caravans, he always is successful, both in time and safety."¹³

Sometime in March Aubry faced southwestward again. By early April he was enroute to Missouri, resolved to try a new road. Leaving the trail at Cold Spring as before, he veered northwest, striking the Arkansas fifty-eight miles above the regular crossing. Proceeding in the same direction above the river, he maintained that he saved fifty miles and could save one hundred if properly done.¹⁴

Aubry's third trip of the year, 1852, was made in August. Bringing two hundred and fifty mules, twelve wagons, and two carriages, he broke no records. Perhaps his interest was waning, for in the next two years he turned to new fields (to him) to exploit, and new paths to follow.

In December (1852) Aubry set out from Santa Fé with nearly 5,000 sheep, a few pack animals, and a number of mules, destined for California. The sheep market offered an opportunity for speculation. Several New Mexicans had already turned to this field of investment.¹⁵ But he was by nature an adventurer. He had constantly turned to new fields or had done many unusual feats to satisfy his restlessness. The blood of the pioneer coursed through his veins and in another age he might have been a promoter of the Pony Express or "Around the World Flights." But in the fifties the fever of continental railroads and Pacific wagon roads was in the air. Aubry moved from the smaller sphere of the Santa Fé Trail to the larger sphere of the whole southwest. While selling sheep in California was a means of a lucrative adventure it also provided him the means and the opportunity to see for himself the proper

13. *Missouri Republican*, February 2, 1852.

14. *Missouri Republican*, May 18, 1852. This short-cut was used some by freighters. The *Missouri Republican*, September 11, 1854, said that this had been pronounced the best road by a topographical engineer.

15. *Missouri Republican*, July 31 and November 11, 1853. This paper estimated that 50,000 sheep would start in November to California by way of the Gila route alone. Others were driven up by way of South Pass and Fort Bridger.

route for a railroad or a wagon road from New Mexico to the Pacific.

Consequently the sheep were herded down the Rio Grande, across to the Gila, down that river to the junction of the Colorado, thence up to the coast where they were sold. The financial success must have inveigled him for he is supposed to have said that he "would not thank any man to offer him 50 cents per pound for freight from Independence to Santa Fé."¹⁶ The *Independence Messenger* believed him worth \$250,000 in "plato blanco" after this bit of speculation.

The return from San Francisco offered him his opportunity. Crossing the Sierra Nevada through Tejón Pass, he with a party of eighteen men traveled eastward along the thirty-fifth parallel to the Mojave river, along that river for a few days, then leaving it to the right proceeded to the Colorado. Hostile bands of Indians harrassed them as they went toward Zuñi. At one time a party of warriors, abetted by squaws and children, attacked and threatened to destroy them. Twelve of the whites were seriously wounded and twenty-five Indians were killed. Water became scarce and good food an unattainable luxury. For a month they subsisted on mule and horse flesh, including his "inestimable" mare *Dolly*.¹⁷

On September 10 they were in Albuquerque, having completed the first investigation of a route along the thirty-fifth parallel from New Mexico to California.¹⁸ At the end of his journal he made a complete resumé of the trip, purposes, and possibilities of the route. "I set out in the first place," he wrote, "upon this journey, simply to satisfy my own curiosity as to the practicability of one of the much talked of routes for the contemplated Atlantic and Pacific

16. The account of this drive is given in the *Missouri Republican*, July 4, 1853, which quotes the *Independence Messenger*, June 25, 1853.

17. His journal as published in the *Saint Louis Western Journal and Civilian*, Vol. II, No. 2, pp. 84-96, is given in Appendix I.

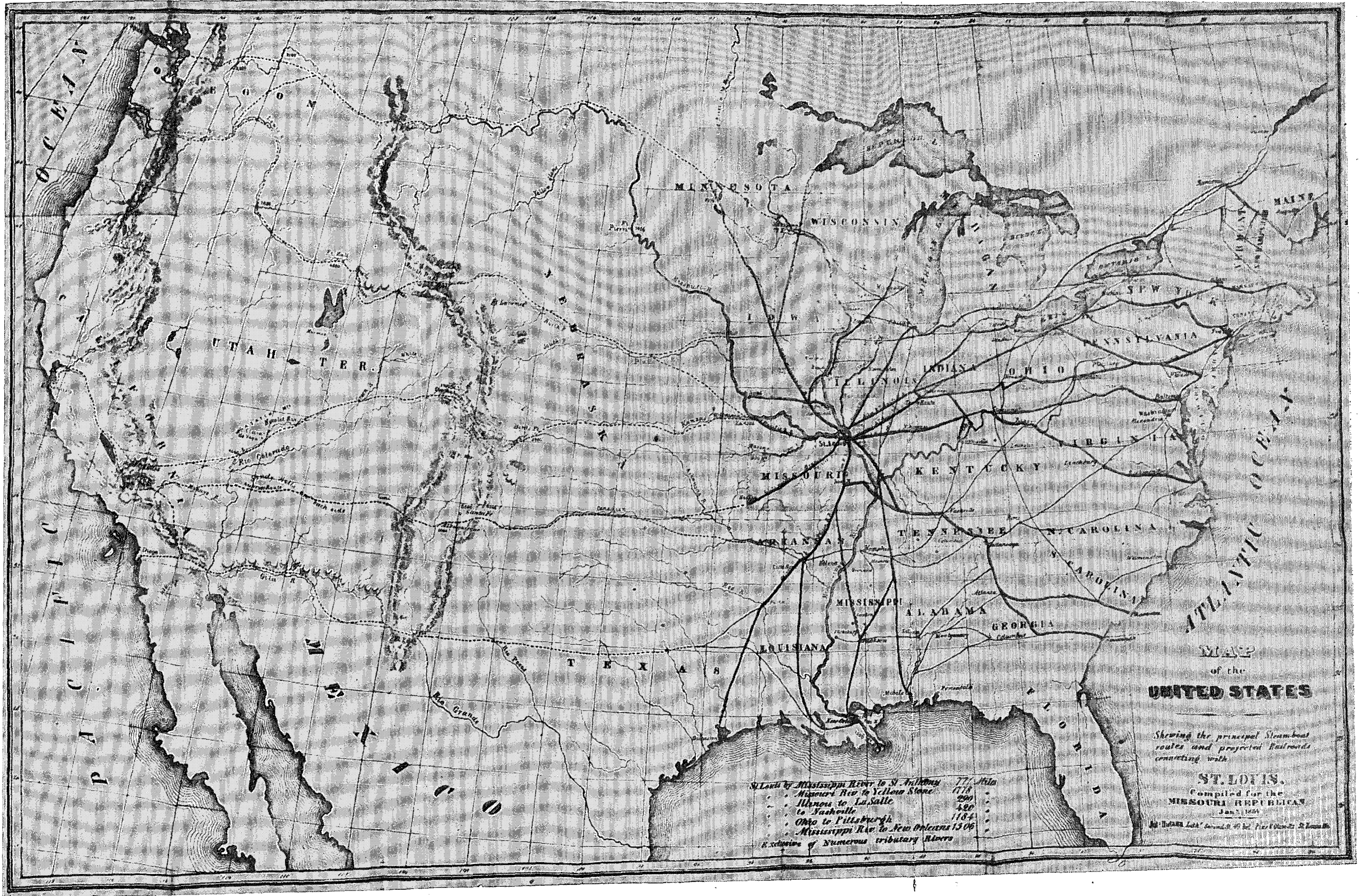
18. Captain L. Sitgraves made a reconnaissance as far as the Colorado from New Mexico in 1851. He followed the thirty-fifth parallel. See *Senate Executive Doc. No. 59*, 32d. Congress, 2d Session.

Railroad. Having previously traveled the southern or Gila route, I felt anxious to compare it with the Albuquerque or middle route. Although I conceive the former to be every way practicable, I now give it as my opinion that the latter is equally so, whilst it has the additional advantage of being more central and serviceable to the Union. I believe the route I traveled is far enough south to be certainly free from the danger of obstruction by snows in winter. . . . I am satisfied that a railroad may be run almost mathematically direct from Zuñi to the Colorado, and from thence to the Tejón pass in California. . . ." Then he proceeds to give specific recommendations in regard to the exact location of the track. He states his objections to the other proposed routes and ends his journal thus: "I have no interest in recommending one of these routes more than another. . . . Upon the route I have just traveled, I encountered many hardships and dangers, and met with serious pecuniary loss; yet I say it is the best for a railroad, and would be excellent for ordinary traveling but for the Indians. A large portion of the trail over which I passed—say some 250 miles west from the Rio Grande—is, for the most part, admirably adapted to farming and stock raising."¹⁹

Just a few days after Aubry had started from California a government expedition, under Lieutenant A. W. Whipple, started from Ft. Smith, Arkansas, to "ascertain the most practicable and economical route for a railroad from the Mississippi to the Pacific ocean" which would lie along the thirty-fifth parallel.²⁰ Before Whipple left Albuquerque for the west, one of Aubry's men was consulted, and he gave

19. Quoted from his *Journal* cited *ante*, pp. 94-96. The *Missouri Republican* made a map of Aubry's route on January 1, 1854. It was published by the St. Louis Chamber of Commerce in their annual report of 1853 under the title of "Map of the United States Showing the principal Steamboat routes and projected railroads connecting with St. Louis." A photostatic copy of this map was obtained through the courtesy of the State Historical Society of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri.

20. The Military Act of March 3, 1853, provided for this survey. Whipple with a corp of topographical engineers, geologists, artists, and other experts, escorted by troops, and taking wagons and pack animals, left Ft. Smith, Arkansas, on July 14, 1853, and Albuquerque on November 7, 1853. They arrived in Los Angeles on March 24, 1854. See his journal in *House Executive Doc.* No. 91, 33d Congress, 2d Session, Vol. III.



MAP
of the
UNITED STATES

Showing the principal Steamboat
routes and projected Railroads
connecting with

ST. LOUIS,
Compiled for the
MISSOURI REPUBLICAN
Jan. 2, 1854

St. Louis by Mississippi River to St. Anthony	771	Miles
Missouri River to Yellow Stone	1718	
Illinois to La Salle	299	
to Washville	420	
Ohio to Pittsburgh	1184	
Mississippi River to New Orleans	1506	
Exclusive of Numerous tributary Rivers		

Wm. B. Lewis, Engr. & Lith. New York. S. B. Smith, Jr. Proprietor.

them a description of the country over which they had passed. Whipple recorded that the man cautioned them to "avoid his trail as being unsuitable for our [Whipple's] operations."²¹ However, this warning must have been made concerning a part of the trail, for Whipple followed in a general way that taken by Aubry and was enthusiastic concerning it. In the latter part of that year or in the early part of 1854 Aubry and other New Mexican capitalists were on the way to California with their sheep. Aubry had visions of following the same middle route on his return to Albuquerque, but in such a way as to avoid the hardships of the former year. Accordingly, on July 6, he led a force of men through Tejón Pass. This group had been outfitted at a cost of \$15,000 with the avowed object, so he wrote in his journal, of locating "a Wagon Road from this valley [San Jose] to Albuquerque on the north side of the Gila, in the 35th parallel of latitude, or as near it as practicable."²²

Whipple's trail was crossed several times, as was his own of the year before. The Indians did not harass them on this trip, nor did the party suffer from lack of food and water.

Thirty-five days after the departure from California, Aubry stopped at the store of Messrs. Mercure in Santa Fé. Major R. H. Weightman, formerly the editor of the *Amigo del Pais*, of Albuquerque, who had published Aubry's California journal of the previous year, entered the store soon after. After shaking hands, the men began a general conversation concerning the journal Weightman had published. Aubry asked Weightman what had happened to his paper, and was told that it had died for lack of subscribers. "Aubry then said that any such lying paper ought to die. Weightman asked him what he alluded to, when Aubry replied and said: 'last fall you asked me for information about it, which I gave you, and you afterwards abused me.'" In the quarrel which followed Weightman threw part of a tumbler of liquor in Aubry's face, then stepped back a pace or two, and

21. *Ibid.*, p. 48.

22. His journal was printed in the *Missouri Republican*, September 26, 1854. See Appendix II.

placed his hands upon his belt. . . . [Aubry] immediately drew a five-shooter from his left side, and as he brought it up in front of him, one barrel prematurely discharged (supposedly while cocking it) before it was on a level with Weightman's person, and the bullet went into the ceiling." Weightman drew a Bowie knife, they clinched, and Aubry was stabbed, dying soon afterward.²³

In the subsequent trial the court instructed the jury that by reason of Aubry's drawing the pistol, Weightman had "no reasonable and safe means in his power to avoid or escape the danger in which he was placed without taking the life of Aubry." Frontier justice was soon given, the jury agreeing unanimously that the defendant was not guilty.²⁴ The *Missouri Republican* rather sadly told of the funeral services being held in the "Parroquial" church in Santa Fé, and that a "large concourse of friends" followed the body to the grave.

The exploits of Aubry drew the respect of the leading newspapers of the day. By them he was referred to as "Telegraph Aubrey," the "Great Plains Courier," the "Skimmer of the Plains," and the "fleet traveller of the Prairie," also being given other sobriquets of a similar ring. His speed records, in all probability, inspired the christening of the "F. X. Aubry," one of the "Lightning Line" packets plying on the Missouri. The military department gave his name to a fort on the Arkansas river built for the protection of the Santa Fé Trail in the Indian troubles of 1865 and 1866. The state of Missouri named a town in his honor. Even the gold rush to Colorado in the latter seventies brought an "F. X. Aubry" lode. The name became legendary, associated with great speed and daring. His soul was restless and adventurous, craving only the approbation of his fellowmen. He typifies the frontier spirit in

23. This account is taken from testimony given under oath in the trial of Weightman, published in the *Santa Fé Gazette* and quoted by the *Missouri Republican*, September 26, 1854. Also given by R. E. Twitchell in his *Leading Facts of New Mexican History* (Cedar Rapids, 1912), Vol. II, pp. 305-309.

24. A full account of the trial is given in the *Missouri Republican*, October 28, 1854.

his boundless energy, his faith in himself, and in his belief in the power of man to conquer nature. Yet he made no permanent contributions. A distant government failed to recruit his talents in guiding one of the many surveying parties of the fifties in quest of a suitable railroad route through the Southwest, or in commanding wagon trains to feed the destitute Army of the West in the Mexican War. Aubry probably would have scorned such an offer. It was for him to play the lone hand, to do the unusual and spectacular. To live in the spotlight of public approval was all that he demanded in return. It is rather melancholy that his death should have come while defending one of his exploits. Contemporary testimony indicates that he was one of the heroes of the latter forties and early fifties, and that he deserves the honor of being called a pathfinder, an explorer, and one who personifies the "great riding tradition of the West."

APPENDIX I

AUBRY'S JOURNEY FROM CALIFORNIA TO NEW MEXICO

(The notes, kept by Aubry, of this journey in 1853 are given as they first appeared in the *St. Louis Western Journal and Civilian*, vol. 11, no. 2 (Nov., 1853), pp. 84-96. The editor, in a note, said: "The following account of a trip made by F. X. Aubry from California to New Mexico, through an unexplored region, is full of interest, especially at the present time, and is highly worthy of being preserved in American history on account of the heroism displayed by the author and his comrades.")

Notes.—By F. X. AUBRY

TEJON PASS, *July 10th*, 1853.—As the country between this point and San Francisco is well known, I have kept no minutes of my journey thus far. We crossed the Sierra Nevada at the Tejon Pass, which is in about the 35th parallel of latitude, and about 50 miles south of Walker's pass. From this point we travel east until we reach the Rio

Grande at Albuquerque, New Mexico. It is well to remark that, unfortunately, there is no one with us who knows anything of the country through which we must pass, and we could not obtain any information in regard to it. *My* party consists of eighteen men—twelve Americans and six Mexicans. Messrs. Tully, of Santa Fe, and Adair, of Independence, have joined us for a pleasure trip. We use pack animals entirely, having neither wagon nor carriage.

July 11th.—Left the Pass, and made twelve miles east over a level, gravelly and sandy soil, and found a spring of good water.

July 12th.—Traveled twenty miles eastward, the country similar to that of yesterday. We met with no timber, but found several springs of fresh water. There is timber in the mountains about the Tejon pass, but none on the eastern side of them.

July 13th.—Travelled to-day 35 miles east, and struck the Mohave river, where we found plenty of good water. This river sometimes disappears in its course, whilst at others it contains as much as two feet of water. There is a little coot-wood timber upon its banks, and canebrakes in great abundance. The cane is not of the large species.

The Mohave takes its rise in the San Bernardino mountains, which lie to the south of us, and after pursuing a northern course to a point a little north of our present camp, turns suddenly east, and soon south of east to empty into the great Colorado. Found good grass for our animals.

July 14th.—Made 20 miles east along the Mohave, and found water, timber and grass abundant.

July 15th.—Continued along the river about 18 miles further, in a direction nearly east, then leaving the Mohave to our right, we traveled 15 miles north-east.

Met with an abundance of grass, a little timber, and a few miles of fertile land along the river. There is no water in the bed of the stream; but it may be had by digging a few feet. Found wild game from time to time. Encamped without water, grass or wood.

July 16th.—Still pursuing a north-eastern course—we traveled to-day 35 miles over a level, gravelly soil. We have deviated from our due east course in order to avoid a region of sand hills that lie to our right, and directly between us and the Great Colorado. The weather is very hot, and no rain has fallen since we left the Pass. So far we have met

with neither Indians nor game of any kind. We obtained a little water about half-way in our day's journey; but saw no timber or grass.

July 17th.—Made 33 miles northeast, over a level, gravelly country; about half way obtained a little very bad water. No grass or timber in sight during the day; but at night we obtained good water, grass and wild game. Prairie mountains lie on both sides of the trail.

July 18th.—Traveled 20 miles, still north-east, over a level country. Saw but little good land, and no timber. After traveling about 5 miles, we found good spring water, but encamped without any.

July 19th.—Course still north-east, distance 32 miles, country level, soil inferior, grass and water, but no timber.

July 20th.—Made 20 miles north east over a level, gravelly country, and obtained good spring water and grass. Saw no timber.

July 21st.—Were detained in camp all day by the sickness of one of the men.

July 22d.—Traveled 20 miles east-south-east, most of the distance through a little canon, where we found good grass, water and game in abundance, and struck the great Colorado of the West. The river at this place is over 300 yards in width, and has from 10 to 15 feet water in the channel. Its banks are entirely destitute of timber and grass; in fact, no vegetation is met with except a small shrub, called *chamezo* by the Mexicans, and I believe *artemesia* by botanists. We were very fortunate in striking the river at this point, where there are neither canons nor mountains, although the country appears very rough and mountainous both to the north and south of us. To the north, the rocks are black and irregular, and seem to be volcanic; whilst the cliffs to the south are of red sandstone. The banks at the crossing are low, rocky and unchanging, and the current exceedingly rapid.

We followed the river up for 5 miles, and selected a crossing where it was some 200 yards wide and 20 or 25 feet deep. We succeeded in finding a little drift wood, of which we made a raft. Four men took charge of it, and it was carried some 3 miles with the current before it could be landed. The heights were covered with Indians, in readiness to shoot us down. I started down with four men to follow the raft and protect the men who were upon it,

having ordered the camp to move down in haste. Having unloaded the raft upon the eastern bank, the men recrossed the river, and we selected a camp opposite the place where the baggage was deposited, and during the night kept up a constant fire with our rifles across the river, and in this manner protected it from the Indians.

The animals were taken to the crossing I had first selected, to swim the river. I took them up with three men on the west bank, and four men received them on the opposite side. This detained us half a day, and altogether we were detained five days in crossing the river.

The driftwood of which we constructed our little raft, appeared to have been cut by beavers. These animals must be exceedingly abundant, as they destroyed during the first night the ropes with which our raft was bound together, and carried off the timber. The loss of the ropes was a great inconvenience to us. We set a guard afterwards at night over our second raft, to protect it from a similar fate.

The river showed signs of having been some fifteen feet higher than when we crossed it. It is here a grand and magnificent stream, swift like the Mississippi, and apparently as well adapted to navigation.

The place of our crossing is well suited to bridging, or ferriage by steam or otherwise.

We saw no water-fowl about the river, and only a few antelope and black-tailed deer. East of the river we encountered a great many rattlesnakes of an uncommonly large size. They seem to be a new species, as their tails are covered, for some six inches from the point, with alternate white and black rings of hair or bristles, about a quarter of an inch long.

According to my observations the Colorado of the west is set down upon the maps greatly too far to the east, perhaps as much as 150 miles.

The Indians were constantly in sight, and watching our movements. They could not be induced to approach us; but assured us, across the river, that they were Mohaves.

On one occasion, whilst at rest for a few minutes in a deep gulley, about a mile from the crossing on the west side of the river, a Mexican mule-boy discovered something glistening upon the ground, which on examination proved to be gold. We at once commenced washing sand in our tin cups, and in every one discovered particles of gold. This gold was discovered in a dark, coarse sand, and a black

heavy sand was found in the cup after washing away the gravel. The sandy soil was so compact that we could not dig it up with our fingers. The Indians being still on the heights near us, and our party being separated by the river, the danger was so great that we could not remain longer at this spot. I intended to return again, but the Indians became so numerous that it was impossible to do so. This gulley is on the right bank of the river, and the head of it is in a very rough and rugged mountain.

July 27th.—We washed sand on the east side of the river, and found gold in greater abundance than on any previous occasion. A Mexican boy, on washing a frying-panfull of coarse sand, found from forty to fifty particles of pure gold, some of which were as large as the head of a pin. We took the clay and sand from the top of the ground without digging. The appearance of the country also indicated gold. I made no further examination, as our animals had subsisted for five days upon the *chamezo*, without a blade of grass, and our provisions had been damaged in the Colorado, which must cause us to travel several days without anything to eat.

To-day we made 10 miles east. The country is without wood, water or grass.

July 28th.—Two of our men being sick, we were compelled to return to the river on their account.

Struck it some 15 miles below the crossing, and found that from near that point it makes a considerable bend towards the east. The country here does not indicate gold, nor could we find any on washing the sands.

July 29th.—The condition of our sick men obliged us to remain in camp all day. Our animals were in a starving condition, as there is not a particle of grass on or near the river.

July 30th.—Left the river and traveled 15 miles east, and 5 north-east. A sick Mexican was so much exhausted that we were compelled to make for a mountain north of us, which indicated water; but we found neither water, timber nor grass.

July 31st.—Traveled 8 miles, north-east, and struck a large stream, but much smaller than the Colorado, coming from the east-south-east, and running west-north-west. This stream may be what the Mexicans designate as the Rio

Grande de los Apaches, and what the Americans have recently called the Little Red River.

One of our Mexicans followed this stream a few miles, and says it empties into the Colorado, 7 or 8 miles below camp, and that there is below us a valley of good soil, and grass in abundance. Where we struck this stream there is neither timber nor grass.

In the evening, we traveled 5 miles south, to avoid mountains, and as many east.

The country was level, but without grass or timber.

The mountains, or perhaps more properly hills that we have thus far met with, are nothing more than elevations of various forms and dimensions, dispersed in a detached and irregular manner over a vast and otherwise uninterrupted plateau. Hence, I have constantly termed the country level, and very properly, as it may be traversed in all directions among the solitary and detached elevations or mountains, without the necessity of crossing them.

August 1st.—Traveled 20 miles east, and found a spring of good water; the grass was abundant, and cedar trees were seen on the highlands. The country is level, and the soil inferior.

August 2d.—Made 10 miles east, crossing a mountain or ridge, where we found a fine pass, grass and timber (cedar and piñon,) abundant.

August 3d.—Traveled 20 miles south of east, over a country somewhat broken; timber and grass abundant. Indians were around us in numbers, all day, shooting arrows every moment. They wounded some of our mules, and my famous mare Dolly, who has so often rescued me from danger, by her speed and capacity of endurance.

August 4th.—We moved 10 miles south, to avoid mountains, and struck a valley which we left a few days since, and which extends to the Colorado. The mountains which we left are covered with timber. Grass and water were found in plenty.

The Indians commenced firing on us at sunrise, and continued until we reached camp. Arrows passed through the clothes of the men, and three passed through my own clothes, and I was slightly wounded by two others in different places. An arrow passed through the collar of Dick Williams. We killed several of the Indians and wounded more. Peter Prudon accidentally shot himself in the right knee.

August 5th.—Traveled 10 miles south-east in a valley. No water; grass and timber in abundance on all the mountains.

August 6th.—Continued 10 miles south-east in the same valley in which we traveled yesterday; found no water, but good grass and plenty of timber on and below the mountains. As our sick men are unable to travel, we are suffering for water, having been nearly 3 days without any; and indications are not now favorable. Indians still around us.

August 7th.—Traveled 10 miles south-east, half the distance in the same valley, and then went to a mountain, and found good water, grass and timber. All the mountains in this country are covered with cedar, pine and piñon. The grass is good in all the prairies, but none of them have any water. The soil is sandy and full of particles of mica. Indians are numerous, and continue to fire upon us.

August 8th.—Made 15 miles east-south-east, crossing a little chain of mountains, where we found a level pass, and timber, grass and water in abundance. Crossed a stream running from north-east to south-west, which I think goes to the Colorado. After crossing the mountains, we passed through a fine valley, with an abundance of good spring water, and timber near it. The Indians attacked the camp several times last night, but without success, and continued fighting us during the day, but with less boldness and resolution.

August 9th.—After proceeding 8 miles east, we found ourselves surrounded by cañons, apparently from one to four thousand feet deep; at least we sometimes could not see the bottom. We were compelled to return to the same camp. The country is high and level, and well supplied with timber, grass and water.

August 10th.—Moved 10 miles south-east over a somewhat broken country. Crossed a stream of good water, (with timber along its course,) which is evidently a tributary of the Gila. The country indicates gold in abundance. We crossed a little chain of mountains, where we found a great quantity of silver ore in flint rocks.

August 11th.—Traveled south-east over a country a little broken, but well supplied with water, grass and timber. Indications of gold still exist.

August 12th.—Made 15 miles south-east, crossing the bed of a large stream now dry, with plenty of timber along it. Struck the valley which we left some five or six days ago, having crossed a few days ago the head water of a stream which passes through it. This valley will be of the utmost importance in the making of a wagon or rail road.

To-day, for the first time on this trip, we ate a dinner of mule meat. It was a new dish to most of our men, and made some of them sick. To me it was an old acquaintance, and I feel well. It only served to remind me of hard times on other journeys. The quality of the meat depends on the appetite of the man. Several of us are now on foot.

August 13th.—Marched 20 miles east, leaving to our right the great valley so often mentioned, and which extends to the Colorado. Passed through a little valley between two mountains, where we found timber, grass and water in abundance. The soil was excellent.

We here met Indians, who professed to be very friendly, with papers of recommendation from the commanding officer of Fort Yuma, on the Gila trail.

August 14th.—We left early, and after traveling 5 miles in an eastern direction, stopped to breakfast near an Indian camp of Garroteros. They professed friendship, but having no faith in their professions, I selected a camp on the top of a small hill, which would give us advantage in case of a fight. All went on well until our mules were saddled, and we were ready to start, when, at a given signal, some forty or fifty Indians, apparently unarmed, and accompanied by their squaws, children and babies, (tied to boards,) in their arms, very suddenly charged upon us, and attempted to destroy the whole party with clubs and rocks. The signal of attack was the taking of my hand in farewell by a chief, which he held with all his strength. So soon as these first Indians commenced the fight about two hundred more rushed from behind a hill and brush, and charged upon us with clubs, bows and arrows. I thought, for a few minutes, that our party must necessarily be destroyed; but some of us having disengaged ourselves, we shot them down so fast with our Colt's revolvers, that we soon produced confusion among them, and put them to flight. We owe our lives to these firearms, the best ever were invented, and now brought, by successive improvements, to a state of perfection.

Mr. Hendry, an American, and Francisco Guzman, a New Mexican, greatly distinguished themselves.

Twelve of us, just two-thirds of our party, were severely wounded. I, among the rest, was wounded in six places. Abner Adair, I fear, is dangerously injured. It was a very great satisfaction to me to find that none of my men were killed, nor any of the animals lost. We bled very much from our numerous wounds; but the blood and bodies of the Indians covered the ground for many yards around us. We killed over twenty-five, and wounded more. The bows and arrows that we captured and destroyed, would have more than filled a large wagon.

Before the attack commenced, the squaws kept the clubs, which were from 18 to 24 inches long, concealed in deer skins about their children. When put to flight, they threw their babes down into a deep, brushy gulley, near at hand, by which many of them must have been killed. This is the first time I ever met with a war party of Indians accompanied by their wives and children. The presence of the latter was evidently to remove from our minds all suspicion of foul play on their part. I was never before in so perilous a condition with a party in all my life. On this occasion, which will be the last, I imprudently gave my right hand, in parting, to the Indian chief. The left must answer for leave taking hereafter.

We have thus far had so much ill-luck to encounter, that our arrival at our destination must be much delayed. First, our men fell sick, then our provisions were damaged in the Colorado; latterly, a man shot himself through the knee; our mules' feet, for want of shoes, are worn out; and, to crown all, to-day two-thirds of the party are badly wounded, and all have barely escaped with their lives. We are now subsisting entirely on mule meat, and do not get as much of that as we want. We are without salt and pepper, and, in their absence, it requires a stout stomach to digest our fare. But nobody complains, and the possibility of not doing what we have set out to do, has never entered the minds of my party.

We traveled 5 miles this afternoon, with the Indians at our heels, shooting arrows at us every moment.

August 15th.—Traveled 10 miles east among mountains, where we found water, grass and timber in abundance. Indians around us all day shooting arrows. I omitted, in the proper place, to say that I brought away from

the mountains we passed through on the 10th, a little black sand, less than a cupful, and found in it, on washing, twelve or fifteen particles of pure gold.

August 16th.—Made 10 miles east and found no water; plenty of grass and timber seen on the mountains north of us. Indians still numerous and troublesome. To-day met with copper in very great quantities. A vein of the pure native metal, about an inch and a half in diameter, was seen sticking out from a rock, which must have worn away by time and left the copper exposed. I think there is gold in the ore, but am not certain.

Our condition at present is bad enough. I have eight wounds upon me, five of which cause me much suffering; and at the same time, my mule having given out, I have to walk the whole distance. Thirteen of us are now wounded, and one is sick, so that we have only four men in good health. We are unable to travel faster on account of Adair's condition.

Our canteens, &c., having been broken or destroyed in our fight with the Indians, we cannot carry water enough for more than half a day. This loss caused us to suffer more than can be imagined. Our animals are broken down by this traveling, which could not be avoided. We would come across an abundance of water every day if we could march some twenty-five or thirty miles, but our condition is such that it requires three days to make that small distance. In addition to all this, we are now on half rations of horse meat; and I have the misfortune to know that it is the flesh of my inestimable mare *Dolly*, who has so often, by her speed, saved me from death at the hands of the Indians. Being wounded some days ago by the Garroteros, she gave out, and we are now subsisting upon her flesh.

August 17th.—Moved to-day about 10 miles east, over a country rather rough. Suffering much for want of water. In crossing mountains we have to select the highest places instead of the regular passes, as when caught in cañons or gullies we are not strong enough to fight the Indians. To-day, from the top of a little mountain, I saw the great valley, so often mentioned, extending to the Colorado, not over twenty miles south of us, and it now seems to turn more to the east. I intend to make for it. I entertain fears that Adair and Baskerville are in danger from their wounds; all the others are getting better.

August 18th.—Moved only 5 miles south of east. Found water, grass and some timber.

August 19th.—Went 5 miles to-day in the same direction as yesterday, and came to the great valley that extends to the Colorado. Encamped on a creek of good water and grass. Adair being sometimes unable to travel, we are waiting on him. Indians around us shooting arrows. We never return their fire without being certain of our shots.

August 20th.—Traveled 20 miles east, over a level, gravelly country; crossed a creek; found good grass; no timber in sight.

August 21st.—Moved 10 miles east over a level, gravelly country, and struck a large stream which is, no doubt, a branch of the Gila. The mountains to the north of us are very rough, and without timber.

There is no grass on the stream, which is 30 yards wide, with three feet of water in the channel. Its course is from north to south.

August 22d.—Made 10 miles south-east to a mountain. Country level, and without grass or timber.

August 23d.—Moved about the same distance and in the same direction, over a low, gravelly country. Struck a stream of good water, but without grass or timber.

August 24th.—Went about 8 miles north-east, and encamped in the mountains, where we met with the Apaches Tontos. No timber seen to-day.

August 25th.—Crossed the mountains where the Apaches Tontos live, and found water, timber and grass in abundance. Traveled 15 miles northeast from the top of this mountain, from which we saw the Sierra Blanca Mountains, which are near the Pueblo of Zuñi.

Saw a prairie extending from the east end of the Garrotero Mountain to the upper end of the Sierra Blanca. I saw this prairie when we were at the east end of the Garrotero Mountain, but we were not in a condition to examine it. Fifty miles is nothing with good animals; but ours were broken down, and our wounded men were unable to travel over ten miles a day. But I saw the country sufficiently well to convince me that there will be no obstacle whatever to the making of a rail or wagon road. The mountains which we crossed to-day are impracticable for either. I should like to return to the east end of the Garrotero Mountain and pursue the route I indicate; but it is utterly impos-

sible to do so, as we are now living on berries and herbs. We would rejoice to have mule meat, but we have so few animals, and so many wounded men, that it would be unsafe to kill any more. I have the good fortune of having true men with me, otherwise it would be uncertain that the party could get through; but I have confidence in my men, and I feel positively certain that we will make the trip.

It will take us some ten or twelve days to reach Zuñi, where we expect to procure provisions. I shall travel near the mountains, as heretofore, on account of the certainty and facility of getting water, but shall remain in sight of the prairie extending from the Garrotero to the Sierra Blanca Mountain.

August 26th.—Moved 10 miles east-north-east, most of the way along a creek, where we found grass in plenty, and some timber. The Apaches Tontos are numerous and troublesome.

August 27th.—Made 15 miles east, crossing two streams which are branches of the Gila. We met Indians to-day, who, I think, are not Apaches Tontos, as they do not speak any Spanish, and refuse to answer our questions. We obtained from them over fifteen hundred dollars worth of gold for a few old articles of clothing. The Indians use gold bullets for their guns. They are of different sizes and each Indian has a pouch of them. We saw an Indian load his gun with one large and three small bullets to shoot a rabbit. They proposed exchanging them for lead, but I preferred trading other articles. Whether the Indians made these balls themselves, or whether they were obtained by the murder of miners in California or Sonora, I am unable to say.

August 28th.—Traveled 10 miles east, over a good country, met with more Indians and traded for some horse-meat, by giving articles of clothing in exchange. We traded also a few hundred dollars worth of gold. To-day a mule broke down, and an Indian gave me for it a lump of gold weighing a pound and a half less one ounce.

The Indians are so numerous they would destroy the party if we allowed them the least chance. But we are very vigilant, and select camps on elevated places, consequently we are unable to make any examinations for gold in the sands of the country. The Indians call themselves Belenios.

August 29th.—Traveled some twenty miles in an eastern direction; the country quite level, and the land good, with plenty of grass and water.

August 30th.—Moved about twelve miles north of east, over a country similar to that of yesterday. Found water, grass and pine timber.

September 1st.—Traveled fifteen miles over a country a little broken, and well supplied with water, grass and timber.

September 2d.—Traveled the same distance north-east to the Sierra Blanca. Followed Indian trails all day, and found grass, water and pine timber in great abundance; and most of the soil is of a superior quality.

September 3d.—Pursuing the same course, we traveled some fifteen miles among the same mountains. To-day we passed through valleys of good soil, and we found the pine timber in greater abundance than yesterday. The trees are generally from two and a half to five feet in diameter, and over two hundred feet high. We have seen timber enough to-day to make a railroad from the Eastern States to the Pacific. The passes through this mountain are level, and can be traveled by wagons without any difficulty whatever.

September 4th.—Made 25 miles north-east, crossing the Colorado Chiquito after traveling two miles. The land is level and good, and water and wood are plenty.

September 5th.—Made 20 miles north-east, and got out of the mountains after traveling five miles; struck the prairie, where we found good soil, grass and water.

September 6th.—Continuing north-east over a good and level country for 25 miles, we reached the Indian town or pueblo of Zuñi, where we met with a hospitable and civilized population, from whom we obtained an abundance of good provisions, over which we greatly rejoiced.

We have subsisted for a month on mule and horse flesh, and for the most part of that time on half or quarter rations. But as I have reached this place with all my men, I feel satisfied. I shall take no notes of the country from this town to Albuquerque on the Rio Grande, as a level and much traveled wagon road exists between the two places, and is familiar to the people of New Mexico. It has been described by others, and is well known to present no difficulties to the construction of a railroad.

September 10th.—At Albuquerque, New Mexico. Before laying aside my pencil, for the use of which I have no fancy, I shall set down a few ideas that are now prominent in my recollection.

I set out, in the first place, upon this journey, simply to gratify my own curiosity, as to the practicability of one of the much talked of routes for the contemplated Atlantic and Pacific Railroad. Having previously traveled the southern or Gila route, I felt anxious to compare it with the Albuquerque or middle route. Although I conceive the former to be every way practicable, I now give it as my opinion that the latter is equally so, whilst it has the additional advantage of being more central and serviceable to the Union. I believe the route I traveled is far enough south to be certainly free from the danger of obstruction by snow in winter.

The route, in all its length, may be said to pass over a high plateau, or generally level country, for the most part thickly studded with prairie mountains, or detached elevations, seldom so linked together as to deserve to be called a chain of mountains. Numerous mountains were at all times in sight; but being for the most part isolated peaks, a detour of a few miles would always supersede the necessity of crossing them. To the south of our route from the great Colorado to Zuñi, the country was more level than on the north, and for the greater part of the distance a valley extends nearly due east and west to the Colorado. The existence of so many mountains along the way must be considered, in reference to a railroad, as a very fortunate circumstance instead of a disadvantage, as it is the mountains alone which furnish the timber and never failing water. The plains are only deserts and barren spots, if they are to be called so after the fashion of the day, which exist in all that vast region of country which lies between the Gila on the south and the British Possessions on the north, and the Rio Grande on the east, and the Sierra Nevada of California on the west. The plateau, or table lands, must of course furnish the track upon which the road is to be laid; but the mountains adjacent must furnish the timber to make it, and the water for the use of men and animals employed in its construction, and for the use of the depots afterwards.

It is well for the country over which I passed that these mountains exist, as without them it would be in reality one vast and repulsive desert. It would be a disadvantage for

a railroad to have to cross them, as, although not difficult to cross, it would much increase the expense. But I saw nothing that rendered it at all probable that they would have to be crossed. On the contrary, I am satisfied that a railroad may be run almost mathematically direct from Zuñi to the Colorado, and from thence to the Tejon Pass in California. The section from the Pass to San Francisco should leave the Tular Lake to the west, and should pass through the Coast Range of mountains, say in the neighborhood of San Juan, and thence to San Francisco, and by a branch to Stockton.

The west side of Tular Lake is unfit for a road on account of its miry nature. The section of the route from Zuñi to Albuquerque is plain sailing. That from Albuquerque to Independence to St. Louis, or Memphis, is equally plain, by two or three well known passes through the Sandia Mountains, which lie east of the Rio Grande.

Certain slight deviations from the track which I pursued would improve the route. For instance, it would be better to leave my trail to the north, at a point say 180 miles east of the Sierra Nevada, and intersect it again some fifteen miles west of the Colorado. On the east side of the Colorado the road should pursue a directly eastern course for 75 miles, and thence take an east-south-east course for nearly 200 miles, at the foot and on the south side of the mountain inhabited by the Garrotero Indians. Thence north-east for 15 miles, in a prairie between these mountains and a range of mountains which seem to extend to the Gila. From this point, the road should run easterly to the Colorado Chiquito river, and thence north-east to Zuñi. The distance from the east end of the Garrotero mountain to Zuñi is about 200 miles. This route, as I indicate it, will pass at all times in sight of my trail, and through as practicable a country as any railroad route of the same distance in the United States.

The proposed route by the Sangre de Cristo, north of Taos, I take, if practicable at all, to be very objectionable on account of the vast elevations the road must ascend to and the large quantities of snow which fall and remain there so long during the winter months. This route has also the additional disadvantage of crossing two rivers, the Grand and the Green, either of which would be as costly to bridge as the Colorado.

A route has been somewhat spoken of just north of the Gila, with the view of having a route wholly on American

ground. This, I am satisfied, is altogether out of the question, on account of mountains alone, if no other objection existed. The Gila route proper, passing in part through Sonora, is objectionable on several accounts, besides its situation. In the first place, there is no timber upon the plains, nor upon the volcanic mountains that are along the way. A considerable part of the route, too, lies over a country destitute of vegetation, which, when dry, is a white powder, resembling flour, in which the feet of men and animals sink several inches. This same clay, when wet, is the most treacherous of quagmires. Some parts of the road are also very sandy. Don Ambrosio Armijo, who took sheep to California last year, lost as many as eleven hundred among the sand-hills west of Colorado, by sinking in the sand, and being run over by those behind. Another serious objection to the Gila route is the great desert which lies west of the Colorado, and has an extent of 100 miles without wood or water.

I have no interest in recommending one of these routes more than another. I took sheep and wagons to California last year by the Gila route, and I am about to return that way to California again with sheep. Upon the route which I have just traveled, I encountered many hardships and dangers, and met with serious pecuniary loss; yet I say it is the best for a railroad, and would be excellent for ordinary traveling but for the Indians. A large portion of the trail over which I passed—say some 250 miles west from the Rio Grande—is, for the most part, admirably adapted to farming and stock raising.

APPENDIX II

In the editorial column of its issue of September 26, 1854, *The Missouri Republican* (St. Louis) said:

We publish to-day the traveling notes of MR. AUBREY, taken during his late trip from San Jose to Santa Fe. They contain much valuable information in regard to the nature and resources of the country through which he passed, and they possess a melancholy interest as a record of the last journey which the daring adventurer made.

A good many letters were received yesterday from Santa Fe, all of which make mention, in sorrowful terms of the death of AUBREY. It was an occurrence universally regretted, and the regret seems to have been heightened by the

achievement which he had just accomplished of making the trip from San Jose to Peralta in *twenty-nine* days—not unaccompanied, as has been supposed, but with a company of sixty men, and bringing with them to Peralta a wagon which had been driven the whole distance. We have seen a letter from DR. CONNELLY which states this fact, and it furnishes irrefutable evidence that a Railroad from Albuquerque to San Francisco is practicable, and that, as mules and or Peralta, in twenty-nine days, it is by all odds the best route which has yet been discovered for a Railroad to the Pacific. Now take the Southwestern Branch of the Pacific Railroad of Missouri, extend it to the Missouri border, as it has been determined to do, push it to Albuquerque and thence to the Pacific, and we shall be able to make St. Louis the great Central Route for the trade of California and the Indies.

(Immediately following is the account of Aubry's death, copied from the *Santa Fe Gazette*; and in column four of the same page are the notes which are here reproduced.)

F. X. AUBREY'S JOURNAL

SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA, July 6th, 1854.

We leave this place to-day for New Mexico, with a party consisting of sixty men, and fitted out at an expense of about fifteen thousand dollars. Judge OTERO, Mr. CHAVIS, and Mr. PEREA, are my companions. The object of the expedition is to locate a Wagon Road from this valley to Albuquerque on the north side of the Gila, in the 35th parallel of latitude, or as near it as practicable.

JULY 22.—To-day we struck the Mohave river, having crossed the Coast Range mountains near San Juan, and the Sierra Nevada at the Tejon Pass. The Pass through the Coast Range is low and easily practicable for a Railroad, wagons can be driven between San Jose and Albuquerque, and it can be continued at the foot of the Coast Mountain to the Sierra Nevada without the least difficulty, as it all level. The land on the west side of the Tulare Lakes is very inferior, and forever uninhabitable. It was oppressively warm; the thermometer marked 112 degrees in the shade.

The Cañon de Uvas (or Grape Pass), is the lowest pass in the Sierra Nevada, and the best for a Railroad, and thence the route should come direct to the Mohave river.

JULY 30.—We arrived to-day at the Great Colorado river, where we struck last year. We came from San Jose to the Sierra Nevada in ten days, and from that mountain to this place in eight days, counting traveling days only. We were delayed in making attempts to find a route to cross this river some fifty miles below this point, but could not succeed. The country south is either filled up with low mountains or sand hills. However, I think a level route can be had by going east to *this c* (not distinct) from a point where the Mohave river turns abruptly to the north-east. But this country is barren and indicates no water. I had intended to pass through it, but Judge Otero objected to it so strongly that I abandoned the project.

We brought our boat on a wagon to this place without the least difficulty, and a rail route can be had with the greatest facility. The country most suitable for a rail or wagon road is to leave the old Spanish trail twelve miles from the Agua Tiomese, and traveling north-east to this place. There is an extensive vegas about forty miles south-west from here, which will be of great advantage to travelers. On this route there is no sand whatever.

The distance from the Cañon de Uvas to this place is less than 300 miles, and the whole distance from San Jose will not quite reach 600 miles.

Also, travelers can reach this crossing by taking the old Spanish trail to the Vegas Callatana, leaving it to the north and traveling twenty-five miles south-east—Springs will be found at half way, with grass in abundance.

Recent observations show that this crossing is very nearly in latitude $35\frac{3}{4}$ degrees, as the Vegas Callatana is in a few minutes less than 36 degrees.

We found the Colorado river some fifteen feet lower than last year, and anticipated no trouble in crossing. The river, as low as it seems, is still navigable for the largest class of steamboats; and this may be the head of navigation, as there is a cañon just above us. This will, no doubt, become a landing for the people of Salt Lake.

JULY 31.—We crossed the Colorado in ten hours, without any loss whatever. Our boat worked admirably, under the management of PEREA and CHAVIS, who are better navigators than any others in the party. We delayed half a day in searching for gold, and without much success. We found some small particles in sand obtained near the river. Our

two miners say that indications are much better in a little mountain near the river which we crossed the next day.

AUGUST 1.—We marched twenty miles southeast, crossed a low mountain where there is a good pass; but there are on this side a number of gullies, from three to fifteen feet deep. Of course they can be easily made level for a rail or wagon road. We struck the Colorado where it turns to the south.

AUGUST 2.—Made fifteen miles east, near our trail of last year. Country level and gravelly; no timber.

AUGUST 4.—We traveled fifty miles southeast yesterday, and to-day in the same level valley, which is well supplied with lakes and spring of good water, and with an abundance of timber on the mountains. There is a *plaze*, or dry lake, in this valley, about twenty-five miles in length and ten miles in width.

This valley or prairie extends all the way to Zuñi, but as it makes a bend to the south, and afterward to the north, we will attempt to find a more direct route to the Del Norte.

It seems that the presence of our large party has created great confusion among the Indians. We found several rancherias they have abandoned, where they left their crops—consisting of water-melons, pumpkins, and a little corn. Also, in some places they left bows, arrows, &c., &c. Our men regret not having an opportunity of bringing punishment upon them for the treatment they extended to us last year. It would be useless for us to follow them, as they have gone into rugged mountains.

AUGUST 5.—We were detained half a day in search of a pass through a high table mountain, and found one entirely level, and one to two hundred yards wide. We traveled two miles north and eight miles east; passed two springs of good water, and plenty of grass and timber.

To-day CHAVIS, PEREA, and a few men, met some Indians, and exchanged a few shots with them.

AUGUST 6.—Marched twenty-five miles over a high, level table land, with great abundance of grass and timber. We saw deer and antelopes, and found rainwater in many places.

AUGUST 7.—Traveled twenty miles over the same level country; found grass, timber, and water in abundance. We

passed during the day, several branches of William's Fork, or Big Sandy, and encamped near the head of the main stream. I went on top of a high peak, and recognized the Garrotero mountains, near our trail of last year.

AUGUST 8.—We started in an eastern direction, and crossed Lieut. WHIPPLE'S trail, after traveling three miles. We continued the same course, and after traveling ten miles we struck heavy and thick timber, of pine, cedar, and piñon, where we were detained hours without being able to get through it; and it is barely possible to pass it on foot. In consequence of this, we went south, and traveled eight miles on Lieut. WHIPPLE'S trail.

AUGUST 9.—We left Lieut. W.'s trail to the north, and proceeded east. We passed near a valley fifteen miles wide, and twenty miles in length; and passed through another about ten miles in length, and seven or eight miles wide. We found several springs of good water, yesterday and to-day.

The whole of this country is well supplied with grass in great abundance, and we saw timber enough to-day to make a thousand miles of railroad; the trees are from one to four feet in diameter, and from one hundred to two hundred and fifty feet high. There are mountains North and South of us covered with timber. We traveled twenty miles East, and fifteen miles North-east. This evening I went on top of a mountain and discovered, from the formation of the country ahead of us, that there is a stream not over twenty-five miles from our camp; it may be the Colorado Chiquito.

10th—We marched twenty-seven miles North-east and struck the Colorado Chiquito. According to one of PEREA'S men, we are opposite the villages of the Moquis. We have so far succeeded most admirably in finding a wagon route to this place; and it is clear sailing from this camp to Zuñi, as the valley of this river may be followed all the way without the least obstacle. The country to-day was level and well supplied with timber and grass. This stream is about twenty yards wide and one and a half feet deep. The valley is narrow, with coarse grass in it, and unfit for cultivation; there are a few small cotton-wood trees along the stream.

We came from the Great Colorado to this place in nine traveling days: distance 225 miles.

11th.—We came to the falls of the Colorado Chiquito after traveling eight miles, and made twenty-two miles in the afternoon. We are traveling up the river in a S. S. E. direction. We discovered to-day that a distance of thirty or forty miles can be avoided by coming directly East from our camp on the 7th inst., and striking the river at this camp. There is a higher mountain covered with fine timber which must be left to the North, and some low hills to the South.

12th.—Marched thirty-five miles East, along the river, where we found wagon tracks, plenty of cotton trees and grass.

13th.—Traveled twenty-five miles East on North side of the river, and two miles near a little creek coming from the East. To-day we went in the hills and found several very large petrified trees, one was six feet in diameter and two hundred and fifty feet in length.

This morning we saw the Sierra Blanca and recognized other mountains on my trail of last year.

14th.—Marched twenty-five miles East over a level country, with gravelly soil, good grass and some Cedar and Piñon. We are about fifteen miles North of the Colorado Chiquito.

16th.—Traveled twelve miles East and struck my trail of last year thirty-five miles from Zuñi, which we will pursue to that place, and travel the wagon road to the Del Norte.