1856-Eli Augustus Griffin

YEAR/NAME OF EMIGRANT

56GRIØ2

SURVEY ID NUMBER

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COED - Census of Overland Emigrant Documents
PAGE 1: Document Description

Document ID: (56GRI Ø2)

Emigrant's last name: Griffin
first & middle names: Eli Augustus
Title: Eli A. Griffin diary April 24 - June 21, 1856

Surveyed by: MJS46 Mary Jo Sprague
Date surveyed: 09-26-96

Year of journey: 1856
Year written (if different):
Page numbers surveyed: 1-19
Type of document: D (D - diary; J - journal: R - reminiscence; L - letter; N - newspaper article; G - guide; A - autobiography; O - other)
Items in document: M (use all applicable codes)

M - daily mileages **D** - emigrant drawings **P** - emigrant maps **Q** - maps by editor **K** - biographical sketch
I - Introduction **B** - bibliography **N** - Index **X** - photos **F** - footnotes/commentaries

Published? (Y/N): N
Location of original document: Michigan Historical Collection, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

For PUBLISHED documents only:
Published in:

Publisher:
Year published:
Place published:
Editor's (or translator's) last name:
first & middle names:
Notes about publication history:

For UNPUBLISHED documents only:
Notes about format of document: Photocopy of handwritten manuscript

Notes on back? —

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Platte River Road Narratives, Entry #1556 - Merrill Mattes

COED - Census of Overland Emigrant Documents
PAGE 2: Journey Description

Document ID: (56 GRI Ø2) MJS 46

Emigrant's occupation: _____ Origin: _____

Age: _____ M/F: M With family? (Y/N) N No. in family: _____

Departed from (code): J5 Arrived at (code): M1

Date of departure: 04-25-56 Date of arrival: 06-17-56 (use form mm/dd/yy)

Party: _____

Mode of travel: W (one code only: **W** - wagons; **P** - packing: **L** - passenger lines; **H** - handcart; **X** - other)

Number of wagons at departure: _____

Number of people at departure: _____ total _____ men _____ women _____ children

Draft animals of departure: _____ oxen _____ mules _____ horses _____ other (use X or a number)

Other animals: _____ (**H** - horses; **C** - cattle; **S** - sheep; **P** - pigs; **F** - fowl; **D** - dogs; **X** - other)

Guidebook used by emigrant (enter either a title, or an author and title, if given):

_____

Routes: 1A 1E 1H 1K ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ (use codes from the trail maps)

Notes on back? _____

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COED - Census of Overland Emigrant Documents

PAGE 3: Survey of Names (page 1 of 1)

Document ID: (56 GRI 02) MJS46

Last name	First names	Age	M/F	Origin	Party	Page	Date (mm/dd)	Codes 1	Codes 2
Derby			M			5	05-06		
Butterfield			M			5	05-07		
Company	James			Galena	James Co.	7	05-14		
Foote			M	Chicago		17	06-09		L

CODES for column 1:

- **A** - birth
- **B** - death, illness
- **C** - death, accident
- **D** - death, murder
- **E** - death, other/unknown
- **F** - name on grave
- **G** - marriage (*)
- **H** - registered name
- **I** - name on roster
- **J** - turned back
- **K** - traveling east

CODES for column 2:

- **L** - capt. of party
- **M** - guide of party
- **N** - military
- **O** - govt. surveyor/explorer
- **P** - trader
- **Q** - non-immigrant
- **R** - Black
- **S** - Indian
- **T** - Hispanic
- **U** - non-US citizen
- **V** - Mormon
- **W** - joined other party or left party

Codes may not apply to all names. Use up to 2 codes in each column, if multiple codes apply.

*For marriages, bracket the spouses' names and number the couples sequentially.

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COED - Census of Overland Emigrant Documents
PAGE 4: Survey of Locations (page 1 of 2)

Document ID: (56GRIØ2) MJ546

Location	Page	Date
Winter Quarters ruins of Mormon village	1	04-25-56
Elkhorn river - Pappea Creek 2 . 04-26-56	2	04-27
Platte river	3	05-01
Shell Creek	4	05-02
Loup Fork	4	05-03
Lone Tree	8	05-16
Crab Creek	9	05-19
Scotts Bluffs	9	05-19
Chimney Rock	9	05-19
Spring Creek	9	05-21
Fort Laramie	10	05-23
Independence Rock	13	06-01
Sage Creek	13	06-02
Devils Gate	13	06-02
Sweetwater river	14	06-02
Ice Springs	14	06-03
Mormon Cut-off	15	06-05
Rocky Mountains	15	06-06
Fremont Peak	15	06-06
Little Sandy creek	15	06-06
Big Sandy River	16	06-07
Table Rock	16	06-07
Great Basin	16	06-07
Green river	16	06-08

COED - Census of Overland Emigrant Documents
PAGE 4: Survey of Locations (page 2 of 2)

Document ID: (56GRIØ2) MJS46

Location	Page	Date
Blacks Fork	16	06-09
Hams Fork	17	06-10
Mud Creek	17	06-10
Fort Bridger	17	06-11
Bear river	18	06-13
Sulphur Creek	18	06-13
Echo Creek	18	06-14
Weber River	19	06-15

COED - Census of Overland Emigrant Documents

PAGE 5: Indian Encounters (page 1 of 1)

Document ID: (56 GRI Ø2) MJS46

CODE	Tribe name (leave blank if not mentioned)	Page	Date
D	Omaha	1	04-24
I	Omaha	2	04-27 *
K	Pawnees	3	05-01
D	Pawnees	4	05-03
D	Sioux	10	05-23
I	Crow	12	05-29 **

CODES (use up to 3 for each entry)

- **A** - attacked
- **B** - begged
- **C** - robbed
- **D** - saw Indians
- **E** - imagined sighting
- **F** - worried about Indians
- **G** - were warned about
- **H** - traded with Indians
- **I** - other
- **J** - paid toll to Indians
- **K** - helped by Indians, visited/talked to Indians

* Omaha Indian mounds (Graves of small pox victims)

** Indians visited camp & stole frying pans, wash basins, almost all tin ware

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MHC

Council Bluffs Apr 24th 1856

Council Bluffs

Camp near Council Bluffs. We left our Camp about 10 O Clock A.M. and drove to the ferry 10 Miles. We reached the river about 2 P.M. after getting stuck in the mud several times on the way. Made arrangements to cross next morning. About before dark a large band of Omaha Indians came to the opposite side of the river, yelling and whooping. Some of our company very much frightened and wished themselves home again. Weather warm and muggy.

Apr 25th

Crossed the river on Steamer Patrick Henry. We were nearly all day crossing. We drove 2 M. and found good camping grounds. Passed the ruins of an old Pawnee village called Winter Quarters. Saw a few straggling Indians miserable looking enough.

Eli A. Griffin's diary

april 24 - June 21. 1856

Michigan Historical Collections
Bentley Historical Library
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

See Platte River Road Narratives
Entry # 1556

[Mormon Journals, Pioneers]

April 26th 1856

Cold rainy disagreable day. Drove 18 Miles and Camped on Pappea Creek. The Hills sheltered us somewhat from the cold wind. Found a little grass for our horses good farming land but no timber except a few cottonwood trees.

Apr 27th

Drove 10 Miles to Elkhorn river. Found the river high and no ferry boat. Camped and went to work to build a raft. During the day we passed some Indian mounds that looked new. Afterwards ascertained that they were graves of Omaha's that had died of small pox the past winter. Rained towards night.

Apr 28th

Guard called us up about 4 A.M. The river having raised during the night. Quite a strong current between us and the shore. Found myself lying in water. Cold high winds. Finished our ferry boat.

Apr 29th 1856

Crossed the river and drove 2 miles. Over 500 teams waiting here to cross. Any quantity of whooping yelling swearing. Mules braying &c. Got a letter from home today.

Apr 30th

Drove 2 Miles and came to a fork of the Elkhorn. Had to ferry our goods over in a wagon box & swim our horses. I attempted to swim a horse over and was obliged to let go and swim back. Cold weather.

May 1st

One of our wagons having broke down we had to stop and repair. Drove 10 Miles. Reached Platte river. A Band of Pawnees visited us today. Found good grass. Timber very scarce. Quite a number of teams ahead of us. We passed over a fine Prairie Country today but without a stick of timber until we reached the Platte where we found a few cottonwood trees.

May 2d

Started very early and drove 30 miles. Passed 75 teams mostly oxen some of the road today very bad. Weather finer than any we have had before. Horses getting quieter down a good deal. Crossed Shell Creek a fine little stream.

May 3d

Drove 10 miles. Arrived at Loups Fork of the Platte about noon. Found the head teams here waiting to cross the river. Men women and children here with a slight sprinkling of Pawnees. Fine weather. Found good grass about a mile from camp.

May 4th

We were all day crossing the river and camped on the West side. Fine warm weather. 100 teams ahead of us. Our company enjoying good health.

May 5th

Cold disagreeable day. We drove 10 miles. Saw over 20 graves today

Passed several teams. Road dry and hard. Travelled over fine Prairie country all day

May 6th

Drove 25 Miles. Divided goods with Derby. Commenced raining at dark. Rained all night. Our horses stampeded during the night and all got loose except 4. Some one called to Derby to get up but he did not dare come out.

May 7

Drove 10 Miles and camped. Butterfield tied one of his horses to my wagon and broke an axeltree. I had to leave my wagon. Rained a part of the afternoon. Fine level country. Some Timber. Crossed several fine creeks today

May 8th

Drove 25 Miles over level plain barren and desolate. Water very bad. Several of our company getting sick. Cold disagreeable weather. Plenty of home sick Californians in the train.

May 9th

Cloudy. Cold weather. Drove 24 miles. Rained in afternoon. Cleared off in Evening. Found good Camping ground but very Poor grass. The sick getting better. I stood guard.

May 10th

Drove 30 miles. Camped on the Bank of Platte. Poor grass. Saw a herd of Buffalo the first we had seen. Better weather. All getting along fine.

May 11th

Drove 35 miles. Saw a Buffalo chase. We had plenty of Buffalo meat. Passed several teams. Camped on Platte river. Rain at night.

May 12th

Drove 26 miles Camped on Platte River again. Here we left timber and struck out on the Prairie without a sign of timber. Cold Cloudy weather Very bad camping ground &

13th

Drove 25 miles. Rained all day and also part of the night. Crossed Shaft Creek. Some very bad road today. Quite a Thunder Storm at night. We had to cross quite a number of Sand ridges of Thick City sand destitute of vegetation.

14th

Drove 24 miles. Our road along the bottoms was quite muddy and on the hills sandy. Overtook Barnes Co from Salina. Rain accompanied with wind all day. 4 horses strayed off. Followed two miles and found them.

15th

Today being Sunday we moved 5 miles and stopped to rest and dry our clothes which were soaked. Saw several Antelope near the camp. Several Ox and horse teams passed us today. Found good grass.

16th

Drove 22 Miles, Arrived at the Lone Tree. So called from being one hundred miles from any other tree. Hail Rain & Snow compelled us to cut down what remained of the Lone Tree as the branches were gone before. Company all well

17th

Drove 16 Miles through rain Very cold Snow towards night so as to cover our horses. Cleared off very cold. Hardest Times we had seen yet.

18th

Drove 10 Miles. Weather warmer but cloudy and prospect of more rain stopped at 2 P.M. and dried our clothes. Had fine camping place Dry and good grass which revived up our spirits

19th

Drove 28 Miles. Fine clear weather Passed Ancient Bluffs so called from their fancied resemblance

to the ruins of Castles. They have Corinthian columns reaching from top to bottom and are worth going this far to see. We crossed Crab Creek a small stream and camped opposite Scotts Bluffs and in sight of Chimney Rock which looked like a white washed chimney in the distance.

20th

Drove 28 Miles. Very warm day the warmest we had yet experienced Passed Chimney Rock during the after noon which loomed up on the opposite side of the river like a tall factory Chimney. Camped two miles from Platte river. Saw several Antelope today. Company all well.

21st

Drove 20 Miles. Beautiful day. Passed a small trading post. Saw a number of Singular Rocks on opposite of the River. Camped on Spring Creek and found fine grass.

May 22

Drove 20 Miles. Camped on Platte River. Rained all the forenoon. We camped soon after noon. I wrote a letter home today. Some of the road very bad today.

23

Drove 15 Miles and Camped 2 Miles from Fort Laramie. Visited the Fort in afternoon. Most of the company being gone Derby and son took their horses and a few provision and started. Any quantity of Sioux around the Fort. counted 130 Lodges.

24th

Remained in Camp all day. Our wagons being too long we shortened them here. Pine, Grass and our horses doing finely.

25th

Drove 30 Miles 10 Miles to a fine spring and 18 more before we struck the river again. Rough hilly road. Thunder Storm in afternoon which

made the hills fairly quake. We saw the finest scenery today we have yet seen. I rode ahead alone and found camping place

26

Drove 28 Miles over fine hard roads and camped on the river bank opposite an Indian encampment. Some grass and timber quite plenty along here. The Bottom lands are quite rich. Saw stone coal among the hills today and obtained a specimen.

27th

Drove 25 Miles Camped on river in a beautiful valley. Crossed two small Creeks today. Crossed over some high Bluffs. Any quantity of Buffalo Bones lying around and poles of Lodges left where the Indians had slaughtered and feasted last year. The best land we have yet seen along here. Gooseberry and other kinds of berries found in the bottoms.

28th

Drove 20 Miles. Camped on river again. Good grass and plenty of wood. An awful thunder storm in afternoon. Cleared up in Eve Road fine today. Snow in sight on the hills

29th

Drove 22 Miles. Rain all the forenoon Sandy bad road today. Met a large band of Wind Indians. Indians came around very friendly and after they were gone we found out the crust. Our Frying pan, wash basins, tin pails had disappeared having as almost minus tin ware. Camped on Platte river Plenty wood water & grass.

30th

Drove 20 Miles Passed the ferry where teams from the south side crop to the north. Very sandy roads. One of my horses having become quite broke down I traded him with a French trapper for

a fine Cream colored pony with black legs and black mane and tail. Rain towards night. A large no of teams camped near us.

31st

Drove 20 Miles over the worst looking country that I ever saw. Alkali swamps and rocky hills being ~~the~~ all that we crossed in 20 Miles. A great many horses and cattle left today having become poorwell and too weak to proceed. Gloomy times for Emigrants. Very Poor Grass.

June 1st

Drove 26 Miles Passed Independence Rock. Camped 2 Miles from Sweetwater River in afternoon making the roads very muddy. Plenty of Cedar wood and good grass.

2d

Drove 18 Miles Camped on Sage creek so called from the immense quantity of wild sage growing here. Passed Devils Gate one of the greatest curiosity on the Plains. Here

the Sweetwater river cuts through the solid rock which almost closes at the top while the river boils through like mad. Passed quite a large trading Post today. Several of our company rodeed horses for Ponies & Mules. Rain as usual in afternoon. Poor grass.

30

Drove 20 Miles over a very bad road. Broke an axeltree of one of the wagons just at night. Stopped to repair. Had to drive our horses over a mile from camp to find grass. Snow and rain in afternoon. We are now getting pretty well up on the rocky Mountains. Passed Ice Springs today where Ice may be found at any time of the year by digging two feet through a kind of soft clay. Passed over a great deal of Alkali. Some places thick enough to whiten the ground.

4th

Drove 20 Miles. Very cold day. Road rough and hilly. Rain and hail part of the day. Saw a large number of Cattle which had been left to die. Camped on the Mountain. Plenty of Wood but no grass. Horses suffering a great deal.

Sunday 5th

Drove 18 Miles. Very rough road. Tried a Mormon Cut off which proved a cut on. Very poor grass. Rained a little. Very poor grass. We are now within 15 Miles of the dividing ridge. Passed 30 teams today.

6th

Drove 22 Miles. We camped on west side of Rocky Mountains. Fremont Peak in sight. Good road and fine weather. Found good camping place on the Little Sandy creek. Six miles from here the Salt Lake road turns off. Quite a discussion here some being in favor of going to Salt Lake while others wanted to push through. Decided to go to Salt Lake.

7th

Drove 20 Miles. Camped on Big Sandy River. Good grass. Passed Table Rock a large rock entirely separate from any other and perfectly flat on top. Beautiful road and fine weather. We are now in the Great Basin. Jack Robinson an old Trapper visited us and had a long talk with us. He has been here 23 years and was with Bonneville when he discovered Salt Lake. Saw old Scott a dog formerly owned in Niles. Jack owns him.

8th

Drove 20 Miles. Crossed Green river. We had fine road today over Prairie country which would make good farming land. Met three Mountaineers just from Colo. with U.S. Mail going to the States. Passed a number of ox teams today. Poor grass.

9th

Drove 22 Miles Camped on Blacks Fork. Good road and beautiful

weather. Met two wagons from Salt Lake City. Here we divided our company and made a new Mate. Poole of Chicago Captain

10th

~~Drove 22 Miles Passed Fort Bridger Cold weather. Camped on Mountain side near snow water~~

10th

Drove 20 Miles Crossed Hams fork and Muddy Creek (mighty warm) Found good grass. Good road and fine weather but miserable poor country. Cool weather and no dust

11th

Drove 22 Miles Passed Fort Bridger Cold weather. Good road. Camped on the Mountain side. Snow water for use. and Hemlock boughs to sleep on making a bed fit for a King to lie on. Good bunch grass for Horses.

12th

Today being Sunday we did not move our camp. Poole and myself climed up the highest Peak we could

sic and had a beautiful view of the surrounding country. Some of the company sick with Mountain fever.

13th

Drove 30 Miles Arrived at Bear river Very Mountainous road. up hill and down. Crossed Mud Creek and Sulphur Creek. Cold weather. Emigrants camped along the road sick with fever. Our company doing well.

14th

Drove 25 Miles. Forded Bear River the water of which is very cold. Plenty of Spruce Timber. Hilly road. Crossed several small brooks today of pure cold water. Camped on Echo Creek Beautiful Mountain Scenery.

15th

Drove 18 Miles down Echo Creek which runs down a valley with high perpendicular rocks on each side. A shout or gun fired would be echoed from either side. Beautiful flowers and scenery that cant be beat. Arrived at the Mouth of Echo Creek where

it empties into Weber River, Crossed Weber River and camped. Found Mormon settlement here. I felt quite unwell today.

16th

Drove 25 Miles Passed over a Mountain ridge over a mile high. Awful rough road the worst we have yet seen Forded over 20 Streams today. Found no grass for horses but were obliged to camp.

17

Drove 15 Miles. Harnessed up at 4 A.M. and drove 2 Miles to good grass Arrived with 5 Miles of G.S.L. City Camped in a Canon. Awful Hot day. Rode my pony into the City in afternoon. Thermometer stood at 92 in the shade. Salt Lake is laid out finely. The streets cross each other at right angles and are level and clean. A reservoir above the City toward the Mountains furnishes plenty of water which runs along on each side of the streets in little brooks. During dry times the water is turned

off into the hardens. Crops looked fine. Potatoes not quite large enough to dig.) Beef 25 cts " " Butter 25 Eggs 25 Chickens 25 and plenty of Milk. Flour was 10 pr Barrel on account of short crop last year. Mormons appear to live very well and treat us well and do not ask exhorbitant price for provisions.

Journal of trip to Pike's Peak. Apr 5th 1859

Camped in St Jo Mo

Mar 28 1859

Packed up, started and went up the river 6 miles to Belmont. Camped about 1 mile from Belmont. Fine and rain all day.

Mar 29th

Still camped in Belmont. Clear cold weather. Jack went to St Jo to get bunghole and did not return. Bob & Griffin arrived at camp.

Mar 30th

Packed up and started on leaving Jack behind. Drove 10 miles. Lizzies wagon broke down during afternoon. Jack arrived in camp with a fine dog. Bob went back to Roy about 1 mile to get wagon repaired. Fear cold day with a small dash of rain.