

# Jonathan Letterman Correspondence and Diary 1860-1864

Trip from Fort Leavenworth to Santa Fe, N.M.

[NLM Finding Aid](#)

## [page 1]

Lt Pegram in command Capt M Ferran A Q. M. 160 horses – 119 mules –

### [written upside down at bottom of page1]

charge M [L] 153.50 Putnams mess owes for beef 1.30 Powder & shot at Riley – 3.20

## [page 2]

Left Fort L at 3 ½ o'clock P M on Wednesday 30 with Mr Putnam the train having moved about 12 o'clock, overlook at just making camp at the Stranger about 6 ½ am carrying a sty in my right eye, very dusty & dry, fine rich rolling prairie like long swells of the ocean Rode my mule [Jeny] Distance made 12 m 31- rose at 4 & started at six, & made 2 miles from Osawkey (or Jackass) west bank, by 2 ½ o'clock threatening a storm all afternoon which set in about 4 ½

### [written along side of page 2]

(W W G)

## [page 3]

gently everything quit writing on my mess table 9 o'clock –

Distance made – 23 m

**June 1st** Some rain & strong wind last night, was in the Saddle at 5 ½ o'clock & on our way cloudy with slight showers & thunder until 11 o'clock passed Eaton in which I saw nothing but stakes & the stakes of St Joe & Topeka RR. left Topeka 2 ½ miles to our left crossed big muddy & also Soldiers Creek (on a bridge) into Indianola into the bottom of the valley of the

### [written along side of page 3]

W. W. G.

## [page 4]

Kaw & campd 10 miles West of Indianola at 5 ½ o'clock 2 ½ miles from the Kaw – on silver Lake Distance made 28 miles.

**2** Rose 4 & moved off at 6.15 from our Camp at silver Lake in fine order. passed the Pota [ ... ] mission about 11 o'clock crossed on bridges. Deep Creek & Vermillion & campd

on West bank of Rock Creek near Louisville at 5 o'clock, our route all day was up the Kaw bottom north side & close to the hills – the bottom is very rich rocks in abundance  
**[written along side of page 4]**

WW & Grass

### **[page 5]**

crop out on the hill sides, Lime & sandstone I noticed sand & gravel on the tops of the ridges like the beach of the Ohio river – timber very scarce except on the large streams  
Dist made 29 m –

**3. Wagon** Rose at 4 ½

Wagons left 6 ½ & horses at 8 ½ left the Kaw & took over hills which roll beautifully & have sand & gravel on the tops & in many places ledges of rock, crop out just along the edge – I got to valley of the Blue

### **[page 6]**

about 10 mile above its mouth crossed Blue at 2 ½ at Manhattan on a ferry. Pittsburg on the East bank. passed a number of cities, but could not tell them by the stakes. passed Blue-mont College 1 ½ m West of Manhattan & saw many houses some large & well built of stone got to camp at 5 o'clock on the north bank of Wild Cat passed through a magnificent country. here we leave the rolling country & get among limestone hills one on top another like Dist made – 27 m

**[written along side of page 6]**

mountains with tops cut off – timber very scarce

### **[page 7]**

Left camp at 9 ½ o'clock, in 2 miles struck the Kaw which we kept up passing Riley we camped about 3 m above on the Republican about 65 or so yds wide filled with sand bars all shapes & every size, water good – We keep in close to the hills which generally slope at an angle of 45° & about 60 ft a ledge of limestone crop out for 18 ft 30 in thick in an almost perfect & unbroken straight line broke here & there by ravines around which the same rocks continue. this ledge looks as if laid by masons so regular is it, from the bottom up to the ledge rocks from the size

### **[page 8]**

of a large store box to small pebbles cover the ground from this ledge back there is a level of say 20 or 30 ft then a slope of from 25 to 30 ft which is the common level, on this level are mounds or hills here & there from 20 to 40 ft high sloping in all directions covered with flint rock & lime stone I noticed this formation more particularly yesterday & to-day. Riley is a small but well built fort stone buildings near the junction of the R & 125 S Hill fork rivers – Sand in abundance thus far (except on the limestone) timber very scarce, just a little brush around the ravines, Stone fences will be made here

## [page 9]

Weather warm but good thus far. grass scarce, fed hay & corn every night – timber scrub oak & cotton birds, curlew & dove – Distance made 14 miles. Limestone hills still around us dont fancy the country since we left Manhattan bottoms sandy good for corn in wet seasons can see often 10 or more miles in every direction when on the hills.

**5** Lay in camp all day – warm, rode up to the Ft. where I spent the morning, set in a tremendous blow about 4 o'clock, very hard blows nearly all the time out here. I am told

## [page 10]

**6** Left camp about 6 – Capt & I left Ft. R at very hot, but Capt Lyon here & 2 staff, no young officers – Gordon [Qr] Mr [ ... ] & Wilson Sutler –

**6** Moved at 6, crossing the Rep ½ m above Ft R on a floating bridge passd thro Junction City 3 miles fr Ft R – where is the last brewery – 1 ½ miles out saw first Kaws hunting horses, crosd Chapman creek, deep & narrow – I notice as we travel west more & more sand – I am told 3 or 4 miles from the river on the hills, that the soil is rich & black Smoky Hill derives its

## [page 11]

name from the Smokey appearance of several hills on its 150 miles above here given by a party of white men in 1840. The water is brackish & unhealthy – hired a guide to Pawnee to-day has been pleasant, as I write a hard blow has spring up, how it do blow here, limestone hills with much sand still continues. Came into the Antelope range to day, dove & curlew still around but no quail, since we left Rock Creek. Past Newport consisting of 6 deserted log huts –

## [page 12]

our route to day is up the Smoky Hill --- nats & bugs rather too thick campd at 2 ½, near Clark, Dist 20 miles – Grass good –

**7** Left camp 6.20, horses at 5.20, had a slight shower kept up the valley of the smoky hill [ ... ] all day pasd over turkey creek, muddy creek, Solomons Fork, over which there is a ferry bot eggs at 15c & butter at 20, the hills are very gently rolling & have not seen any crops of limestone, here & there a Squatter, as 2 m from Camp we came into squatter land, Saw the first antelope just after

## [page 13]

crossing Solomons fork – one of the Guides, shot at antelope, missed but followed up, has not come in yet, Solomons fork derives its name from an old trapper. came into camp at 4 o'clock maj Sedwick ½s old camp Water worse, bad in a well nearby – called blue earth, have been following the Saleni since we crossed Solomon – Dist made 21 m –

## [page 14]

**8** Left camp 5.40, cloudy but pleasant – Kept up Saleni & crossed on ferry 4 m from Salina, last settlement where I bot some figs & candy yesterday & to-day brackish water,

well water sulphur or blue earth water. the country very gently rolling with hills on hills, kept the valleys all day passing over but one ridge on which is a small hillock say 100 yds long & steep rocky banks where 18 Delewares defended themselves, from 600 Pawnees Saw first Buff chips & bones about miles from Salina & many trails from the hills to the streams, timber more

### **[page 15]**

& more scarce, grows on the sides of the streams close to the water courses which are deep & very steep banks without slopes, so that you mostly see the tops only of the trees or bushes saw no stone to day – becoming more sandy – Camped on Spring Creek at 4 o'clock, thus far no want of wood W & gr animals eat but little corn prefer grass, thus far dive on until you tire & you can find good camping. Smoky hill South of us, [ ... ] & [ ... ] 10 m South after Buff Kaws 2 or 3 days ahead

### **[page 16]**

no trouble to this point Distance made 23 m yesterday & to day saw the polar which points north almost like the needle also wild Sunflower Squash & mount moss, [Dove] & cattle bird – 9 Left camp at 7, had a tremendous blow last night about 2, thunder & heavy rain, which lasted an hour or so, when I lay down last night, I placed my hands over my head & cracks like sparks, from a [Leyden] jar passed between my hands or wrists & my head, at first I thought it was in my cheek bone

### **[page 17]**

then I thought it was a bug & then I knew it must be electricity, so I got my rubber comb & run it through my hair & my head was a shower of sparks, my shirt hd horn buttons. we left Spring C valley in about 7 m & took the divide over into the Smoky hill as we got on the hills I saw the Buffaloe in his native place for the first time about 200 m fr the mo, we saw small herds all day, sometimes grazing & some times marching in single file, old Prairie

### **[page 18]**

men told me they were mostly [grown] old bulls in the small herds the cows & calfs being together in larger herds our guides brot in a calf some of wh we had for supper. the teamster & ostlers killed 2 or 3, & Hosea an antelope our road to-day has been rough as we crossed many little branches pulling into the spring cr & smoky hill – passed a fine spring on the left of the road near a large table rock about 4 or 5 m East of the ford of Smoky hill –

### **[page 19]**

I noticed Iron pyrites to day also, the m moss & yellow cactus or prickly pear, Sand-stone of a flinty nature abounds over the hills from small to very large I saw some like 5 or 6 muscle shells put together & then opened still more sandy. I picked up a few common agates this eve – weather still pleasant camped about 3 on the South bank of Smokey Hill just at the ford Distance made 20 m to day I felt for the

## [page 20]

first time that we were getting much above the ocean why I felt I cant say. the creeks are very deep, steep & narrow, trees grow down in them & you can see the tops peeping out, blowing as I write how it do blow out here –

**10th** moved at 6 ¾, misty & cloudy William & George were out all night (last) having got lost, crossed Little & big cow creek & camped about 8 miles from Walnut Creek on the left of the road ½ m from on a slough where we found water. Our route to day has been over wide table lands

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Sandy & gently roll with many stretches of level – cactus we still see growing in sandy places, Buff in sight nearly all day I had 2 or 3 dashes, they seem to lumber not run. got to camp tired at 8 ½ o'clock, a shower -

[written along edge of page]

in which I got wet Distance 36 m – ~~Crossed Big 7 Little Cows-creek~~, where you can find water in common Seasons, in any weather (very dry as this year) not good water for man or beast from Smoky Hill to Walnut both living streams. Passd some bottoms to day which would be bad in a wet

## [page 22]

Season.

**11** moved at 6 ¾ o'clock mostly over gently rollg land, saw a few Buff had a dash but I could not come up nearer than 100 yds, campd at 9 ½ a.m. on the south bank of Walnut creek. Dist 8 ½ m – very hot day, land quite sandy, since we left Salina. I have seen no land fit for the white man no timber hardly, water scarce & bad & land poor covered with Buff grass a short fine grass but nutritious – Lay in camp fixing &

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resting the stock which are very tired after yester-days travel –

**12th** Left camp 5 ¾, & in 8 or 9 m came into the old road at Pawnee Rock, which is a bluff say 30 ft high 400 yds across covered with stone passed ash creek at 12 ½ & Pawnee fork at 2. 1 m below camp alert, & camped on the North bank of the Arkansas 6 m below alert at 4, very hot. Thunder shower & a little hail about 5 ½, blew like fury our road to-day has been over a level sandy country in which no white man would wish

## [page 24]

to dwell, every thing looks dry & barren – Sandy country Distance to Pawnee crossing – 23 m for several days have been passing dog towns Dogs are about the size of a fox squirrel & look like a shaggy terrier –

**13th** Lay in camp, went up to Alert & saw the first Adobe buildings day war, but a pleasant breeze. Several trains passed us to-day bound westward we are now on the Arkansas, at the place it is say 300 yds wide but very shallow – filled with bars –

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**14th** moved at 5 3/4, heavy fog, past on up the Arkansas which is wide & shallow & dotted with little islands – were in sight of trains all day – our road was tolerably near the river over a sandy bottom on the other side Sand hills – with a scrub tree here & there – Campd at 12 ½ o clock. Dis 20 m Saw either Swan or Sand hill cranes in the river –

**15th** Moved at 6 on up the Arkansas, since we struck it it has kept close to the Sand hills on the south bank – some of the hills are pure sand others are covered

## [page 26]

with scrub grass. to-day the last plains with the broad river & a tree or two here & there reminds me of [ruins] in Egypt & I can now realize the many things said in the bible about the shadow of a great rock in a weary land – and I am vividly reminded of many Eastern scenes taken from the bible. The river is wide & full of islands bank from 3 to 6 ft high or the bottom is that near the level of the plains or bottom land over which we have been travelling, river swift never much over 2 or 3

## [page 27]

feet deep. heavy blowing all afternoon. trains passing bound out. Dist 22 m – came into camp at 1 o clock

**16.** moved at 6 ½ & came in at 12 ½ crossed over a few rolling alkline hills & came upon a small camp of friendly Arapahoes. hills on this side of the river, [ ... ] on the other. heard guyotas this morning. Santa Fe mail passed out came into camp at 3 & as I write is a little above us 4 men well armed, are a little afraid of Indians. Dist – 20 m saw Iron pyrites – we lay about 2 m from the West end of dry route

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**17th** moved at 6 ¾ fine morning – last night was very windy & I slept but little – this day we made a fine march crossing a few spurs or alkaline ridges, which look like little lumps of lime mixed with a few pebles. passed Jackson Island about 12 m from camp pasd old Fort Man built of dobe came into camp at 1 having made 21 m. the most pleasant march we have made – on consultation with the chiefs choose the Ratone route – wind lulled about 2 & a pleasant evening, our route up the Arkansas has been through (to me) an

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almost perfect desert. mostly covered with grass which is bad owing to the drought, a tree here & there in view on the South bank. to day the river is narrower & full of islands. A train fr Denver bound to Kansas passed us early this morning. gathered some seed of the mountain moss which grows in damp places in Sandy soil, has a bell cup flower larger than a thimble seeds & flowers on the same vine – Prairie dogs & towns since we crossed Smoky Hill mostly find them on the hill sides in Buff grass on which I am told they live. They are about the

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size of the Penna fox squirl in color like the [Scotish] terrier, short tail & no visible ears, very quick & as you pass come out & utter a short chick, chick, chick, & watch you, you can approach very close. They have a large hole around which an embankment is thrown up built of dirt & grass, a sort of [side] which protects the hole from water (may smaller holes are fixed same way) here they assemble & hold counsel one old fellow in the middle who seems Chief – when he starts the rest leave –

## [page 31]

I am told they move their towns every 2 or 3 years. I saw many new & old ones. food consists of grass. Campd at ~~hotian~~ Island big dead tree. 4 ½ m below crossing still see the moss, cactus (on the hills) & wild squash on the bottom.

**18th** Moved at 5 ¾ & came up to the crossing where we saw an outward bound train crossing & an inward train both crossing at once, ford good, here we left ~~the~~ took the Ratone route on up the Arkansas. The land is a little richer to-day but very sandy. when you rise the hills the plains

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stretch out far & wide – until the eye grows weary – The road to-day is very gravelly came in at 1 & made 22 m took a nap & had a pleasant evening.

## (19th)

Moved at 5 ½ on up the Arkansas our route to day has been near the hills with a gentle ascent up- wards. road fine – gravelly with here & there sand. Saw the first Kinnekinik – it is a woody plant somewhat like the whortleberry – with bunches of of red berries, it is called by the Plains men & old teamster (bitter sweet) it leaves are taken after the first frost & dried by the Indians to smoke generally mixing it with

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(here I have stopped 2 pages) our route up the Arkansas has been a fine road, & the water in the river good we have been sinking wells all along by digging about 2 ½ feet when we come to a quik sand & the water percolates through it, more cool than river water – last night it tasted inky & I prefer the river water – on the 17<sup>th</sup> an Indian Arapahoe came into my tent & I gave him crackers & tobacco he wanted a colored

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stripd shirt I had on on the 18 I tasted for the first time dried Buff meat bot at 25c lb from the Mexicans it is very good – dried in the sun- from Pawnee Fork to this eve

**(19)** we have wood but what we brot & got on the other side of the river – mixing wood & Buff chip, which burn very fast –

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tobacco the flavor is much like by smokers – the river is somewhat wider & full of large & small islands to-days travel pleasant – found a few agates to-day the first I have gotten the land somewhat richer though very sandy – saw rocks that seemed to be a mixture of sand & gravel some very large & cropping out of the hill sides. Also saw the Indian potatoes root like a parsnip – have seen but little game since we left Ft L & none but a few ducks, since we left Pawnee, these the mud hen or crow bill

## [page 36]

nearly black & half webbed foot, & a few sand hill cranes – for 3 days have been among hostile Indians none seen by us however as they keep themselves hid old teamsters say that our presence is known by them for 100 m around or more I sleep mostly in the afternoon – taking cat naps at night, with my pistol at my head – Dist made 23 23 m came into camp at 1 ¼ -

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**20th** moved at 5 ½ & I rose at 3, morning very pleasant had a hard blow for an hour we crossed several spurs of hills. Some of which were hills of hard pebbles [sand] the finest & best roads I ever saw, Passed a grave with a head stone on which was a name & date May 26, 1860 (covered with stones) The soil in to-days travel is richer than for 2 days past but still I have seen none fit for cultivation except a little on the bottoms & it is very sandy. The hills for the last 10 miles travel were hills of pebles & small stones, with a small growth of grass & wide ravines with broad beds of sand. Country more rolling

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came into Camp at 1 o'clock

Dist made 23 m – weather fine up to this date –

**21st** moved at 5 ½ fine morning our route today has been over the bottoms about 11 we came to considerable timber, more than we have seen on the Arkansas & also sand hills or butes on the South bank. met 4 men going in from the Peak who spoke favorably – to night the prairie above us is on fire. Still very Sandy soil, camped at 1 – Dist made – 23 m Evening soft & balmy & calm

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**22** moved at 5 ¼ on up the river our travel to-day has been pleasant The first cool orning out, coats were in demand until 8 o'clock, we kept up the bottom all day, except one very small spur just before we camped. The land is sandy & alkali in many long stretches quite gravelly – we camped on alkali bottom in the sink, the top of the ground was coated white with it, the wells we sunk brackish & bad, river water as usual – the current is rapid – Still see the cactus which grows on poor ground & sandy & the m moss or Indian potatoes. game very scarce & but few fish in the river. Since we crossed the Smoky Hill, the country is to me



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nearly a desert we have to carry our wood, it is very scarce on the north bank & soft & poor not as good as Buff ships which have been scarce for 3 or 4 days past, a few Sand hill cranes are along our route to-day & yesterday & to-day we have seen some ducks. Campd at 2 – Dist made 25 m. bottoms wide & hills gently rolling blowing cold like blazes –

**23rd** moved at 5 ¼ our route to day has been up the valley met an ox train (about 5 miles from Bents New Fort) bound in. road today for the first time about 4 hours in a wagon & felt much better of it – we came into the Big Timbers

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about 9 ½ or 10. Say 10 miles fr Bents fort, it consists of a sleight skirt on either side of the river & on the islands of thick stunted cottonwood & reaches for about 24 m. camped at 2, & went up to Bents Fort, none there except 2 white men & few Arapahoes herding in the bottom, the fort is about 400 ft square 15 high & 3 ft thick, with 15 rooms next to the walls & a clear area in the center I saw one small mounted canon – Bents Fort is built on ledges of Sandy rock, the first rock we have come to. Dist made 15 campd at 2 o clock This eve we came into a rocky & gravelly country

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1

**24th** moved at 5 ¾, our camp last night was in the Big timber & we had a terrible blow, our route to-day has been over ridges & the country more rolling The country is almost a desert. The hills seem to be of sandstone base – the tops of gravel, sand & boulders, like you find along the Ohio, gravel about the same – I saw the red & yellow cactus in great abundance on the hills – the river flows very rapidly & the banks in many places are bluff & rocky – we came into camp at 1 & we made say 23 m tasted Antelope meat yesterday which I got at Bents Fort it was dark but sweet – Camped opposite the mouth of the Purgatory (Picketwan) Heard the mocking bird last 2 nights singing & the Spanish [bayonet] in abundance for 2 days past –

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2

**25th** moved at 6, our route to day was over the [2<sup>nd</sup>] bottom sandy & gravelly. the country is more rolling. long & wide plains one on another rounding & sloping down one to the other very pretty, gravel hills with little tufts of grass. reached Bents old Fort & crossed the Arkansas at 10 ½ to 11 ½ without trouble, leaving the Pike Peak road, crossed at 12 m above our last camp & kept up the South bank & camped at 1 ½ 5 m above the ford on a little dry musket grass, Indians seen this eve supposed to be Kiowas – moonlight nights until 12 – dont see the m moss & but little deer or none [falls] here. The air has been very balmy & delicious for several days past made 16 m and our

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3

last camp on the Arkansas –

**26th** I got to bed at 12 ½ & rose at 2 & by 3 ½ the train was under way we moved up the river about 4 m & struck into the hills. The hills are closer to the river & more bluff the banks are also much higher & the current very rapid with sand & gravel bed, I felt like bidding a friend good Bye as we left the Arkansas, having camped on its banks 13 nights, for 4 days past timber skirts its banks enough to show its meanderings, whilst for the 9 days before we seldom saw a shrub, To day we are into the Gramma grass, a fine grass which is said to be very nutritious, also a shrub which the Indians use the roots for soap called wild sedge –

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we came to water holes about 8 m fr the river water brackish – also some water in ravines on the hills, our road has been upward an angle 1 ½ ° to 2° or 3° - & the eye grows weary with the view, for far beyond the level he is on, he sees a rise or bluff 20 to 50 rise & a plain stretching out on top of it, antelope plenty. Ricker teamster brot in 2 which was very good, we have but little deer here. The country is nearly all sand, with cactus & gramma grass & [ ... ] brush a burly plant, somewhat like the currant, a tree here & there where there is water. I see but few birds (small ones) (1<sup>st</sup> [ ... ] seen camped at 12 (Spanish Peak

[written along side of page 45]

water at our camp on the right of the road 20 m from Bear Pond water

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**27** moved at 5 & got among the hills, our route was along wide plains encircled with hills or spurs putting out in every direction bold steep & covered with small stones & rocks, thick stunted cedars & gramma grass a thin long wiry grass & some Buff grass. These hills as we first got into them were small from 20 to 60 & rounding on all sides, like Lugar [loves] set on a plain irregularly, here & there a deep ravine These plains stretch out far & wide & are completely encircled with the hills, as we progressed the hills become more bold hither & bluff & rocky – I notice the round branch cactus & but few flat branch cactus – also I saw the spanish bayonet – Spanish peak a high sugar

loaf mt was in view part of to day & it presented a beautiful sight towering high above all things else away far in the distance

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6

we travelled for hours & seemed no nearer leaving it a little to our right, the hills are covered with cedars growing apparently out of the rocks, as also a few penon – came into camp at 1 at “holes in the rocks” (deep ravines with basins or ponds with water not running or sprint water) grass good

Dist 25 m – Saw Pike<sup>1/2</sup>s Peak like a <sup>dark</sup> cloud towering high into the clouds off to our right, campd on an old Indian camp on the left of the road where I picked up a pine board with “rifles” & “Fort Laramie” on it –

**28th** Moved at 4 ¼ on over an immense plain with Spanish peaks, & Fishers Peak on the Raton Mountains I view. The R mts stood up high & bold some 50 m off towering like an immense black wall against the horizon cutting off all vision beyond them. I saw to the North what was said to be Pikes Peak & ranges of mts

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as far as I could see. The view was the grandest I ever saw. The mts on all sides & a plain say 20 or 30 m <sup>wide</sup> very gently rolling, stretching out to their base, - I could see streaks of white glistening in the morning Sun which was said to be snow around on Spanish Peak a cloud hung like a turban all morning – to day we [ ... ] approached the Raton mts, bearing in to the left of the Sp Pks, notice lime & sand stone but no bold bluffs as we kept thro the plains last was a beautiful night, cool enough for a blanket, & this morning the air was really delicious, saw a good many antelope & Rugar & I went out, but did not get nearer than 150 yds as the antelope were frightened by some soldiers shooting [prairie] dogs, Camp at 9 ½ o clock at “Holes in the Prairies.” Dist 16 m – Ricker saw Indians We are & have been for several past on the great Summer resort of the Arapahoes Comanches, Kiowas & Utes, our arrival here was signalled by a smoke in toward Fishers Peak

**[written along right side of page 48]**

This evening the frogs are singing the first I have heard for 10 or 12 days –

**[written along the left side of page 48]**

Bangs brot me a horned frog which looks like a single terrapin, it was of a brown color, varagated with white & yellow & had sharp \*

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**29<sup>th</sup>** \* Points around its body, bony substance a tail & very wide mouth, it is said it can kill the rattle snake by taking it by the back of the neck – a small shower this afternoon, Eve cool & blankets very comfortable.

**29th** moved at 6 & crossed the Picketwan at 10 12 m from Holes in Prairie, thence moved up its valley 9 m & camped where the road leads off to the left, into a canon, about 3 m or at the base of Fishers Peak & 4 or 5 m from the Pike Peak road <sup>West of it</sup> The valley is fr ½ to 1 m wide, hemed in with mountains. The stream runs like a mill tail & at the crossing 2 ½ ft deep – The hills for 3 days past have been covered with cedar to-day at 12 we came into

the pinon species of pine, of short thick growth, grass very poor. cactus, Spanish bayonet in great abundance, I noticed a good many doves & yellow breasted & headed black birds. I saw the Indian signals thro the mts, a column of smoke <sup>answered</sup> answered by another & we are on a sharp

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lookout for a stampede, had a slight shower, & I saw some 5 or 6 this afternoon about Fishers Peak. It rains a great deal on these mts, old teamsters say this is a great place for game – bear, deer, turkey &c – we saw but little as the mts had been on fire for miles along our rout but a short time ago. I saw some beautiful green slopes on the sides of Fishers Peak, Spanish Peak, still in view to the North, at 12 warm for 2 or 3 days with gentle cool nights Dist made 21 m. Bangs caught a few [chubs] but no trout, weather fine. Moonlight nights, up until after 12 for 3 nights past.

**30th** Moved camp at 6, leaving the Purgty & crossed to a branch up which we Kept & found Springs with cold & good water 12 ½ m fr our last camp. Camped fr springs for ½ m up the canon & within a 1 m of the Summit, yesterday & to day the valleys become narrower & to night we are among the mts

**[written along side of page 50]**

an ambulance with 1 out rider passed in a head of us today from Pikes Peak –

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10

6000 ft above the ocean – little or no deer as it is now after 12 & I have been out on the grass & my feet are dry – we have fires in several places to keep off the bear for fear of a stampede. A man with 2 horses passed us to day on his way to the Arkansas, he said – Mr Kearney & I started ahead this morning but could not find any game, one of the soldiers caught a fine 7 inches long with his hands it the branch it was speckled trout. This eve our camp looks very beautiful with the tents wagons & animals, & guard fires & the view down the canon to the North is the grandest I have I have ever seen it looks like an immense ampitheatre full of hills with level & rather broad tops gentle slopes & capped with steep rugged & rocky mts towering high, on the hills groves of penon trees here & there & green

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bushes looking like beautiful patches of grass – campd at 12 Dist 14 m – 2 large bears pasd in & near the front guard but they did not get a shot – I saw their fresh tracks but no bear, no bugs flies or gnats for 4 or 5 days, saw doves & robins to-day – on the tops of some of the hills I noticed meadows level & smooth of fr 1 to 400 acres in extent & then hills from these would rise again hundreds of feet high – it is pretty thundering cold to night now 12 o clock also ditto last night & 2 blankets & robe just keep me warm boots & pants thrown in, had stewed gooseberry pie for dinner I see the stone formation is chiefly the gritty sandstone

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12

**July 1st** Moved at 6 on up the mts & got on the Summit at 6 ½ from which far far ahead of us was a range of mts with snow, at first I thought it must be clouds the view was grand & magnifi-cent I though it could not be real to our right about 20 m were the spanish speaks, our descent was about 2° for 2 m & good other we had a few deep ravines to cross the valley we were getting more & more narrow, in about 4 m we struck the level & camped on the candain or Red river at 12 having made 15 m – noticed the bitter current & Goosebery & saw large quantities of wild chery bushes about fr 3 to 7 ft high & the thickest say 1 ½ inches in diameter fr which I cut pipe stems – camped on North Fork of Red River

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**2d** moved at 5 ½ over a vast plain quite sandy but covered with gramma & Buff grass the country or plain was like one immense basin with a circular range of hills to the West & North our course South, saw the Wagon Mount do the S East, it is a mound like a wagon – last night cold with rain, saw in the distance several small showers, distant thunder to-night Dist made 24 m – camped on the Vermijo or Vermillion & called it Rattlesnake camp as several were Killed in it

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**3d** moved at 5 crossed the Vermijo & travelled over a vast rolling plain of sand & gravel, covered sparsely with bunch grass & saw for the first time sings of civilization sheep & jackasses & Mexican herders farther on cattle & horses – camped at noon 2 m below [ ... ] ranch – where we got eggs butter chickens & mutton & corn at 5\$ pr bushel – The country we passed thro was gravelly sandy & poor – Dist 23 m – 42 miles from Ft Union – beautiful moonlight nights delightful mornings & cool nights, got a bi-weekly Republican of June 5<sup>th</sup> which was eagerly read the first paper we have seen for a month or more Camp near Rejado –

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**4th** moved at 7 passing thro gravelly bottoms & over gravelly hills, some of which were covered with large stones which indicated iron, campd at 3 ½ Dist made 24, saw one large saleratus basin.

**5**

moved out of camp at 6 & got Union at 12 o½clock & camped at 3 & we here stop this scrawling by the way, 37 days from the Mo -