

MORRIS SLEIGHT

Letters,

1850

Transcribed

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by
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St Louis April 12 1850

Dear H

The Packet Boat Prarie State. came along soon after you left Lockport. The next Morning we were in Laselle. where I took the steamer Rob^t Fulton Capt Dewitt[?], for S^t Louis got my Breakfast on Board. and we steamed down to Peru w[h]ere I saw M^r I. H. Harmon found him and family well. at Laselle I saw the Boat that took my Produce at Lockport. they ware loaded in part with Lumber and had reshipt all the Green &C on Board a steamBoat for[?] Laselle on saturday. consequently it was. 2 days ahead of me. I found it all unloaded.. I yesterday made out to dispen[se?] of the wheat but not to very good advantage as the quality was not the best. I find it vents[wants?] the best grain for this Market especially wheat or flour. it will clear me about 55^{ct} pr Bushel. it about held out the weight that I had load[?] it at everything is weighed on the Levy by a City weigher therefore there is no Chance to gogue[gouge?]. I have Shipt my Oats for S^t Jo and I have Bought a load of Hay about 1200 hundred[sic] pounds and 12 Sacks. (30) Bushe[l?]'s Corn they say here that. Hay. Corn & Oats is dear at S^t Jo but Corn not very dear at the Bluffs I get every thing freighted up for 30 cents pr Hundred, and pay \$8. for my Foce[?] Cabin and a good State Room. near the Ladies Cabin. for fear of the Boiler you Know. A week ago the far[e] for Cabin was \$20. and 87 ½ ^{cts} pr Hundred freight it has brot more Vessels in the trade consequently the fall in prices

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I go to St Jo this Evening by the Embassy a very fine Boat they say the best out. since taken my passage a board her yesterday and getting a state Room they have put up the price per[?] 1 to 2 dollars higher and no state rooms I shou[l]d not be surprised if we have 2 or 300 pasengers before we leave. I have bought. Bacon, at 5 ½ good Sugar very handsome[?] white at 8^{ct} Dry Beef at 8. and a fine Cheese weighg 52^{lb}[?] at 9[&] and a Barrel of good Winter[?] Wheat Flour. and all on board with me I suppose we shall be off in 2 Hours.

I am writing at the desk of M^r O. Wales. a Large dealer in Grocer[i]es an acquaintance I met in the West. before I moved to naperville. he is a very fine Man from N.Y City, formerly from Connecticut two of his daughters, one married and one single came in the store this Morning.. his Married daughter looks[?] like Mrs Hosmer and is just such a social body they invited me to call on them but I have no time for Visiting I also met Stephen H. Hermick[?] you Know him he is a commerce[?] Merchant here[?]. The Joliett Catholic Priest and his brother are also passengers on board the Embassy. there is. a dozzen or more passengers on board from Lockport & Joliete. I saw Henry Northern he is on his way up the Munne[Missouri?]. I believe he will stay here yet a day or so.

St Louis has improved beyeound all a/c since I was here in. 1834, even the Houses have grown tall. I do not recognize but one building the City Hotel w[h]ere I put up in -/34__ The Levy is a complete Panorema. Horses waggons, Mules, Negros, Irish, dutch &C &C. Steam Boats by the Mile

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They do say. it is not a beggng[?] to S^t Jo well I hope so. I do not like big doses at first, all appear to be in good health and Spirits although is[it] is said there is Cholera in S^t Louis and at S^t Jo.. but it does not appear to Frighten anybody___. I think there will possibly be a little reaction in wheat in Chicago[?] caused by the decline in S^t Louis. they have been shipping everything this way. from Chicago and all the Mills on Fox River, which has glutted this Market for the present but it will not last long Delces[?] had better finish sewing before he sells any in Chicago. and he ought to get from 65 to 70 for Seed what I had here is no criteria for what is at Home that is Wheat this. is serceness in part. I enclose ***in \$25 I had of Delcas[?].__ I have a few small articles to pick up before I leave such as paper Powder &C &c Therefore I must quit by telling you that I am perfectly well and feel like going ahead. If you can read this you will be lucky for I have not been over 10 minuts Writing and there is such a nois near me on the levy I can hardly hear myself think You will hear from me again at S^t Jo

Your M Sleight

[envelope addressed to]

Morris Sleight

Naperville

D^u Page Co

Ill

[post marked St Louis April 13, 10 cents]

Saint Jo, April 23 1850 Tuesday

My dear H _____

I arrived here, Sunday afternoon, we did not get off from S^t Louis. until the day after I wrote in the evening. making the trip up the river in Eight days. it commenced snowing Sunday morning a little above S^t Cha^s and continued most of the day snow fell plump 6 inches deep and lay until next day when it disappeared Tuesday after it rain,d[sic] a perfect Torrent all day. the river commenced rising and rose 15 feet in less than 30 Hours but such a rush of waters, and drift wood. I never saw and the Boat was in great danger all the way. she was a good Boat, with 2 Engines. from the Ohio River and larger than those in the regular trade, and she came through safe although. there was Boats started 2 days before us that are not here yet.. But I tell you it was rough Sledding she was almost continually running over logs she could not avoid she came near going ashore several times. there were turns[?] in the river w[h]ere. the current ran so swift that sometimes for one hour together, she would not make 10 rod, we had over 200 passngr the dempness of the Boat and the great croud made it rather unpleasant but I had by going on board so early received a good state room.. and fared better than those that lay on the floor. The Capt and Clerk were accomodating fine men but the fare on board so far as eating was concernd was bad enough, the worst Butter I ever saw. was plenty and appeared to enter in the whole economy of Cooking, everythg swam in it notwithstanding there were but few sick. I had. the Bowel complaint for a day or two pretty bad. it did not make me very sick I check^d it gradually with the drops from 10 to 15 drops at a time

The weather has been uncommonly Cold ever since I started: and I only saw the sun once from the time I left s^t Louis till we arrvd here it cleared here yesterday morning. and the weather is now fair But very cold. the ground froze hard last night. there is no appearance of grass. anywise[?] not so much as at Napervle

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Peach Trees above St Charles was in full Bloom. and it was a sorry sight to see them. covered with snow: I understand some of the Emigrants have put out and have been heard of for 50 miles out, but few are starting yet,

grain and Hay are Scarce here. Hay is not to be had. I. bought a few Bundles at S^t Louis at the rate of \$25 pr Ton.. I paid 30.[&] pr Hunered[sic] for the Freight of all my things to this place. Our teams have not yet arrived. and as a special favour to some of those that come up with me I let them have what Hay I thought I did not need for our own teams. I let them take it at \$40 pr ton, and I also let Jacob Mtcher[?] and the Dutch Company with Him have 100 Bushels of my oats. at 90 cents pr Bushel from the dock. which is near[1?]y as good as good as a Dollar pr Bushel. out of there[them?]. I Bot about 30 Bushels of Corn for our team in. S^t Louis which costs me here about 70.[&] pr Bushe[1] I can sell it readily for one dollar if I Choose.

I am Boarding at the Mission[?] Hotel I room with Gen Fry. of Lockport. an[d] pay \$3.50 pr

Week; it is back in town a little but I believe. Board at the. Hotels. near the river is \$5. pr week[?] and find your own Blankets

Jacob Natchn[?] started for Council Bluffs but he understood that it was impossible to get feed on the route and he made for ***point and will cross the river here and go out 10 or 12, Miles, and camp and wants me to come up and go with him.

Mr Goodings Lockport Company is here they came up the river with me they are very anxious to have us in their train which I think it likely we shall do if the Boys arrive in time Goodings teams started a week before ours. and if our boys make the same time they will be in on friday or staturdy[sic] of this week. much will depend wether[sic] those H[e]avy Rains & Snow reached them, there was no snow here, but I Mitchum[?] said there was considerable w[h]ere he was, and the go[i]ng across Missouri very bad

I understand. M^r Scott & Hines left here for the Bluffs about 5 or 6 days ago- all[?] well.

I tried. 5 or 6 times yesterday to get a heanry[?] at the small Hole at the post office. I will believe after this ~~that~~ all that is said about the office in California is true. it is almost impossible to get near this office Last Evening by stand[i]ng still and working up gradually with the croud I got up in about an Hour but found no letter but in doing this there is danger from Black Legs who are very plenty

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there. was plenty of them on board our Boat and a number of Passengers had their mon[e]y Stole from their pockets. but no very large amounts, the largest I heard of was one sum of \$100 and one of \$60: they gambled nearly all night---

I conversed with an inteligent Merchant here last evening he says. the best estimates that can be made of the Emigrants in S^t Jo and the Neighbourhood about is about 1500, persons and as nearly as I can learn by others. it is supposed to be nearly correct but I should not suppose to look about town there[?] wer[?] as many. returning M^r Snibler[?] told Me he thought if these companys. were at home now that they would not start again, and I think that is the case with a great many a number that came up with us. just look^d at the scene here and returned with the Boat they had seen the Elephant.. by the by one merchant has an Elephant neatly painted nearly as large as life. and hung over the side walk that those that wish to see the animal this side the plains ma[y] do so and go home satisfied, but I think I Know of some folks ***** will try to see the other one.

S^t Jo is a Much larger place ***** I expected to find, and much the Handsomest place that I have bein[?] on this river. and about the only place, w[h]ere there is a fine opening back to the Bluffs.. it has some fine wet[?] land laying south of the Village for a Mile or two. it is a delightful place for Residence.. I think it is the next handsome[st] place to Naperville that I have seen..

Charly Huganin[?] of Chicago &C are here they have hired a small log House. with a Back room and Barn near it. ~~one I have~~ I have stored our grain in his back room at half Store House prices. he pays 2 dollars pr week[?] and my good will nearly pay his rent and it accomodates me

as the goods are safer. and are not tumbled[?] over. I am now sitting on his Mess Chest in his Cabin writing this.

M^r Pain of the East Branch came up the River with me. a. part of the way he came off the Steam Boat Globe. they could not stem the rapids he started for the Isthmus but found he could not get there. he wishes to get in our Company. he has the Rhino[?] in gold.. he mortgaged his farm to M^r Brooks, who lately returnd from California. I have taken his Case under consideration till the boys Come then we will have a consultation.. it will reduce the average[?] and give give[sic] us more teams and we[?] Know[?] he can talk[?] some[?]
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I deserve[observe?] my sheet is almost full. the Company here all left are[?] out in town the fire is all out. and it is very cold here I can hardly hold my pen.

I Mitchu[?] has just been here I let him have a sack or two More oats. and just sold another Bale Hay-- a Chicago Man. says he will trust to my getting along in California, anyhow,

(signed)

M Sleight

I will send you a S^t Jo paper if I can get one and will write again before. I leave and after the Boys arrive. I suppose it is not necessary to tell you that I am well. and mean to try to Keep so, my appatata[sic] is not Keen enough to injure Myself eating out the fen[?] of Missouri is not tempting enough to provke one. I shall soon get my pick of dish[?] and I think my Box of. Mamried[?] Ointment, Fine Candy[?] &C &C will not come[?] across ____, I suppose Daliar[?] will. Finish sowing by the time Spring sets in.

[envelope addressed to]

Mrs. H.T. Sleight

Naperville

D^u Page Co

Ill

[post marked]

St. Joseph, Mo Apr 25, 10 [cents]

Saint Joseph, May 1, 1850

Dear H

The Boys arrived here on Sunday afternoon just one week. after my arrival. they. are all well and in fine spirits. making 26 days on the road they found the roads very bad all through Missouri and the west part of Illinois they Broke one axeltree and had a new one put in at Quincy they also broke a waggon tongue within a few miles of the place and crack^d their new axeltree. I did not think it safe and advised it replaced by a new one otherwise they got along as well as could be expected for the going. Gen Figs teams that started a week before ours came in. one day behind them

as soon as the boys arrived in town I met them and took them. w[h]ere my goods were Stored with M^r Huganen[?] of Chicago in a double log house.. I amediately hired a room for one Shilling p^r day and they Mooved in, so in half an hour after they arrived. I had them housed. in Comfortable quarters w[h]ere a part of them sleep one or two stays in the waggons to watch our Stock, as there is more of less stole every night we shall Stay, here a few days. till we get mended up and then move w[h]ere the horses will get a little grass. in some warm nook for as yet there is none on the rout.

Yesterday an express arrived here. from Fort. Chiles on the Platt River, they report having met emigrants, some 100 to 200 Miles out in a suffering condition and considerable of their stock had died and there was no grass, at all. on the plains. they stuck up notices signed by the Comandig Officers of the Fort that ~~that~~ Emigrants must not, depend on the Forts for any supplys as in consequence of non arrivals they were short of provisions for themselves therefore. fears are entertained for the safety of those that have started, and there must be many on the road some have gone out for a number of days and have returned here & Sold out and returned home and I think many men will return, they say that every boat that returns, down the river are loaded with returning Emigrants

[page 2]

I have just returned from the Boat. that arrived this afternoon she has just left for Council Bluffs__ D^r Furthingham and family were on board. I saw him for a Moment I sent Mrs[?] Wetherall & M^r Jones letters by him. as it is uncertain yet wither we go up the river to F^t Carney or not. the Doctor was just going up to a Notary to Certify to the Death of our little David Hatch of Chicago he died of Ireipelus[erysipelas] on Board [t]he boat and was buryed somew[h]ere below on the Bank of the River, he was taken sick on the Illinois River and. was sick about a week. they say every attention was paid him

We have taken M^r Paine in Our company.. his portion [of] one Sixth part of our Outfit amounted to \$240, he paid it in Gold and appeared to have considerable more left in his Belt,

I had purchased a very good pair of Poneys for Leaders and riding animals, before the boys

arrived I bot them and their Harness. 1 pair of double & Single Whippetrees & the rigging for the leaders for \$120, I was offered 140 for them several times.. without any Harness, The Boys traded off an even trade the Mare that M^r Moore[?] had and the largest Estes Horse for a good span of Broke Mules for which the boys say they were offered \$250, they would bring it in this Market we yet think of Purchasing another pair of Mules. before we leave a decent Mules 3 to 4 Years old. (and it is impossible to find any older) that hav[e] never been Haltered is worth from 80 to 90 & as high as \$110 Each and although the town is getting Much thinner of Emigrants the prices of Mules does not come down Horses are no higher than with you _.

I must say I feel proud of the Illinoians, they are the best looking and best behaved Men I have seen== almost every Morning there is one or two Men found dead either on the streets or waggons, but I believe no marks of Violence on them. and any time of day you can see some laying in the streets or alleys dead drunk, but as yet I have not seen a fight..

it is almost imposible to get any w[h]ere near the Post office, I crouded in to day after 2 Hours hard squeezing, but found no letters for me and I fear I shall not find one before I. leave town but I shall try to write again, before we cut loose for good which I think, will not be much before the 8 or 10th Inst[?] we have plenty of Feed for our teams and they are in fine condition
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I think they look nearly or quite as well to day as when they left Home,

grain has risen. 25^{&ents} pr Bushel since yesterday Oats. is now worth \$1. and Corn \$1.25 pr Bushel quick[?] and if the weather holds Cold three days longer it will be worth \$1.50 to \$2. p Bushel, we here[hear] that it is worth from \$2.50 to \$3 at the Bluffs, I think it quite likely it is so, as there has not been A Boat above this place. for a week before this evening. and I think she had not much grain on board the

The reason I did not send you papers was the last ones I saw were not worth sending, I will, see this weeks paper and if it is worth sendg I will Mail one or two for you and also for the Recorder

We purchased to day a pair of Mules_ (all I wrote above was written last evening and dated 1st May, when it was the last of April) for \$180,_ they are a very Handsome pair in good order but had never been Haltered or broke at all perfectly wild. they are 4 years old, it is almost impossible to find a mule in this market Over 3 years old and some of them. are quite large it is not safe to trust them so young on so long a trip, but Many of the Calfaornians have bought them. 3 and some even but 2 years old. when the sellers could tell them they were four & Even 5 years old, but I have been here long enough to be up to many of the tricks of trade and if. I can see a mules Mouth I can tell his age to 5 year old we bought these of a M^r Watson one of the Directors of the Bank of Missouri and he said when we could see their Mouths if they were not as old as he said we could return them. the Boys are Now Braking them. and they are getting something tamer. we find them to be 4 years old. it is quite a job to brake them it Makes Sport for the boys and M^r Pane, they are all verry busy with them. they have the Harness on them and are drawing a log but they go by twitches & jirks.

Tell Julia that I saw to day comeing from my dinner a drive of Indians all painted their was a number of Squaws. each had a pappoose on their Backs inside their Blanets, there little

Blacks[sic] heads just sticking up it was funny to see so many little heads go niddy noddy as they all run over the Bridge to get out of the way of teams crossing. tell her I remember her. she must Kiss Boy for me and she must go to Naperville and stay with Grandma & Rose all summer..

I think we Shall have a good time to Cross the River as there was a Steam Ferry Boat arrived here yesterday about 10 oClock the price of ferrying 1 Waggon & 4 Horses & the Men Belonging to it

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is only One doller they now run across in 3 or 4 Minutes. it was rather unsafe crossing in Scows when the water was so high. they got a number of teams in the river but I believe none were drowned. M^r Estes told me today that Charley Mere[?] lost his pocket Book coming across with some \$40 or \$50, dollars in while Hunting one day. they look^d considerable for it but could not find it he said he felt very bad about it for a day or two, but when he arrived. he was as cheerful as ever. and his merry laugh made the old house ring__ I never saw a set of men feel Better than the boys did after. they got in and all Sheved[sic] and wash^d up which was their first Job after taking Care of the Horses__ I. myself am still Boardi[n]g. w[h]ere I did with the Ferrymen W.. Tompson the house is thinning out some and I have a good bed and I shall stick to it until we leave the. Village- as the nights are quite cold, last night it made Ice ¾ inch thick in our wash water cask.. If the weather is as cold with you. if Delia gets done planti[n]g by the 10 or 12 of May he will be time enough, and he could sew oats if he wishes after planti[n]g.

My oats cleard me clear of all expenses. of Sacki[n]g carting to canal. Fr[e]ight Stage[?] & all Charges about 56¢ pr Bushel laying in the grainery at Naperville,, Hard Bread is worth here from 5 to 8 ½ cents pr ^{lb} I sold about 200 pounds of ours, I thought we had rather more than we could Carry conveniently. Oats and corn to day are worth about 1%[sic] pr Bushel Each. Flour \$3 ½ pr 100 pounds. Bacon 4 cents, Coffy 1/1[?] only, the Boys could not get flour coming across therefor they were obliged to eat all the[i]r Crackers. we cant get any here therefor we shall take 500 pounds of flour with us we can get here at the Steam Mill first rate. Winter[?] Wheat Flour. but I think we cannot[?] find Creckes[crackers?]. I shall try hard. I never saw finer Winter Wheat than they are making our flour of__ I am up for Paper I see _ Yours M Sleight

Henry Northern wish^s you to say to M^r Meachem. that he had not time to write him but is well.. he has just cross^d over the river, and will camp 6 miles out with the Lockport Comp[an]y in which is a M^r Isaac[?] Gooding. and M^r Augustus Goodings Men. which are nearly all his relatives they all appear to be fine[?] men[?] he with. the. Wilmington Company will go with them,, If we dont go up to old Fort Carney to cross I think we will be in the same Compy or train with him & them

[following in right margin of last page]

we got our new mules to day at 10 oClock the Boys now have them before the waggon. they go quite well they are sorrels and you cannot hardly tell them apart a very pretty Span for Mules

[envelope addressed to]
Mrs H.T. Sleight

Naperville,
Du Page Co
Ill,

[postmarked] St Joseph, Mo

May 4

[stamped] X

[following in top margin of page 1]

I forgot to tell you that I am perfectly well. I did not feel quite right for several days after our hard trip up the river. but I begin to feel quite returned, I think I have lost about 10 or 15 pounds weight but I feel all the better for it,, the Boys all look well, but like[?] Billy. in fine order but not quite so pepy as when they left home: they say the[y] feel much. better for their loss of flesh--

[following in left margin of page 1]

I forgot to say that Doc^f Furthington said his fami[l]y were well but his children had been Exposed to the Small pox on board the Steam Boat & very bad if they take it

S^t Jo. May. 5. 1850 (Sunday)

[no greeting]

We are now all fitted up and ready to take up our line of March and should do so tomorrow. if the Mail was in, but there has been no eastern Mail since last. wednesday and there has none of us except (John Estes. from Michigan) received a line from home yet and if the next mail which is due tomorrow 5 oClock does not bring us any it is not likely we shall hear from you again until we get in Calafornia I shall endeavour[sic] to write home on our rout as often as I have an opportunity. to send back.

The weather is almost as cold here yet as when I arrived two week[s] ago. and there is no. grass we intend to take grain enough. to last us, about, fifteen days, with what grass they can pick. there is some returning every day that has been out, from 50 to 100 Miles, and exhausted their grain, and return sell out and return home,.

Yesterday Corn, was worth \$1,50 pr Bushel and Hay \$3. pr 100^{lb}, I saw a small load of some 3 to 4 co^{lb}[?] pound Hay sell for \$15,, I offered \$12 for it,, I would have Made it ½ up in small Bundles.. and sold it for cost and fed the Ballance to our own stock, as we are nearly out of Hay but we have Corn, oats, Bran & Sherts[?], to last us yet from 15 to 20 days, If I had brot my wheat[?] here it would by grinding up cleer^d me One dollar pr Bushel My judgmt told me when I was in S^t Louis to take it with me but as it was in, Walkers Sacks. I could not do it,

Our animals are all well and as playfull as Kittens. I shake hands with Billy every Mornig, and he appears glad to see me..

One Waggon arrived here yesterday from Warrenville D^r Waters, Brother, Waterman, & Harker, M^r Kegwin tells me that he heard of W^m Jones & Co several times on. the way to S^t Jo. they have not yet. arrived here. and I think it is a mistake, as they started for the Bluff

Shall I give you a family Picture, well here we are in our Log Cabin I am Sitting on. M^r Wandells Chest with my Volun[?] before me my portfolio on the t[able] top Writing, M^r Estes. on our Mess Chest near me,, with his, writing to his wife Hi Behind me on a stool, Combing his hair, John Esets. sitting. before the Big fire place in which sets our stove the pipe runnig up. Chimny,, with the dinner on and a good fire under and the pot Boiling most gloriously, cookig Beans; Mr Moore is out among the waggon Mules & Horses which we have arragd Close to the door. and W Pape, has gone to Church with M^r Huganen[?]

[page 2]

M^r Wondell[?], is setting on a bag at the end of the chest on which I am writing making a sack. the room with the exception of room to spread beds for those that. do not watch the horses. and stay in the waggons. is piled on each side with Bags of Flour; Bacon, Bedding & C. & c the

room is hung around with coats, our Hams, Hats Caps &C. M^r Wondell, who is from Chicago. pays ½ the rent he has his son and another man with him. he is a relative. of Cap^t Wandell that sailed[?] for John Caller at H Park, he has also been a North River Captain,, I do not think that. he or Huganen will either. be ready to start when we do.

we are thinking of Keeping up on this side the river as far as fort Kerney before we cross, as there has been perhaps 100 crosse^d here where[?] there has not 5 gone up on this side,, if we do so we save the crossing of one or two, streams in which according to the stage of Water on the Missouri must be well up and we may be detained several days on a/c of there being so many ahead of us. to ford or ferry, and what little grass there may be will be pick^d clean: on this side we shall save crossing these streams. and get quite as much grass, with some chance of getting Hay or grain. if we come short and then get in the Vally of the Platt in. 10 days, w[h]ere we expect to find grass. the other rout we do not strike the vally of the platt much short of 300 Miles, and with. the Slow progress that will be made among such a crowd it will probably be from 15 to 20 days before we shall get much grass in that rout if we have good luck crossing at fort Karney. we think, we can travel fast enough to get in to Fort Chiles. on the Platt ahead of those that started two weeks ago as the Moment they strike grass they will be obliged to stop a week or two to recruit the[i]r Stock: such is my present calculation and I think I have been a pretty close observer, I have proposed the plan to the company, it strikes them. favourable but as yet have not decided but will do so before I close this letter,.

I believe I wrote you on the margin of my last letter that D^r Furthingham told me his family had been Exposed to the Small Pox. if I wrote so. I. think it was Measles., in fact I ~~was~~ am quite sure he said so

Monday evening May 5 6th

The Mail has arrived but it is Impossible to get a letter out this evening if there should be one for me till Morning— on a/c of the croud at the office

I. found a Merchant. to day that has been an Indian trader. he advised me to cross the river. at this place, he said with the grain & hay we have. we can reach Fort Karney on the Platt which he says is 45 Miles nearer then to go by Old Fort Kerney, and the streams that I feared on this Rout, Viz the Wolf & Blue Rivers. have both been Bridged within a Month,, so we have concluded to take this Rout and get our teams across the Missouri River this afternoon

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all safe,. I. remain on this side, to Mail these Letters home and to get. the letters. from the east that. was due this afternoon,

I was fortunate enough. yesterday. to purchase. a small. load of Hay for \$6. perhaps 400^{lb} I sold a little of it for One dollar and we pack^d and Bag^d the Ballence after giving our animals. a good feed last night and to day.. we put on board our waggons, risi[n]g of 2000^{lb} of Hay, Corn, Oats, Bran & Shoots[?], and pern[?]. 80 to 100 days provision. for ourselves, we have 4 Horses & 6 Mules which I think. will take us along in good Style if our waggons Will hold up our load. the roads are now good,, and we. shall drive slow for a few days untill our loads get lighter, they will lighten, some, 150^{lb} pr day till. we find some grass. which I think will not be for some days, as water froze ¼ of an inch thick again last evenig

We are as you see fairly cutting loose, and unless I get your letter with bad news from home, tomorrow, I shall be traveling the Hunting grounds of the red men, There was some 40 or 50 of them that cross^d the river on the Steam Ferry Boat, with our teams this afternoon, they had a number of Indian Horses[?] with them, Pack^d with a Kind of flag Carpeting for their, Wig Wam floors, and a number of square Benches, neatly tied up but I could not tell what they contained, There is a great many Indians,, in St Jo every day,, they are Pottowottames & KicKapoos,, & Some Ottaways, many of them get gloriously drunk every day some of them speak, good english,,

To day I was fortunate enough to get 6 ½ pounds of good fresh Butter from a farmer in the street at 25¢ pr pound, I have not tasted of Fresh Butter but once since I left home, one day my^{my} landlady Mrs Thompson (who treats me very Kindly, got a very little for her little girl that was unwell,) thought I, did not appear to have a very good appetite so set before Me a plate of toast with fresh butter on it. I was much obliged for the attention, what butter we had on the boats was worse than none and, they do say there is not a pound of butter; or drop of Milk used in a Boarding House in S^t Jo. If there is I have not seen it. therefore you see, I am nearly weaned[?] from Milk and butter,,

we are all in excelent health, and you may tell our naperville Friends that I really do talk of going to Calafornia,, Tell little Julia that I have a pretty little sorrel, mare, not as large as fanny, that, is, as pretty as a picture, and is a great pet with all the Boys, I call her little Julia after her,, the Horse is a fine Mustang Poney, his eyes fairly sparkle with inteligence, and the men thinks, there is not another such a poney on the road, they have improved very Much, as have all the Horses & Mules, since they arrived, we have driven our new wild Mules. alone on the waggon, and We pack^d them with oats to day to Cross the ferry, for the fun of the thing, they behaved very well, and look^d at each other after their packs was on with astonishment
[page 4]

M^r Walkers, agent. at S^t Louis a M^r D.L. Latorell. Shipt my Hard Bread, to St Jo. without. orders. from me. to the Firm of Jones & Kerr made a Charge of \$5.45,, which he put on the bill of Lading, to them as Charges at S^t Louis, bercs[?] Jones & Kerr had to Bay[sic]. the fright[sic] up from St., Louis to S^t Jo. of \$1,40., and 75.. cents Storage at S^t Jo Making in all \$7.60 Charges on. 5 Sacks of 400^{lb} of Hard Bread, which is Just \$5.45 More than I ought to pay:, I paid him \$2. in S^t Louis for the freight from Chicago. to S^t Louis

I have taken, Jones & Kerrs Certificate that. I paid them the overcharge on the Back of the Bill and sent it in a letter to Cha^s Walker who is my man to look to for how to have it righted with Laterell, if he wishes to do so,, but I ask him to send you the. overcharge of \$5.45, all the other Charges was according to agreemt, this May possibly have been an ~~over~~ error of M^r Latterell, as it was on a long Bill of Lading, but I. had to pay it,, as all Jones & Kerr Made on it was 75 cents for Storage I presume M^r Walker will make it all right if he does not write you within a reasonable time. Delen[?] can call on him for it. I wrote him all the Particulars and send him the Vouchers that he may called of his agent,, were it not for that I should send you the papers insted of sendig them to M^r Walker

After: I. look in the post office in the Mornig and I must do so as soon as it is open, I will add a few lines, so good night

Yours
M Sleight

[addressed to]
Mrs. H. T. Sleight
Naperville
DuPage Co
Ill

[postmarked]
St Joseph Mo
May 9[?]

[stamped] X

May 7 [1850] [no location]

[no greeting]

This morning I went to the Post office. early I happend to be the first to the peep Hole; and gave in my list, which they look^d over in a few moments, it was raining quite hard, it had rained and snowed all night. I found a letter from you and was very glad to get it.

I have seen a Number of men. that were in California last year and are now on the their way again, their advice compared well with the Doctors, I think the difficulty in Cooking Beans, is that almost all Beans bought are old ones. Mr Hugenen bot some in S' Jo and cannot boil them tender enough to use them Ours are new and cook very tender. they cook all to pieces if Boild a little to[o] long,. Mr E would not take \$5 p Bushel for them..

I was going to settle my board bill this mornng I have been with Mrs Thompson just 2 weeks. but it is Raining and I shall not. camp till it stops as long as I can get a good bed,,, I shall I think have about \$200. left after. paying all expenses and outfit here..- our outfit and expenses. now up to this time is about \$1800, or \$300. Each, I, think some of the boys will not have enough; to pay me all up,, I think M' Moore after his loss will come some short, bully[?] taking in M' Paine,, makes.. up. his loss but purchasing. more team, adds. a good deal to the. cost,, of the company of 6. M' P. is flush. a a great many of the Californians have been imprendous[?] and have lost their money gambling. you can hardly pass a company without haveing some complaining of part of their company loosing, it brakes up many a company, and the lateness of grass. and high prices of grain will be good excuses for them to their friends when they return. so far I am very much pleased with our Company they agree well, and take first rate care of everything

I told Mr Moore he must not be discouraged about his loss if we get our teams through safe, he will have something left after he gets there and there was Money enough in the Company to Carry us through, therefore he must make himself perfectly easy, and he appears to be as cheerfull as ever

there was no letters for any of the rest of our company. they were all in hopes of hearing from home before they left, --,,

I can add a little to the song of Susannah_ I can say at[sic] Rained & Snowed" the day we left so, Hannah do not cry. __

The Warrenville team will cross to day and want to Keep in compa[n]y with us. Young Barnard & King, has been in company with our boys ever since they left Aurora. and camped with them- all the way and have been with them ever since. and cross^d aron[?]

[page 2]

them yesterday, we like them very well, -

I expect we shall in a few days come up with. H Northern. & the Lock Port Company. in which is the Catholic Priest Mr Inglander. he wish^d me to enquire for a letter for him I did so and have got it ___ M^r Kegwin is encamp^t 6 Miles out. and is in town for letters I suppose. we shall be in his company. & Mr Hujanin is determined if possible to be ready to day. to go with us,, but as we are all pretty heavy loaded with. Grain, I fear. we shall not get far for several days, although the roads dry very fast after a rain,,

you Must rem[em]ber me to all the family Boys Joannel[?] and all, I shall[?] send the Docter to Chicago a Paper from here if I can get in the office before I leave I. have sent Mr Sellen. one. and one to C Adams and one to you and I took one for myself, but since I have examined mine and find but little with reading I. will send. the Gazette to the Docter and another to the Editor, at N. if they have anything in them so you can get the Docters or I will direct it to you and you can send the Docter both of them, after Readig them. ___ I, sent the Adventure

I have not heard anything from W^m Jones, nor any of the Naperville Folks yet I presume they have all gone to the Blufs- and I suppose you. will hear from them often.. there will be persons leaving from here yet for a Month, they will be strung out from S^t Josephs to Fort Hall, and from S^t Joseph to their Homes

You did not mention of any of you being sick, therefore I shall take it for granted that you are all well and doing well and shall not give myself any unclassiness[uneasiness?] about you. but if we are fortunate enough. to get to California, I, shall try to Make acquaintene[sic] with the Post Master to Sacramento City to get letters. if they arrive there.. it has stopt raining. but it has not cleard. I shall settle my bill. I have had my Breakfast and am now writing on the dining table. shall Mail this and perhaps Cross over yet this forenoon. but, but if we do not cross over to the Bluffs. (which is 6 Miles. through a, thick timbered bottom and bad road when wet) I shall return here this eveng to Sleep- one more night in S^t Jo: So I. must bid you all goodby for the present. I shall write every opportunity..

MS

Encampment of the Bank of a Dry River,
May. 15.1850, 6oClock P.M.

[large ink blot covers part of top half of page 1]

[no greeting]

Here we are encamped on the banks of a dry river between the Big and Little Blue Rivers. our Eighth day since we left the western Bluffs of the Missouri River we have made about 25 Miles pr Day since we started. as near as [we can le?]arn we are now within 100 Miles of fort Karney which is 15 Miles up the P[latte Rive?]r from w[h]ere we strike the Platt Bottoms.. we are in hopes of being in the [vic?]inity of F Karney on Sunday eveng which will be the 19. of May,

I must In the[?] first place tell you that we are all well, and so far have had a very Pleasant time. good road***** plenty of company, the streams are low. there has not been any rain here for some time consequently there is but little grass and those that have not Provided themselves with grain. are searching out such places as they think they can subsist their teams and are going into camp untill the grass grows. I think if we find any feed on the Bottoms of the Platt with what grain we have yet it will carry us,, ahead yet from 12 to 15 days.

before we left S^t Jo. we heard there was a great deal of suffering. among the early emigrants in this vicinity but as yet we have not seen much of it near the road. we have counted about 20. Dead horses. but expected to have found 100 before this time. how much distress[?] there may or might have been off the road we are not able to say. Stock can now subsist on grass alone if they do not work much but there is not enough to depend on it alone, the weather is very dry. the grass Cracks under your feet. yesterday and to day has been quite warm. and a little rain would soon bring the grass forward.

I believe I told you that M^r Barnard and King of our neighbourhood was in Company with us at S^t Jo. they are with us yet; and to day M^r Hugenan of Chicago & His Company of 5 with one 4 Horse team Came up with and Encampt with us this evening. and. Mr Wandle who I mentioned before of Chicago has just drove up Making our Camp now 15 Strong. as we are now in the Country of the Pawnee Indians we shall form a regular Censs[?]. but we have not seen an Indian for last 5 days: which was on the Banks of Wolf River across which the Indians have made a small Log Bridge, they Charge. 25¢ for each team that Cross. they are taking money about as fast as they can count it of the white man that takes this pay, deals fairly by them,, there were two Chiefs standing by him all the time looking on fine looking Indians and well dressed. Pottawottoms[sic] I believe

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[ink blot from previous page has soaked through paper]

we shall have grain enough to carry ** to Fort Laramie which is about the same distance from Fort Kern***** Fort Kerney is from S^t Jo. ___ I have not seen or heard of any of the Naperville folks, lately. but as we. are now on the same Road it is possible we May fall in with some of them before many days Mr Kegwin is still behind us__

I suppose you would like to Know. what the Many hardships. emigrants. have to endure on this rout to California are I believe I promised to let you Know[?] what they were. as they[?] are always complained of, but never named. all the answer I can give you is that I have not run foul of them yet, I have seen nothg yet but wh[at?] would be properly named "Incidents of Travel.["]

If anybody wants to Know what particular sections on Rivers I wish. to explain by my maps.. tell them, there is two rivers over which I have pass^d Called little Blue Big Blue and the next place looks like salt Lake.,

I. suppose you would a***** to know how we look. and what part of the play I act, well Son*****I help Cook Wash dishes make Beds,, set up the tent take it down, watch Indians ½ the night alone, should they attack, Me I shall[?] compromise[?] with them by giving them a Mule, if they insist on havng Billy, I,ll fight before will settle with them so.

Tell Julia I should like to send her a little Antelope. they are such little Beauties, they look very Much like a goat. I bought Me a Spy Glass in S^t Louis. and it affords me a good deal of amusement to see every thing that is going on for 4 or 5 Miles about the Plains. I can tell the color of a mans Coat two one Miles. I bring the antelopes & Wolves up close to me and examine them although they are a mile off I expect to see some fine Buffalo Hunts with my Glass. the great difficulty is when I. want it most every body wants a peep__

it is getting quite late they are laying all around me asleep except M^r Estes who is also writing by my side. M^r Paine is on Watch. I now go to. bed he calls me at 1 oClock I shall add a line or two at Fort Kerny good, night__.

11 oClock Sunday

we have stopt. to bait our Horses. one mile before reaching the Fort. they do not allow emigrants to feed on the grass for that distance as they want it for uncle Sams Cattle. the Feed is short on the bottoms but better than it has been back[?]

we met 6 Large Ox waggons yesterday. loaded with Buffalo Hides from Scots Bluff. they started from there. the 13 April. they told us we would find the feed better. up the River, their Oxen was very. Poor. that part of the Platte that runs south of Grand Island is not much larger than the Oplain[?]

Last evenig we cook^d our Supper with Green Willow. our next fuel will be "Chips" and willow [rest of line partially cut off] here the **** *we[?] **** get them [page 3]

My Inkstand just made an upset. and I have no time to repair the damage. also it is at night and I am writing by a candle flaming every way___ we have made a safe trip through so far. with the exception of one or two Slight accidents, our mules got a little. frightend to[?] day in coming

down a hill. and run foul of M^r Barnards & Kings waggon and Smash^d it we rigg^d up in an Hour. by finding another wheel. it is not quite as large as this but will answer till we can pick up a better one

we struck the Valley of the Little Blue River. on Thursday Morning and continued up the Vally 2 days,, as soon as we entered the Vally. the Emigrants began to dineva[divine?] Buffalo. and they have Kill^d a number yesterday mornng soon after leaving Camp. we saw an animal about a mile from us at full run in another Instant. three or 4 hunters. on horseback came over the Hill. in full pursuit. one of them fired but was too far off there were 3 Men riding directly behind our waggon one on a beautiful Sorrel Bay[?] off he dash^d and in a very short time. was neari[n]g the Buffalo. and before. he got 3/4 of a Mile he was near enough to fire. he fired his horse[?] and Buffalo both at the top of their Speed. I saw the Buffalo fall before I heard the report of his gun. in an Instant there were more than fifty Persons around him. and continued there as far as I could see them, they were behind us and near the road. since that we have seen a great many antelope but they are too fleet for the Hunters it is a fine sight to see them bound off for quarter or half mile and then turn round and look at their pursuers as much as to say "you cant Come it _["]

I suppose you want to hear something about Billy. he is well and looks as well as when he left Naperville. the feed is very short on the P[latte] river. but we turn him out loose with the other Horses to Bait Mornng Noon & Evenig, he is the Most quiet and gentle animal we have we can go up to him and catch him anyone[?] and he never unZertates[?] to get free from[?] here[?] we put him we always. have[?] 2 or three horses[?] with them[him?] when they are loose and 30 feet of Rope to them but Billy does not need that appendage__

The Boys all continue well and in, good spirits. and all attend to their business thoroughly I dont believe there is any teams on the road that gets the attention that ours have. I believe I. told you that we started from S^t Jo havg loaded with grain & Hay, we have yet about 18 Bushels Oats & about 10 Bu Bran and Shoots[?], and between 50 & 100[?] lbs pounds[sic] of Hay. of[?] we get along as well as we have from S^t Jo here

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[more ink blots on this page]

after crossig we encampt on the west Bank *****d not been there long before quite an old resp[e]ctable looking Indian ***** camp[?] and presented us with two or 3 Small pieces of Paper, on which *****npenies[?] of Emigrants had Certified that, Otto Chief the bearer was ***** a good Indian and would not Steal, I expected what was wanted, I h*****em *****k to him and told him they said he was a good Indian he took out a few dim*** and showed me that they had given him. we added two more to his stack *** tra***end he left us very Civilly. I ask him w[h]ere his wig wam was, he pointed to *** north South E & West and then swept the Horison with his outstretched hand which[?] I supposed[?] that meant their wigwams were all around us or. that he was a live[lone?] Indian and the world was his wigwam. if the latter was his meaning, he has a fine one for a *****ne ***** country I never saw. then from the first days travel. to the present, no ***** State will compare with this Indian territory. it ha*** a been burned off and ***** grass; a yart[?] green enough to give it that beauty, that nothing but a *****n has at this season of the year. I cannot describe it to you but o**** fancy to yourself the handsomest place in Illinois you ever saw and you can find a hundred

places and views [here] every day. that. coul^d cast it in the Shed ***** of it just Rolling enough, if it was only supplied with a little more or a good deal more timber and water. in all seasons, it would be a delightfull place to live, but to undertake[?] to describe it is wasting time. I have wished for you a hundred times that you might. enjoy it.

I suppose if I were to tell you that I walk. from 10 to 20 Miles every day you would hardly believe me, last thursday I walk^d 25 Miles the country is so delightfull I cannot sit in the waggon: and finer Roads I never saw although they are getting very dusty. To undertake to give you an Idea how many teams are on the road would be impossible the roads have beautifull windings to Keep on the highest lands. consequently it may well be called a winding Way. when we get on some of the highest rolls of the Prairie and look as far as the Eye can reach both ahead & behind us you will see long lines of teams some just disaparing in some ravine & others just rising in another Place,, this scene continues from day to day

Saturday Evening. May 18__

This evening at 7 oClock we encampt on the. Platte Bottom, w[h]ere the Road from. S^t Jo. Independance Weston & C strikes the road from Old Fort Kerney. we intend to continue our rout in the Morning and shall perhaps pass Fort Kerney tomorrow nearly. 12 oClock w[h]ere we intend to Mail Our Letters. this is our Eleventh day From the Bluffs of the Missouri 7 Miles from S^t Jo. in that distance which I make 285 miles we think we have pass^d more than 1000 Teams some under way and some camp^d down for waiting for feed

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[last two pages on smaller paper]

on looking at my letter. I find it is hardly worth sending,, it is in such a condition but I have not time to remedy the evil. I shall let it go as it is I. believe we have passed nearly One hundred teams that were camp^d for Sunday among them I noticed Mr Inglesbee[?] the Catholic Priest from Joliett & his Company of 10 or 12 Waggons. we have not seen any Indians on the Platt yet we saw a few on the little blue. there are a good many emigrants traveling to day, although. it is one of the disagreeable hard windy days we read of we had one of them while traveling up the Vally of the Blue this is from the SWest and we are in hopes it will bring Rain we have not had any since we left S^t Jo. and it appears as if there had not been any here for a month the grass is very Small even here w[h]ere it ought to have been a full Bate[?].

this great emigration Moves along very quietly hardly a word said. it is good much Stettan[?] than when we were passing Ox teams,, I think. likely we shall have to pass another Lot of Ox teams. if they were[?] ahead of us from fort. Kerney on the Missouri we have also pass^d a number of Large Drowes of Cows & Oxen.

if an opportunity offers I shall write again at Fort Lar*****[Laramie] 300 miles ahead,, I have already seen the Plains, the Buffalo. & CC. and I think if any body goes through we shall get along without much difficulty among ourselves. a great deal of distress is occurance[?] by. Companys being too large a number broke up at S^t Jo. and we had. applications almost every day. to take somebody

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in with us sometimes they want almost insist but we would not do it in no other case than M^r

Paines. his was all in ready money in advance. and I think he will do very well, _

I. take it for granted that you are all well and enjoying yourselves therefor I. shall not give myself any uneasiness[?] about you give my respects to all inquiring. Friends[?] and tell them I am one of the boys bound for California the Land for me. this is now. the only time you hear sing[?],, and this we hear every day a hundred times from Sundady[?]. Rember me to all the family. and E & the Doctor; Tell Julia she must Kiss boy for me.

Well Rose think I. Shale[sic] ever get w[h]ere I can put any thing in those Bags I see them very often and think of You.. take notice sometimes when you are all sitting around the fire or table. see if you see me I am there with you every day. but I suppose you do not see me_ I. sometimes think I see some of you tripping over the Plains, how I wish you could you would be delighted. Adieu I dont Know when I shall hear from you again but I shale[sic] expect letters at Sacramento.-

M Sleight

manuscript, 6 p.
Chicago Historical Society

Scotts Bluffs May. 28. 1850
(67 miles to F^t Laramie)

My Dear Hannah.

According to my traveling notes we are about 67 Miles from Fort Laramie and at the rate we are now traveling. we are in hopes to make at[it] on Friday next. which is the Last day of may.. and the Mail ~~will~~ ~~which~~ that leaves Fort. L once a month. the Mail driver told Me as he passed us up. this side of Fort Kerney would leave Fort L again on the 5th of June. so I am in hopes this will reach you in good Season as it will not lay at the Fort over 3 or 4 days. I mailed a Letter for you at Fort Kerney which I suppose you have received

We are all well and getting along finally[finely]. they told us at Fort. K that according to their register there was. about 2300 Waggons ahead of us on this side the Platte. and I think. as near as we can judge we have passed at least from 8. to 10. hundred teams which are principally ox teams, we se[e] considerable many on the north side the River but as near as we can tell we are traveling faster than they. are: the distance from S^t Jo to Fort Laramie is 640 Miles if we get there the last day of May it will Make us 23 days out from S^t Jo about 28 Miles pr day,, a good business for light waggons so heavily loaded as we were when we left S^t Jo, we think we shall have grain enough to carry us a week beyond Fort L,..

the emigrants I think are. very Healthy I have not heard of a case of sickness among them and have only seen One New Grave on the road yet we have counted rising of 20. Graves of last year. up to this time the new Grave was an accidental death. caused by the discharge of a Pistol in overtearbag[?]. the Bedding in a waggon: I was a few Miles ahead of our Company. on Rock run, when he[the deceased] passed with his company we came along an hour or two after them, and found what had occurred. written. on a board at the head of his grave

The roads are good. but. we find considerable of sand when the road. does not run near the river which makes heavy drawing, we crossed the. south Fork of the Platt, which I think is nearly half mile wide last saturday Mrng 10 oClock, had good luck getting across, the river they said had been rising for several days, a little we did not raise our waggon Boxes. and it run in One waggon some. but only damaged a few pounds Bread

[page 2]

that. I had baked for the Horses,, they will eat it yet.. we find the grass rather. better since we. reached the north fork. which we reached on sunday Morning. having Encampt in Ash Hollow on saturday night above one Mile from the River,, the distance from w[h]ere we crossed the South fork of the Platte across to the north fork at ash Hollow is 22 Miles over a high rolling Prarie. untill we descend a very Steep rocky Bluff into ash Hollow. before descending the. Hill. we took off all our Mules and Horses from both waggons except Bill & Dick, we then chained both Wheels. and they let it down very carefully, we then. took them up again and. got the other waggon down without any accident. but as we commenced or about commencing to hitch on again, their. Came up such a storm of wind. & sand. that came. very near blowing our waggon

over, although we had ~~throwed~~[?] the Horses in our hands. they were so much frightened it was all we could do to hold them 5 Minuets[minutes] sooner it would have struck us coming down the bluff which I think must be 200 feet, and very steep, it was fortunate. that. we was so well prepared for it the dust blew so that I could not see. neither the Horses or men that was all round me,, it continued Blowing nearly all night,

it has not miss^d a day or rather a night since we struck the Platte but, there would be some appearance of rain and it would end in a violent storm of wind &. dust, two or 3 times I almost thought it would blow the waggon over, I believe it has blown the boys out of bed two or 3 times, stript the tent off them. M^r Estes said his shirt bottom snapt around his ears so he could not hear anything, else, I never saw but one blow equal to the one at ash Hollow and [it was] the time, that Esqr Allens House was blown down, after we encampt several waggons came in with their covers in Ribbands

we left ash Hollow. on sunday Morning and. about 2 oClock came to an Indian encampmt of 3 or 4 Lodges of the Soix Tribe we were told be[by] an indian trader that. 7 Miles below. there was a Village of 150 Lodges. of from 4 to 5 Indians to a lodge and the day before some Emigrants had sold them 28 galls Whiskey and they were drunk and havig a time of it that they had fired on some Emigrants, and unless we had a very large company it would be dengerous to go on. as we would be sure to have a fight, we made up our Mind to have a fight if they wish^d it and so got all our guns ready, there was nearly 20 Waggons in the train at that time, and when we came near the Village we drove. our teams close together, and. the men that was not driving took guns pistols &C in their hands and walk^d along side the waggons. [as] we passed them they Came out Men Women Children, dogs & Poneys and appeared very friendly, it was a beautifull spot and good Grass

[page 3]

a fine looking old Indian. well dressed in a Blue overcoat fur cap, when he saw we were going to camp, came riding up to us and. showed us the Best Place,, about a Mile from the town, which had as near as we could count 100 lodges. which were built of Poles tied at the top and covered with Skins, they look quite comfortable. and much better dress[ed] then Indian[s] in generel, although it was raining quite a number followed us. to our camping ground. it was late we did not get any regular supper, but set a double watch at dark. at which time they all left us. they. behaved very civilly and we gave them some Hard bread, which appeared to be very acceptable it was quite cold, I put on My Big overcoat and my woolen night cap to Keep my. ears warm; and to prevent tooth ache,. they all had to come up to me, shake Hand feel of my Coat & night Cap, and look at Billy so Billy and I. were the Lions, they would like to have skin^d me and took Billy Hide and all, they was very good natured. and wanted to swap. with me for Billy. one tall fine looking good natured Indian offer[ed] Me 2 Poneys for Him. when I told him no,. he laughe^d and put his hand on back of my neck to make believe he was going to Choke me out of fun I then lock^d arms with him and we walk^d all around the camp much to the amusemt of the Boys. he finaly offerd my[me] 3 poneys for Billy, but I would not let him go,.

next mornng before our Breakfast was ready they came again and placed themselves around each waggon or mess, four our share we had 2 fine lucky Indians and their Squaws and one fine little Pappoose. one of them my friend of the previous night, his squaw had the Pappoose. and was quite good looking a[I?] tied a string of small red Beads around her papoos[e]s neck that

pleased them very much. after we was through Breakfast, we gave them some Hard Bread, and each a cup of good sweet coffee they were delighted,,, after we was through with them two or 3 others came to me with little crums of Hard Bread in their Hand, and showed me and I gave each a piece. and finally the Old Chief came again to Shake Hands before I left to admire my Coat. I gave him some Hard Bread. he appeared as much pleased as the others. we shook Hands again when we was ready to leave and all parted well pleased wit[h] each other, they showed no signs to try to steal anythg they saw we were so well prepared that it would be of no use

I commnd singing- Old Dan Tucker. once and one of the. Indians commnd Dancing the Indians and boys all laughd so I could not sing

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To. day we have passed. ~~Castle Bl.~~ what is Called the Court House or Church The Chimney, Rock, and [we] are now laying encampt near a number of Beautifull Forts. Castles & C in Sight of chimney rock [&] Scotts Bluffs I suppose. this is much the finest scenery on the Platte. I had no Idea this[that] those Castles. & Forts. were so perfect,, it actually appears fo as though we were coming to or was in a large City,, every thing about them is no neat, such fine. green sod[?] it actually looks as though there Must be. a good many men about them to Keep the ground in order Fort Kerney. dont compare with them at all. Fort Levnworth is a Beautifull Place Much the finest, I have seen among the Forts anyw[h]ere. but for Beauty & Grandure it will not compare with ther[sic] works of nature. I only wish you could be here to see them. I should very much like to spend a week here. but no. we have too much work before us.

this is the 20.th day we have been travelg, constantly. from 5 to 6 oClock in the mornng untill. 5 & Sometimes 6 in the evening, we laid still. about 3 or 4 Hours on Sunday to overhaul our loads and repack them after Crossing the river, we Keep 2 Men on watch from dusk to. Breakfast when the Horses are brot up for their Grain, those that are not on watch are Called at 3 ½ past 2 or 3 oClock by the time Breakfast can be got Horses Harnessd and Tent put up. & all things in Readiness it is time to start,. I watch ½ the Night or rather till one oClock every 3rd night. I walk from 12 to 16 miles every day some days I get an Hour or two sleep on the waggons. I am now writing in the waggon at 11 oClock at night I was up till 1, last night and must be up again at 3 oClock. and off again at ½ past 5. tomorrow we get our first peep at the peaks of the Rocky Mounta[i]ns. you must excuse. Imperfections I am writing. on my Valeece laying down leaning on my elbow. the wind is blowing a pretty good gale. and there is. 2 Horses at each end of the waggon eating their grain so the waggon is in Motion all the time. I suppose all. that I have mentioned are Called sufferigs,. but if they are suffering, the boys all seem to enjoy them, for a happyer set of fellows you wont find in a days ride.

I. forgot to tell you we have had. 3 or 4 Meals of Buffalo. there was 2 Killed w[her]e we stopt at noon. near the Forks of Platte., I was Cook that day, I Cut it and then Cutlett and fryed it it was well cook^d and very good I roll^d it in Flour the same as you do cuttletts,, WE[?] can beat you women all to pieces Makig Bread. better I never eat. and we neather. use. Creen[Cream] Tarter or soda but simply Flour & Water Soured[screened?]. into yeast and let stand for [part of bottom line possibly cut off]
use no Salt

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Fort Laramie 6 oClock AM May 29-

We. reach^d the fort or rather the Laramie Fork of Platte River near the Junction with the Main Platte. about 5 oClock. last Evening. and as they told us it ha^d commenced rising. very fast we concluded to cross Imediately. it is deeper than the South Fork but not so wide we raised our waggon Boxes about 6 inches. and cross^d without damage or accident,, about ½ Mile from w[h]ere we crosse^d the larime fork.. there is a ferry w[h]ere goverment Ferrys for one Dollar those over the main Stream that come from Council Bluffs on the North Side. here all the Emigrants get on one track, and here we well commence to ascend the Black Hills which if we take that rout it will take us 3 days to get over them.. but I think we shall take the river route. The guide Books tell us the river rout is the best but we will be oblige^d to ford the platte 2, or 3 times One of the Officers at the Fort tells me we do not have to ford or cross it at all till we get 110 Miles and then we come to a ferry. and they ferry in 3 different Places-. if this should prove true and as soon as they get doing Business at the Fort after Breakfast we shall Know. and then determin

I tried to ascertain at the Ferry if any of the Naperville Boys was there but could not as there was but few Persons on the side I was. I saw one man that told me that a Waggon Mark^d Naperville Express, (Depew & C I suppose) was in a company 21 Miles Back and would be at the ferry to day. Scotts Company he told me. Cross^d at Fort Kerney and is a head if so they are registerd at the Fort, 10 Miles Back on a tree at a watering Place,, among a great many other names. wrote over & over each other was Tom Finly[?]. & James Johnson if it was our Jim Johnson. he must be near us as he had only pass^d the day Before:

I ask^d the Post Master how many teams were ahead of us. he had just finish[ed] the List up to Last Evenig. which I Copyed from his Book it stood thus. Men 8352, Women 68. Children 39 Waggons 2266 Horses 82[?]87 Mules 2744 Oxen 1544. Cows 91. so we Know as near as we can Know what is ahead of us. if nothing Happens I think before we get to Salt Lake we shall reduce from ¼ to ½ [the number ahead of us],,- we have now traveled 640 Miles in. 22. days: one day sooner than I thought. to. average 29 Miles pr day. with a rest of 4. Hours for our teams,,

we are in hopes of being on the road again. by 12. or. 1 oClock we stop long enough to get one Skein mended to our waggon Mail our Letters, and get such information. as we can from the officers of the Fort-

The Platte River up to this Place. is one of the Straightest rivers I. Know of. it is so wide that the Current does not cut away its Banks and make curves.. but its waters and the waters of the Laramie Fork & South fork are all very Muddy like the waters of the Missouri... But a great deal of the scenery is very Beutifull especially from. Ash Hollow to. Scotts Bluffs about 45 Miles, they tell you about it. Towe[r]s, Castles, & C & C and they. say. Forty features. but if. you say. fifty features you will then not have half that have the appearance of Forts

[following written in upper margin of page 5]

I bought mc an old Bulls Eye Watch of a packer[?] in S^t Louis for \$3 and I dont believe there is a Better time piece on the Road it is a red Regulator[?] I found my Spy Glass very conveniet

to Examine the Towers Castles&C. although we were a mile or two off.. I could get very near them

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Here the Mormon guide Book commences most of us go through the Black Hills, we have[?] Wears[Ware's] guide so far & map so far and it is not worth a Straw he has never traveled the rout. if we take the River Road this Mormon guide will not do us much Good. After we get through I Can make a better Guide book than ever has been made yet. I Keep the distance by traveling time. giving so many Miles to. the No of Hours we travel. and so far. I came out very near in distances that have actually been Measured by Goverment.. If I had time I would Cut the guide Books in Slices and show them up. it ought to be done there is thousands of them on the Road and the Emigran[t]s are Sweering about them. they Can not depend on them at all. they only Misllead them, the Trail is their Best guide,, and I suppose there is not a Plainer or Better Road, in America so far

Larami Peak. what is in the Black Hills. has been Sight from Scotts Bluffs it is Called the Peak of the Rocky Mountains. I suppose it is a Spur of them. if so I. have Seen the Peak^s of the Rocky Mountin, there is quite a long Chain of them Laramies is. the Highest and its top on the north side appears to be covered with Snow

I suppose. if I should Continue. on a Month or two longer people would begin to think. it is actually my intention to go to California, and I think there is a fair Prospect. my. Health never was better. perhaps I have Miss^d. (I cannot call it a loss) from 15 to 20^{lb} in weight, I can walk 10 to 15 Miles without. Much fatigue. after Eating 4 or 5 Slices of Boil^d Pork, with Pepper Sauce & Some of M^r Estes. good Bread,.. we have nearly all our Butter yet; and. have just Cut our 2nd Hem[?] wheel[of cheese?] is excellent. we live like Nabobs. and Sleep: very sound I can assure you. althoug[h] our Beds are across Bags bundles, Boxes &C; I never slept better in my life. so far I enjoy the trip, sufficent for the day[?], so do not cry for me Tell Doc if he enjoys farmig as much as I do traveling, he has a good time of it, the only draw back, we have that I believe every day since we struck the Platte, we have in the afternoon. about 3 or 4 & Sometimes later. one of those Storms of wind, with but little rain. that. Blows a Jimmy Cane[?] we often have to stop our teams. and take them by the Head and hold on to Keep them from turning round or runnig away,, the way it does blow & the dust fly cant be beat,,

if I get any thing new at the Fort when I go to mail this I will add it my love to all,, I may write again from the South Pass. if. there is an Express from there which I believe there is. Kiss Julia and the Boy for me. & tell her I dont forget Her. I shall look for letters after I get to Scarmento[sic]. hole[?] with my wash[?] Board[?] on my Knee. so adieu till then if I can not write before

[signed]
M. Sleight

[following is in smaller writing below signature]

Scott &C0. are registerd. the 17th May so they are 13 or 14 days ahead. Gooding[?] & Henry Northern are 4 days ahead of us The Stanleys & Adam[?] of Downers Grove. Kendall & Co..

27 May-.. they did not Find M^r Banisters name or Bill Jones.. the Kimballs were with. Scott..
D^r Furthingham[?] has not pass^d yet I. fear his children. hav[e] the Measles.. if not he must
be near us I. expect all that have pass[ed]. are well. I think we shall take the River Road

June 7, 1850, Friday Evening
above Independence Rock

Dearest H

Our Encampment to night brings us fairly in the Rocky Mountains 7 Miles above the Devils Gate w[h]ere the S Water forces its way between perpendicular Rocks 400 feet high... we Reached the Sweet Water at Independence Rock. to day at One oClock. all well. after passing a good deal of the Alkali country. for the last two or three days.. last evening there was 12 or 15 Sick Horses in 2 other Companies that Camp't near us 29 Miles Back, but I believe none died, or had not this morning

We reach^d the upper Platte Ferry in 5½ day[s] from Fort Laramie. we are now within 90 Miles of the South Pass of. the Rocky Mountains. which if nothing happens we hope to pass next Monday. it is just one month to day since we left S^t Jo we have only lost one day ½ at Fort Laramie & ½ last Monday. a heavy rain Storm in the Black Hills.. it comm[enced] raining about one oClock P.M. and rained about 3 Hours. and then cleared but we did not Start till next morning. by the Banks of one dry River bed we saw the water had been between 2½ & 3 feet high this river bed was our road for 200 yds but at 8 oClock next morn'g. you could pass it dry footed. the next Stream the La Prele River those encamp^t on its Banks said, rose that night 6 feet but at ½ past 8 we crossed it the water just come to our axe[l]s. such is the effect of a heavy rain in these Mountains. which are cover^d with Snow. from their summits half way down on the north Sides that is the Highest Ranges it makes the nights and mornings Very cold. although it is quite hot from 11 till 4 or 5 oClock, the Country is very Barren and feed is very scarce Our Mormon guide,, is no use to us only on a/c of water w[h]ere they say we will find plenty of feed there is scarcely any, it appears w[h]ere the good Camping grounds have been there the grass does not grow again and if there has been any feed it is already all eaten off by those ahead. therefore we make our own Camp'g places, we provide ourselves with water in our Casks & Bag[?] and a Bag of wood; and w[h]ere we find grass, there we camp the some[?] at noon; sometimes at 11 oClock sometimes at 2 oClock. if we cant find it near the road we drove off w[h]ere we can get it, by this[?] Means[?] our Animals have done well all in good condition we turn them all loose and watch them all night, they have got so they well acquainted they stick together & the two[?] that we do not have

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are[?] Henrys follows[?] without leading if they get a short distance behind they soon come up with a rush. we shall have grain for our Horses. untill we reach. the south pass. and will take. some. to the Desert. the Mules do well enough without. grain.. the animals all look well. and we are overtaking those that started. from S^t Jo 8 to 10 days before us. as near as we could learn at the Ferrys on the upper Platte there was. about 16 or 17 hundred teams ahead of us— now. I. dont think there can be over 10 or 11 hundred, we are continually overhauling new companies, at Fort Laramie. Scott & Co, was 12 or 13 days ahead of us. yesterday I saw a dutchman. at the Willow Spring. that said he saw his name registered at the Ferry & the names of his men he pass^d only 4 days ahead of us. I could hardly believe it but since, I have understood. that the

earlyest Emigrants were obliged to lay by on a/c of Snowg[?] I expect. that. M^r Jones & C. & W Banister Dapew. Furthingham and others are. behind us. we see by guide boards or Marks on trees Buffalo Heads & &C that we were gaining fast on Goodny[?] & Hen[r]y Northern. & the Lockport folks that started several days ahead if nothing happens to us I am in hopes to be in California in time to write you by the 1st of August Steamer. M^r[?] Estes left a letter at the Ferry for his wife. the P Master at Fort Laramie is concerned in the Ferry post[?] upper Platte and is there and said he was to send it the first opportunity I am in hopes of meeting some express between this and the south Pass to send this by__

I suppose you would like to hear more about ourselves well we are all well, and harty enough I can assure you, and I never slept Better in my life., I shall almost be afraid to sleep in a house again for fear of taking Cold, our house. is a large one. and is well Ventilated,,

untill the two last days before we reach^d the Platte Ferrry which is about 150 miles above Fort L, we had a Storm every day after we first reach^d the Platte River between one and 5 oClock, sometimes a little rain but every time plenty of Wind

a better road for the distance I never, Saw. although there is a great many places it wants a great deal of Care going down steep pitches in[to] creeks & Rivers,

Yesterday and to day I have seen the Horned Toads. I believe only 3 or 4, they have a Kind of Shell like a turtle but do not draw in their Head, that. heareas[?] horns somethg like a goat. and a row all around the Edge of the Shell 1/8 to 1/4 inch long they can run very fast, A Snake has no business to try to Swallow one of them, we have Kill^d 2 or 3 of the large yellow Rattlesnake. one yesterday and we have seen several dead ones.,

Two of the boys (Waterman of Marseille & King that is with Barnard.) got to Makg Calculation[?] how long it would take them to go on the Mountain and bri[n]g down some Snow for us they thought they Could do it and Catch up in two or 3 Hours (when[?] we nooning) they Started, and did not overtake us again untill the next day. 2 oClock, they walk^d about 50 Miles they Said the Snow was 10 feet deep in the gous[groves?] of the mountain
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and so say several of the Emigrants that have been up. the distance to a mountain is very deceivig;

they Saw 20 or 30 wild Sheep and considerable other game, the Emigrants Kill, Deer, Bear, Elk, Antelopes hares, Buffalo or something. almost eve[r]y day, but they have to go to the Mountns

I. have not seen an Indian or seen. a Sign of one totaly[?]. 20 miles East of Fort L. were the last, we are now in the country Belongng to the Snake Indians,, which they say are very quiet the next will be the Crow^s. we shall Keep our Eyes Skin^d for those gentlemen, we Keep up our watch at night as close as if there was 1000 Indinds[sic] near us we dont mean to be caught napping, Our Company is Small and our turns come, to watch 1/2 of every 4th Night, my watch is again tomorrow eveng,, till one, oClock. I had the first watch in the Mountains. our. Company has 4 Waggons & 12 Men & 16 Horses & Mules quite as large as we want it we

get along first rate and we have not even appointed a Captain, besides our 6, there is Barnard & King, and Harker, Newton (a brother of the Docter). Waterman & Fellowdgr[?], from Marsaille[?] others have wanted to come in with us but we dont want them if we take care of our own Stock we Know that. they are provided for we see too much poor Stock on the road to trust ours to anybody it is now 12 oClock at night I am writing on my Knee in the waggon and I hardly Know what I am saying so good night

Monday evening June 10th

Yesterday was Sunday and we lay over. part of the day after spending some 3 Hours fording the Sweet water. twice, the water is. high. and it was bad fording. but we got over safe and drove 4 miles w[h]ere we found good grass. we camp^t and Shortened our waggons.- cut off the Boxes. between 2 & 3 feet they now draw much easier in the sand; in rising a Bluff this morning. the range of Mountains Laying north of the Pass came in full View., clothed in Snow from Base to summit, it was a fine Morning. and as the snow on the other mountains around us that was (which were low.) had nearly all disapeared it was quite a surprise. I never saw a More Beautiful sight. they. look^d like a parcil[?] of Young ladies[?]. all drap^d in white. just out of a Bond Box. so near and clean as the sun shone very brightly on them,, tommorrow evening. we shall if Possible encamp at the Pacific Spring & Creek 3 Miles beyound the South pass. I. suppose at that point our journey from S^t Jo to Sacramento will be one half completed in 32. days actual travel and 34 days. since we left the Missouri River

So far we have not had a sick Man nor animal (with the exception of some slight Colds & diaree), our animals are in good condition. we have plenty of Provisions.. and good appetites.. they all eat hartily & Sleep soundly, for my

[bottom half of last line on page did not copy]

part I have not dreamed a dream or got up[?] no[?] our[?] own ground[?] in the night since[?] I left S^t Jo

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we have grain yet. so that we give each of the old Horses a good mess of oats & Bran every day. for the last two or three days. they have followed the waggon we have broke in a pair. of new Mules. that we Bought just before we started; they are a fine pair. of Sorrels and. are so well match^d for color and Size that you can hardly tell them apart; we find. that it takes much less feed to Keep a mule than a Horse, and as we have Six of them and two poneys that are just about as good as mules we are in hopes we shall get them all through if there is More danger from the. alkali water & grass then[?] from Starvation at present although grass is Very scarce. but. a great deal of the grass is frosted with Pesilant[?], Cattle eat this and they Say if they drink soon after it is nearly as bad as drinkg the water, Some Companies that have been careless or ignorant have lost. a number of animals,,

M^r Shepherd that was once to.. our House. with M^r Cornesh[?] I. think fell in company with us to day and is now encampt within a few Rods of us. he is acquainted with M^r Paine. who says he spoke of being at my House with an Episcopal Minister. I have not spoken to him. and I shall not Introduce myself-

there is Some 30 teams Campd near us to night More than we have seen at a time for several days as we are constantly coming up to new Companies, had we traveled all day yesterday this lot would have been behind

we have 7 Bunches of Oats yet and as many of Bran & Shorts[?]. and one Bag of Hay: we have not found much difficulty on a/c of Fuel.. we always Keep a little wood or pine Board on hand. this with "Chips["]. make good fire either to Boil or bake with. the Sage Stalks make good fuel they are from the Size of your little finger to the size of your arm and many of them are dry and make first rate wood for our Stove, Wood and water. there is no trouble about. as the whole Country. is fill^d with Sage I cant compare it to any thing but a Dutch Potatoe Patch, that had been planted. & Hoed without[?] Ploughing,, and without ~~anyto,~~ as funacusscg[?],,

I am somethng disapointed in the Mountains I expected to find them Much. higher and more compact[?] there is fine wide Vallys runng through them in all directions and if the land was good. Some parts of them would be as pleasant as any country. but. the soil is miserable nothig but sand and gravels.. this is a long journey. but I cannot realize[?] it nor do I think a person would be likely to unless he should get sick. or out of Provisions: the Sun Shines as Bright and the Birds sing as natural and as sweetly as they do in our groves. I was on watch last saturday night on a bend of the Sweet Water. directly under a Meadow[mountain?]. and. one Robin sang for Me all night or till. I was relieved at one oClock. I was much obliged to the dear Bird.. I told her she must go and sing for my little pet Julia

[following in top margin of page 1]

on Bear[?] River near Fort Hall[?] all well June 20th I thought[?] of writing more but I shall fold it in hopes of meeting somebody from F Hall going East

M S

we have ***** & 2 Snow Storms and have been in sight of Snow ***** mountain for the last 15[?] days

Hangtown or Placerville, California
August 2nd 1850

Dear C—

We arrived here, on, Saturday July. 8th [July 8 was a Monday] all well and safe. though our Journey which has. been Just Eighty days. Since we left the Missouri River: the same number of Days that at[?] took. R. Naper & D^r Barns. to Cross: we were one day too late to get letters in the office at this place for. the 1st of August Steamer which I was in hopes we should do but some that were here and Knew we were near this place. say they wrote. that we were within a days travel.

We had a good trip through. plenty to eat all the way, and I wish I could say so of all that started. but so I was fearfull it would be. many neglected. to lay in a sufficiency thinking they could get it from others. that would have a surplus as many threw away last year, but they were Mistaken and many have and are now suffering the consequences; Flour on the road. has been sold at different prices as high as two dollars p^r pound. but from one Dollar to one fifty cents has been the general prices for flour, Meal Bacon Rice or indeed anything. they could get hold of to sustain life and Many an ox. and. some mules & Horses. have been obliged to supply. the place of. Ham & Bacon, we gave away in small quantities to some that had no money or anything to eat. and we sold. something Rising of One hundred Dollars worth for Cash, after crossing the Desert we then Met persons going on some to meet their friends and others with Provinns.[sic] for Sale.. and there was trading posts Established. from the Mouth of Carson River. to this Place, they sold at High prices and would take worn down Horses Or Mules. at very low prices, from 5 to 15 pounds of Flour must[?] purchase what on the commencement of the journey had been a good Horse. 6 pounds. was all a Man could get offered for quite a decent poney at this place Flour by retail is worth about 20¢, Flesh Beeff[sic] 20 to 30¢.. Pork 30 to 40¢ Butter \$1 to \$1.25. Cheese one dollar. Potatoes. 25¢ pr pound Onions One Dollar a pound

Most of the Naperville Folks that started early are here. and all I believe with the exception of M^r Scott got through. well. I suppose you will get all the particulars. of his company by. the first of August letters therefore. I need not say much about it. The Old Man looks

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very feeble.. and some. think. he is not in his right mind but I conversed with him a little. I did not discover[?] it. but he is quite weak. and. almost a Skeleton. he shoved up his sleeve for me to look at his arm. it did not look much like the arm of a man that weighed 200^{lbs} or rising. as he was before he left home. all that I have Met have fallen off more or less. those that was the thinnest before they left now are the most fleshy M^r Orcott[?] who was almost dead with the asthma. is one of the Healthiest[?] and stands work the best N Thomas looks very well. Jos Johnson has fallen off a good deal. so did all our company except M^r Paine. I think. he nearly held his own but both the Estears[?] & C Moore & em[?] Sargul[?] all lost as much or more than

I did. I weighed when I Started. 185 to day I weighed 153.. but 155 to 160 is generally my Honest weight- I stood it across as well as any of our Company. I. was not Sick a day on the Journey. when Hot weather first set in in the Mountains it affected me for a day or two. I walk^d a good deal and. the reflection of the sun on the Sand. made it quite Hot and. I quit walking for a couple of days and got over it. but two or three days before I reach^d this place I. had. a. pimple come inside of my nose that pained me considerable and the night before I. reach^d here nearly. Shut my right Eye. it effected my eye Ear teeth, Neck & temple. it was so painfull that I was obliged to have one tooth an old Broken one taken out. it swell^d a good deal and remaind very Hard. to day is the 10th or 11th day since I first felt it and. this morning it Broke. and has discharged considerable. and has released me considerable some . and I have slept most of the fournoon. without pain which I have not done before for the last 10 days. it was very provoking as I calculated to have a few days rest after I got through. it has been much worse than traveling in carmel.. as the moment I got in a doze I was on the road. and found much worse road in my Sleep than any over the Mountains. and there were Some.

We did not attempt to bring our waggons over the Mountains, we left one. at the Sink of Marys River the other we took across the Desert. with. our provision.. & feed & Water for our stock. we left the Sink at ½ past 3 in the afternoon and was over to Carson River at Eleven oClock next day. Stopt. at 11 oClock at night & fed and watered. 2 Hours and. fed and watered again & Rested 2 Hour after Daylight. our animals suffered but very little. but there was a good deal of suffering. then and is every day but few are prepared sufficiently. and many not at all, there are several other places. w[h]ere we traveled from 20 to 30 Miles without. feed or water.. Our Animals, stood it very well with

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the Exception of Billy. and I. advise everybody going to California not to take. a Billy. Horse along at all. I cannot Hear that one got over. although many of his Kind was not work^d in Harness:: he got quite thin. and the boys all said I might do what I chose with him he belong^d to the: whole company. I. would not leave him. I give him to a Young Masourian. he said if there was a possibility of his getting to Calafornia he should go. the company promised me he should not be left to suffer The Sorrel Horse is the one I ought to have taken The. Poneys. stood it very well. I. ase[?] brought Cost Here... Stock is low in Calafornia, and very Expensive to Keep it costs from \$2.50 to \$3 pr Day to Keep a Horse. in any town. here.. the sum to Keep a Man-

We got our Stock all in this town last Monday Morning. and sold it all before we took off. their. Packs. we then. camp^t made an auction. among ourselves. and sold. all that we could not divided and Settled up our whole affair the same day. Desolved our Company, in suming all up. I find. it has cost about \$175. to \$180. a prsn. to get to Calafornia. this is quite as small a sum or less than I expectd it would cost, and if our outfit had not been first rate and our. provisions. for food ample it would. have been a costly trip.. it Makes some difference w[h]ether. you have flour to sell at One dollar a pound or w[h]et[h]er you are obliged to pay two Dollars. a pound in Horses at from 25 to \$30. Each. as many are obliged to do or starve.

M^r Estes & his Brother Sargent & Moore. have gone to Coloma on the South Fork of the American. Near Sutters Mill. to Dig. Henry Northern and M^r Gooding. works near them. they will be over here again on Sunday to see if there is any letters for them. they sent down by M^r

Barnerd[?] that Cross^d with M^r King. for their letters he Received one from his Mother in Vermont and one from. his.. Brotherinlaw. M^r Brench. M^r Stanley & M^r Compton are acquainted with M^r King. he and I Keep House together for the present M^r Kings letter is dated 2 June. the Middle of June Mail[mail] has not yet arrived but is Expected every day I am in hopes to get letters from home before I send this. M^r Paine left here on tuesday Morning after our Settlemt for Sacramento City to seek his fortune. & get his letters: W Orcott. & some of his Company Sam & Tom Finley. the Warren Villa Folks. (Westen[?] & Waterman.) N Thomas & W Hart, Cha^s Beard[?] & Wood. near W Crampton, & the Roberts Boys are all Digging. within Sight. as near as I can learn they get from \$2 to \$5. pr Day to Each Men. W Harker I believe is going to Coloma to try his luck digging

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Robt Naper, Richard Sweet[?] & a W Clark an other Man. are Building here quite a large Hotel. and James Johnson is at work for them I believe. at \$12 pr day__ D^r Clark & Meachem are on the Middle fork of the American River. at work or preparing to work. a Sub Marine ***en.. Dick Berry. is at Sacnmento[sic]. City Making Gold Rockers working at His trade Shusetating[?] &C. and they say is made himself with[?] Several thousand Dollars, Lysender Gage & Several Others have Made themselves a Rancho, on the Macosma River. and are Herding Stock R Naper Says he is Making Money.. ..

Sunday. 4 August,

M^r[?] Estes came over to day, but finding no letters. wrote. one for his wife to go by the next Steamer and left it with me to mail. I seen M^r Hines to day. he has been sick with the Bloody Dierea. the principal complaint here but is over it. I saw M^r Weaver also to day. M^r Weaver & M^r Alden. have a claim on the South fork of the American[?] near Coloma. M^r Weaver & Hines and all the rest condem[n] M^r[?] Scott in severe terms. I suppose as near as I can learn M^r[?] Scott has made a total [w?]reck of all his investment[?] health & everything. yesterday My Nose Broke astride[?] in 3 places. and... dischargd. a good deal I hope now it will soon be better. it has been a bad customer. We hear the M^r W^m Jones & Company. are as far as Carson vally if so he must be in this next week. I suppose M^r[?] Banister D^r Fuechingham[?] & others are with him. he is Capt of the Company

Saturday Evening August, 10th 1850-

Last sunday evening I walke^d out in town. & Found they were holding a Meeting of the newly arrived Emigrants the Meeting was large. and they pass[ed] resolutions, to go over the next Morning at 10 oClock on the South Fork of the American[?] River for 4 to 6 Miles from Hang Town, W[h]ere there is several companys of Chilians, Manilla men. (Kanackeres) as they call the Sandwich[Hawaiian] Island people here, and drive them off the[i]r works they. are. Daming the river & making races to let off the water so as to work the bed of the river & the Bar, between the race & River, then work over the Most part or a good part cemptate[?] & they, think they will commenc[e] work on the bed of river in a few days. The Resolutions pasd by the Emigrants, were not in accordance with the laws of Calafornia. and there was a number of Americans[?]. belonging[?] in Hang Town. Coloma. and other places interested[?] in the Works with the Foreigners. the Law is that. any. Foreigner may work the same as an American by paying a tax of \$20 pr Month The. Sheriff & other officers threatned. of aresting the leaders of the Emigrants it came so near making a fuss between the Americans that it was all broken up

I concluded. there would be. a good deal of. a Stir ~~between~~ among the foreigners so I concluded I would walk over to the River. I found they. were all prepar^d for a fight none[?] of them at work: there was one company. that appeared to have a good

[text evidently continues on page 1 in top margin and in very small script]

At Hang town August 11 1850

NB I find that my paper is out and the weight is all I can have for a single letter, I have just seen John Estes & Sargent, they have been tolerably fortunate round[?] about \$100 Each Cha^s Moore is quite sick Estes has gone for a Doctor. he has the Bloody Direa.. Told the Doc^t to be. sure to send me a prescription for the Madacine,, for that Complaint Saw[?] M^r Daniels M^r Depew around here the 8th of August & last night. Hawkins arr[i]ved Depew [Depaw?] & Boardman have got to digging. he says they make some \$5 or 6 each yesterday, Old man Scott is digging sommer[somewhere?] but with what success I Know not. Rodney whyll[?] has arrived[?]. and I understand has gone to Georgetown, W Jones & his men are together yet, M^r Banister & Joy ropes[?] are together. with Somro[?] C Kath[?] & H VanDyke together packing I believe I suppose they will be here in a few days,, I wish you would[?] just step over and make us a visit you may ***** one. a rolls[?] of Butter. a pitcher of Milk. & a few other little things,. potatoes Melons. Squash. Tomatoes are[?] in season[?] yet Here..

[in left margin of page 1]

NB August 20

Tell little Junia[Julia] I want her to come and pick up gold for me when I get a digging. Do^c Clark and his company are on the Middle fork of A.M.[?] River but we have not heard that they have mat[?] well[?] any success[?] yet the Armour[?] cost[?] them down \$1600 or \$2000

[in right margin of page 2]

I got a letter from Sacramento City form M^r Paine he is going on the Cold[?] Burnap[?] with a Man from Boston he say he saw M^r[?] Kellogg he is working at his trade[?] Blacksmithing[?] at Sacramento. City. he sent his compliments[?] to me.