

MEMENTOES AND STORIES ABOUT

ALBERT CAMPBELL BURTON
Oct 10, 1860 to Jul 28, 1927

Albert Campbell Burton was the second child of Amos Chaney Burton and Lavina Headrick. They had a total of eight children, two of which died at or near birth and six, who survived and lived a full life:

Sylvester Burton	born August 20, 1859	Stillborn
Albert Campbell Burton	October 10, 1860	Bloomfield, Davis County, Iowa
Generva Alice Burton	November 10, 1862	Bloomfield
Della May Burton	September 22, 1864	Bloomfield
John Thomas Burton	November 23, 1867	Waverly, Lancaster County, NE
Daniel Headrick Burton	October 29, 1869	Waverly
Harvey Hill Burton	June 9, 1872	Waverly
Mary A. Burton	April 16, 1874	Waverly, died April 16, 1874

Lavina Headrick Burton had measles and died after childbirth April 19, 1874.

Albert's father worked at the brickyard in Bloomfield, owned by Lavina's father, Daniel Headrick, at the time of Albert's birth. The Burton family had known the Headrick family in Indiana before they moved to Iowa. Amos and Lavina, the 3 children, and Benjamin Jackson Robbins, Amos' half brother, loaded an ox-drawn covered wagon with their belongings and moved to Saunders County, Nebr., near Ashland, NE. They did not stay long at Ashland but moved on to Waverly, where John was born in 1867, and settled on land which they later homesteaded.

We do not have a lot of detailed information about Albert. This story is being written in February and March of 2004 by Boise Burton, grandson of Albert, with input from his brother, Laddie -- Laddie and Boise being sons of William Thomas "Bill" Burton, 5th child of Albert, and input from Ralph Burton before he died July 12, 2000, who had the most information passed on before anyone became interested in writing a story on Albert.

A quick review of the ancestors shows that this family has been traced back to England in 1575:

1. Francis Burton was born in England and died in England.
2. His child, Richard Burton, born about 1575 in England and died in England.
3. Child of Richard Burton and Catherine Christian, Thomas Burton, born in England, and died in Virginia, immigrated before 1676.
4. Thomas Burton, child of Thomas, born about 1634 in unknown, died 1686 in Virginia.
5. John Burton, child of Thomas(4), born about 1666 in Virginia, died 1754 in Virginia. Married Elizabeth Fowler in Virginia, 11 children.
6. James Burton, child of John, born 1699 in Virginia, died 1782-83 in Virginia, married Judith Payne (Paine), 4 children.
7. James Burton, Jr., child of James, born about 1736 in Goochland, Charlotte County, Virginia, and died 9 September 1814 in Pulaski County, Kentucky, married Sarah Stovall about 1760 in, probably, Lunenburg County, VA, daughter of Thomas Stovall and Elizabeth Owen, 10 children.
8. Thomas Burton, was born 1776-1777 in Pittsylvania, Virginia, daughter of James McDaniel. Apparently only 1 child, William Thomas, with Jerusha. 2nd marriage apparently to "Zerishe", with 4 more children, 5 children altogether, including William Thomas Burton.

Thomas was enlisted in the War of 1812 as a Private in Capt. Mason Singleton's Company, 1st regiment of the Kentucky Mounted Volunteer Militia. His service was from Aug. 26th to Nov. 6th, 1813. Time paid for was 2 month and 12 days. His pay per month was \$8.00. His total pay was \$19.09. Amount of allowance for the use of his horse at 40 cents a day was \$29.20 making a total of \$8.29. A remark at the bottom of his record was "sick at Detroit".

9. William Thomas Burton, child of Thomas, born 1798-1799 in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, and died about 1834 in Bartholomew County, Indiana. He married Susannah Chaney August 25, 1825 in Somerset, Pulaski County, Kentucky, daughter of John Chaney and Susannah Hill. 5 children. After William died, Susannah married Benjamin Robbins, and they had 2 children, Emily and Benjamin Jackson Robbins.
10. Amos Chaney Burton, child of William Thomas, born April 16, 1830, in Pulaski county, Kentucky, and died February 2, 1901 in Waverly, Lancaster County, Nebraska. He married Lavina Headrick and they had 8 children, of which 6 survived after birth.
11. Albert Campbell Burton, Generva Alice, Della May, John Thomas, Daniel Headrick and Harvey Hill were children of Amos Chaney Burton.
12. The children of Albert Campbell Burton were:

Stella Burton	b. Waverly NE	1882, d. N. Platte NE	abt 1936
Harry Daniel Burton	b. Waverly NE	Jul 13, 1883, d. Arvada CO	Aug 9, 1960
Orson Albert Burton	b. Waverly NE	Mar 18, 1886, d. Denver CO	Jan 7, 1952
Ethel Pearl Burton	b. Hayes Co. NE	Apr 15, 1888, d. N. Platte NE	Feb 16, 1926
William Thomas "Bill"	b. Wellfleet NE	Aug 7, 1891, d. Palm Springs CA	Apr 22, 1983

The above five children's mother was Albert's first wife's children, Ida E. Wakefield, born in Iowa, died at Wellfleet, Lincoln County, NE July 27, 1899.

Albert Jean, born at Wellfleet Sep 25, 1901, d. No. Platte Jan 25, 1953
Her mother was Viola Beightel Craig Burton, born 1874, died 1965

Albert worked on the farm for his father before and after his mother died in 1874, when Albert was 13. As the younger boys grew old enough to help with the work, Albert, apparently, worked away from home for the neighbors, to bring in a little extra money, whenever possible. In his letter written in 1937, Robert Franklin Grant, who married Della May Burton, said that he became acquainted with the Amos Burton family in October of 1879, at which time Albert was working away from home and shortly thereafter was married to Ida Wakefield, which was on November 10, 1880, in a double ceremony, with Generva Alice, his sister, and Ida's brother, Dan Wakefield. He said that Albert taught at the old Rock Creek School, and where "I heard him preach with credit." The teaching and preaching must have gone on for several years, as the next we hear about Albert is that he and his family and Dan Wakefield and his family started the trek West in the spring of 1888 to Homestead. The Story of the Homestead Trek and homesteading experience, as written by Albert, is attached at the end of this story.

At the end of this Story are the following Stories written by Albert and his brother, John.

1. The Story that Albert wrote about his Trip by Ox-Team to Homestead in Hayes County NE starting in March 1888, to take up the homestead on April 21, 1888.
2. The Story that John Thomas Burton wrote about a trip by John, Albert and their brother, Dan, starting on the 8th day of July, 1889, to look for land to the northwest in the Sandhill Country.
3. The story that Albert wrote about the trip, starting September 20, 1897, with his two older sons, Harry and Orson.

Near the end of story about the homesteading years, Albert refers to his trip returning to "the east" which we presumed as meaning he returned to Waverly, where his father lived. The return trip took only 10 days. This trip evidently took place in the Spring of 1893.

We do not seem to have any information as to what Albert and his family did from Spring of 1893 to 1896; but, here again, we presume that he went back to teaching and preaching.

The next information we have indicates that he may have returned to the Wellfleet NE area in the spring of 1896, as the Real Estate records in North Platte show that Amos C. Burton bought land (in Sections 5, 6 and 8, in Township 9 North in Range 30 West of the 6th Principal Meridian), about 2 ½ miles Northwest of Wellfleet, which Albert later bought from his father's Estate after his father died in 1901. Albert bought other land in the Area at various times. This was always referred to as the "The Burton Ranch." I, Boise, had an occasion to go through some abstracts including the area in and around Wellfleet, showing that A. C. Burton acquired by tax title many of the lots in Wellfleet in 1896. A story of Wellfleet refers to A. C. Burton in 1896 having bought the first Truck in the area. My father, "Bill" spoke of his father owning a considerable amount of land west and north of Wellfleet, and that he owned a hardware store with a livery stable, and other buildings in Wellfleet, such as, the old Buckalew Garage building, and Sanders dry goods store building, as well as the old hotel on the main street of the town. "Bill" said that he dropped out of grade school and worked the ranch and hired hands while his father went in to Wellfleet to run the hardware store. He, "Bill", also referred to his dad as being a cattle rancher, cattle feeder, and horse trader.

Ralph Burton, one of the sons of Orson Burton, said that Albert came out several times to visit Orson's family and Harry at their homesteads, about five miles northwest of the North Sterling Reservoir. Ralph reports that Albert built the 3-story ranchhouse on the "Ranch" in 1916.

Sometime after 1916, Albert and Viola moved to North Platte, where Albert bought some properties, among which was a large rooming house, which Viola operated in later years to provide for her income.

I remember an incident when I was very small when my father "Bill" was renting the land north of the "Ranch" known as "Lonetree". It was in the fall during corn-picking time. Bill was using a team of horses which were "barned" at the "Ranch". One day, toward evening, after dusk, my father finished unloading a load of corn. He put me (I was quite small), in the wagon. The lines used to guide the horses fell from the post on the front of the wagon and startled the horses. They took off from Lonetree at a dead run for the "Ranch", with me wailing at the top of my lungs all the way, which was a little over a mile and a half. The team, with the wagon bounding along behind, at a dead run, came in toward the Ranch House. All I can remember is

that somehow Grandpa was able to stop the horses and lifted me out of the Wagon and cuddled me until I stopped crying. I do not remember anything about Grandpa after that until I saw him in the casket at his funeral in July 1927; but, that experience remains very vivid in my mind. Because of that incident, and hearing something about him from my father, I have always had a great respect and remembrance of him. This could have happened in late 1921.

Grandpa Albert's death certificate reflects that he was in the State Hospital at Ingleside, Nebraska, 5 years, 4 months, and 23 days before his death - which would indicate that he went in to the hospital on March 5, 1922. My mother, Hazel's sister, Ida, had a friend who worked at the same hospital while Grandpa Albert was there, said that he had severe depression and was difficult to handle.

Grandpa Albert's daughter, my Aunt Alberta, said that her father did some preaching in North Platte after he moved there. This would have been before he went to the hospital.

Many of Albert's grandchildren have enjoyed going back to the old "Ranch" to see the Ranchhouse that Grandpa had built. I always enjoyed seeing the 3 acre orchard that Grandpa had planted north of the ranchhouse, and the subirrigated alfalfa fields along the springfed Medicine Creek, which were very productive and provided feed for the livestock.

My father "Bill" rented the ranchland for awhile in the Twenties; so, I remember the place quite well. Later, my father rented what was known as the School Section (Section 16 that went with the ranch), which included farmland, grazing land for cattle, the springfed Medicine Creek, and land that run into the west side of the town of Wellfleet. Later, a large lake was established on the Creek near the town and the area made a State Recreation Area.

ALBERT CAMPBELL BURTON'S STORY OF HIS COVERED WAGON (CATTLE)-TEAM TRIP FROM WAVERLY, NEBRASKA, TO HAYES COUNTY, NEBRASKA, TO TAKE UP A HOMESTEAD, WHICH, BY LAW, HAD TO BE TAKEN UP BY APRIL 21 1888.

(This is transcribed from a handwritten journal by ALBERT. The first two pages are missing from the script; so, this story starts with the third page.)

PAGE 3. STUCK

unbroke cattle in the road that, on looking back, I saw Dan's [DAN WAKEFIELD'S] team was stuck, or about so, about 100 yards in the rear of me and not more than that distance from the house. I waited, not daring to leave my team, till I saw father and my brothers with a big mule which they hitched on in the lead. My oldest brother, John, mounting him. They now began to push through the mud slowly but had to stop and rest the team every little distance.

Our cattle neither knew "gee", "haw", "getup" nor even "whoa", the first word they invariably learn. To make matters worse, Dan had never driven cattle before, and I never had since I was a small boy till a few days previous to starting.

We only got just 2 miles from 3 P.M. till nightfall and was obliged to camp for the night in sight of home. We saw we could make no headway with a load whatever; so, we instructed John to come back to our camp next morning and get all our unnecessary baggage, bidding him another farewell as we expected to be on the road before his

PAGE 4. OUR FIRST CAMP

Return for the goods. Our camp was just opposite a Swede neighbor's of whom we bought some hay for our cattle. We now proceeded to cook a well earned supper on our cook stoves which we had placed in the front end of our wagons. We then sat down together and talked over our prospects which we could not settle to our entire satisfaction. We then retired for the night, our bodies tired and our spirits varying from the darkest forebodings to the wildest hopes, such is the condition of the minds of youth, for we were "going through". We did have families, having been married at 19 and 20 years. We were now but 26 and 27. Except for the occasional "yank", our cattle gave us, as they got up or lay down, being tied to the wheels, we slept well.

Friday, Mar 30th

The sun came out bright this morning and after unloading our wagons of everything except our stoves and bedding, and my chickens, got ready at a late hour to move on.

I cooked the meals for myself and children to save being so much crowded while

PAGE 5. UNLOADING OUR WAGONS

Cooking and eating, and not being fond of cold bread, I invariably cooked "flapjacks". At first I was inclined to make up too much batter, which, being left over, I would keep over till the next meal, which, while none the worse for standing, broke me of swinging the batter bucket to the ridgepole of my wagon cover, for, while crawling about in the wagon this morning, the bucket was relieved of its contents, which lit on the back of my coat. I took the incident for a joke at first; but, when I came to try to get it off, I was surprised to find, it could not be done, or at least, that batter spot lasted as long as the coat, I never having been able to remove it. The spot

was about 6 inches in diameter and always retained the color of soiled batter. Its situation was conspicuous, being on the back of my coat midway between the shoulders. We left our goods piled up by the side of the road, not waiting for John's return for them. We worried on in the same manner today as

PAGE 6. TWISTING OUR CATTLE'S TAIL

yesterday, having to twist my near bull's tail a good deal, to keep up his courage (a favorite pastime of mine.) Dan and I, as well as his wife and some of the children, walked a considerable, that the cattle might make better headway.

We arrived even with where an uncle lived about 2 P.M., I think. We left our cattle hitched at the side of the road to rest and went on foot carrying and leading the children down to uncle's half a mile distance, whom we wished to bid good bye.

Here, I bought a pair of turkeys and a few seed potatoes, much to my regret afterwards. After an hour, or so spent in a pleasant chat, we went back to our teams, uncle and family accompanying us as far as to where we had left our wagons.

Dan's cow, being thin, began to show signs of giving out all day by laying down once in awhile. She finally gave completely out early in the evening, and we pitched camp near a vacated house, having only gone 6 miles today. One of my cattle, was pretty tired, also. We felt even more dispirited tonight than last night.

PAGE 7. TRYING TO TRADE - A "SMASHUP"

Dan decided that he must make a change of his cow for something else before trying to go further. I felt very tired and weak tonight, but felt somewhat refreshed by morning.

SATURDAY, MARCH 31ST

Notwithstanding, it was improbable to be resolved to try and trade the cow to some ranchman who lived near our camp, but we were unable to do so unless we had had some difference to give, which we could not spare, having but about \$12 to \$15 dollars apiece to travel on. Teams on the road gave us "wide berth" being afraid of our Cattle teams were almost unknown in this part of Nebraska at this time. Today a 4-horse team, with a load of hay, got frightened as they passed our camp and broke the wagon tongue square off.

We never turned out of the road on our entire trip nor even gave half the road but only acclaimed "Gee" in strictorian tones which, though an enigma to our cattle,

PAGE 8. PLAYING A "YANKEE TRICK" - A MISTAKE

Pacified those we met, and brought smiles to our faces, for the trick we had played on them. We played this trick all along the road but never grew tired of the fun.

We did not see another cattle team on the road on our entire trip and, of course, our teams caused a good deal of curiosity, as they were made up of bulls and cows instead of steers. Men, women and children would often come out of the farmhouses and villages, carrying the children, to look at our strange teams. Sometimes sweethearts were brought out by their swains but usually beat a hasty retreat when they got close enough to discover the sex of our teams. One family congregated out by the side of the road a half mile

ahead of us awaiting our advance but our teams gave out before reaching them, and we camped not passing them till the next morning. But I am anticipating to return to my subject. John followed up our trail with his faithful mule to see how we were getting along, stopping overnight with us to help comprise a "ways and means"?.

PAGE 9. LEADING A GIVEOUT COW

We remained tonight where we camped last night. This morning, Dan decided to take his cow back to father's and get another cow, of which he had been offered a choice,

SUNDAY, APRIL 1st

As he had got his cow from father. The other cow was in better condition and he hoped better results from her, possibly; so, I bid John still another 'farewell". He and Dan returned home, Dan leading his cow. I remained in camp and rested as I was weak and tired. Dan returned with the other cow this evening and we remained still in the same camp another night.

MONDAY, APRIL 2nd

This morning Dan yoked up his cow, which "had never seen the inside of a yoke" and which had a little Texas blood in her; he drove them about in the yoke but a few minutes till he put them on the wagon, and tying them to the rear end of my wagon, we proceeded on our way. This morning was the fifth day after starting and found us but 8 miles from home.

OVERTAKEN BY FATHER - IMPOSSIBLE STREETS

After going 3 or 4 miles today, making a little better time than before, Dan's cow giving but little brother, father overtook us with a team and wagon and loaded up all our extra baggage in the way of children, they being the easiest to transfer, so as to lighten our load still more.

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Our wagons were now almost empty, especially when we walked, but still the roads were in such a condition we made slow headway.

We camped at noon in the outskirts of Lincoln. The April sun was warm, in which there was a suggestion of spring and made camping outdoors a pleasure today. Si Anvy and wife passed. After dinner we hitched up and proceeded through town, stopping on the outskirts of the business part of town, and going on up town on foot, as the streets in the center of town were impossible, being entirely abandoned by teamsters. This was before the city was paved. I saw 2 or 3 wagons which had been "swamped" in the mud in the streets and left.

Here I got another barrel, in which, together with the one I had already, strapped on behind my wagon, I kept my chickens and turkeys, answering as coops on the road, and intended to answer to haul water in, when I arrived at my destination as I did

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Not expect to be able to have a well put down soon as it was 225 to 300 feet to water there and a well was a great expense.

I received a letter here from my wife telling of her safe arrival at her father's of which had caused me a good deal of uneasiness before, as the telegraph wires were down, caused by the heaviest sleet I ever saw, when she

started. The trains were not running on regular time at all and there was danger of collisions or, at least long delays on her journey.

We camped tonight in the west part of town near where an acquaintance, Mr. Moore, lived, with whom father stayed all night. We only traveled 9 miles today, though, putting in nearly all day on the road. Our acquaintance, his wife and daughters came out and visited our camp tonight and we had a pleasant chat together.

PAGE 12 - TUES., APRIL 3rd - EATING GAME IN CAMP - BIGGEST DAY'S DRIVE

This morning we moved on, father still accompanying us. We were now getting into a more rolling country and the roads were getting a little better. Along about 10 or 11 A.M. we, again, bid father another farewell, the 6th day after we had took leave of him before. I shot a prairie chicken today, which we relished in camp.

My near bull gave out early this evening, having made but 12 miles, but which was the biggest day's drive we had yet made and in fact the biggest I ever made on my whole trip.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4th

This morning we were still in sight of Lincoln from the west, in fact, we had never been out of sight of it, although this was the 7th day, as it was in sight from the east from home, our starting point.

Today, we only went about 6 or 7 miles and could look back and see from our camp tonight the windmill and grove where we camped last night.

My bull gave out again, causing our slow headway, but, to save a continual repetition, I will state that he gave out every day that I was on my journey, a distance of 250 or 275 miles, still we enjoyed ourselves, as the weather was fine and roads getting pretty fair now.

PAGE 13. THURSDAY, APRIL 5th OFFERED A TRADE

Today we arrived in Crete, a thriving town, about 9 A.M. Here I was offered a well-mated, good, young team of good-sized driving ponies - even - for my cattle, but I did not trade, much to my regret, even for years after, not being able to see ahead the difficulties which that tired bull team had in store for me. My reason for not trading were fourfold. The cattle seemed in better spirits, I thought, than they had been. The roads were better - I did not want to get a team so fast that Dan could not keep along with. And, I thought the cattle, when through, would be much better for a breaking team.

We had gotten only about 5 or 6 miles out of town till my bull gave out again, causing, as usual, an early camp. We had gone about 11 miles today.

PAGE 14. GETTING STUCK FRIDAY, APRIL 6th

Today we passed through Dorchester, making about 10 miles. We experienced a good deal of trouble getting feed for our cattle, having to begin to look for feed soon after noon so as to be prepared to camp when my ox gave out, as we were not always able to choose our camping place.

SATURDAY, APRIL 7th

Today, we passed through Friendsville. Tonight, I think it was, it rained a light rain, the only rain we had on the road.

SUNDAY, APRIL 8th

We were so anxious to get along that we traveled on today, although it was Sunday, for it was now only 13 days till we were compelled by law to be on our claims, as they were in danger of being contested by someone.

MONDAY, APRIL 9th

Today, I think it was, Dan's team got stuck in the mud while we were going through a deep pond of water that stood across the road. I went back and gave him a lift on the wheel, getting into water nearly to my body, and Dan going into the water up to his waist in jumping out to keep his cattle from turning out into a ditch.

PAGE 15. TUESDAY, APRIL 10th

We passed through (Exeter) a little town or two today. Dan's cow stood the trip well from the first. In fact, all stood it fairly well, now, excepting my near ox. We

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11th

traveled on today through a beautiful country, in fact, we had been going through as almost level country as far as the eye could reach in every direction, for 4 or 5 days past, but I thought to be about the prettiest yet so far. We camped tonight in Harvard at the outskirts of the town.

Here an incident happened to me, though, no discredit to me, was rather an indiscretion on my part, and which I will not give, but only mention, to call up a very ludicrous situation to Dan, should he read these pages, and who will understand that to which I refer. This morning I made a "desperate" effort to trade off my "tired" bull, but failed, not having means to pay the big difference invariably asked of me.

PAGE 16. SEPARATING - A CODE OF CORRESPONDENCE

As we were making no headway on account of my bull, I resolved not to be a hindrance to Dan longer and, after much persuasion, got him to go on and leave me and, I would, if my team did not better, leave them and take the train, make my settlement on my claim, and then return for my cattle.

I had some faint hopes, however, that, if he went on, that I might be able to keep close after him, and this hope was enhanced by my camping at noon in sight of his camp, but I never sighted him again.

Imagine how lonesome I felt, with only the 2 little children for company, my health, though better, still poor after having difficulty breathing at night, and, now, left behind on the "Great Plains" nearly midway between my starting point and my destination.

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Previous to separating, Dan and I arranged a code of correspondence. He was to leave notes hid near his camping places and, I was to send him notes by "movers" on emigrants passing me with horse teams who would easily overtake and still more easily identify him by his peculiar team of cow and bull. The camp notes I forgot to look for at first, and I soon took a "cutoff" route, which I did not think he would take, but I got one letter through to him, telling him of the "cutoff" route but which reached him too late to take advantage of. This evening I camped alone with the children, only, for company, in a lonely place near a large pond: and, as I was obliged to camp early, I spent sometime in shooting at wild ducks. It was raw and cool and cloudy to make it more lonely still. The children were so lonesome that they

did not like me to leave them a minute; however, they always looked forward to camptime as a happy event, especially as to the cooking of the meal.

THURSDAY, APRIL 12th

Today, I passed through Hastings, the 3rd city of the state at this time. Here an incident, though trivial, possibly interesting, happened.

PAGE 18. A COMICAL INCIDENT

While strolling through town and passing a large show window, I chanced to see my reflection in the glass and, for a moment, thought it a tramp staring at me. I had not looked in a glass since starting weeks before and my appearance was startling.

Just before starting I had been teaching school and had kept myself neat and well dressed and, of course, out of the sun; but, on starting, I had donned plainer clothes, changing my high derby hat for an old slouch one and my other clothes in proportion; and, the mud, camp grease, smoke, the warm April sun, batching and general carelessness had transformed me indeed! I, there and then, decided to shave and clean up as soon as I reached my destination.

FRIDAY, APRIL 13th

Today, I passed by Juniata, and, from here, I was to begin my "cutoff", leaving the railroad and going straight westward.

SATURDAY, APRIL 14th

Today, the country began to show perceptible signs of having been more recently settled than heretofore. Nothing particularly happened today, except the bull giving out, which was "the regular order of the day".

PAGE 19. Sunday, APRIL 15th CRAWLING ONTO a DECOY GOOSE

Today, I arrived at a little station on a cross branch of the railroad, Heartwell by name, at which I mailed a fond letter to my wife, accompanying it by a piece of poetry, setting forth my condition longings, etc., given in a strain in accordance with my lonesome spirits.

MONDAY, APRIL 16th

Nothing unusual occurred today. I am still passing through a beautiful country, though more rolling and the soil of a yellow or reddish colored of a clayish posture, but rich.

TUESDAY, APRIL 17th

Today, I think, it was, I did a most laughable act. It was a damp day and there were a good many geese and ducks flying about. Finally, I espied a lone goose in a patch of wheat getting green, as there was a little ravine between me and the goose.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18th

I thought I could crawl up on the goose, so I left the team and children and proceeded to crawl along very cautiously for about 200 yards. Once in a while I would peer out and look at the goose; but, he either did not see me or thought me at a

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distance. I crawled up very close so as to be sure of him. He moved a little a time or two, but did not seem to be frightened. At last I raised up and took a quick aim but just before pulling the trigger saw I was about to fire at a tin image of decoy goose. Imagine my chagrin. It had been pointed up in good shape and the wind swayed it about a little making it seem alive. As I had been badly fooled I concluded to have a joke on the children who were peering out of the wagon in great expectation; so, pretending my gun would not go off, I ran up and grabbed the goose by the neck, the children hardly believing their own senses at the sight.

THURSDAY, APRIL 19th

Today, I was nearing the railroad again and the children and I began to scour up with soap and water, As we traveled, fearing that we would not reach the station by the time the train came in going west, which we allowed to take.

PAGE 21. ABANDONING THE BULL AND CATCHING A TRAIN

We reached Bertrand about 11 A.M., where we left our team. The train being sight before I got to the livery barn near the depot, I took the children and grabbed a few clothes and not waiting to help unhitch, made for the depot to catch the train, leaving my cattle to rest a week. It was only 2 days, now till my time was up and I had about a hundred miles to go and was nearing the canyon country - all the rough country was ahead yet so we left the bull team and boarded the train for Wellfleet, the nearest town to my father-in-law's.

We got there in about 3 hours. Our appearance was so rough that the conductor took pity on us and made no charges for the children's space. I landed at Wellfleet with just \$1.50, and after buying the children 5 cents worth of crackers, lacked 5 cents of having enough to pay a fellow to haul us out. There was no livery barn at Wellfleet. The fellow's rig consisted of an old one-horse buggy with a bronco attached. The canyons were so steep that our driver had to get out and hold a wheel in lieu of a brake.

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While descending. We finally got to my father-in-law's shortly before sundown, after about a distance of 13 miles drive. Although it had only been 6 months since I saw my father-in-law's family, scarcely any of them would have known me, they said, if they had met me in an unexpected place, so changed was my appearance by a full beard and general tramp-like looks.

When I arrived I found a 9 day's old girl baby waiting for me, which was wholly unexpected by me for some time to come.

The house in which my father-in-law's family lived, was made of sod, and consisted of but one room in which his large family lived, ate and slept, including visitors, when they chanced to come; however, this was an improvement over his first residence on his claim, which was used as a living room and stable combined only some poles and boards separating the family and horses. There was no floor in neither of the above-mentioned houses; and, the grass had become so unevenly worn, being quite sandy, that anyone not used to walking on it would often stumble or fall in

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moving about. The roof was first covered with rough boards; then, sodded on top. The above description is typical of the house of the pioneer settler of this part of the west, except that often there were no boards used in the roof, only poles, brush and sod. These houses are very warm in winter and cool in summer. A well-made sod house will never freeze in winter with no fire kept at night, Only a cook stove and light fuel used. Nearly everyone

keeps a quantity of climbing and flowering plants through the winter, using the deep south windows as a bow window. The best of the midsummer sun never penetrates those thick earth walls but what a person is always cool inside.

APRIL 20 - Friday

Today, I borrowed a tent 10 feet square and went up to my claims and stretched it so as to claim "way"/ It was about 4 miles distant from my father-in-law's.

PAGE 24. MAKING "SETTLEMENT" ON CLAIM

I first stretched it near the center of the quarter, think it would be more convenient farming from this point, but afterward was tempted to move to a beautiful natural building spot that sloped slightly to the sunny side and which was situated near the north central part of the claim. I scared up a great many grouse today from the tall grass; and, after gazing over my new possession with longing eyes, I returned to my father-in-law's.

SATURDAY, APRIL 21st

This morning, which was a bright sunny one, I took up my father-in-law's team and plow and plowed or broke, a fireguard at a good distance around my tent, as it was situated in a sea of dry prairie grass. I, then, burned the grass inside this guard which now made a safe protection of my tent from prairie fires.

SUNDAY, APRIL 22

Today, I walked up to my claim, taking a few blankets, provisions and camp utensils, as I wished to spend the night there, as required by law, before I returned back after my cattle. I pulled some prairie grass by hand for a bed, using a blanket as tick and sheet combined. My camp utensils were also of very primitive order, consisting

PAGE 25. A WALK ACROSS THE WILD PRAIRIE

of an oyster can for a coffee pot, a case knife, and an old pie tin which answered as a fry pan and plate combined. I wandered over the hill and broad prairie today to my tree claim, a distance of 2 miles from my tent. I came across the skeletons of several buffaloes, being able to distinguish them from those of cattle, by their horns always being black as ebony entirely through and also, by the short, sharp and stumpy appearance of them. I, also, scared up many grouse on my walk. My tree claim is situated in a wild looking place in a small valley surrounded by sandhills and hot a house in sight. I walked back toward evening to my tent where I spent the night.

MONDAY, APRIL 23rd

Today I walked back to my father-in-law's where I spent 3 or 4 days; and, after borrowing \$2 of a neighbor, proceeded on foot to Maywood, a railroad station about

PAGE 26. RETURNING FOR MY CATTLE THURSDAY, APRIL 26th

16 miles distant enroute for my team, my health being much better by this time. I bought some gingersnaps and that, with water, made my supper. I then crawled under a building near the depot, leaving my clothes on in lieu of a bed, to await for the morning train.

FRIDAY, APRIL 27th

Today, I boarded the train and stopped off at Ellwood, 15 miles before reaching Bertrand, where I had left my cattle, to get some money which father had proffered to send me, as this was the point I expected to have reached with my cattle before leaving them, but found I would strike the canyon country before reaching Ellwood, and was afraid I would be unable to reach there till my cattle had a rest. I did not know the money was there but risked it, as I had not 25 cents left, and my livery bill had amounted to \$4.20. But, as luck would have it, I got my money, \$5, and took a freight in about an hour reached Bertrand where I found my cattle, dog, chickens, turkeys and a nest of eggs in my wagon. I arrived about 2 PM.

PAGE 27. THAT TIRED BULL AGAIN - DEEP WELLS

My bull, however, seemed no livelier that when I left him, to my disappointment. A man 4 miles out in the country had left word that he would trade me a steer for my "tired" bull; so, accordingly, I set out on foot for a trade, but he "beat around the bush" trying to trade me an old stag for my best bull only; so, I went back, packed up, and proceeded on my way, in the same old manner as before. I drove out 4 or 5 miles this evening and camped, the bull seeming pretty tired after his week's rest. I now had less than a dollar in my pocket, and all the roughest country ahead of me, a distance of about, perhaps, 90 or 100 miles. The grass was not big enough for my cattle to graze on yet; and, feed was high and scarce. At Ellwood I watered from a well 325 feet deep and was shown the windmill that stood over one

PAGE 28. WAGON COMES AFIRE

330 feet deep. I left my team and walked nearly a mile and back to look at a cow, which a fellow talked of trading me for my bull and dog which was a good watchdog, but he backed out. He was a yankee, and, if I had thought for sure he was playing a "yankee trick", think I was in a frame of mind to have returned the compliment in some way or another.

One night not far from this time, while reading at night by the aid of a miner's lamp hung to the wagon cover, I fell asleep and was aroused by the smell of smoke finding a lively blaze starting in my wagon cover caught from the lamp. This broke me of hanging lamps with chimneys to wagon covers while taking a nap, as I had a lively time getting the fire put out.

SATURDAY, APRIL 28th to THURSDAY, MAY 3rd

Nothing unusual happened to me for a few days, except cattle giving out each day till I undertook to pull up out of a canyon steeper than usual, and after whipping, coaxing, and lifting on the wheels, and worrying for a long time getting about half

PAGE 29. WAGON CAPSIZED - PANDEMONIUM REIGNS

way up the hill, the cattle became unmanageable and made a buldge sidewise completely, upsetting my wagon. It was so completely upset that all 4 of the wheels were in the air, not one touching the ground, being propped up by the sideboards and broken wagon bows. The best bow left was broken in 3 pieces. The stove rolled out breaking most of the legs, cover torn, barrels broke loose from the wagon letting the chickens all out and the cattle bolted down to the bottom of the canyon where they undoubtedly remembered having seen some green grass, as they passed. "Pandemonium reigned" (for me at least). I stood scratching my head, the swat streaming out of every pore as it was a warm day "viewing the wreck". (See cut) I walked about 1½ miles to a house and tried to get a team to pull my wagon up the canyon but was refused, but a young man was sent to help me. We finally got the wagon right side up, and after a great deal of urging managed to get the cattle to pull up the running

PAGE 30. CHASING MY BARRELS

gears alone, the boy and carrying up the wagon bed, stove, barrels and bedding. The boy then left me to get the chickens as best I could. I now found I had the biggest job on hands yet. The chickens and turkeys went down to the bottom of the canyon and seemed to be enjoying themselves hugely at my expense, as it struck me. Well, after wearing my patience as near out as I ever had it done before I managed to drive most of them up to the wagon but had much trouble in catching them. The always wanted to run back down the canyon - even after getting the flock up to the wagon. I then drove my wagon about 75 yards away from the canyon, thinking they would not try to run back, but 2 or 3 of them were determined to do so, especially one old rooster kept up the trick after all the rest had been caught; finally, I took the loaded shotgun determined to break him of the trick by shooting him and feast on his flesh for supper as an additional punishment but this time I taught him.

PAGE 31. TAKING DOWN A FENCE

Nothing unusual occurred till I got stuck going up another when I had to get another boy to help me carry up my wagon box and other things, as before, to lighten the load. About this time, being out of money, I took a turkey into a little town and sold it to buy feed with. I still made slow headway my bull giving out every day.

THURSDAY, MAY 3

Just before getting to Curtis I came to a long and steep hill, which, I concluded, I could not pull up, as I had learned to measure them pretty accurately with my eyes; so, seeing I could avoid the hill some by going around I proceeded to take down a 3 wire fence, crossing into a pasture, fixing up the fence behind me, and going out at the other side in the same manner. At Curtis, about 25 miles before reaching my claim, I bought a breaking plow, giving plow and best bull as surety. After getting 2 or 3 miles out of Curtis I came so near sticking-even going up small hills, that on coming to a canyon with a very steep hill on the opposite, I decided I never

PAGE 32. LEAVING WAGON TO LIGHTEN LOAD

could get up with the wagon, as it was evident that my bull was getting weaker than he yet had been; so, I pulled out about 50 yards to one side of the road then went to have the settler watch my things a little and to bring the chickens over to his place. I now proceeded on foot, driving the cattle with the yoke on.

FRIDAY, MAY 4th

Tonight I camped over night with 3 single boys who were batching together, turning my cattle loose into the pocket of a canyon, as there was some grass by this time. Anyhow, I was out of money with which to buy feed. I did not have money to pay for my lodging; but that was alright with the boys, as it generally was with the pioneer settler of the west who is almost always freehearted and accommodating.

PAGE 33 SATURDAY, May 5th and SUNDAY, May 6th

Next morning I found my cattle near where I had left them, too tired to wander far away. Friday, I traveled about 6 miles and that "tired bull" lay down (a favorite pastime of his). As there was plenty of water near and grass enough, I concluded to leave him, hiding the yoke in the same brush. So, taking the other bull by leading him, I proceeded once more through he was very lame in one foreleg.

I finally arrived at my father-in-law's along in the evening on foot and leading one lame bull. This was the condition I landed there, being the end of the time of this somewhat eventful trip

PAGE 34. MONDAY, MAY 7th

After waiting for my "tired" bull to rest 3 or 4 days, my father-in-law and I went back to get him and my wagon with his team. We camped overnight in my wagon, spreading the cover over the top of the sideboards, as we had done ever since my bows got broke in the canyon wreck, although it snowed quite a snow one night. We also cut a pole near our camp to splice my wagon tongue which had been broken by the bull trying to use it as a lounge when he wanted to rest (another one of his favorite tricks). In fact, he had broken the tongue and I had mended it so often that I had got tired of it and had traveled most of the distance with the stub of the tongue of about half its length - fastening this to the log chain which was a very poor thing to go down hill with, especially, as you can imagine, often the wagon only being held back by the rumps of the cattle against the wagon bed.

TUESDAY, May 8th

We hitched my wagon on behind the other and traveled towards my father-in-law's finding the bull in the canyon no a hundred yards from where I had left him 3 or 4 days before. I had to drive him to keep up his spirits, and we got home at a late hour tonight.

WEDNESDAY, May 9th

Today, I hitched up both bulls once again to my wagon, loaded up my family and belongings and proceeded on my way to my claim, my wife insisting on accompanying me. We got along slowly till we got in half a mile of the tent, when the "tired" bull gave out again. We all gout out and leading or carrying the children proceeded

PAGE 35

on foot to the tent. After allowing the bulls to rest half an hour, I went back and brought them on through to the tent, also.

I now lacked but on day of 6 weeks since I started from the east only 250 miles and 4 ½ weeks of that time had actually been put in driving on the road, an average of but 8 miles per day.

In the meantime, Dan had got along very well after leaving me, getting through to my father-in-law's Monday, April 23rd.

END OF TRIP

On the next page will be found the beginning of "Incidents of Western Life" connected with the above narrative.

INCIDENTS OF WESTERN LIFE

A Personal Account of the "UPS and DOWNS" of holding down a Claim

WEDNESDAY, May 5th, 1888

We moved our family of 6 into a 10 x 10 tent, using the top box of the wagon for a bedstead, and extra sideboards, as slats. This bed took the full length of one side of the tent and answered for all the family by some sleeping at the head and some sleeping at the foot, and lapping a little.

We put up our little cook stove near the center, using a "grub box" as a cupboard. We were now domiciled on our claim. Our fuel for the entire first summer consisted of cornstalks. I had to go 4 ½ miles for water, paying for it besides. It took half a day in summer and all day in winter to get a load of water with my cattle, and the 2 cattle would drink about a barrel a day in hot weather, I only had 2 barrels to haul with the first summer, one being small. I hauled water to above-

PAGE 37. DRAWING WATER WITH CATTLE

named distance for 2 years, the first summer with cattle. A few trips I made to a well nearer, about 2 miles, which had no windmill. Here I had to hitch on my cattle to the end of a rope and pull out in a straight line till the bucket came up, a distance of 258 feet, then leave my cattle stand while I went back and emptied the water into a barrel on the ground, return to my cattle, which were sometime tangled up in trying to graze, hitch the rope on to the front of the yoke to keep it from going down the well too rapidly (as it was very heavy, being so long and thick) then return to the well again. After I had drawn up enough in this tedious manner, I would have to load the water into my barrels in the wagon. I soon abandoned this mode of getting water and went back to the other well, where there was a windmill. Sometimes the wind did not blow and finding no water, I would return home without, or, more often, go on 5 or 6 miles farther where there was a hand pump near the creek.

PAGE 38. TENT POLE BROKEN IN A RAINSTORM

The last 3 years I hauled my water but 1 ¼ miles but never owned a well in the 5 years we lived on our claim. 25 families got water at one well one season, as many people as in an entire township there. We lived in our tent just one month much of the time it was raining. It never leaked to bother but twice, once when the rain came very suddenly and severe and one the wind blew so hard while I was away that one tent pole broke off and my wife held one end of the tent up for half an hour till I arrived and got it fixed. Once it hailed and you can imagine what a noise it made.

SATURDAY, June 9th

When we moved into the sod house, I had been building, it had but one room, and the only door shutters we had were blankets, and muslin for windows, till the following October. We had the ground for a floor for 4 ½ years. The roof was covered with poles and brush then sod on top.

PAGE 39. TRADING OFF THAT "TIRED" BULL

My bull did not improve; so, I traded him off for a little old cow. I yoked the cow up where I made the trade, about 3 miles from home, though she had never been hitched up before. I thought, now, I would have a team. At least, the cow was in better condition; but, I was doomed to disappointment,

for they soon began to give out, turn about. Sometimes they would give out at the far end of a furrow that I was breaking, and I would not be able to get them home for sometime. Once, I went after a load of poles about 10 miles, and, when getting a little over half way home, they gave out and I laid and slept under the wagon till morning then resumed my journey. Once I went to town and getting part of the way back put up at night in the same manner. Both times I was caught without even a blanket for bedding. I only got the cattle to break 5 acres of ground, 2 of garden, and do a little work for another (a day or 2) till I gave up trying to work them. I planted 4 or 5 acres

PAGE 40. HUNTING WORK

of sod corn on breaking that had been done the fall before, but which made nothing but a little stunted fodder. I had about an acre of sod corn on my own place that made a few nubbins and about 2 acres on another man's place that was planted so late it made only fodder. This was all the crop I got in the first season, except the garden of 2 acres which made a good crop.

PAGE 41. JULY TURNING FLAPJACKS WITHOUT GREASE

Along in July, Dan and I ran about out of provisions, and, as we could get no work near home, we took Dan's team and wagon, tying my cattle behind, as I could not get enough water at home to last them long. We started east, leaving our families, resolving to go till we got work but resolving to get it as near as possible. We camped on the Medicine Creek near Maywood the first night about 17 miles distant. Dan had about 50 cents and I had nothing. We took along but very little to eat, as we had to leave what little we did have with our families. We did not have money enough to get a sack of flour (and couldn't afford to buy bread); so, we persuaded the merchant to sell us a part of a sack. I think we got a little coffee. I don't remember whether anything else or not, but think we got a little sugar, also. I knew we did not have any butter nor grease and that we mixed up our flour with water into a stiff batter, putting it into a small tin bucket lid and then placing it on the campfire bottom side up to cook. Of course, there being no grease, the batter stuck to the lid very tenaciously, but I discovered that by letting it burn till black on the that it got loose enough to be turned when the other side would have to be rescued the same way. You can imagine what kind of looking bread it was: but, it tasted excellent to u. We boiled our coffee in an oyster can and made some sugar syrup in another.

Next day about noon we got to Curtis 25 miles from home. Dan and I each set out separately to look the town over for work. Dan got a kind of half promise from the

PAGE 42. OUR CAMP IN WILSON'S POCKET

shoemaker, who owned a Claim 1 ½ miles from town, if we thought we could do it as he said others had refused to undertake it. The job that was offered - was to break up a very rough side hill which was to be used for a vineyard.

We drove out to Wilson's (the Shoemaker) and pitched our camp in what we always called "Wilson's Pocket". It was a picket in the side of a deep canyon. This canyon was, perhaps, 50 yards wide, up which ran the public road and about 150 feet below the surrounding country, with almost perpendicular banks in many places. Wilson's house was in this canyon. We camped back in a nook or picket so as to be back from the public road a little and to be handy to water. There was the best grass here for our cattle, also. This picket got almost unendurably hot in the middle of the day as the sun poured down in on us and there could hardly a breath of air reach us. But at night, it was always uncomfortably cool, as it always is in these deep canyons of the west, frost often appearing in them from one to two

months earlier than on the land just above. We used our wagon as a bed - Dan sleeping in the wagon and I under it to keep from being crowded. We had no wagon cover.

PAGE 43. RAINED OUT OF CAMP

Sometimes it rained us out. One night after we had been laying down sometime, it began to fairly "pour down". We got up and one of us taking nearly a full sack of flour on his shoulder and the other a ham of meat and some other things started on a run for cover at Wilson's stable about 40 rods off. Here we passed the night using the flour and meat for pillows, and an empty stall for a bed. We slept well as we had got used to roughing it and took a kind of mild satisfaction in our pioneer life. Next day Wilson, Dan and I took Dan's cattle and breaker and proceeded to climb the canyon where a rough road had been made, to see what we could do in the line of breaking. We climbed up about half to the top of the hill directly above the house.

PAGE 44

The upper part of the hill here was not perpendicular like the lower part, but lay steep and in many places in what the pioneer call "cut steps". The only way we could plow at all was to begin at the end and plow along the foot of the hill - winding around canyon pockets and throwing the furrow downhill till we got to the other end. Then, go down the steep part to the bottom of the canyon, drive down the canyon without plowing, then climb the hill again and so on as before. These abrupt "cat steps" were perpendicular and from 6 inches to 2 or 3 feet high and while the furrow ox would be in the furrow, the other would be half its height above him, or as far as the yoke would allow. The sod in places would roll over and over for nearly a rod down the hill. Dan was 10 days breaking 5 acres. Wilson put me to digging a cellar what time I did not have to lead Dan's cattle. I dug a cellar 18 feet deep, beginning at the bottom I dug into the perpendicular side of the danyon - intending to prop the roof, as is done in mines, but after digging a good while and wheeling out the dirt, Wilson concluded to have it dug on up above to the surface and cover with shingles.

PAGE 45. FOUND FAMILY WITHOUT FOOD

Wilson was accommodating and bought us provisions to live on, in advance. In about a week we thought we must make a trip home and take our families some provisions. Accordingly, we set out with Dan's cattle and wagon. We found our families, or at least, mine entirely out of anything whatever, to eat. My family had been out of anything for but a few hours, although, they could have borrowed of neighbors but had been looking for me every minute. It took all day and part of the night to drive home. Next day was Sunday, I think, and we had to put in about all day, hauling water. Next day we returned to Wilson's, spend nearly half the week going and coming from home and getting up water. Taking out about 1 day in the week for rain, it left only about 4 days in the week to work, as we went home every one or two weeks, often driving half the night, that we might have a little more time to spend with our families. The heat in the middle of the days was sever at one place on

PAGE 46. MY BULL DIES - TEACHING SCHOOL

the road where our road lay for 8 miles in the bottom of a canyon where the wind was partly shut off. We worked for Wilson about 5 weeks this summer.

AUGUST

We raised a good garden without any cultivation, as the ground was new and free from weeds. I had a nice crop of potatoes, beans, and especially of melons.

SEPTEMBER

Along in September my bull died, leaving me only the old cow for a team. Though I never used her in this time but once when I lead her $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile to an old Maid's place to get a sack of corn, putting it on her back to carry. About this time I got a 6 months school to teach. At \$25 per month, but, as there was no money, in the school treasury, I had to sell my school orders for 75 cents on the dollar, leaving me a little under \$20 per month. I had earned \$40 per month the year before, teaching in eastern Nebraska. I had to walk nearly 3 miles to the schoolhouse. The schoolhouse was a conglomeration. It was half out of the ground and half in -- half sod and half boards - the door was half window - half the inside was plastered and half wasn't. I taught the entire term without a timepiece.

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER

Soon after beginning my school my health began to fail again. I got so I was not able to walk to the schoolhouse; so, I traded my cow and some difference for an unbroke Texas bronco. It was very thin and, after getting it home with some difficulty, I mounted it next morning, although it had never been rode. It reared up once and I being heavy and it weak, my weight mashed it down to the ground. Mounting again, I rode it to school with much further bother. As I had no saddle, its back

DECEMBER

was so sharp and soon became sore that I had a cart made out of the forewheels of my wagon, using rough-hewn poles for shafts and axle. This did not make a funny looking cart by any means. The seat was made by cross poles connecting the shafts together, which projected back of the axle.

PAGE 48. BUYING ANOTHER BRONCO

Brother John came out in November and filed on a claim cornering mine, which Dan and I had picked out for him. We had a good deal of deep snows this winter.

JANUARY

John hauled our wood from the Red Willow Creek 11 miles this winter.

FEBRUARY

Along towards spring John and I bought a wild bronco in partnership. John was to

MARCH

use this bronco to ride to a school that he got along the last of March, and I was to work his mule team on the shares till his school was out about the last of May.

APRIL

The spring opened up early this year (1889). The first week in April, I turned out my bronco which I had first got, and, although, it was very poor, it made a living on the grass from that time on without grain and did well.

MAY

I only broke about 12 acres of ground on my homestead this spring, as I broke some for others and put in about 10 acres of corn on another place.

PAGE 49. A TRIP TO THE NORTHWEST

We had plenty of rain this season, as we did last. We raised a good garden and good sod corn.

JULY

Along in July, Dan, John and I took a trip to the extreme Northwest part of the state. An account of which will be found in another book. Suffice it to say, we had a pleasant trip and enjoyed ourselves immensely. Shortly after returning from this trip, I was in need of money, and so, mounting the partnership pony, which was the easiest animal in the saddle I ever mounted, set out for Curtis for a job. Night overtook me at Maywood, and, tying the lariat of my bronco to the stockyards, lay down upon the ground in the open air to pass the night; but, it being near the Medicine Creek, the mosquitoes were unbearable. I got up along in the night, remounted my bronco resolving to ride to Curtis about 8 miles further on; but, after getting about 1 ½ or 2 miles out onto the high divide, the mosquitoes left me and I became so drowsy that I came near falling off my pony several times; so, dismounting, I tied one end of the lariat to the pony, and the other to the saddle, then using the saddle for a pillow that might be aware if my bronco tried to bolt, I preferred to pass the remainder of the night on the open prairie without any bed except the buffalo grass and only the blue vault of heaven as a covering.

PAGE 50. THE "COWBOY" WAY OF CAMPING OUT

I slept well and about daylight proceeded on my way. When I arrived at Curtis, I only had about 50 cents and, as I did not know how long before I would get a job and wanted to live as inexpensively as possible, I bought a few pounds of flour (it being much cheaper than bread), some cheap strong butter, a little sugar and, I think, some tea. The merchant sent me to his wife's kitchen to get the flour. I put the butter in an oyster can which I picked up - picked up another in which to make my tea, bought a 5 cent pie pan, put these in a sack and throwing them across my pony in front of me, rode off to the brush on the creek about half a mile that I might find water, wood and, also, a hiding place to camp for fear someone would think me insane. Here, I hitched my bronco to a tree, got in among the trees, got some water out of the creek, and proceeded to get my breakfast at a late hour.

PAGE 51. THE "WESTERN" WAY OF CAMPING OUT

I did not even have a jackknife nor a spoon to eat with. And, I had to turn my flapjacks and eat with sticks and my fingers. After breakfasting, I hid my can of butter in the forks of a tree, as it was too warm to take it about with me without melting. The rest of the camp outfit I put back into the sack and took along back to town where I hid them under a mill. I then lariatied my bronco and looked for work.

I got a short job of waiting on a plasterer. At night I would ride off to the creek get my supper ride back to town and lariat my pony, hide my saddle, and take my provision sack along to use as a pillow in the hayloft of a livery barn where I got leave to sleep. In the morning I would have to get up very early in order to go and get my breakfast and at noon I would not have time to cook a warm meal and would eat a cold lunch. I cooked and worked this way for a week or more.

PAGE 52. A LATE RIDE

I worked in and around Curtis at 3 different times during the summer and fall. Sometime, I would work till evening Saturday, get my supper, ride 1 ½ miles to Curtis (while working in the country), buy some provisions to take home, and then, after the stars had begun to shine, start for home 25 miles over a very rough country with 13 pasture gates to open on my way. I would arrive at home about 2 or 3 in the morning, spend half the day Sunday hauling up water, and, then, along in the evening ride back so as to be on hand for work Monday morning. I should have stated before that along in the spring my health got better so that I worked, though I was really not able to do much if I could have avoided it.

SEPTEMBER

This fall I undertook to break my 2 broncos to work but one turned out to be balky and the other was not very true, and both very wild and high strung. I had nothing but hames and ropes for harness. Rope lines and bridle, and rope back and belly bands and rope tugs, the collars I made out of ducking and straw. Once while breaking in one of the ponies, it rubbed the bridle off and then crawled out backwards through the collar and harness and trotted back home, leaving me and the other horse and wagon in the road about ¾ of a mile from the house. These broncos, as

PAGE 53. LONG ROADS

my team before (the cattle) were destined to do me no good.

About the 21st of September my youngest sister and family and husband came out and wintered in a quarter of a mile of us.

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER

This fall after gathering my little crop of corn I gathered over 60 acres of corn for my neighbors, going an average over 5 miles to work and driving from home each morning most of the time. Half the time, at least, I would give out a little before the end of the day.

DESEMBER

I got my fuel this winter by diving 11 miles and chopping wood on the shares, coming home every night. Sometimes I bought a load instead of chopping on shares.

JANUARY (1890)

This winter, running out of flour on account of bad roads and distance to town, we would grind corn in the coffee mill for a few days at a time. This left the meal

FEBRUARY

very coarse, even after grinding it over twice, taking nearly half an hour and tiring both myself and wife out each time. This winter was very mild.

MARCH

This spring, brother John and sister Della and family moved up into the northwest part of the state.

APRIL

Father sent me a pony this past winter and, by trading off my balkiest pony for another, I rigged up a three-horse or pony team. I did a little breaking and tended

MAY - JUNE

about 30 acres of corn, but this year (1890) nearly all of the country around failed on corn and vegetables, but I and some of my neighbors, who had sandy soil, raised enough to feed. I raised 4 acres of melons for a seed company. They were fine, the drought not seeming to affect them at all.

JULY

Along the last of July, my brother, Dan, and two of my old school pupils stopped and visited us a few days on their way out to the Northwest part of the state, know as the "Lake Country".

AUGUST

My health kept so poor that, not being able to help harvest the melons, and seeing I would not be able to gather my corn, I concluded to try running a peddling wagon over the country; so,

SEPTEMBER

Along in September, I started out with a team of broncos and spring wagon and

OCTOBER

rather to my surprise I made good wages from the first. I had, now, undoubtedly found my calling - that of talking for a living.

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER

I put a cover on my wagon, sleeping in it at night and camping out, till into November, to save expense. I generally took on of the children with me on account of my poor health, and came home about twice a week, and peddled all winter, and often right through a blizzard rather than to lay up an expense away from home. I peddled

PAGE 57. JANUARY - STUCK ON AN ICY HILL

all winter without an overcoat or overshoes. When very cold, I would pin a blanket about me. It was a cold winter with a great deal of ice and snow, making very bad

FEBRUARY

roads, about the worst I ever say, yet I did not get my ponies shod, though a few times I was unable to get out of some icy canyon till someone came along and helped me, or I went around some other road. I will mention one particular incident of this kind.

The only way I had been able to get up alone many times was to get the broncos under a full run and shoot up the hill by the impetus they got in running; but, finally, I cam to a canyon hill so long and steep that when "shooting" up about half way, the ponies both fell down on the slick ice. One of them would, repeatedly, get up and fall down, but the other was of a sulky nature and refused to budge; so, I unhitched them, backed the buggy down the hill by hand, got one pony up to getting it to one side of the road where it was rough, but not quite so slick, and then went

PAGE 58. MARCH - A GOOD MELON HARVEST

back and took the other one, which still refused to move out, taking her by the bit, turned her around, and slid her down the hill on her belly - she never seeming to be disturbed at all. I then waited till some teams came along which were shod and got them to pull my wagon up the hill while I managed to get my ponies to go up to one side where, though impossible for a wagon, was rough and grassy and afforded some footing for the ponies.

APRIL

This spring (1892) not being able to farm myself, I hired 10 acres of my land farmed, that amount being required by law, before I could make final 5 years' proof on my homestead, which I desired to do the following autumn. Six acres of this amount I had planted in melons and cucumbers for the purpose of raising seed for a seed company, and, although, I got a light stand having to replant my watermelons twice,

MAY

I cleared \$113 on the 6 acres, \$25 of this being for melons I sold. The land on which this crop was grown was not valued at this time at more than from 4 to 6 dollars per acre. Some of my neighbors got a much heavier turnout from their vine

PAGE 59. June - A BREEZY BED

crop than I did. This season we got hardly as much rain as desirable, yet enough to produce a fair crop.

JULY

I still run my peddling wagon as much as my health would permit, which was 3 to 4 days per week.

AUGUST

About May 10th, I again began to camp out at night. I slept under my buggy on the ground this summer with a wagon sheet thrown over the buggy reach and fastened to bottom of the wheels which, at best, would let in the wind. Of still warm nights I would dispense with the wagon cover. The ground was often wet or damp and the weather so changeable I would often wake up in the night cold and the night wind

SEPTEMBER

blowing on me. This manner of camping out gave me an attack or cataarh in the head, of which I already had had symptoms, but which after this became chronic. One night, while camping out, my 9 year old boy, Harry, and I were sleeping under the wagon when a heavy rein came up which got to running under us on the ground, and we were forced to get up and go through the rain to a straw stack about 40 rods distance. We dug a hole into which we crawled till after the storm.

PAGE 60. OCTOBER - LOST IN THE SANDHILLS

This fall, while coming home through an uninhabited tract of sand hills, we got lost, or partially, at least. It was very dark and all the hills of this sandy region always resemble each other. In trying to take a dim "cutoff" road we wandered off on an old trail for miles in a wrong direction. It was so dark the road could not be seen but it was easily told when the wagon got out as the ground was so bumpy. We finally discovered we were on the wrong

road, as we would have struck a level country before this, if we had been on the road we at first started on. We hardly knew what to, for on this occasion we were not fixed to camp out, having no wagon cover nor blankets, and a strong north wind blew up making it very chilly as it was now October. We dared not strike across the country without a road as the country besides being bumpy and full of steep hillocks was interspersed with abrupt banks and "blowouts". I finally decided to "take a back trail" and find the road we had missed although my ponies were fagging pulling through the sand. After driving a good while, I got out and walked ahead of the team in the road, for fear we might pass the road on which I wished to turn off, while my little boy, Harry, drove. After passing 2 or 3 cross roads which I came near mistaking for the right one, we found the proper one. After following this for 2 or 3 miles, we came to a house which was occupied occasionally by a bachelor and, though it had a scanty amount of furniture inside, we concluded to put up in it for fear the ponies would give entirely out on the road. We unhitched but could not get the ponies inside the house. The western bronco is always very shy of strange quarters. It was too cold to stand them out, as heated as they were, so we concluded to journey on towards home and finally reached there at a late hour both ourselves and team about exhausted.

I thought this fall of going on a visit to my old home in the eastern part of the state, but on getting partly ready, my health was so poor I did not feel able for

PAGE 62. NOVEMBER - DECEMBER

the journey and concluded to wait till spring and, if my health permitted, move back.

JANUARY (1893) - APRIL

This winter was light with good roads. It was now nearing the time when I was to leave for the east, as I was not able to farm, hoping to regain my health, in part at least, by the change, although, it was with many regrets and fond memories that I did so. I disposed of everything except 3 broncos, the spring wagon, a part of our scanty house furniture, and my land. Three or four weeks previous to starting I was out in a severe windstorm and something was lodged in one of my eyeballs, but, as it was yellow (undoubtedly the storm put in a corn husk, as I afterwards found out), the local physicians took for an ulcer caused by a cold, it was coated over and resembled an and I did not feel it enter my eye at the time. This eye bothered me greatly and became worse on the road while moving so that I was unable to see to drive half the time - the other being inflamed with sympathy. At Hastings I had my eye operated on by a specialist and in 24 hours it was almost well.

PAGE 65. AFTERTHOUGHTS

We drove back in a covered spring wagon in 10 days without any other incident worth mentioning, except that my wife was on her first overland trip, and who caused me much amusement on the first part of the trip at her attempts to be tidy and neat.

I will, now, give an account of some incidents that have come to my mind since writing the above.

At one time I needed some corn for feed and, having no team, took a sack and lading the family cow, I went to my nearest neighbor, over half a mile, who was an old maid homesteader, who met me in the yard with course men's boots on. After filling my sack, I laid it across the cow's back and lead her back home.

In the spring of 1892 I had been suffering with tooth ache severely; so, I mounted a bronco and rode 20 miles and back for no other purpose than to get it pulled.

Once it rained so incessantly that it got to leaking through my sod house roof at night routing up all the family; but, I, being about sick, had the table put over me on the bed with the legs straddle of my body while I steadied it to keep it from falling the remainder of the night.

The first summer we killed 8 rattlesnakes within 50 yards of our house, besides some viper which were said to be poison. We sometimes found a snake in the house in the morning that had crawled in the house through the open door at night. My wife found one under the bed once.

PAGE 66. THE WESTERN FLEA

The great pest of the western country is the flea. No remedy has ever been found to do away with him. Those who thought they knew something about fleas in the east or south found they were very inactive by the side of our western flea. Our western flea had great advantages in number also. They only bothered badly through the summer and the night. Some of our children the first summer were so poisoned by their bites that their skin felt like that of an alligator; and, I thought seriously of seeing a doctor to find what kind of a skin disease they had - not thinking it possible that the fleas could do it. However, a person becomes inoculated in the time till they do not poison them so much, and some are not poisoned by their bites even at first; but, there are but few that get so they can endure their biting so as to sleep good through the flea season.

PAGE 67. MORE FLEAS

I, as well as others, often pulled off our pants in the evening while eating supper or reading that we might keep them scared away somewhat. Whole families abandoned their houses at night, and, changing clothes, would sleep out in the haystacks through the summer months, except when driven in by a storm. No one thought anything strange to see another scratching their bodies even in church. I tried all the remedies I could think of against them but to little avail. I have greased myself from head to foot with kerosene and ?, but they would bite right through it. For several nights I had been bothered with them worse than common. I kept the lamp

PAGE 68. HERDING FLEAS BY LAMPLIGHT

lit and, when they would bite so as to wake me up, I would take the light and beginning at the head move the light back and forth till I drove or herded them off the bed (they will always jump away from a bright light), then I would lay down and drop to sleep only to be awakened after a while when I would repeat the same process. I kept this up for several nights. I had young pigs get so covered with them that the fleas hung in rolls something after the manner of balls (only not so thick) so that they would not be scared off and I would have to take wisps of hay and rake them off. I think they would have killed the pigs if I had not moved them to other quarters.

When deep snows blocked the roads and the weather was severe, we often melted snow and used it for drinking, cooking and for our stock for a few days.

I have seen the sand drift by the winds till it would cover up low fences (such as hog lots) and so as to make the road almost impossible for an empty wagon without turning aside. These drifts came from cultivated fields that had been left bare.

PAGE 69. A JUROR CAMPING OUT

I will mention another incident of rough camp life. I was chosen as a jurymen in the spring of 1890 at my county seat, Hayes Center, 20 miles distance from home. I rode over on my bronco and, being scarce of means, concluded to camp out instead of paying lodging; so, at night I rode off about a half mile from town and pitched camp in a canyon. I carried my camp outfit and eatables in a sack, built my campfire of weeds up against a perpendicular bank, to act as a chimney to draw up the smoke, lariatd my pony in the bottom of the canyon, then lay down on the ground wrapped in a blanket preparatory to pass the night. At night I was awakened several times by the howling of coyotes near by, which had evidently been cheated out of their evening meal by my presence, as I noticed a dead cow lying near by in the canyon in plain sight of my camp, but I had not noticed it till after pitching camp. I refused to change quarters. I camped here two nights and

PAGE 70. CHILDREN AFRAID OF CARS

sleeping as comfortable as if I had been lodged in a hotel - some would not have been undoubtedly, but it suited my taste, and I was never happier or had more noble thoughts than when surrounded by such circumstances.

Some of our schools were of a very primitive order. I have known school to go on where there was but one scholar attending for a month or more.

Many people lived 25 miles to a railroad, and small children living here were as afraid of the cars, when seeing them for the first time, as a gracious horse. Our own little boy 2 years old who had never seen the cars till we moved away from our western home would run to camp as fast as his little legs would carry him at sight of them, and even to mention the cars were coming, would cause him to run and scream.

In the course of my peddling I came across isolated houses in the sandhills where the children up to 10 years, at least, were afraid of a stranger. They would not answer a question; but, on being spoken to, if not sooner, would run into the house like so many frightened sheep, and, as I left the house, they would cautiously

PAGE 71. LITTLE ETHEL'S FIRST VISIT TO TOWN

emerge and stare after me as far as their vision would reach, often getting on a hill and on the house top that they might get sight of me a little longer.

Many young men and women, here, have never seen an elephant, or any kind of animals, other than domestic ones, or those indigenous to their own country, and many have never ridden on the cars.

I remember taking my little girl, Ethel, to town for the first time. She was about 4 years old. She loved accompanying me. I lifted her out of the buggy and, while I was hitching my team she had disappeared in a moment's time, almost. I looked in the stores and up and down the thinly settled streets; and, I finally caught sight of her just as she was entering the depot at the R.R. station on the run, and which was about 200 yards distance. She was evidently "taking in the town", for she reappeared and started on the run up town again but looking somewhat confused. I met her, and took her back to the store. While I was getting something out of the buggy, she had run up on the porch where a group of men were standing. I heard

PAGE 72. WRONG SIDE UP IN A CANYON BOTTOM

a burst of laughter from the group and inquired what it was about and was told little Ethel, on looking in, exclaimed with much enthusiasm, "Why, you

have got a board floor, ain't you?" This astonishment had arose from the fact that most of our neighbors houses had no floor, including our own house, and people were considered a step in advance who could afford such a luxury.

A good joke was told me by a neighbor on another who had been to town and filled up on "fire water" as was his custom. My neighbor said he was going along the road between the heads of two canyons - passes- or "handshakes" as they are called by the frontiersman, and, on looking down to one side of him, was startled to see a horse and buggy, both lying bottom side up at the bottom of the canyon, the horse struggling to get his equilibrium. He said he looked on the scene for a moment when a derby hat appeared, coming from underneath the buggy; then, its owner became visible. He waited awhile the tide of coming events. The man, however, managed to struggle to his feet and, after some difficulty, got his buggy right side up, and, also, his

PAGE 73. GRASS FIRED BY LIGHTNING

horse. My neighbor said he saw nothing was damaged seriously and, being somewhat disgusted at his neighbor for getting drunk; he drove on, leaving him to get out of his difficulty as best he could, hoping he had not been seen by him at all on account of being so much above him.

A party of young folks, including my wife's sister, were going to a dance one night when the team and wagon and all its inmates were precipitated over the bank of a canyon, seriously injuring my sister-in-law and another girl. The roads were often forced to go near these canyons which were dangerous pitfalls.

I knew one woman who tended to crop with a yoke of cattle while her husband worked out.

I was coming home, in the spring of '89 I think, with a load of wood, and, when getting in sight of my homestead, a heavy thunderstorm came up, the lightning setting the grass afire and burning a spot about 2 or 3 rods square near the middle of my place.

While giving the facts above, I have, perhaps, dwelt more on the rough side of life, while there, so, I will bring my narrative to a close by mentioning some things on the "bright side" of life while there.

PAGE 74. THE BRIGHT SIDE

In the first place, I loved the country there because I was able to own a home there, only.

Previous to going there I had been teaching and attending school most of the time for over 5 years and had grown weary of it and the demands that society had imposed upon me in living in an old settled country. I longed for rest from the hurry and bustle of humanity and business; and, here is the great new, grand undeveloped west, I found that for which I desired.

Here I found nature in all it wild beauty, grandeur and solitude. It was balm for my excited and overworked nerves and rest and peace for my mind. I naturally loved that which is wild and new and primitive in nature. I think I must have inherited this disposition, as it has always been thus with me from boyhood. My ancestors have lived on the frontier for at least 3 generations before me.

PAGE 79. MIRAGES ON THE PRAIRIE

They look like green tinted billows of the ocean. The appearance of these sandy hills, also, have not been exaggerated in my last remark above, as they

made Dan dizzy when first looking upon them, giving him the impression of moving waves from their regular size and similarity of form.

I loved to get up early of a still summer morning and gaze upon those beautiful mirages only seen on a great prairie, sometimes taking of the form of a great forest - sometimes of a great moving billows of smoke, as from the fires of a gigantic furnace. Sometimes they take the form of an ancient city, veiled in mist with its towers and domes and spires and monuments reaching into cloudland. This kind of a place and I have often called out my family in the early morning to witness this grand phenomenon of nature.

Living here on the great prairie, away from the noise and bustle and confusion and

PAGE 80. NATURE AND ITS AUTHOR

Contradictory influences of man and civilization, surrounded by the peace, beauty and harmony of nature, awestricken by its hushed stillness - its great magnitude, as seen by the eye, my thoughts would involuntarily revert from nature to Nature's Creator and would feel that His presence was very near, for in the language of the poet - - -

Nature is but a faint emblem of Omnipotence,
Shaped by his hand - the shadow of his light -
The veil in which he wraps His Majesty,
And through whose mantling folds He deigns to show,
Of his mysterious, awful attribute
And dazzling splendors, all man's feeble thought
Can grasp uncrushed, or vision bear unquenched.
- Selected

THE END

TRAVELS

By J. T. Burton, 1889

"TRAVELS" by J. T. Burton

"Written when I was 21 past" (Summer of 1889)

(Copied from an old notebook, by his daughter Alice; Mrs J.R. Jeske).

We (Albert, John T. and Dan Burton) started on our pleasure and land-hunting excursion on the 8th day of July, 1889, about 6 P.M.

We were equipped with a team of mules, covered wagon, camping outfit and two ponies. Before we got out of sight of home, one pony broke loose. We did not stop, but went on and left her there. I soon afterwards saw a jackrabbit - I fired at it and missed. We traveled through a country very similar to our own for about eight miles. On the way, at the top of a small knoll, we saw two or three coyotes. They were too far off for our guns and soon skulked out of sight.

We than struck the canyon which is the head of the Little Medicine Creek. This creek, where we struck it, had neither timber nor water, although we could see water down the creek, and there was some brush even here. In about three miles drive we reached the other Medicine, at Somerset, which is a deserted village on the B & M Railroad.

It was then dark, and we stopped and proceeded to look for fuel and water, which we found with little difficulty. It was a beautiful evening, the moon shining brightly when we cooked and greatly relished our first meal on our journey. Dan and I slept in the wagon, while Albert slept under the wagon.

We ate our breakfast with an equal relish, and after inquiring the road to North Platte, we started on through the sandhills. It was somewhat cloudy in the morning and an hour or two after we started, it commenced raining, and rained some until noon. We took dinner in eight miles of North Platte, 20 miles. The monotony was only broken by occasionally seeing a jackrabbit or grouse and an occasional team passing. Finally, coming onto a hill we saw the wide, level valley of the Platte, and could trace with the eye the bed of the rivers, which is a bed of gravel which looks at a distance like a field of ripe grain. There between the forks of the Platte we found the beautiful little city of North Platte, and were reminded that it was the home of Buffalo Bill.

They had hail two days before, on the bottom, which almost destroyed the little crop which was there.

We crossed the bridge over the South Platte at 4 P.M. We found that the land office for the country where we were going, was at Sidney. We purchased a few things for our journey, heard a brief history of Buffalo Bill, which I will give as follows: Buffalo Bill, when acting as a scout for the Government, lived 13 miles below here. He was poor, and his wife washed for the soldiers to help make a living. In 1861 he built his present residence in town. He is considered honest but has been given to drink pretty bad. A few years ago, on the 4th of July, he made an exhibition of some buffaloes reddened by cowboys. It raised some excitement, and he thought, for the first time, of going east with a show. He is now in France with his famous show, and is making about \$11,000 a month. A few years ago he built a fine house and barn on his ranch, which we saw ver well by means of our field glasses, and could read the name of the ranch, (Scouts Rest Ranch), printed in large letters on the roof of the barn. His ranch consists of 2,000 acres.

We found that the best road was to follow up the South Platte to Ogallala, then go north across the North Platte and follow up to Sidney. Wednesday

morning our artist sketched Buffalo Bill's home while we got breakfast. Albert saw Buffalo Bill's wife (or Mrs. Cody).

After driving a few miles we scared up some chickens and killed one. Soon after I saw a mirage which I showed to the other boys. Dan still thought it a grove for some two or three hours. We camped for noon at the side of the railroad, where the bottom is a little higher and looks like it would be a good farming country. The bottom from North Platte up to here is eight or ten miles wide, nearly as level as a floor, and only a few feet above the level of the river.

We passed through Nickols in the forenoon, and through Othens in the afternoon. They each consisted of a section house and little else.

We drove west to the U.P.R.R. Had a good view of the valley, which is 8 or 10 miles wide and level, but contains a good deal of alkali. We went to camp at a Dutchman's place, but he routed us, and we drive on about a mile.

The next day, before dinner, we went through Paxton, where I bought a sack of corn. At noon we drove under the railroad bridge, and camped in the bed of the South Platte which was dry there. It was in numerous channels with gravel bottom between, which were dozens of little islands covered with tall grass which ran runners on top of the gravel, some of these were 30 feet long and about the size of my finger.

We passed Roscoe, a place with a section house and little more, in the afternoon we reached Ogallala. This is a nice little town, nearly as large as North Platte. We heard her of land about 15 or 20 miles north of there which we thought worth going to see. We drove 7 miles north to the bridge on the U.P.R.R., where we camped. We met an old man hauling some buffalo bones, who told us a little about the country and gave us a dog. We took a walk on the bridge after supper, and looked at the old river. The bridge is nearly one half mile wide.

The next day we went north east into the country which we had heard described. We came to Whitetail Creek about a mile from the mouth. It is a beautiful stream with gravel bottom, low banks, and water as clear as crystal. We traveled up this beautiful stream 8 or 9 miles. We had a chat with an old man, and found we couldn't get anything on the creek. We camped at the head of the creek, but the most wonderful thing was the way the stream headed. About 150 yards below the head waters there was volume enough of water to run a grist mill. I went in swimming at this place. Then 60 yards above the headwaters the land was about 75 feet higher than the creek.

As the head of the creek was vacant land, but was very poor, the grass we called twelvemock grass because the spears where about that far apart. The grass and crops were looking very dry.

After dinner we started back to the Platte bridge. We drove through some very poor sandhills for 8 or 9 miles, and stuck the Platte bottom near the bridge. We went up the north side of the Platte for about 5 miles that evening, crossed several little streams of running water. These streams are a peculiarity of the north side of the river, there being no running streams on the south side.

Just before we pulled into camp, Albert shot a prairie whistler. We camped by the side of a little stream out of which we used the water. The next morning we continued up the valley, intending to go to Gering and probably on to Cheyenne, but we met a mover who had been through most of the west, and he said the lake country was the nicest he had seen anywhere. We camped for noon near a store just before we left the Platte bottom. In the afternoon we

passed over some nice country and saw some claims that were vacant, but deep to water. We saw, this afternoon and the day before, several stone houses.

We reached the Blue that night, some 10 to 15 miles from the mouth where we camped, and talked with two Dutchmen and found out about some vacant land, and heard more of the lake country. He told us of a vacant place on the creek joining his, but did not tell us the numbers. We looked at the piece; it had water, some hay, some farm land and a good deal of bluffs and rough land. Also we were told that there was plenty of vacant land on the divide, where there was buffalo grass and about 200 feet to water. The Blue Creek is about as wide as Salt Creek, but shallow. The banks are bare, having not timber and small spots of grass along the creek. We traveled up the creek, and passed several pieces of nice corn, and a store. We took dinner by the Blue where we had to cook our dinner with weeds.

A while after dinner we reached a claim that had been deserted by Hadley. This had 3 or 4 acres of nice sod corn, there were some other pieces that were vacant that took the Blue. We soon reached the head of the Blue where we could see lofty, barren sandhills and big blowouts. We drove through a valley about 3 miles, then climbed up a sand hill when I saw a lake. We soon saw some other lakes. Albert seated himself a few rods from where we first saw the lake. And took a sketch of the lake, while Dan and I walked over to the lake. The lake is known as Swan or Crest Lake. It is about 3 miles long and nearly a mile wide. The shore is clear, no large grass or rushes, but a sand and gravel shore on which the waves were rolling in. We went past Island Lake. This lake is not so large as the other, but has lots of good mow hay on the flat near the lake. We went on about 2 miles through the hills and valley of good grass, and camped not far from Mr. Campbell's, a locator.

The next day, (Monday), we wanted to see more of the lake country which we concluded to do on horseback. So we took the pony and the mules and started off through the rough hills without a road. Albert took his gut so as to look for antelope. We saw several lakes, some of them were with a good valley. Ducks on the lakes - and came to the west shore of Crescent Lake.

We were tired of riding through the toughest of sandhills, so we returned for our wagon. We wound our way back till we reached the valley where our wagon was on the opposite side. We rode through this valley of heavy hay for nearly a half mile.

We went on northwest, following from valley to valley, occasionally crossing sandy ridges between the valleys. The lakes were smaller and the valley wider, and some spots looked like they would do to farm. Just before we reached camp, Dan killed a Prairie Whistler. We camped in a little valley by the side of the road. It commenced to rain just as we were eating our supper.

The objections to this country just gone through, are given by the stock ranchers. One said that the flies and mosquitoes would sap the stalks of corn, also that it rained every day. Others told us that it was sandy and alkali. Where we camped (this night, just a week after we started) was in the northwest part of Deuel County, a part of old Cheyenne County. The mosquitoes bothered until they woke us up and kept us awake a good part (bit) of the night and finally routed us at the break of day.

We were on the road about sunrise, and drove about 5 or 6 miles through some very nice valleys, when we came to a house where we watered out of a 14 foot well. He had sod corn and other crops on sod that looked fine. This man told us of a large valley south of his, which he thought was better than his claim where he lived. It was located about 4 miles from Reno, and 20 miles from Alliance. After passing Mr. Foster's we decided to see this valley. We went

about 3 miles south and could see a large valley. Albert stopped, got off his horse, and began to survey it with his field glasses. Dan and I saw the lake and rode on in that direction, thinking Albert would follow, but hid not. The lake was farther than we thought. We saw some very good land which we think is vacant. We returned, making a trip of about 5 miles after we left Albert, who had grown very impatient.

About a day before this we had a long talk about what we would do when we got home, and decided we couldn't stay in this country where there was no work. We had almost given up the idea of coming west, and Albert had even suggested turning back. But as we journeyed on the valley looked better. We saw potatoes and corn both on sod. They rivaled anything we had seen on the road.

But the middle of the afternoon we had reached the Flats of Bos Butte County (Albert had seen the town from the hill where we looked at the Valley). This was one of the most beautiful countries to the eye that we had seen. It was warm and I drove slow reaching Alliance about an hour and a half before sunset.

Alliance is a beautiful little town, situated on an almost level flat, where they can get water at about 25 feet. Alliance has about the amount of business as North Platte, and is only a little over one year old. The first house was built one ago last February.

After some trouble we found the locator who said he could locate us on good valley claims among the hills about 11 or 12 miles from Alliance. We could get tree claims and homesteads adjoining. He charged \$10.00 to locate a single or \$15.00 to locate 2 claims for one person. If we all came out he will locate us all for \$5.00 apiece.

We enjoyed ourselves very well as we went on toward Gering, by reading the novel Dora Thorne, which we read by turns. Our travel for some distance was along a railroad grade. We then took ongoing roads, most of the time toward the southwest. A couple of men rode with us most of the afternoon. They said they lived out southwest of where we stopped for noon, about 15 miles from town. We kept on in the same direction in the afternoon, and passed but few houses, and passed lots of vacant land. It was a little hilly with a kind of light magnesis soil. About 10 o'clock we came in sight of Scotts Bluff. We came down the hills and took dinner on the flats. The soil was rather poor. The afternoon before we passed 3 or 4 loads of bones.

We reached the river about 3 hours by sun and took a swim in the Platte. After this I and Dan got supper while Albert sketched the Bluff and Monument Rock, taking in the river between us and the bluff. The Bluff looked to be about $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{2}{3}$ mile off but we were told the closest part was 2 miles.

We drove to Gering after supper, a distance of 2 miles. We drove out of town about 100 yards from a small house. Directly a man came out with a Winchester rifle and talked a while with us. We supposed he had been hunting and inquired about game. He said the rifle was for that man in the house. The house was a jail, the man we talked to was the guard. He said that the man had shot another man in a quarrel over a debt. The man in jail seemed happy, for while we were talking he was whistling or humming a tune. His trial is to come off next month. From where we were camped the bluff seemed to be about a half mile off, but people said it was 2 and $\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

The next morning, Friday, we began to explore the Bluff. I and Dan went on foot, Albert went on his pony. We came to a house at the foot of the Bluff and inquired the way to find a way to get up the Bluff. Se told us the way to a path called the "Winding Stairs". This bluff is estimated by the people at town from 600 feet to 1600 feet high. We climbed up the winding path and

reached the top. The top was covered by scattered pine trees. I and Dan climbed up in a pine tree and saw in the dim distance the Rocky Mountains. We say Laramie Peak and some other peaks in south of it. Laramie Peak is said to be 100 miles from us. We walked then to a little higher place west. We could see many miles up the river, and still farther could see Laramie Peak to the north. We could see many miles up the river, and still farther could see Laramie Peak to the north. We could see across the river to the hills about 20 miles. To the east we could see Chimney Rock very plain. Chimney Rock is said to be 400 feet from the base to the top. The upper part, from where we were, looking taller in proportion height than a man. To the south we could see the mountains nearly covered with pine trees. These were 8 or 10 miles off.

After exploring to our satisfaction and carving our names in a place or two, I got a specimen of the rock, and a small pine tree, and we started back. While we were on top we tried throwing down rocks over on of the highest and steepest places. The pine trees on top, which only looked about as high as a man's knee from where Albert sketched them, are about 25 feet high, and 1 and $\frac{1}{2}$ feet through. We climbed for some distance until we reached the shade of a cliff which rose perpendicular for about 150 feet. We rested in the shade for a while, then descended to the foot of the mountain a little farther around the base. We stopped at a house and got a drink out of a spring that ran out of the Bluff. From here we saw Albert about a mile and a half and returning from another part of the bluff where he had been exploring.

When we got to the wagon, Albert was in town writing a letter to Pa and the boys. It is said that three soldiers shot off about 50 feet of Chimney rock a few years ago, with

Gering is about 1 and $\frac{1}{2}$ years old. It has nearly as much business buildings as Greenwood. It has no railroad but it is the county seat of Scottsbluff County. We bought a few things, such as flour and beans and started for Sidney.

We went about 10 or 12 miles before we camped for dinner. We passed some crops in the valleys that looked better than we had seen since we left Alliance. The sides of the mountains were covered with scattered pines. We crossed the Pumpkinseed crick in the afternoon. It is a small stream about 25 miles long.

We drove down the valley a few miles and came to a town consisting of 4 or 5 stores. We knocked at the stores but they were all closed. Directly we saw a man start out from a farm house. The man was entirely deaf, his boy sold the groceries and told us that there was no one living in the town.

We camped 4 or 5 miles down the valley from town, making a drive of about 20 miles in the afternoon. (there may be a page missing here. A.J.)

We reached Sidney about 8:00 in the morning. Sidney is a little less than North Platte, and looks like it is an old town. It has some large trees along the streets. We had drove about 10 miles from Sidney by noon, and passed through a station with one store, but I do not know the name of it. In the afternoon we passed through Lodgepole. This is a town with about as much business as Greenwood. We had not got out but a few miles from Lodgepole when a fearful wind, with lots of rain and hail, hit. We turned our wagon to the wind, and by a strong effort held our cover on. When we started on the water came down the slews like a flood. The water was running over the railroad tracks in several places, in about 15 minutes after the rain stopped, at one place at the end of a bridge it had washed under the tracks for about 10 feet deep. We measured it with our ridge pole. We waited at this place for the water to go down, safer than fording until the water was down to the bottom of the box. We flagged the road on each side of

the bridge and went on. By borrowing a little dry cedar wood off the side of a fence post we managed to get supper and breakfast. The next morning (Monday) we drove through a little town 2 or 3 miles and then truck it again at Julesburg. This divide was pretty nice and they have some very nice crops.

Julesburg is quite a thriving little town, like all other western towns it is mostly business buildings. Julesburg is situated in the northeast corner of Colorado, at the junction of the Denver branch of the U.P. Railroad with the main line. We ate our dinner 4 or 5 miles southeast of Julesburg (after crossing the bridge on the south Platte near town).

In the afternoon we went on southeast making for Grant. We saw some very fine country in Colorado, then crossed the line to Perkins County, Nebraska. We passed some beautiful land here with fair crops, but it was deep to water. We camped by a corn field in 7 or 8 miles of Grant. The next morning we went through Grant. It is one of the biggest towns we saw. It is the mostly nice land and good crops. We camped in about 8 or 9 miles of Wallace.

(This is where the account ends. I wish it went on! What is the sequel?! E know they went on home, and I know they cam on back to the sandhills in a couple of years See "Trip to the Black Hills in 1891" written by John T. Burton. A.J.)

WE TAKE THE TRAIL

A TRIP IN NORTHWESTERN NEBRASKA

(by Albert Campbell Burton)

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 1897

It is in the early autumn. The lazy days of September are here. The sky is cloudless and the birds are singing their parting song before leaving us for the southern clime.

Nature's mantle of green is still untouched by the hand of frost. We are having that calm, sunny weather for which Western Nebraska is noted.

Such are the conditions under which Harry and Orson, aged 14 and 11 years, and their father, the writer, leave home for an overland trip starting from the southwestern part of the state and going to the northwestern part, for the purpose of a pleasure trip, visit and with expectation of buying and bringing back a small bunch of cattle. Our outfit consists of 2 horses, 2 saddle ponies, a spring wagon, a gun, a dog and a tent and the inevitable "grub box".

Today, about ten o'clock, Harry shot a gun off for the first time, and killed a jackrabbit. This rabbit we fed our dog, which foundered on it, vomiting for sometime and wouldn't eat anything for a day or two, was afraid she would die for a day or two but she got over it but never tried to eat a whole jack at one meal again.

We camped for noon today where there was grass on one side of the road and bare ground on the other, which afforded us a safe place to build a camp fire. This camp was situated in the midst of the sandhills and waving prairie grass.

PAGE 2. A Lonely Hay Camp

After making a short halt, we changed teams and moved on. The boys rode on horseback, as I had my spring wagon heavily loaded and the road was very sandy. We arrived at North Platte about 4:00 p.m., a distance of 28 or 30 miles. Here I sold my load of produce and bought some notions to peddle out on the road, occasionally. We camped in the south part of town and lariat our horses on the grass. After supper, as we wandered down town after dark, we were attracted by sounds like the speaking of a ventriloquist, but found out it was a graphophone being operated from an open window across the street. At this time the graphophone was just coming into use and was quite a curiosity. We went back to our bed in the tent about 10 o'clock.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21st

The sunlight was kissing the hilltops and the long morning shadows were fleeing away before we awoke this morning. It took till noon today to get through with my business in town. We pulled out west of town about a mile to camp for dinner by the side of Buffalo Bill's Ranch. We are told there were 900 acres of alfalfa cut three times on this ranch this year. This afternoon we went about 13 miles up the South Platte river when we began looking for a place to camp where we could get grass and water. Along here almost all the valley is hay land, the most of it already cut; and, not liking to lariat our horses on that which was not cut with consent, we drove a little late and pulled up at a lonely looking "hay camp". Here we found a veritable "house on wheels", in which a woman was getting the evening meal for the haymakers,

PAGE 3. IN A GALE - DREARY THOUGHTS

and singing an old-time tune. I asked her in regard to a camping place and was told it was most likely I could camp near but that I had better wait and ask her husband when he came in from the hay fields. I waited her for almost an hour till it was getting dark before he came in, in the meantime scanning the extent of mowed hay land towards the west, my vision was lost in the distance of it. It was a lonely, quiet and quaint scene. We finally got permission to camp nearby and soon had a blazing campfire. Our camp tonight is a mile west of the little village of Hershey where by the light of a dim lantern I am writing the notes while the boys are wrapped "in the sweet arms of Morpheus".

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

Just as we got up this morning we discovered a large flock of sandhill cranes to the east of us but which were soon scared up by the shot of a gun. Today we passed through Sutherland about noon and laid in a supply of feed and provisions. We also passed the little village of Paxton. About sundown there was quite a strong gale of wind blew up making the dust fly and, as it was sparsely settled place, it made me feel a little nearer homesick than I got on the entire trip. It got very dark being somewhat cloudy and no moon and the grass was eaten off so close there was no feed for our horses. I drove some distance back from the road and near some bluffs to find a camping place but had to go on. The wind was moaning dismally near the bigger bluffs and shrubbery, putting one in mind of a lost spirit. More or less, dreary thoughts seemed to take possession of me, I suppose on account of being away from the family, and tired, dreary surroundings.

PAGE 4. A GRUMBLING WOMAN

It was an hour after dark before we halted. The boys rode off a half mile to a house to find out if we were trespassing. We made our campfire of weeds tonight that flashed and lit up the darkness. It seemed to make us cheerful, as a campfire has a tendency to do to a traveler, and also seemed to have a wild-like fascination about it. I might mention that we passed a house where two pools, fed by water from windmills, which answer as tanks.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

This morning one of our horses was sick but soon recovered. After going about 1½ miles we passed through Ogallala where I attempted to get into the P.O. to drop a card to the folks at home. The office was not open yet, as it was early and we did not want to wait. Still, I did not fail, as I got a post card of a businessman nearby. After driving 3 or 4 miles we stopped at a house to water our teams and fill up our big jugs and was told by a woman that the windmill was out of fix and also that it was 25 or 30 miles to the next place we could get water, as we now had to leave the South Platte and go northwest across a high divide. We felt more or less in a predicament and didn't know but what we would have to drive back 2 or 3 miles to water; but, by hard talking, (which is my trade) I bought the right to pump water by hand by giving the woman 10 cents in trade, but was cautioned, strictly, to not water in the tank. I also treaded her out of some biscuits and got her to feed my dog a little while she continued to grumble about the bother all the while but took the trouble to charge me for everything. This woman is the only person that treated us shabbily on the entire trip.

PAGE 5. A BARREN REGION

About a mile further we angled northwest up a long canyon and finally came upon a high divide between the two rivers. This divide is about as deserted, high and barren-looking as I have seen in the state, being 250 to 300 feet to water, covered only by the short stem buffalo grass which at this early season was dead and dry. A wagon load of hunters passed us here, evidently

some of the Nimrods from town. We traveled a good many miles before we seen anything but the old ruined wall of some old sod "shack" of some drouthstricken settler. I often think what a history clusters about these ruins if they could only speak. We found a settler in about 15 miles from the house where the old woman lived who predicted a much longer drive before we would find water, for the sake of a bit of the "filthy lucre". We pitched camp here for noon and were allowed to water our horses. The water here was so scarce on account of the lack of wind to run the mill that the 2 little girls said they expected to have to drive their cattle to the Platte river for water soon, a distance of 12 or 14 miles, unless the wind blew very hard. I thought of the contrast of people in accommodating a traveler and it was not to the old woman's credit. We kept on the high divide this afternoon till about 4 P.M. when we passed another settler and then turned down a canyon known as "Ash Hollow", which followed down to the North Platte river. We camped near the bridge across the North Platte and so near the river we could hear the murmur of the water way down in our little tent at night. We went about 30 miles today.

PAGE 6. FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24 CRYSTAL WATERS TUNGED WITH GREEN

This morning after crossing the long river bridge (over a half mile in length) and going on land a mile further, we came to Lewellen P.O. and store connection or rather "Lewellen Store and Post Office" as the sign reads over the door. We went on a mile or 2 and laid in a good supply of feed, oats and corn, as we expected to soon reach the range country where we could get neither. Grain is raised under irrigation from the waters of the Blue Creek. This is a shallow stream and clear as crystal. It is a beautiful stream coming down from the great sandhills and bordered only by the green prairie grass and ??, there being no trees or shrubbery. We crossed this stream going westward a short distance, where we now turned north and drove out on the divide, a rolling, sandy country. We camped by an old deserted sod house where we could build a campfire against the walls which served as a chimney to draw up the smoke and there is less danger of getting the grass afire. Shortly after dinner we came to a big frame house where Petersons P.O. is kept. We now angled northwest on the high divide but near the breaks of the Blue then forded it and followed up the narrow bottom on the east side. Tonight we camped, just for the fun of it, on the very bring of a clear little brook, fed by a big spring only a hundred yards or so away. We were again lulled to sleep by the murmur of running water. The grass is eaten off pretty short here as there is a herd of nine hundred cattle ranging here. I have peddled but little the past three days, for the skies are so fair, the gentle zephyrs so soft and the air so balmy that my thought refuses to dwell on business and I give up to natures desire and rest and sights to see and to the anticipation of our visit ahead. We traveled about 28 or 30 miles today.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25 A GRAND VIEW

This morning we passed the head of the Blue, crossed a sandy divide of 3 or 4 miles and came suddenly into view of beautiful luiscent Lake, one of our objective points, as the boys wished to see it, though I had seen it some eight years before, still I longed to look on the bosom of its bright waters again. It was in the early morning yet and the shadows of the green hills were thrown across it, shimmering and ever changing in the sunlight as old sol mounted higher in the heavens. Its placid waters are flecked with innumerable wild fowl. Some snow white ? are near the eastern shore, nearer are some gentle kind which have come down to slake their thirst standing here deep in its limpid waters; while, across on the opposite side are some hunters who occasionally fire a shot at the fowl. But, I am too far distant to tell the result. I leave the boys and dog strolling along the shore, while I mount a horse and ride back to a little raise where I can get a more commanding view of the lake to do some sketching. From here in the distance to the westward I get the glimpse of another lake, outline to the east and

south, standing out against the horizon are bald, barren sandhills, while to the east a short distance is a flock of great sandhill cranes circling about preparatory to lighting. It is a fair scene. Now the mist of morning is slowly moving away from over the lake ??? had been lifted by unseen hands formed

PAGE 7. A SHOT AT FOWL - RESULT A DEAD WOLF

???? is gleaming o'er its bosom. After finishing my rough sketch, I rode down to the wagon and then followed up the cranes. I took the gun and went on foot, crawling about 40 rods so to keep out of their sight, got a long distance shot at them. They all seemed to take wing and I was not a little surprised to see what appeared to be one lying dead on the ground on the spot where they had been, and was still more surprised when I found it to be a dead coyote, which some cowboy had scalped for the bounty paid on them. The boys were looking eagerly out of the wagon at this procedure with the keen curiosity of youth. From here we went north in sight of Caland Lake. On the north shore are a beautiful grove of dense young trees, probably 20 or 30 feet high, where 8 years before was but prairie. Her we stopped at a sod shack and inquired of a woman to a Mr. Miners. She said it was two miles of rough sandy road, and I found she was right. I think we were two hours driving it and came near getting lost. The loose sand in many places came 3 to 5 inches above the bottom of the wheels, and in a place or so I got out and walked to save the team, though we had on a good sized team and an almost empty spring wagon. The boys rode the saddle ponies to lighten our load also. One place I had to walk and hole up the wagon to keep it from turning over. One place the wind was digging out a hole in the road. These chopfills are found on an almost barren desert of shifting sand.

PAGE 8. ON THE CHOPHILLS

We struck Miner's Ranch about 11:30 A.M. and, on inquiring, our road was told the nearest way would be through the chopfills but that we were likely to get lost and that we had better go a longer route by way of Lakeside. We were now several miles out of our way - on the road to Lakeside. We were urged to stop and wait for dinner, though it was sometime till that hour. We went on a mile or so and passed another ranch where we were again invited to dinner; but, we went on a short distance and halted for noon. We have been going over the chopfills since leaving Miners and came near getting lost between their ranch and the next, stayed only a couple miles after ?? This afternoon we stuck some nice big valleys, the first being "Calvins Ranch", which is owned by the Crete Nursery Co. here and run on a large scale. Here we watered our horses and bought some bread, I think, about 4 P.M. We met two fellows relative of mine, was told he was Thompson, Henry Thompson. We found afterwards that they were taking cattle to Calvin's Ranch at the rate of a train load a day till two thousand head should be taken there and that the Crete Nursery Co. had just made a deal in Wyoming for eighteen thousand cattle, representing, at current prices, about half a million dollars and were placing one to two thousand in place. We pitched a camp near a ranch in a lovely looking valley tonight, having traveled by putting in a long day, perhaps, 15 miles.

PAGE 9. SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 26 COME NEAR GETTING LOST

This morning we rose early as we expected to reach our destination today. We passed Blacks Ranch and got to Thompsons just as they were finishing breakfast, though the sun was two hours high, for the ranchman is not noted as being an early riser. As we drive up, the family came out to meet us frontier-type. I spoke and then, on asking them whom they thought I was, Mrs. Thompson says "I believe you are one of the Burtons" and followed this remark by grasping my hand, followed by Mr. Thompson and the girls. They urged us to stop, but, after standing and talking 15 or 20 minutes, we moved

on. From here we are in sight of a part of the little village of "Lakeside". There is a beautiful valley view toward the west from here bordered by ranges of big sandhills about 300 feet high, which gives it a picturesque view. We went eastward along the railroad when we were not turned aside to go around some high sandhill. We passed Browns Ranch arriving at the little station of Ellsworth about 10 A.M. Here we again inquired our road for the last time before going through the hills to my brother's 7 or 8 miles, as there was no other house and we were not in sight of any habitation till we were almost to his place. I killed ? on this road. It was with difficulty that we found our way through these hills, some of the worst sandhills I had seen. We wondered time and again if we were on the right road. It is a serious thing to get lost in these sandhills, for we might wonder in some direction for a day or two without finding water or habitation.

PAGE 10. ARRIVING AT OUR DESTINATION

We arrived at Mr. Bell's, my brother's father-in-law, whose house is near his own, just about 12 o'clock. The first person I saw was my brother's wife, who came out to meet us in the yard. My brother, Mr. Bell and my father, who had come here to meet us, were down in the corral looking at a thorobred bull they had just got home. My brother hitched up his team and we went out to his place, about a half a mile, though you could see nothing of this house or ranch till we were in a quarter of a mile of a it, or less. We were now at our destination and were feeling happy at the thought of a good visit at my brother's cattle ranch in the great sandhill range country. After dinner John and I took a couple of his saddle horses and rode out over his ranch. We got off our horses after a while and talked over old times till dark. As the house was not large and the fleas pretty bad, we stretched our little tent in the yard in which to sleep.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

Old sol was high on his daily course before we got up this morning. The high sandhills keep him out of sight for some time in the morning. Perhaps this is the reason the rancher is not an early riser. It is a beautiful, calm autumnal morning and we are anticipating a good time today, as we are to ride out to see the summer range and the big herd of cattle. We took the spring wagon and two saddle horses, father and the boys accompanying us, and went 3 ½ or 4 miles to the west before we got to the summer ranch, which consists only of a well, windmill, a big watering tank and the

PAGE 11. GALLOPING OVER THE RANGE

range of green grass about. It is a beautiful sight to see these sleek cattle taking their midmorning drink and afternoon rest, some standing and others lying down, but all having such a satisfied look, disturbed by the bellowing of the herd bulls. John and I got on the saddle horses and rode around through the herd while he pointed to the cows I would probably take back with me. After spending two or three hours looking at the herd, we went back to John's place, he and I riding the horses most of the way. He insisted on us galloping out about two miles over a somewhat sandy road to show me what wind his horses had. At the end of this distance they were scarcely drawing a long breath and John and I each weighed about 220 lbs. This afternoon we again rode out over his home ranch taking along a shot gun. I shot a jack rabbit from the saddle but the horse wheeled in the opposite direction so quickly that I cam near being unseated. Up the valley a little further I killed a grouse.

Tonight long after dark John went out to milk but his wife playfully said I should not go with him as we had stayed out so late the night before - talking. Father was bothered with the toothache tonight.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

Today John, the two boys and I, all mounted horses and rode to the herd and brought about a dozen cows and as many calves back to wean. We had some little racing to "cut them out" of the herd and we found John and his trained horse more than a match

PAGE 12. THE RANCHMAN'S MUSIC

for all the rest of us. When we got home we put the calves up and turned the cows outside and then the "ranch music" began. The calves inside and the cows outside bellowed incessantly all evening, all night and all the next day and into the next night before I noticed a halt. Some of them grew hoarse but still bellowed. The first night I could sleep but little, as the walls of our tent did not seem to temper the sound and they were often in a few yards of us, but my brother and wife never seemed to notice it.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

Another fine morning, but the sun got the start of us again. Well, today we are to have a genuine rancher's "roundup", and are to brand 50 or 60, see 50 or 60 head of cattle lassoed and branded. I and the boys had never witnessed any branding and as we expected to keep cattle now, it was with great anticipation we awaited the event. The roundup is to be at Mr. Bell's where he has a fine large corral fenced in tightly eight feet high, for it takes a good corral to hold cattle when the branding begins. Ah! The cattle cannot so much as see the big sandhills over this fence and I guess they won't get away? The cattle were corralled by John's brother-in-law, George Atcheson, before we got there, but we had to turn out 25 or 30 head to make necessary room inside, as there were over 300 head altogether. Now, the lasso circles around and settles gracefully over a calf's head and almost simultaneously another encircles it hind legs. Now he is quickly stretched out tightly between two snubbing posts.

PAGE 13. A "ROUNDUP"

A quick strong jerk brings his hind legs out from under him, he is given a push in front, while the rope is choking off his wind and he is down. John sits complacently on his neck. George holds a hind leg while Mr. Bell puts on the burning brand, while I wait on him. The smoke rises with that peculiar smell of burning hair and scorched flesh and the calf bellows like it last time had come, while its mother getting up close shaking her head nervously while her eyes glare at us while it goes on.

Mr. Bell chews his tobacco rapidly as he plays the fiery brand, but looks like he enjoys his work. John and George seem to relish this rough work, though they get many a hard jerk. My two boys look on with the excitement of youth. Father looks on leisurely, but to me this seems like cruel work and while I enjoy the excitement, pity the helpless brute, but I know it is necessary to be done and I try to learn all I can doing some of the branding and lassoing. The boys lasso a few small calves after throwing the rope, perhaps, 25 times or more to the calf and sometimes catching some other than the one they are after so that John and George have to take off the lasso and letting go a lassoed animal is still worse job than lassoing one. Now the big ranch bell is ringing on the tall post sounds above the din and noise of the cattle, announcing dinner. Mr. Bell fixes his fire which is in a stove inside the corral, then father and I go with him to dinner, while the boys go home with John. After dinner we resume the branding till past the middle of the afternoon. This has been a big day for my boys and me.

PAGE 14. THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 30 STARTING HOME WITH CATTLE

Today we are to start home with a little bunch of cattle, but it is 11:00 A.M. before we are ready. John mounted his saddle horse "Jim" and accompanied us most of the day for fear our cows which had been taken from their calves would make a break and go back. John and the boys start on horseback with the cattle while father and I ride in the wagon. We pushed the cattle along today so as to get them as far from home and also to get them as tired as possible to prevent a bolt at night. We had one calf along but little more than week old that I thought sure would five out in an hour or two and I suggested hauling it, but father thought it would stand it, and it did and did not have to be hauled the entire trip. We went nearly due south today right through the chophills, taking a shorter route than the way we came, in fact, we were on a different road over two thirds of the way home. In about 3 or 4 miles we crossed the railroad and after shutting the gates of the R.R. fence we felt little safer about the ways. We traveled on till about two or three o'clock before we halted for dinner among the wild looking sandhills while our cattle grazed. We had a kind of farewell talk with John as we ate our dinner, as he expected to return home in a couple of hours at least. We passed through what is known as "Butcher's Valley" today. It takes its name from the water, when low, in the lagoons, which looks exactly like water stained with blood. I shot a wild duck here and wounded another.

PAGE 15. "BUTCHER'S VALLEY"

About an hour by sun John bid us farewell and started on a fast gallop towards home, as he had 13 miles of rough road. We got to Lotspeich Bros. Ranch about dusk, having traveled about 16 miles with the cattle since 11 A.M. We got permission to put the cattle in a cattle yard, and pitched our tent near it, to be on the lookout list the cows should break out and attempt to go home. Shortly after pitching camp, we heard some disturbance in the corral, which I found to be our bull and another big fellow attempting to fight through a kind of window in the corral. We had a late supper and cooked and ate it by the light of the campfire, as our lantern failed us soon after starting on our trip in going out. The Lotspeich boys came out and talked with us around the campfire till a late hour. They told us of incidents of western ranch life in that slow leisured way of the "cowboy", as they lay in a lazy attitude on the grass. Our tent was very small and as father was large, weighing near three hundred, we found that, even by lying it to the most advantage, that we completely filled it. We slept side by side, putting the boys in the middle for fear they would be uncovered. It was with difficulty I could get into the tent, as father lay next to the low door and with still more difficulty that I could turn over in bed, as one of the main tent poles stood close against my ribs, while the other tent pole came up

PAGE 15. A TENT FULL

against father. They served one good purpose, however, and that was to keep us from getting out from under the quilt so badly, though often the quilt would only cover half my body. I never told father but what I had plenty of cover, as I wanted him to be covered well. I slept with my coat on so as to keep warm. When father or I turned over in bed, it made the boys wiggle some in their slumbers. Sometimes I found them up against the tent above our heads as far as they could get. Tow or three times when I got up of a morning before father, I would be amused to see his feet sticking a foot or two outside the tent, but as he kept his shoes on, he probably did not notice it.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1st

Today we had to most trying tie on our entire trip. About daylight I got up and opened the gate of the corral and turned out our cattle to graze, as they

had had nothing all night. Well those cows started out briskly on the back track. Harry had gone after the horses in a big pasture. I told Orié to head them off, thinking it could be easily done, but they got way from him. I ran after them but soon gave out and turned back to see if Harry was coming with the horses, but he was out of hearing a good half a mile off. I rushed down to the ranch and woke up the sleepy ranchers and asked them if I could get a horse of them, but their horses were out in the big pasture. I then hurried to meet Harry, but he could not catch our horses and we had

PAGE 16. OUR CATTLE BOLTS - A RACE

To drive them down and into the corral before we could catch them. I now jumped on a horse; also, one of the boys mounted and we started out after those runaway cows, in a rapid gallop. I told the other boy to follow as soon as he could get a horse. We did not overtake them till they had gotten near about two miles. Now the excitement began for I found they were determined not to turn back. The boys were up by this time but they were not used enough to riding to help much. They had no whips for their horses which were rather lazy. I lost my patience for the first time on the trip and the cows went on in spite of us. I yelled myself hoarse at the boys and cattle. I got after the boys' horses and whipped them up to put life in them and I did it well. I and my horse "split the air" as we never did before or since. In fact, "pandemonium reigned" for awhile. The race waged fiercely for awhile for the boys had finally got awakened to the situation and were riding fast. I began to think to turn them now was impossible and my thoughts flew as fast as my horse for a minute; then, I "struck an idea" which was that if we couldn't turn them in a minute or so more to let them go and push them so as to tire them out and turn them afterwards, for I couldn't keep up my present gate much longer, as my horse was panting already, but just at this time, the race began to turn in our favor. We finally got them halted and after some bother got them turned back toward camp and I tell you we did not allow the "grass

PAGE 17. WE GET LOST IN THE HILLS

to grow under their feet". When we returned we found father at our camp looking as if nothing had happened, though he was out of sign and did not know what luck we had had till we got nearly back to our camp over the hills. I now began to get our tardy breakfast while the boys stayed with the cattle mounted on their horses. I shot a rabbit near the camp this morning, also, a grouse later today.

John gave us a direction of our road as best he could and we, also, drew off a rough draft of a map of the road as we had about 25 miles more of the sandhills to go through a long valley without a road we bore too much eastward, but we swung back. About the middle of the afternoon we came to a well, windmill and corral. The mill was running but there was no sign of any habitation near. We did not know what to make of this as according to John's we were to strike a settler here, before we passed some watering places similar to this. We thought we must have missed the ranch, but couldn't think it possible we had traveled far enough to reach one of the watering places after going out of our road. We were afraid we were lost and it was not a pleasant thought, as we had but a small amount of provisions and a bunch of cattle that wanted to run back. We were not right sure that we could even find our way back easily as these hills are impossible for an empty wagon, except you wind through the valleys and gaps between. These hills extend over several large counties and we might go, perhaps, days without finding water in some direction and it was very hot in the middle of the day, yet. We filled up every vessel we thought would hold water and thought better camp here where we had corral and water for the cattle, and if we went on we would about exhaust our supply of water in getting supper and breakfast and not get very far either. I thought it possible someone might

come to this watering place also of whom we could inquire our road. I had some leisure; so, I thought hard. I wondered what the great detective, Sherlock Holmes, would have done, whether he could have found a clew as to where we were under the circumstances and to I thought I would go at it detective fashion, too. There were the ruins of an old sod shack and stable nearby, and I went out there to examine and see if perhaps I might find a name on some old newspaper or perhaps some initials cut in the wall of pieces of wood on the old windowsills, as John had given us the names of the settlers along here. I had already looked for initials on the windmill tower and corral but found nothing. Well, I looked about the old ruined house and yard and some old newspapers but found nothing, but finally, I found on a piece of an old goods box, the initials E.L.P. and, as Putney was the name of the settler, we were to have come to, I concluded we had missed him and had come on to one of his summer watering places. I finally found on another piece of box the name of E. L. Putney so we were quite sure

PAGE 18. FILLING UP ON WATER

Now we were on some of his premises but which we did not know, and it bothered us as to how to calculate our course some. We put our horses in a sod stable, our cattle in the corral, or on part, as it was double, and in the other we stretched our tent, as it was somewhat cool and windy this evening, and the corral was made of tight boards and sod walls. I went to bed tonight in an uneasy frame of mind.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2

The boys took care of the horses and herded of mornings and sometimes of evenings, while I acted as "cook and milkmaid", I was generally out milking by daylight, as I had to milk 4 cows and one we just broke while at John's. I had to lasso some of the cows before I could milk them. One of the boys got fuel for the campfire and waited on me. Father helped us in the way of driving the spring wagon most of the time, which gave me an opportunity to get in the back end and lie down and read, sleep or take a much needed rest a spell each day, as I am no rugged. To resume: This morning we filled up everything full of water, as we were yet somewhat doubtful about being on the right road: however, in 2 or 3 miles we came to another watering place and about this same distance further on we came to another, where, also, a settler lived. This was different from John's description, as the settler was to have

PAGE 19. THE INCIDENT OF A CAMP KETTLE

lived at the first well. I sent a boy up to the house and the woman said we were on the right road but we were yet puzzled. At noon we came to still another watering place. There were a big drove of cattle here and our cattle got all mixed together. It took us nearly a half hour to get them separated. We pitched camp near the well. Another "outfit" was camped about a hundred yards off. From this camp a horseman rode up while we were getting dinner. He looked at us suspiciously and asked us where we had camped last night. I told him I guess from some names I found there I guessed it was Putneys place. He acted, I thought, rather sullen and asked us if we used the corral and some other questions. I finally asked him his name and he said it was Putney, which surprised me. There is a little incident connected with this I guess I will relate. On our campfire we had a pot that was cracked badly and had an iron hasp on it which we had picked up at our camp last night, as it was thrown out to one side and of course thrown away (unless someone on the road like us, who were a little short of cooking utensil) would have thought of picking it up. I think the sight pot made Putney more suspicious of us and thought perhaps we molested other things there. We found from him now an explanation of our road. He had moved away from the first watering place and

built a house at the last one which changed everything about. This moving onto fresh territory with cattle is as common her almost as it was with

PAGE 20. A GALLOP O'ER THE GREEN VALLEYS

Abraham of old with his flocks and herds. Putney was looking after 350 horses besides his cattle. We were told it was 14 miles to the next water place on the Blue Creek. After dinner Putney said he would help us start our cattle out a ways. We didn't know but what he would dry to halt us while he examined his property where we camped last night, as he looked sullen, but we were no molested. At this noon camp some men were loading up a bull in a wagon and were going our way, who told us to follow their trail. Today or yesterday one, while in doubt about our road, I saw a man a mile to the west in a hay field. I rode out to him on horseback but did not get much satisfaction, but thought we were all right. I enjoyed this gallop over the big green valley, this beautiful autumn day. How slow our cattle and "prairie schooner" seemed to move at this distance, as I turned back, and how small and insignificant they looked against those mighty sandhills as a background.

We did not expect to get any water from today noon till next day at about 10 A.M., but we traveled on late so as to get as near to water as possible, as we expected to drive to water tomorrow before we could breakfast. We were still pushing those tired cattle long after the "curtains of night were pinned back by the stars". I spoke once or twice of camping, but father insisted on going on. We had traveled an hour after dark when I saw signs of cattle trails and I concluded we were not far from the Blue,

PAGE 20. I REACH OUT MY HAND TO DEAD CARCASS

as I thought these trails led there. Father did not seem to think so, but as soon as I saw a great rift in the dark hills before us, I knew it was the valley of the creek. Father seemed doubtful yet as we did no think we had traveled far enough yet. It was a relief to think we were so near water after going through a veritable desert. I rode off towards the west following the cattle trails as best I could, for it was a dark night, thinking I might strike a ranch sooner than going on the road. I rode a half a mile or more when the sandhills came to an abrupt end, and to where the low, wide, happy valley began. I found myself at the mouth of a canyon, and as I peered over it looked like some kind of dead carcasses lying there almost at my feet. I was not satisfied, as it was very dark, so I got off my horse and led him down a precipitous place, and when getting near enough reached out my hand and felt the hair of on of the dead animals. They were cattle, I think, which had died and been dragged and dumped in there. I could see the twinkle of two lights off at quite a distance down in the valley from here; but, as I could see none near, I mounted and rode back to our "cavalcade" which had halted to await my explanation. We concluded to go on and follow the road. In a mole or more from here we came to where the road was fenced up with no way of going around to join our road again. A ling seemed to beckon to us off the west about a half mile; so, I rode off there to inquire our way, but I found it nearly a mile before I reached it. I found an enormous herd of cattle, mostly lying down by the side of the road and to the north. I found the

PAGE 21. FORDING THE BLUE - OUR CATTLE TRY TO MIX

Light was in a house across the creek which was about two rods wide here. I rode up to the bank and gave a loud "halloo", but was answered in a low quiet tone from just across the stream near a barn where two men had come down to meet me, probably apprised of my coming by the barking of their dogs. They said we should have to come by their ranch and ford the creek, as the road had been changed. I rode back and brought up the rest of the party. One of

the ranchmen had mounted a horse and met us so as to help keep our cattle from mixing. It took all the energy of three of us on horses and one boy on foot to keep them apart. I almost gave up hope at time for if they had got together it was so dark we could not have told them apart, but we finally succeeded. Father had driven on and forded the creek under direction of the other ranchman. We now had to ford our cattle, and a creek was something but a few of them had ever seen. Just on the very bank of the stream on the farther side was a gate that went into a corral. After a good deal of whipping and loud hollering, as only a cowboy could do, we got them across and the gate closed behind them. I felt much relieved now, thought it was probably after 10 o'clock and much to do yet. It was near midnight before we had eaten our supper and were ready to go to bed. In the meantime the ranchmen were lying about our camp on the ground by our campfire till we were ready to retire. We had traveled about 15 miles since 2 o'clock P.M.

PAGE 22. SUNDAY, OCTOBER 3 A LETTER FROM HOME

I thought "our host", the ranchman, would charge us pretty well for the use of his corral and all his bother, but he refused pay pioneerlike. Today, we traveled south across the divide 9 or 10 miles where we struck the North Platte River, where we camped for dinner, as we didn't want to stop long to cook, I lassoed a cow and milked her and this warm mild and some bread made our midday meal, as it did on some other occasions on the road. This piece of road we traveled over this forenoon and afternoon is all the road that we passed over going out till we got in 35 miles of home. Our camp today noon is near the river and overlooking the valleys of the Blue and the North Platte. It is a pretty stretch of country. We watered our horses in the river, as we didn't camp for dinner today till nearly the middle of the afternoon so as to get water. We only got 3 or 4 miles this afternoon and camped at Lewellen Store and Post Office where I got the first word from home. All were well and I felt relieved, as it has been 13 dys since I left home, where I bought some provisions. I got our cattle in a corral here.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 4th

This morning the boys let one of our horses get loose, the only one that is hard to catch. I sent Orie after her but she kept on going along the road towards home, as of to cross the North Platte bridge. I mounted another horse and, by the time I got up to them, they were about 1 ½ miles from camp and I got the mare "headed off" just as she got to the bridge. I managed to catch her, and not being in very good humor

PAGE 23. CATCHING A HORSE

At losing so much time, I got on her, leaving the other horse with Orie, and rode back to camp in a very short time. While near the bridge after this horse, I saw a hawk make a grab and catch a live blackbird.

Nothing unusual happened today. We were traveling down the North Platte River on the north side which we were to keep for about 90 miles. It was late before we found a place we could get to corral our cattle for the night. We camped near a house where a man was batching while his wife was away. We camped back west of the house not far from the river and in sight of its wide sweep of water and sandbars. The Platte is a wide (about half a mile in middle) river with scarcely any bank. Harry went over north across a small field where there was another house where he managed to buy some bread. We have had hard work the last few days buying bread as fast as we could eat it.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 5

Nothing unusual happened today. It was late hour and after dark before we found a place to corral our cattle. Just as we were putting up the cattle,

one of the calves got scared and took a run out in a pasture and it took two or three of us sometime to run it in. There was no good grass here for our horses; so, after corralling the cattle, we drove on eastward about a quarter of a mile and camped near a school house. Tonight a long legged "son of a ranchman" not overly bright rode up to our camp on a thirty dollar saddle and a fifteen dollar horse, which is much in vogue among cowboys.

PAGE 24. A THIRTY DOLLAR SADDLE ON A FIFTEEN DOLLAR HORSE

We had hay for a bed tonight, a luxury we didn't often get to enjoy

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 6

This morning two cowboys rode up to our camp hunting some runaway steers. The School ma'am, a bright, pretty looking girl, came to her school before we got away. Today we came across a boy about 15 years old, which was hobbling around with one wooden leg hunting grouse with a 6-shot gun. It was plain from his talk that he was a "Son of a Gun". He rode some distance with us. I saw some calves today branded with a double heart brand, which makes the prettiest brand I ever seen. Today we went through a gate into a pasture that was 9 miles long. We met some men driving a large bunch of cattle, probably five or six hundred head, at least. One of the cowboys could yell as loud as anyone I ever heard, I think. Today, I saw a coyote ahead by the road where the road ran along near the river. It did not seem to be afraid and slipped into a patch of tall grass and stunted willows where it looked impossible for it to hide, but it did so. I jumped out with my gun and scared it out and got a shot at it not over 15 steps away broadside. It went off sniffing at its side. I only had in No. 8 quail shot so did not kill it but don't think it will be so bold again soon. Tonight as grass was poor and we camped in a big pasture we left the cattle loose. Our camp is near the bank of the river where there is a deserted house but a mill and pump still used by travelers where we got water.

PAGE 25. THURSDAY, OCTOBER 7 FORDING THE RIVER - A BATH

Our cattle were so tired they had scarcely moved during the night. This forenoon we forded the river with wagon, cattle and all. We were not far above the bridge and in sight of it but we allowed the cattle would be afraid of it and we could save a mile or more in distance; so, we forded where we saw others had crossed. There was water only over about one third of the river bed, the rest being dry, caused, it is said, by irrigation. After crossing we halted for noon. There was only a small patch of grass here beside a corn field; so, we had to herd the cattle turn about. After crossing we halted for noon. There was only a small patch of grass here beside a corn field; so, we had to herd the cattle turn about. After dinner the boys took a bath in the river. It was nowhere deep enough to swim in but it was warm clear and a nice clean sandy bottom. After the boys got through I went and took a bath, also, going behind a "toehold" island to get out of sight of the public road. After dinner I bought some corn for the horses of a young bachelor between two cornfields this afternoon. The fields came up so close there was only room for a wagon to pass, and, of course, we couldn't keep the cattle out of the corn. All we could do was to rush them along. However, the most of the cattle had never tasted corn and would not eat it. There was a house near here, The family looking at us as we passed through the field. I expected them to complain, but they didn't. This afternoon we came to a big irrigation ditch. One of our cows stepped out into it, as we had been used to doing in the ponds and shallow lakes, but she

PAGE 26. A COW TAKES A BATH

Went under so only the top of her head could be seen. I called back to the wagon for a rope, as I expected some bother getting her out, as the sides of

the ditch were nearly perpendicular and the water about 6 feet deep. She had went in just above the low bridge and I was afraid she would lodge under it, while just below this a few rods was a flume where the water poured over a dam about 6 or 8 feet high, but she scrambled out finally. We passed through Hershey this evening and camped about a quarter of a mile east of town. Soon after camping a man came out and wanted to know if we were going to build a campfire there, as he was afraid as we were camped on the grass.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 8

It is chilly this morning for the first time on our entire trip. While the boys are feeding the horses, I take some camp utensils and start out afoot about 100 yards near the railroad where I can build a campfire in safety as it was burned off along here. If someone had some along they would have thought I was crazy cooking out here this chilly morning. We did without a fire last night. About the time I had breakfast ready, father and the boys drove up.

We camped at noon within 2 miles of North Platte City. After dinner I and father drove on to town as we had some business to do and let the boys bring the cattle. We told the boys to go on through town with the cattle and, if they didn't see us, to go on towards home and we would catch them, but we were delayed in town and did not catch

PAGE 27. GETTING HOME

them till nearly sundown. They had got out of the bottom and were up on the high divide, known as the "JACK MOON FLATS". We looked up a camping place right away. It is still cloudy and chilly.

SATURDAY OCTOBER 9

We expect to get home today; so, we got up early. Our cattle has had no water since sometime yesterday afternoon and will probably get none till we get home this evening, as we are going through a barren sandhill country with few wells, and those over 200 feet deep. About 2 hours by sun I and father drove on ahead and reached home about an hour by sun.

My wife was just reading a card I had written her at Lewellen Post Office 6 days before. I had not told her father was with us and she and the children at home were greatly and agreeably surprised at his coming.

This ends our trip to the "Lake Country", as we term it, after cattle. Father and I felt like resting when we got to the end of our journey but the boys seemed as fresh as ever as they got in with the cattle about sundown. All in all it was a pleasant trip, as we had perfect weather up till the last two days.