

Emigrant's last name: Woods Surveyed by: mem 69, Maag, Mary E
 first & middle names: D. B. Jr. Date surveyed: 07/02/94
 Title: From the Wayne County Gold Seekers.

Year of journey: 1849 Year written (if different): _____ Page nos. surveyed: 34-37

Type of document: L (D - diary; J - journal; R - reminiscence; L - letter; N - newspaper article; G - guide; A - autobiography; O - other)

Items in document: _____ (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

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For PUBLISHED documents only:

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There are two letters: Bear River Valley July 12, 1849
and Valley of Lewis' Fork . July 15.

Woods, D.B. Jr.

Maag, Mary E.

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

Document ID: (49W00p3)

Emigrant's occupation: _____ Origin: _____

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

Departed from (code): J4 Arrived at (code): _____

Date of departure: _____ Date of arrival: _____ (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 at departure: _____ oxen X 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: IB ID II IL _____ (use codes from the trail maps)

Notes on back? _____

(Woods, D. B. Jr. Maag, Mary E)

Last name	First names	Age	M/F	Origin	Party	Page	Date (mm/dd)	CODES	
								1	2

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

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.

(Woods, D.B. Jr.

Maag, Mary E

Location	Page	Date
Fort Kearney ^{POINT OF DEPARTURE}	34	
Great Platte	34	
South Fork	34	
Solitary Tower	35	
Chimney Rock	35	
Scott's Bluffs	35	
Fort Laramie	35	
Black Hills	35	
Sweet Water	35	
South Pass	35	
Wind River Mountains	36	
Independence Rock	36	
Pacific Springs	36	
Big Sandy	36	
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Fort Hall	37	
Bear River valley	37	07/12

Woods, D. B. Jr.

Maag, Mary E.

COED - Census of Overland Emigrant Documents

PAGE 5: Indian Encounters (page 1 of 1)

Document ID: (4940043)

CODE	Tribe name (leave blank if not mentioned)	Page	Date
D	Sioux	34	

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 - visited/talked to Indians

FROM THE WAYNE COUNTY GOLD SEEKERS.

* We are under obligations to Mr. Stitt for sending us a half sheet of the "Wayne County Whig," containing the following letters from the junior D. B. Woods:

Bear River Valley
July 12, 1849

Dear Judge;- It has been some time since I wrote you. My last was written at 'Fort Kearney,' near where we first struck the Platte river. I should have written from Fort Laramie but want of time and ill health would not allow. Since leaving Fort Kearney we have traveled near one thousand miles through a country full of interest to the traveller. We have encountered many vicissitudes, and have passed through scenes common to the tourist, yet full of thrilling interest to us. Incidents are almost daily occurring which we shall never forget, and yet they would give but little interest to your readers.

To give you anything like a satisfactory and minute detail of the incidents of our travel from Fort Kearney, or a description of the country, would be impossible. Indeed my time and attention are so fully occupied in the safe conduct of our large company and train that I cannot examine the thousand objects of interest around us, with the care they deserve. I have been absent from the train but one day since I left the States.

From Fort Kearney our route lay directly up the south bank of the Great Platte. But few objects of interest presented themselves before reaching south fork. The broad river, varying from one to four miles in width, dotted over with islands of every shape and size, covered with a handsome growth of cotton-wood and willows, rolled its turbid waters on our right. The plain we traversed was a broad, sandy bottom, bounded by the river on the north, and varying in width, from one to ten miles. To the southward, the plain was limited with a range of sand hills, quite low where we came upon the river, but gradually becoming more lofty and abrupt as we descended the stream, until they finally became towering mountains. The soil on the Platte bottoms is wholly unfit for cultivation after descending a short distance above Fort Kearney. It is wholly destitute of wood, and, for the most part is covered with a fine growth of prairie grass. What wood we used, we got from the islands or the immediate banks of the river, on which we sometimes found a growth of willows. We used the 'Buffalo chips', which answer as a very excellent substitute for wood. Coming into the neighborhood of the South Fork, buffalo began to make their appearance, which marked quite an epoch in our travel. It may be observed, however, that the emigration has been so great this season that but few of these huge beasts are found in the vicinity of the road. An occasional small party, however, frequently straggle within the reach of the great emigrant trail, and are speedily dispatched. We saw none until we crossed the South Fork of Platte. We encamped on the west bank of this stream for the night. Immediately on the river above us was a large village of the Sioux Indians. They were quite friendly, rather too much so indeed. We were compelled to keep them out of camp, and watch them very closely even while the train was in motion to prevent them from stealing. They are a fine looking race of Indians - large, muscular looking men, and most admirable horsemen. Their dress is made of skins, most fantastically cut and elaborately wrought. Soon after we left the camp in the

morning, a number of buffalo made their appearance on the bluffs. When we first observed them, they were quietly feeding, undisturbed by the passing multitude. Things were quickly astir along the line, and horsemen were soon dashing across the plain, armed for the slaughter.

The game, at their approach, fled to the northward, and our hunters were surprised to find two Indians ahead of them in the chase. Among hands a fine buffalo was soon dispatched, and our camp was well supplied with meat, which, I assure you, was most excellent. From that on till we left the Platte, we were well supplied with buffalo meat. The country, from the South Fork to Fort Laramie was by far, the most interesting of any through which we have travelled. The sand hills had become mountains, and, in many places, had assumed the most singular and beautiful shapes. Among the most interesting and noted of these are the 'Solitary Tower', 'Chimney Rock,' and Scott's Bluffs,' which have so often been described by travellers that I shall not tax your patience with a description here. Fort Laramie is a mere trading post, unimportant to the traveller, and not deserving a very large space before the public. It is a good point, however, and I hope will be made a resting place for the traveller in the future. Major Sanderson arrived the day we passed there, charged by the Government with the duty of locating a Fort somewhere in that vicinity, and authorized to purchase the old Fort. Leaving Laramie, we took the road through the 'Black Hills,' a rough, barren region, well deserving their name. We saw little to interest or to please, till we crossed the Platte river for the last time, which we did about 125 miles from Laramie. - The river was very high, in consequence of the melting snow. The Mormons had made a pretty good Ferry, and we crossed and parted with this great river in safety and good cheer. And so ends the first chapter in this epistle.

Yours,

D. B. W.

 On the mountain overlooking the Valley
 of Lewis' Fork. July 15.

Dear Judge:- My last letter left us on the bank of the North Fork of the Platte. From that point, our travel has been interesting beyond all description. Wonder after wonder of earth, air and water, has been presented, until curiosity is well nigh satisfied. The country across from the Platte to Sweet Water is rough, dry and sterile. Soon after leaving the Platte, we came into a region where the hills, and land, and rocks, were colored red. In this region were found the Alkali Lakes and Springs. The water of the springs is strongly impregnated with alkali, so much so as to render it deadly poisonous to stock, and emitting a very offensive smell. Hundreds of cattle died - - - -

- - - - a perfectly white deposit. This deposit is a tolerably fair article of potash.

We were all glad when emerging from the hills we left this poisonous region and entered upon the beautiful valley of the Sweet Water. This stream is almost as large as the East Fork of Whitewater. It heads in the immediate vicinity of the South Pass,

in the Wind River Mountains, and traverses a most beautiful valley of varied width. The valley is covered with a fine growth of bottom grass and is encased on either side by towering mountains covered with snow.

The first object of special interest is 'Independence Rock.' It is a high rock of gray granite, towering up several hundred feet from the level plain. Its summit is easily accessible, and few persons pass without ascending it. Thousands of names are imprinted upon the rock. Ascending this valley, the atmosphere became more light and pure; so much so that breathing, and vision were sensibly affected. We soon came into the region of snow. I ascended the Sweet Water chain of mountains to the south of us, and climbed to the summit of the tallest one - traversed snow drifts piled to an immense depth - and looked out upon the whole world! The Wind River Mountains, the highest of the great Rocky chain, was in full view, and white with snow; and although they were some seventy miles distant, yet such was the clarity and lightness of the atmosphere, that trees, and other objects were distinctly visible with but an ordinary spy glass. The day was quite warm, yet when I had ascended some 500 feet above the snow, the air was sufficiently cool, I can assure you. The next day was unusually hot in the valley. Our morning, however, was rendered quite agreeable by an abundant supply of pure and beautiful ice. This we found in a valley of wet ground resembling muck, with a heavy tufted grass covering the surface. By digging down a foot, we struck a layer of ice, some eight or ten inches in thickness, as pure and cold as any you have ever seen. This, in mid-summer, is a singular phenomena. We encountered some others of those singular bogs before leaving the valley. We hurried on, the snow on every side of us, to the South Pass; and this may be described as a simple valley through the Rocky Mountains. The Sweet Water seems literally to cut this stupendous range of mountains in twain, and opens up a great highway through. So gradual is the approach and the culminating point, so broad the valley and so beautiful the roads that many of our men had passed the turning place and were gently descending towards the great Pacific, before they were aware of it. We hastened down the slope and rested for the night at the Pacific Springs whose waters flow into the great Coast of the Gulf of California. From there across to the forks of the road, near Big Sandy, nothing of note is to be seen; the road forks near that stream, one road leading around by old Fort Bridger, the other crossing the desert by Sublit cut off, to Green River. From Sandy to Green River, a distance of more than ___ miles, there is not a drop of water, and the greater portion of the road traverses a sandy desert, perfectly destitute of vegetation except a singular and dreary clinging weed, somewhat resembling p----.

We rested at the last water till 3 o'clock p.m. when we set out again on the weary march. We traveled till eleven o'clock at night, when we stopped - unharnessed our animals - lighted up the camp-fires - and took supper. The air was clear and cold, and the moon shown brightly. After a rest of two hours, we harnessed up and set out again. It dawned, and still our long, weary road was wending its way over this sterile and arid desert. We halted at sun-rise, unharnessed and again took breakfast. Ourselves and the stock refreshed, we were again on the march, and amidst dreadful heat, reached Green River about 2 o'clock p.m.. The animals were completely exhausted. Many of our most spirited and active mules were scarcely able to get to the river. The men were also weary

and overcome: many of them reaching the water with the greatest difficulty. We found Green River quite a large stream, very much swollen by the melting snows, with a current such as I have never seen in so large a body of water. We met several hundred wagons waiting to cross over. We succeeded in crossing the day after our arrival, by unloading our wagons, taking them to pieces - doing the work ourselves - and paying the owners of the little iron craft \$8 per wagon. Tonight we are all safely over, rigged up and ready for the march. Thence up a beautiful, and interesting valley of a branch river. We encounter nothing of interest except high and rugged mountains, and of these, you have some specimens in the States that supercedes the necessity of a description.

Suffice it to say, that we reached Green River all in safety, and in good health; and in the same condition, we are now in sight of Fort Hall. Time and business will not permit me now to give you our impression of the Bear River valley, by far the most beautiful and interesting we have traversed since we left the States. I will do it in a subsequent letter.

You shall not hear from me again until we reach El Dorado, which, I think will be in about four weeks. We have been making rapid travel for a month past. We are leaving everything on the road behind, yet our stock is in good condition. With a group of more than 100 head, we have not lost a single mule since we left the States; nor have we broken a wagon in the whole train so as to abandon it. You shall hear from me again.

Yours truly,
D.B.W.