

1849

Watts

May 10 left St. Joe

May 11 Wolf "Creek" Indian Burial ^{Abund.} ~~Site~~

May 12 funeral - travel 4 mi.

May 20 Big Blue - Louisiana Co.

May 21

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Benjamin M. Watts Diary



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We left Bowling Green on the 5th day of April A.D. 1849 bound for California. After a hard and tedious journey we arrived at St. Joe and crossed the river here we reloaded our wagons and packed every thing away to the best advantage. Our Company consisted of two wagons and forty two men. We left St Joe on the 10th of May in high spirits and drove out to the bluff 5 miles & camped the road was very muddy & bad.

11th We passed through some very hilly country 14 miles to Wolf creek. here we saw an indian child buried according to their custom, it was placed in a trough wrapped in blankets and placed up in the boughs of a tree 2 miles farther, passing over some steep hills, is a fine spring on the right of the road near which we camped the grass is tolerable good and the timber scattering the country around here is very broken. Here Mr. E. F. Adams was attacked by the cholera in the evening and after passing a night of the keenest misery and agony, at sunrise gave back his spirit to its maker without a struggle.

12th After having performed the last sad rites to our friend in the most becoming manner that our situation would admit we travelled on 4 miles.

Benjamin Watts 1849-1850 Ms. B. 1

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May 1849

20th Our last duty to our departed friend being completed we moved on 3 miles to Big Blue river 10 miles further we camped on a small branch, I omitted stating that on the eighteenth we organized and named our company the Louisiana Company, electing three directors to superintend all matters pertaining to the company.

21st Today we passed over some splendid road with plenty wood water & grass, 18 miles to a small creek banks very high, 2 miles further we camped on the hill, having supplied ourselves with wood & water at the creek, two of our company Messrs Burbridge & Smith whom we left at St Joe came up in a Buggy

22nd Travelled 12 miles to a creek in company with about two hundred wagons making a considerable show miles further we stopped, grazed our cattle & cooked supper sunset we hitched up and drove on 6 miles passing several camping places not very convenient to the road we camped the country about here is very level

23rd We did not get an early start owing to some of our cattle having wandered off, but after finding them we drove on 2 miles to Big Sandy so called from the mound of sand in and near it and I think very appropriately too, water was scarce and not good but grass & wood plenty it is 10 miles to Little Sandy passing several small branches on the bank of our river upset his wagon the first one since we started miles further to Little Blue we camped with wood water & grass in abundance today we discovered wild turkeys & Prickly Pear growing spontaneously game is scarce all there is consists of Antelope, Elk and Deer.

24th Today we travelled up the river for 20 miles & camped wherever plenty it rained near all day, for several days past the weather has been on extremes night and morning very cold, at noon very hot, it continued raining all evening with high wind all night.

May 1849

25th The weather was very cold all day with high wind we continued up the Blue 15 miles & camped. the surface of the country is uneven, good camping at this place the river is rising caused by recent rains.

26th We lay by to rest our stock Mr. McLean killed a few Antelope in the evening.

27th We continued up the river sometimes out of sight of it but mostly on its banks. for 16 miles here the river leaves the Blue and strikes across for Platte river. we traveled 4 miles farther & camped. we crossed several streams and one near here with wood & water but the grass is rather short & scarce.

28th On 5 miles we crossed a creek with timber & good water. 17 miles farther we reached the Platte bottom we passed neither wood nor water since early in the morning. night coming on we had to camp without either near than the river about four miles the grass is short.

29th We continued on up the bottom 15 miles to Fort Kearney one mile to the right, 5 miles we camped camping necessities were inconvenient grass short.

30th Up the river 20 miles & camped on the bank. water & grass plenty no wood only on the islands, which we could get by fording a part of the stream on horses the road today was good. the bottom is very level and sandy.

31st Up the river 20 miles & camped. grass good but we had to get wood from an island. the road was very muddy. occasioned by the recent rains which have been heavy. the nights are cold and at the same time not very warm during the day. we passed several wagons that had broken down, a few teams that had given out and a mule who had become discouraged and turned back.

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