

California gold rush merchant; the journal of Stephen Chapin David. Edited by Benjamin B. Richards

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FOR JANET

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Introduction

IN JULY 1850 a seventeen-year-old New England boy, Stephen Davis, and his brother Josiah sailed from New York City via Panama for San Francisco and the California gold fields. They were

but two of the thousands of Argonauts who were seized by the gold fever and journeyed to the Sierra foothills. Many of these adventurers have left accounts of their experiences; some of them are clear and well written, others are no more than a letter or two written home or a journal valiantly begun but trailing off into silence once the trip was under way. Among the journals that have been discovered, the diary of Stephen Chapin Davis is unusual because the author sees the gold rush through the eyes of a merchant rather than a miner. And while it is true that many young men left home to seek their fortunes, contemporary passenger lists reveal that few were under twenty years of age. Stephen's well-composed diary is therefore all the more remarkable.

In making four Panama crossings he never fails to mention a passing ship; he tells us the cost of goods and services, and he speculates, however briefly, on the prospects and present condition of business in the many places he visits. Through his concise day-by-day entries he emerges as vital and enthusiastic as though his daily and nightly jottings written by candlelight, on shipboard, or under a tent roof had just been put down within the past few days instead of one hundred years ago.

Stephen was an engaging prototype of the Horatio Alger heroes. At thirteen he was at work in the textile mills, and at sixteen he went to sea. For a year he hawked papers. When he sailed the first time for California he purchased five hundred copies of the latest New York editions and disposed of them at Panama, Acapulco, and San Francisco. That such a practice was not uncommon is attested to by Bayard Taylor in his classic *Eldorado*. On his supply trips to San Francisco young Davis brought back newspapers to the diggings, well aware of the salability of news to men far from home.

His motto, "Perseverance, Energy and Economy," ingenuously set down in his journal at Long Bar as a constant reminder to himself, was an expression of traditional American virtues. He was deeply interested in religion and devoted to church-going. Indeed one has the feeling that the life of a missionary, after university training, would have suited him perfectly. No picture of the diarist is available; whether he was tall or short, dark or fair is not so important to our understanding as to know that he was sober and God-fearing by training and conviction, loyally devoted to his family and friends, and unusually single-minded in his quest for financial success.

Stephen was born February 16, 1833, on “the old homestead” near Dunstable, Massachusetts; he died twenty-three years later on October 4, 1856, presumably of tuberculosis. His father Mial had died in March of 1844. Two years later, having disposed of the farm and stock, Stephen and his brothers Josiah, Stilman, Mial, and George, his sister Lucy, and their mother moved to neighboring Nashua, a flourishing town of five thousand inhabitants on the Merrimack River just across the state line in New Hampshire. The boy immediately went to work in the Nashua Manufacturing Company's textile mills, and later did odd jobs for the family of Elder George Evans in Manchester. In the fall he enrolled at the Nashua Literary Institution, a school conducted by David and Louisa Crosby. In March 1847 the family was again stricken. Their beloved Lucy contracted typhoid fever and died. Though Stephen, Mial, and their mother also came down with the same disease, they recovered, and ix Stephen was sent to work as office boy with the family of Dr. J. H. Graves, probably to settle the doctor's bill.

We do not know when he learned that gold had been discovered at Sutter's Mill for the news reached the eastern seaboard slowly. Of more importance to the Davises at this time was their mother's marriage to Mr. J. L. Doty on March 15, 1848. Within a few days Mr. Doty and his family moved into the Davis house on Harrison Street, and that summer Stephen worked with his new stepfather in his shoemaker shop, which he did not care for. But in his leisure time he did enjoy the *Cadets of Temperance* and attended their meetings regularly.

In the fall he was able to return to Mr. Crosby's academy. Stephen speaks of liking school but was increasingly aware of being unable to concentrate upon his studies, for in common with a great many other New Englanders he wanted to “go to Sea.” He dutifully attended classes and did his homework until the spring of 1849 when he went down to Boston armed with a letter of introduction to the shipping firm of Blanchard, Sherman & Company. He signed on as cabin boy with the brig *Dudley* sailing for Galveston, Texas, on March 1. Homesick, seasick, and without food for five or six days, Stephen was forced to attend the captain, J. W. Yates, who had erysipelas; but he tried nevertheless to be patient and uncomplaining. At sixteen he was eager to be independent, purposeful, and was concerned more than the average boy with the seriousness of life.

The *Dudley* was laden with a general cargo of tinware, pins, needles, scissors, combs, buttons, and perhaps cotton cloth and books. Watching the exchange of these “Yankee notions” for a return cargo of cotton, sugar, and molasses aroused Stephen's trading sense; later he was to show real business ability in the mining territory of California.

At Galveston Stephen's abiding interest in religion again manifested itself. He attended the Baptist church, noting that galleries on three sides of the church were occupied by slaves while the lower part was reserved for the whites. He also x described the Catholic church, an elegantly furnished large red sandstone building with stained glass windows.

Because of harsh treatment two sailors had jumped ship, and on the return voyage Stephen served as an able-bodied seaman. “I am drove around by the rascally mates most shamefully, but get along the best way I can.” Except that the crew sighted a large steamship headed north, which they presumed was returning passengers and gold from California on the New York-Chagres run, the trip was uneventful. Landing in New York with wages of fifteen dollars in his pocket to show for three months at sea, Stephen wandered around the city, taking special delight in P. T. Barnum's celebrated museum of wonderful curiosities, and then returned to Nashua on the New Haven Railroad.

Back home he carried papers for his brother Mial, but his heart was not in his work; nor did he seem eager to go back to school. He had tasted the freedom of seafaring, and perhaps too, dreams of California, nourished by reports in the newspapers that he was delivering, increased his restlessness. We do not know the actual incidents leading to the decision of Stephen and Josiah to go to the gold country. Stephen was seventeen now and Josiah was several years older. Perhaps they realized that the booming territory would provide good business possibilities; perhaps they had dreams of striking it rich, although Stephen, who was not robust, seemed less interested in mining than his brother; perhaps they simply wanted to seek adventure. At any rate, by the time another year had passed, they had made a rather solemn agreement to set out together. Their gold rush adventure

begins with Josiah on his way to New York to secure tickets on the United States Mail Steamship *Philadelphia*.

After a fearful Atlantic storm that wrecked many ships, they reached Chagres, eastern terminus of the Isthmian crossing. From the grass huts of Chagres they ascended the Chagres River to Gorgona in a boat propelled by three natives, then walked the remaining part of the fifty-mile transit to Panama City, having encountered poor food and worse lodging, mud, and drenching tropical downpours.

Reaching Panama at last, they learned their ship, the *California*, was due in a couple of days. When their baggage did not arrive from Gorgona in time to meet the sailing date, Josiah went on to San Francisco and Stephen stayed behind waiting for their possessions. He saw the sights of the old Spanish city and worked on the *Panama Echo* as a printer's assistant until the arrival of the next steamer two weeks later. Panama was not crowded at this time, for passengers on the *Tennessee* numbered less than 150 when she left for Acapulco and San Francisco. Stephen steamed through the Golden Gate on September 4, 1850, not quite eight weeks after leaving home.

The brothers, reunited, left San Francisco after a few days, traveling up the Sacramento and then up the Feather River by boat to Marysville. They began their quest for gold on the Yuba River near Rose's Bar, but with only \$1.40 to show for three days of backbreaking labor, Stephen decided to try his luck at some other kind of "prospecting." After several abortive business ventures, Stephen and Josiah set up a store and boardinghouse for miners at Long Bar on the Yuba. On their trips to San Francisco and Sacramento for supplies they carried the miners' mail.

They enjoyed a good deal of success during the next six months, but Josiah was lured to Oregon by the attractive promise of rich farm land as well as stories about the Shasta Mines. Two months later Stephen followed him, and he arrived in San Francisco two days after the disastrous fire that occurred on the night of May 3-4, 1851. Stephen worked his way to Astoria and Portland on a small sailing schooner, the *Merchantman*, only to learn upon his arrival that Josiah had been unsuccessful

and was ready to return. So Stephen remained aboard the *Merchantman* when the schooner returned to San Francisco with a cargo of lumber.

The Davises met again at Sacramento in September. When ^{xii} Stephen fell ill with dysentery and Josiah's odd-job employment began to pall, both thought of going home. They worked passage on the *Oregon* to Panama, Josiah as deck hand and Stephen as waiter. The final task assigned all hands on the *Oregon* on reaching Panama was transferring two and a quarter million dollars in gold dust to the tender that carried it ashore. Then occurred one of the most dramatic incidents of the whole journal, more fully described by Stephen than was usual for him. He and his brother trekked overland from Panama twenty-five miles to Cruces and went down the Chagres River with a party of men in a whaleboat, docking at Chagres the evening of October 21, 1851. The following morning an altercation between the natives and the Americans developed into a general riot. Stephen's narration of the principal events of that day and the next, which reported the death of at least three foreigners and indicated the killing of nearly a score of natives may be exaggerated, but the main facts of the case seem correct.

The brothers were back in Nashua by Thanksgiving. All through the long winter Stephen complained of the severity of the climate and of his inability to find a satisfactory job. By January 1852 he had resolved to return to California. This time his brother Josiah did not accompany him, having bought a farm and settled with his wife near Wilmington, Vermont. But fifteen other men of Nashua and vicinity were to be his companions. Most of them had been callers at the house during the winter seeking information and advice. All Nashua was stirred by talk of gold; Stephen's stepfather and two others had gone to the Pacific in September.

Stephen departed from New York January 21, 1852, aboard the S. S. *United States* paying \$160 for steorage accommodations. The expedition across Panama was uneventful though on one occasion Stephen received some ill-natured criticism from his companions when they got lost in the jungle below Gorgona; because he had crossed twice before, he was expected to “know all the nooks and corners of Central America.” Stephen was ^{xiii} forced to wait from February 4 until March 7 for

passage on the *Frémont* to San Francisco, during which time he estimated that there were some four thousand travelers in Panama awaiting northbound ships.

On arriving at Acapulco the emigrants on his ship learned the fate of the *North America* which had run aground and been wrecked on February 27 a few miles down the Mexican coast. None of the passengers had been lost in the wreck, but they had suffered great privation in reaching Acapulco. Stephen was persuaded by one of them, George Hager, also from Nashua, to give him his ticket in an attempt to board the *Frémont*. Hager was one of several hundred who had not yet been able to obtain passage. He and Stephen were detected at the gangway, and the purser sent Hager ashore. Stephen was ordered off the ship too, but pleas for clemency on the part of other passengers caused the officer to relent and the boy was permitted to re-embark. The *Frémont* arrived at Long Wharf in San Francisco April 1, 1852.

Purchasing “pickles, cheese, segars,” potatoes, and other provisions, Stephen boarded a sloop for Stockton, intending to set up a store in the area south of the Mokelumne River known as the Southern Mines. His stepfather was running a boarding-house at Chili Camp. Setting out from Stockton for Sonora, Stephen passed through Knight's Ferry, Chinese Camp, and Shaw's Flat; then he trudged around for more than a month searching for work, visiting Coulterville, Agua Fria, and Mariposa. He had met a man named J. Hilliard from Nashua, and during the latter part of May arranged to go into business with him at Coulterville.

For two years Stephen kept a store at Coulterville on Maxwell's Creek. During this period he wrote of his expeditions to Stockton and San Francisco for supplies. Business was brisk, and there are gaps in the journal entries of more than a month.

News of Josiah's death reached Stephen in April 1854. This intensified his desire to be once more with his family and friends. xiv After settling affairs with Hilliard, Stephen left Coulterville on April 24. As the result of his two years of storekeeping, he carried with him more than \$3,000 in gold dust as well as part ownership in two quartz veins. He also later received from Hilliard a check for \$769 for his remaining share in the store on Maxwell's Creek.

His description of the valley out of which he rode toward Stockton is filled with a genuine feeling for the land Stephen had come to love. The voyage to Panama on the crowded steamer *Uncle Sam* was smooth. Steerage fare from San Francisco to New York was only \$100, the lowest price Stephen ever paid. While the railroad had not yet reached Panama, more than thirty miles had been opened by 1854, and he boarded the train at Obispo and rode in style to Aspinwall, the little town on Navy Bay. Stephen sold his “dust”—170 ounces at \$17.60 per ounce—to the firm of Bee Bee & Company upon his return to New York and by May 26, 1854, he was back in New England, his California adventure at an end.

His zeal for education sent him back to Crosby's school to finish the spring term, and we may conclude that he graduated, for within a week he was off to Colgate University, then called Madison University, in Hamilton, New York. He described with enthusiasm the commencement exercises which consisted of lengthy sermons and discourses as well as prepared speeches by each of the graduates. Stephen noted that 160 of the student body of 200 were preparing for the ministry, and he was tempted to enroll himself in the fall, but he finally concluded that his health would not permit it. He was impressed by the beauty and dignity of one of the college buildings known as “Eastern Edifice,” and by the appearance of the Utica Brass Band, and he carefully noted the texts of each of the many sermons that he heard. His roundabout return to Nashua was made over the plank road from Utica to Rome and Albany, down river in the steamer *Hero* to New York, and then by the steamship *Bay State* to Boston, and by train back to Nashua.

XV

In September Stephen received the money from Hilliard for his store in California and decided to join a neighbor, Jonas Kendall, in another business venture; they purchased 865 barrels of apples to sell in England. The two young men left New York October 14, 1854, on the Collins steamer *Atlantic*, arriving in Liverpool twelve days later to superintend the sale. Stephen traveled second-class (the cost of passage was \$75), keeping his ears open as he always did, alert for any information that might be useful to him later. He listened earnestly to a group of Germans who described the Fatherland in the most glowing terms. A party of wildly gesticulating French

passengers also impressed him. But for him the most interesting people aboard were three widely different personalities—an Anglican Scotswoman, a Baptist parishioner, and a Roman Catholic priest—who discussed religion during the entire trip.

Having found a room at No. 21 Duke Street, and laying in a supply of bread and cheese for suppers, the partners made a systematic tour of Liverpool, inquiring about produce prices at the markets, attending services at Pembroke Chapel and the Great George Street Chapel, and spending their leisure time in “improving reading” at the public library or in the New York Reading Room. On a side trip to Manchester by rail, Stephen sought out the Smithfield Market to learn the prices of apples there. Another excursion to Birmingham provided him with an opportunity of comparing English railroads with those in the United States. Back in Liverpool he and Kendall went to the Town Hall, to Prince's Park, and to the Philharmonic Hall where they heard Haydn's “Creation.”

Finally on November 8 the *Chatsworth*, a sailing vessel on which the apples had been shipped, docked in Liverpool after a tempestuous crossing. The apples brought nearly \$12 a barrel, which, after costs of docking, commission to the salesman, insurance and freight, fetched the two young men a profit of nearly nine hundred per cent. Stephen wrote home for more apples to be sent as soon as possible!

xvi

Urged by Jonas, he had decided to return on the steamer *Niagara* sailing for Boston December 9, but meanwhile the partners began a tour of the larger cities of the British Isles. At Glasgow on November 18, 1854, Stephen's journal ends abruptly with: “After breakfast took a stroll over town.” Whether he returned to the United States on the *Niagara* in December, or waited for another shipment of apples to arrive, how his last two years were spent—these things are unknown. A note appended to the manuscript by his younger brother George states that by June of 1856 Stephen had become too weak to write. He died soon afterward.

As a boy he had been afflicted with what he called scrofulous ophthalmia as well as with tuberculosis. Surely he was beyond ordinary seasickness when he vomited blood on the way

to Chagres, and tuberculosis may have been the cause of his early death. Though he never had cholera he encountered it in many places and was as ignorant as the average man of his time about its causes; he did have dysentery which was common in the mines because of the poor diet and general lack of sanitary conditions. In September 1853, while shingling the roof of his new store at Coulterville, he was stricken by the sun and lay ill with “brain fever” for several days. But however much this grim catalogue of afflictions may have shortened his life, it did not prevent his having an active one.

In preparing Stephen's diary for publication I have presented in full the portion of his narrative concerned with the gold rush, the major part of his journal. Before the story opens he had recalled his early youth in a series of irregular entries and he continued making entries for six months after his return from California. The only change made in punctuation is the use of commas and periods rather than the dashes of varying length which flowed more naturally from Stephen's pen. I have also taken the liberty of beginning new paragraphs where it was advisable. The names of ships have been italicized throughout and the form of the date of entry has been made uniform. xvii Abbreviations, misspellings, and quotation marks are the diarist's. It did not seem necessary to sprinkle the text with “sic” to clarify obvious mistakes. I have used my own judgement in transcribing capitals when necessary.

The volume itself in which Stephen wrote is a rather large 750-page “Records” book, bound in dark green cloth with calf corners and spine. The blue-tinted pages measure 8 1/8 inches by 13 1/8 inches with a margin on the left-hand side of each page. A sticker inside the upper left-hand corner of the front cover shows that the book was purchased at “T. Groom and Co., Importers of English and French Stationery, Boston.” The handwriting is clear and legible, and the ink shows very little fading after one hundred years.

After Stephen's death the journal passed into the hands of his brother Captain George E. Davis; a later rubber stamp on the flyleaf reads: “Providence, R.I., Abbott Davis, Oct 26 1901.” Years later, in 1923, the diary was put up at public auction by the American Art Association in New York, listed in the catalogue of the sale as “California, Item 82, Reminiscence Manuscript,” along with

a collection of George Washington letters and other rare Americana, including books, broadsides, pamphlets, and even ship models. Thus it came to the attention of Henry E. Huntington. His bid for Item 82 was accepted, and the diary returned from New England to California to become Huntington Manuscript 521.

The editor is grateful to the Trustees of the Henry E. Huntington Library for making possible the publication of this volume, and to the Huntington Library for permission to publish its manuscript journal of Stephen Chapin Davis. He also wishes to thank Arlene Hallstrom, Helen Thompson, and Eleanor Towles for their assistance with the editing and publishing of this work.

BENJAMIN B. RICHARDS

California Gold Rush Merchant

3

June-July, 1850 STEPHEN C. DAVIS JOURNAL—1850-1854

June 1

Since my last date I have steadily continued in the paper business and owing to the excitement in regard to the trial of Dr. J. W. Webster for the murder of Dr. Geo Parkman I have found it quite profitable.*

Dr. John White Webster (1793-1850), Ewing Professor of Chemistry and Mineralogy at the Harvard Medical College, brutally murdered Dr. George Parkman, uncle of the historian Francis Parkman, to whom he was indebted for something less than \$2,500. Accounts of Webster by Edmund L. Pearson and of his judge Lemuel Shaw by Zechariah Chaffee, Jr., may be found in the *Dictionary of American Biography*.

Josiah who is now at work at the Scythe Factory in West Chelmsford, and myself have concluded to go to California as soon as we can get a passage via the Isthmus.

10

A few days ago Josiah went to N York and bought 2 through steorage tickets paying \$215. each, to sail from N.Y. July 13, not being able to get passage on a steamer sailing sooner.

July 1

We are packing up for the journey, taking with us besides a la[r]ge supply of clothing, a tent, cooking utensils, medicines, &c the whole weighing some 300 lbs. I have sold my paper business to Mial for \$55.

11

Took the Steamboat train for N York (via Worcester & Norwich) after bidding adieu to friends and home.

12

Arrived in New York at 7 A. M. and spent the day in looking about the city, purchasing necessaries, &c. Visited Mr Abel Spaulding's family.

13

I bought 500 newspapers of todays issue. And then we immediately went on board the Steamship *Philadelphia* * where we found a dense crowd embarking with their baggage, which consisted of boxes, bales, trunks, bags, valises, bundles of blankets, picks, shovels, &c &c which so completely covered the deck as to render locomotion very difficult.

Wooden side-wheel steamer, 898 tons, built in 1849, and sold to Howland and Aspinwall for the New York-Chagres run. In 1851 she was purchased by the United States Mail Steamship Company at \$187,500 for duty between New Orleans and Chagres. John Haskell Kemble, *The Panama Route, 1848-1869* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1943), p.242. Hereafter cited as *The Panama Route*.

At 3 P.M. the Steamship left the wharf amid the cheers and shouts of the passengers and assembled multitude, and after firing a salute, put to sea. Upon getting out to sea we found a heavy S. W. wind blowing, accompanied by a rough sea, making most of the passengers sea-sick.

July, 1850 14

This is Sunday but it being rough, and most of the passengers sea sick, there is no service. The gale is increasing and being dead ahead retards our progress very much.

15

The storm is still raging with increased fury, so that we make little or no headway. It is so rough, and the vessel tumbles about so, that we can hardly get about deck. I am very sea sick—so that I vomit blood.

16

At 6 oclock this morning as I was lying in my berth (on the “wether side” of the vessel), a huge wave struck her tearing through her side “between decks” from the stem to stern. I was thrown from my berth, over to the “lea side,” under baggage, berths, mattresses, passengers and completely immersed in salt water.

The scene then and there enacted, showed the calm resignation with which the Christian viewed this catastrophe, and how he was ready at any moment to meet that “God” that he has endeavored to worship and obey, and also exposed the awful condition of the sinner who having put off the “Salvation of his Soul” until a “more convenient season,” was now (to all human appearances) to be so suddenly called from time to eternity. For a few moments we all supposed the vessel was sinking, and the cries of the affrighted passenges “Have mercy Lord,” “Save Lord or we perish,” was distinctly heard above the roaring of the storm, from those who but a few moments or hours before were calling down the most awful imprecations upon their head. 5 It is generally supposed

that passengers were washed overboard as the sea made a complete breach through the vessel, coming in on one side and going out through the other.

Immediately all the passengers were divided into watches to pump and bail the ship so as to keep her from foundering, so that each man on board works eight hours of the twenty-four. But although the carpenter endeavored to repair the breach yet so much water came in, that the engine fires were put out; and the passengers became so discouraged that they were upon the point of giving up for lost. But the love of life was so dear, that they resumed their tasks determined to die at their posts. The decks were swept, and everything moveable carried away, and the rigging & sails were blown away and lost, so that the vessel was a complete wreck. But a small peace of sail was got up on the mainmast to keep her head to the wind and so we passed the day, expecting every hour would be the last.

17

The storm rages as severe as ever, and with a heavier sea. The lower Cabin is the only place on board where one can shield himself from the storm—and not here entirely—for occasionally a “sea” comes tearing down the hatchway drenching the occupants of this, the only refuge on board. Water is “swashing” about the floor of this cabin, which is covered by those, who having spent the last eight hours in pumping and bailing, are now trying to seek some repose. Our food consists of bread that has been soaked in salt water and cheese.

18

This forenoon the storm continues the same as yesterday, but at noon it seemed to increase. And at one time the capt told us that “All was lost,” “there was no hope,” as a huge wave came toppling down over the unfortunate vessel; but by constant exertion she was kept afloat.

In the afternoon the engine fires were kindled and the machinery put in motion, but the progress was very slow.

6

July, 1850 19

Last night as I was lying on the cabin floor, under the table by the side of Josiah, one of the stewards came and lay down on the other side, and after I got asleep commenced to remove my clothes, to get at my money belt which was about my body. He appeared to be in such a hurry, and was so bungling, that I was awakened but lay quiet, and let him proceed. As soon however as he had got the belt off, I grabbed him, and asked him what he wanted! He tried to excuse himself by saying that he was "dreaming," &c, and in view of our fearful situation I let him go, advising him to be cautious how he got caught in such a trick again.

During the last four days, we have all worked and slept in the same suit of clothes wringing wet, not having any thing dry on board. For the last 4 days the vessel has made only 200 miles.

21

Yesterday the wind died away and the sea became smo[o]ther. The sun came out also, so that everybody took the occasion to dry their garments, and the vessel looked like one vast "clothes yard." Today also the vessel is so covered with wet, mouldy & rusty articles exposed to the sun.

22

Fine weather with a smooth sea. In the morning saw Crooked Island and soon after Watkins Island. In the afternoon passed through the channel between Cuba and San Domingo, and soon after came in sight of Jamaica. Saw a number of vessels. Our accomodations as Stearage passengers are so filthy that we stay on deck night and day.

26

Since my last date we have had fine weather and very warm. At 2 P.M. came in sight of the high land of "Porto Bello," and at 9 in the evening came to anchor at the roadstead of Chagres. The

steamer was soon surrounded by boats, dugouts, &c, the boatmen 7 shouting in an unknown language. But as we lay 2 or 3 miles from shore, and it being dark, we did not go ashore.

27

Early in the morning went ashore in a skiff, for which we paid \$2. each. We found Chagres to be one of the filthiest places I ever saw, and is situated on a low point of land, at the mouth of the Chagres river, and consists of several "thatched huts with cane sides" and 2 or 3 framed houses occupied as hotels.*

Hubert Howe Bancroft in his *California Inter Pocula* (San Francisco, 1888), p.158, describes Chagres as a village of about fifty bamboo huts with some seven hundred inhabitants, featuring piles of "filthy offal, and greasy, stagnant pools bordered with blue mud." Above this native village rose the bluff on which the crumbling old castle of San Lorenzo still stood, surrounded and nearly covered with luxuriant tropical vegetation. On the opposite, or left bank of the Chagres River, was a sand flat where several hotels of rough construction and other buildings had been put up for the accommodation of the growing swarms of gold seekers.

We engaged passage in a large flat-bottomed boat, with 15 others for \$10. each, to Gorgona, a distance of 54 miles.* The scenery as we slowly worked our way up the stream was very beautiful, the banks being a thick tangled forest of tropical trees and plants many of which were covered with blossoms of beautiful varieties, while parrots, and other birds of magnificent plumage sang merrily from their leafy covert.

The emigrants engaged passage up the river in all types of boats. Stephen ascended in a flat-bottomed skiff; in 1851 he returned in a whaleboat. The steamers *Orus* and *Gorgona* were also available, but most of the travelers were carried in native canoes, or *bongos*, large enough for a dozen passengers.

The boat is manned by three Americans who work very hard, but we help them a great deal, being very anxious to get to Gorgona. At night we generally pull up to the river bank, stop 4 or 5 hours, then go on. We sleep sitting, reclining or anyway we can get it, but always in the boat, which is so crowded that there is no room to lie down. We sometimes get our meals ashore at the huts on the river bank, but more often take them on board from our private stores.

30

After a tedious journey of 3 1/2 days, we arrived at “Gorgona,” and contracted with a Spaniard to transport our baggage to Panama at 12 cts pr lb., to be delivered the next night.*

J. D. Borthwick left a picture of Gorgona much like Bancroft's description of Chagres: a collection of native bamboo shanties, where the inhabitants lay in hammocks a large part of the time, “patiently waiting for time to roll on.” *Three Years in California* (Edinburgh, 1857), p. 19. Borthwick's book is one of the most delightful of all the Argonauts' accounts.

After getting our dinner here, at 3 P.M. a party of 15 or 20 of us started afoot for Panama in the midst of a severe shower. We found the “road” in a horrible condition, the mud being 4 or 5 feet deep in some places,* and at frequent intervals were dead mules in different processes of decomposition, which were now being torn and devoured by vultures.* After travelling 6 or 8 miles and finding we had lost our way, we came to a hut where we concluded to remain for the night, being completely drenched through.

Emigrants had their choice of taking a trail from Gorgona, or from Cruces at the head of navigation on the Chagres River. Panama was still some twenty miles distant. In dry weather the Gorgona trail was not particularly difficult to travel, but in the wet season—nine months of the year in Central America—it was better to spend another day traversing the rocks and rapids of the intervening five miles above Gorgona to Cruces, then following the old Spanish gold and silver trail which, though deeply rutted, was paved in places with cobblestones. Joseph W. Gregory, *Gregory's Guide for California Travellers via the Isthmus of Panama...* (New York, 1850; reprinted San Francisco, 1949).

The year before newspaperman Bayard Taylor in his *Eldorado, or Adventures in the Path of Empire* (New York, 1850), I, 23, had also noticed the dead mules and the vultures that perched on branches overhead; so did Frank Marryat in *Mountains and Molehills, or Recollections of a Burnt Journal* (London, 1855), p. 7. Both Taylor and Marryat produced significant and readable books about the gold rush enhanced by many colored lithographs.

31

We got our lodgings on the ground floor of the bamboo hut, without any blanket but just as we lay in our wet clothes, paying 25 cts each for the privilege.

Starting out in good season, we found the road, and after travelling 15 miles through the mud & rain, at sundown we came to native hut famished with hunger, chilled through, and exhausted, and obtained permission to occupy a “roof” set on posts, some 8 or 10 feet from the ground, for the night. The only food we could get was boiled green corn, which we partook of largely.

Aug. 1

Last night we slept in our wet and muddy clothes, on the ground, and this morning feel quite sore and stiff. Our breakfast consists of the same “variety” as our supper.

The streams were very high in consequence of the late severe rains, so that they cannot be forded as usual. One creek that in Apr[il] is dry, was now a foaming torrent, so that the only way we could cross it was to get an axe and fall a large tree, on the bank, across; but then it was swept down by the current, and we cut another which lodged, and on which we crossed, a distance of 40 or 50 feet. The next one we came to, we could get no axe, so we climbed a tree on the bank, crawled out on a projecting limb that reached nearly over, and then let ourselves down into the creek a distance of 15 feet by a grape vine made fast to the end of the limb.

In the afternoon we arrived at Panama covered with mud from head to foot, our clothes torn into shreds, our feet blistered, and our bodies exhausted by over-exertion and exposure. * We ascertained that the Steamer *California* (the one we had tickets for) would sail the 3d inst.

Panama, the chief city of the Isthmus, was situated on a rocky peninsula stretching a quarter of a mile into the sea from the slopes of Mount Ancon. The population was about 8,000. After the discovery of gold in California, the town became a scene of bustling activity with the arrival of the foreigners. Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Central America* (San Francisco, 1882-87), III, 578 and n.

9

August, 1850 2

The condition of the “emigrants” as they come in is truly deplorable having no baggage to go to, to make a shift, it being all on the road. Our baggage, which should have [been] here last night, is not in yet.

3

Josiah & I waited until the last moment, and then as our baggage did not come, I concluded to wait for the baggage, while Josiah went on to San Francisco to await my arrival. Accordingly I got my ticket transferred so as to go the middle of the month.

Bid “good bye” to Josiah, and found myself a stranger, in a strange land. I got Lodgings at a Resturant for 37 1/2 pr night, and my food by the plate, so that it cost me about \$1. pr day.

5

Today our baggage arrived in a wet and ruinous condition, so that I was oblidge to wash each article and then dry them between the frequent showers.

I sold a number of my Newspapers for from 12 1/2 to 25 cts each, but many of them were so damaged by water as to be worthless.

I have a “Valise” containing Medicines (sent to Dr. D. J. Locke by his brother L. F. Locke of Nashua) which are very badly damaged.* I also take charge of a Valise & 2 Trunks belonging to two men who went up in the *California* with Josiah.

L.F. Locke, M.D., surgeon-dentist, manufactured teeth and performed dental operations with a “skill second to none in New England.” *The Nashua Directory for the Year 1856* (Nashua, New Hampshire, 1856), pp. 159, 161. This 175-page record lists many of the New Hampshire men whom Stephen knew. Stephen himself is listed on p. 39, boarding at 10 Harrison Street.

While I was selling papers the Editor of the “Panama Echo”^{*} got into conversation with me, and offered me employment in his printing office, which I promptly accepted, to commence tomorrow. This afternoon I attended a cock fight, a most cruel “sport,” but which is the principal amusement of the people here.

An English language newspaper published by a North American for the California-bound travelers.

6

I went to work at the printing office this morning and continued through the day, my business being to work the “press,” “ink,” cleaning up, &c, occasionally “setting type.” The work is not very hard but it is so hot that any exertion is sure to produce great exhaustion.

10

This morning 22 Mule loads of “Gold dust” started for Cruces, with over \$1,000,000.

7

Did not work much today, being troubled with “boils.” Steamers *Sarah Sands* sailed for San Francisco, and the *Isthmus* and *Eudore* arrived.

8

Went out to the foot of M't Bolivar with a young fellow from California, to some fruit groves, and gathered a fine lot of rich fruit. Oranges, Limes, Mangroves, Banannas, Pine apples, &c, grow wild here.

In the afternoon there was quite a fracas between some “Yankee” and some “Kanaka” sailors, in which one of the latter got his leg broke, and several others were imprisoned.

11

This being Sunday I attended service at the “Catholic Cathedral” which is a large quaint stone structure, of the old gloomy style of architecture, with 4 towers, each being ornamented with oyster shells. In these towers are several bells (most of which are cracked) which are “hammered upon” by servants for the purpose, at frequent intervals during the whole 24 hours and every day in the year.

There is no Protestant worship in the City. During the day there was 2 or 3 severe quarrels, in one of which a man was stabbed in three places very dangerously by his wife.

13

The weather is showery, with a hot oppressive atmosphere. A young man named James H. Ferriss of Triangle, Broom Co., N Y is stopping here on the same errand as myself, and I find in him a very agreeable companion.

14

Passengers are coming in from the Steamship *Falcon* and present the same woeful appearance that we did, when we crossed.

11

August, 1850 15

The mails & passengers from the *Falcon* have got here but large quantities of baggage is behind. This is one of their modes of swindling: to agree to deliver baggage at Panama in season for the steamer, and then purposely delay it, so that the owners must either go on without it or wait in Panama a fortnight as I did.

17

In the midst of a heavy shower of rain at 3 P.M. I started for the steamship *Tennessee* * in an open boat, a distance of 2 or 3 miles. * At 6 oclock hove up anchor, and started for San Francisco.

This was the first *Tennessee*, a wooden side-wheel steamer of 1,275 tons built in 1848 for the Savannah Steam Navigation Company, and intended for service between New York and Savannah. In October 1849 she was purchased by the Pacific Mail Steamship Company for \$200,000. Arriving at Panama from New York in fifty-seven days' running time, she served on the West Coast until March 6, 1853, when she went aground at Tagus Beach, Bolinas Bay, just north of the entrance to San Francisco Bay. *The Panama Route*, p. 248; Frank Soulé, John H. Gihon, and James Nisbet, *The Annals of San Francisco* (New York, 1855), pp. 434-435.

The roadstead at Panama is a fine anchorage, but there were at this time no dock facilities. Thus to board a north-bound steamer, it was necessary to take a small boat, often going out through the surf and shallow water on the back of a native.

18

It is Sunday but there being no minister on board, there is no divine service. Very fine weather. Steering S.W.

19

Beautiful weather but very warm. Having rounded Pt Malo last night, we are now steering W.N.W. Saw a brig bound to the southward.

There are but about 50 cabin passengers, and 75 Stearage passengers, so that not being crowded we enjoy ourselves very much. Capt Cole is a good commander, doing all he can to make us comfortable. I sleep on deck, finding it much more agreeable, although I am frequently roused from my slumbers by smart showers.

23

Fine weather, and a pleasant company on board. At noon we are 430 miles from Acapulco.

24

Are in sight of the mountainous coast of Mexico Some very high peaks are visible.

25

At 11 A.M. entered the bay of Acapulco and came to anchor. There were 8 sail of vessels, but no steamers, the *Sarah Sands* having left 4 days ago.

I went ashore in a “dugout” which is rigged with a frame on 12 each side to prevent upsetting. I find this a much neater place, although not so large as Panama. The buildings are built of “adobás” (sunburnt brick) with tiled roofs, and generally of but one story in height. A gang of chained convicts sweep the streets every morning. The harbor is completely landlocked so that the ocean is not visible from the town.

26

Went ashore carrying a lot of N York Papers which I sold for one dime each. I went into the fort which I found to be a beautiful structure of white sandstone of a curious shape, and I should think capable of destroying any force that could enter the harbor. There is a large park between the fort and town, which being well shaded with trees, is a beautiful retreat during the hot midday sun.

The Cholera is raging here now and we are admonished to beware of fruit, but it was so ripe & fine that I bought a good supply.*

Many emigrants to the mines were struck by the dreaded Asiatic cholera on whatever route they followed, whether by land or sea. Nearly all the journals of the forty-niners mention the disease, which attacked without warning, brought great pain and suffering, and sometimes carried away its victims in a few hours. It was not until 1883 that the microorganism causing the disease was identified by Koch. The men en route to California did not know that the severe outbreaks were generally caused by contaminated water.

The Steamer *Carolina* from San Francisco with 50 passengers, and the *Columbus* with 200 passengers arrived in port.

Took on board 30 passengers who came through Mexico, and at 6 P.M. sailed for San Francisco. After getting out of the harbor, saw the light of a large vessel steering to the Southard.

27

Fine weather, with head wind, which creates a circulation, so that the heat of the sun is very comfortable.

29

Last night a man named Wm Hurd from Memphis, Tenn. died of dysentary. He came on board at Acapulco, unwell. At 9 A.M. the bell tolled, and the passengers assembled on the quarter deck to witness the ceremonies of the burial of the deceased. His body was sewed up in canvass with a heavy weight at his feet, and he lay on a plank in the lea gangway with the "American Jack"

thrown over him. The Capt then read the English burial service and at a given signal the body was consigned to the deep. His brother was on board and mourned bitterly.

13

August-September, 1850 30

Crossed the mouth of the Gulf of California and are now in sight of Lower California.

Sept. 2

The weather is quite cool, the wind being in the Northard.

3

Saw Steamship *Northerner* bound to Panama. We are in sight of land most of the time.

4

At 3 P.M. came in sight of the "Golden Gate" and soon after worked our way up that rock-bound channel, past "North Beach," when a full view of the harbor, shipping & City of San Francisco was before us. The Steamer went out to "Rincon point" and anchored, some 2 or 3 miles from the city. It being 6 oclock when we came to anchor, I concluded to remain on board for the night.

5

While at breakfast, Wm. G. Parkinson of Baltimore and [Mr.] Olover of Maine came on board to get their baggage that I brought from Panama, and from them I learned Josiah's whereabouts. I went ashore with them, and put up at the "Eastern Hotel" on Jackson St, where they and Josiah board, and then went in search of Josiah, and found him at work on a house, one mile back of the city, for \$5. per day. In the afternoon went around with my Newspapers and sold quite a number.*

One of the New York passengers on Bayard Taylor's ship sold 1,500 copies of Horace Greeley's *Tribune*, and other papers he had brought along, at one dollar a copy. Taylor, who was working for the *Tribune*, came out of

the City Hotel with twelve papers that he had used to stuff in the corners of his valise, and sold them to a boy on the corner for \$10. *Eldorado*, I, 57.

6

Bought a lot of San Francisco "Dalies" at the rate of 6 1/4 cts and sold them at the rate of 12 1/2 cts each. Also sold more of my N York papers.

7

I am engaged in the same business as yesterday, Josiah being still at work on the house.

8

Went over to Happy Valley* and attended worship at the Chapel of Rev. S. H. Willey, who formerly was our school-teacher in Dunstable.* The building was of cloth, with a 14 wooden frame, and was capable of seating 150 or 200 persons. The audience was small, and the singing rather feeble, but the preaching was good. After the service was over, Mr Willey invited us to his house and introduced us to his family. We remained some time and enjoyed a very pleasant conversation.

Happy Valley was along Yerba Buena cove reaching southward toward Rincon Point. It was entered by a path from the junction of Bush and Battery streets by way of First Street. The area centered between First and Second, Mission and Natoma streets. Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of California* (San Francisco, 1884-90), VI, 180 *n*. In an extensive footnote to Chapter X of this volume, pp. 172-187, Bancroft provides a summary description of the entire business and commercial section of San Francisco in the years 1848-50. Samuel Hopkins Willey (1821-1914), clergyman, school teacher, editor, and author, was the second Protestant minister in California. He sailed from New York on December 1, 1848, as a representative of the American Missionary Society and reached Monterey in February 1849. With Padre Ramirez he served as chaplain of the state constitutional convention in the fall. Later he became vice-president of the College of California, 1862-68, and acting president, 1868-69, and wrote *A History of the College of California* (San Francisco, 1887), which traced the transition from the little Contra Costa academy begun in 1853 to the University at Berkeley. See sketch of his life by Harris Elwood Starr in *Dictionary of American Biography*.

9

Paid our board bill at the rate of \$14. per week and took passage for Sacramento in the sloop *Mary Pope* for which we paid \$6. and are to board ourselves.* In a squall lost the main hatch, and received other damage.

From 1849 on there was keen competition between sail and steam vessels, and between rival steam navigation companies, on the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers. Rates were finally stabilized in February 1854 by a combination of steamboat owners and operators, known as the California Steam Navigation Company and capitalized at two and one-half million dollars. From San Francisco to Sacramento cabin accommodations were \$10, deck \$7, and freight \$8 per ton. To Marysville the charges were \$12 cabin, \$10 deck, and freight was \$15 a ton. To Stockton on the San Joaquin costs were \$10 cabin, \$7 for deck passage, and freight was \$6 per ton. *Annals of San Francisco*, p. 521.

12

Yesterday we got lost in one of the sloughs of the river, and found some trouble in getting on the right track, but at length arrived here last night. I find this a flourishing city of 10,000 to 15,000 inhabitants, and that a great deal of business is done here. But our stay was so short that we saw but little of the place.*

Sacramento, or as Stephen sometimes called it "Sac City," was at this time second in size and importance to San Francisco, though it was not until 1854 that it became the capital. It was notable for its rats, the great quantity of red dust over everything, and the winter floods which inundated the city and surrounding plains. A levee had been built which afforded some protection. The streets were wide and straight, crossing each other at right angles, and numbered 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc. from the river and A, B, C, etc. from north to south. J Street was the principal thoroughfare, with wharves at its foot. *Three Years*, pp. 100-102; *Mountains & Molehills*, pp. 223-226.

At noon we (Josiah & I) got a chance to work our passage to Marysville in a schooner laden with provisions. So off we started, Josiah pulling an oar, and I steering. The river was very low, the channel difficult, and the current rapid, and the schooner got snagged several times badly, so as to damage the cargo.*

By August 1850 all steam traffic, except for one little steamer, the *Yuba*, had been discontinued because of the low water in the Feather River. Small vessels, propelled by sail and oar, continued to bring provisions to Marysville and other northern towns, but they reached the head of navigation only with difficulty. See Earl Ramey, *The Beginnings of Marysville* (San Francisco, 1936), p. 41.

16

At noon arrived at Marysville and after getting dinner got our baggage stored at Jones warehouse.* We then got some provision, took our blankets, cooking utensils, some clothing, &c. and started for "Long Bar" "Yuba River."* The sun was so hot, the road so dusty, and our packs so heavy, that we could not go very fast.

During the winter of 1850-51 the city of Marysville was incorporated at the place formerly known as Nye's Ranch, in that triangle of land between the Yuba and Feather rivers. It claimed a population of nearly 10,000 in 1853. Clarkson P. Hale and Fred Emory, *Marysville City Directory* (Marysville, 1853), Foreword.

Long Bar, named because it was the longest bar on the river, had also the longest period of success. Developed first in the fall of 1849, work was still progressing in 1858. As Stephen and Josiah walked north and east from Marysville along the gold-rich Yuba, they passed river-bar towns and mining camps every few miles named in honor of an early man of prominence in the locality. Thus: Ousley's Bar was about ten miles up the Yuba at the mouth of Dry Creek and had been named for a Dr. Ousley of Missouri. Never very rich, it was covered with mining debris from upriver by 1879. Theodore Sicard was a French sailor who, leaving his ship in 1833, had found his way to the Yuba by 1848, and mined and traded at the spot that bore his name. Parks Bar, the richest of all the camps on the river, had been named for David Parks who had brought his wife, the first white woman in the township, and several children with him across the plains. So unusual was a man with a family in the mines, the place was named in his honor. Theodore Cordua arrived in California in 1842 and had dreamed, with some success, of a huge wilderness empire akin to John Sutter's. His claim has since disappeared, covered over by tailings from later hydraulic mining methods. Rose Bar has also been obliterated by the ruinous debris from later mining. Here Jonas Spect found gold on June 2, 1848, the first point where gold was discovered on the Yuba. John Rose was a Scot who started a store there with his partner in the fall of 1848. Kennebec Bar was named after the Kennebec Company of Maine miners who located just opposite the lower end of Long Bar. [William H. Chamberlain and Harry L. Wells], *History of Yuba County, California...* (Oakland, 1879), pp. 76, 83, 84, 86, 88.

In answer to our enquires of those we met, as to "how the mines held out" &c, some told us that we could not earn our board, that we had better turn back, and go to the states as soon as possible, &c, while others told us to go on, that we were on the road to fortune, and that the mines yielded immense returns.

At sundown we had got as far as the table land opposite Ousley's Bar, where we heard the rattle of the auriferous gravel 15 as it passed through the machine, and saw the operation of mining for the first time.* And it gave us fresh courage, so that although we were sore, weary and exhausted, we pushed on 2 miles farther and soon were snugly ensconsed under our blankets beneath the shade of a noble oak, being too tired to prepare any supper.

Probably the sound described by Stephen was made by miners operating either a "cradle" or a "long tom." The cradle, or rocker, was the simplest instrument used in placer mining, next to the pan. Resembling a child's cradle,

it consisted of a box or trough about 20 in. wide and 40 in. long with sides 4 in. high. The lower end was left open. On the upper end a hopper or riddle was placed which was a smaller box about 20 in. square with 4 in. wooden sides and a bottom of zinc or sheet iron pierced with numerous half-inch holes. Under this hopper was an apron of wood or cloth which sloped downward from the lower end of the hopper to the upper end of the cradle. Two strips of wood about an inch square were nailed across the bottom of the cradle box, one at the middle and another at the lower end. In order to give it a rocking motion rockers were nailed under the bottom of the cradle box. With the lower end in position about 2 in. lower than the upper, the cradle was placed in a spot where a constant supply of water could be had, the hopper was filled with pay dirt, and the rocking motion begun, while dipperfuls of water were poured over the mixture until nothing remained but clean stones. The gold and dissolved earth passed through to the lower box with the heavier gold being caught on the cleats on the bottom. Two men with a cradle could work about 200-300 pans of earth a day. The long tom was similar, but the use of it did not require rocking, only water. It was a trough from 8 to 14 ft. long, about 16 in. wide at the upper end and 30 in. at the lower. The bottom at the lower end was a perforated sheet of iron under which a riffle box, with several cleats or riffle bars, was placed. A constant stream entered the top where the dirt was shoveled in. The hopper had an upward turn at the end so nothing could run over. Large stones were thrown out, small ones falling into the riffle box with the gravel and gold. From three to six men usually worked a tom. It was not seen much in California after the middle fifties. John S. Hittell, *Mining in Pacific States of North America* (San Francisco, 1861), pp. 129-130, 133. Almost every bit of gold rush literature contains some information on methods of mining, but this is the best, nearly contemporary account of the actual work done in mining the editor has seen.

17

We awoke after sunrise feeling very sore and stiff from our tedious journey of yesterday. After preparing our breakfast, we went down to the river to learn the operation of mining, remaining about the “bar” all day.*

Diggings on the regular streams in California were divided into “bed” and “bar” diggings. Bed diggings were those made at low water or by damming the stream at a place usually covered by water at even the lowest stage. Where the current was swift and the bedrock smooth, little gold was found. Bars or flats were banks of sand, clay, or gravel covered only at high water. Rich bars were often found at the mouths of canyons or gullies or at the bends in rivers on the inner side of the bend where any deposit carried down from above would lodge, those spots being richest where the water had its strongest eddy when the bar was overflowed. Hittell, *Mining in the Pacific States*, p. 65.

18

Took our packs and started up the river. At noon while resting under the shade of a tree at “Sicards bar” got into conversation with Mr S. D. Loud of Amesbury, Mass. who kindly invited us to take up our abode with him, which we gladly accepted. We found him to be a very intelligent and agreeable

friend from whom we received much useful information. His advice to us concerning our future operations was very beneficial.

19

Started this morning up the river, stopping at "Park's & Corduway's" "bar" and at noon arrived at Rose's "bar". Not liking the prospect at any of these places, in company with an old miner we started to "prospect" a certain "flat" near by that was supposed to be rich; but after a hard afternoon's work we were doomed to be totally disappointed in this, our first experience in mining. After cooking our simple meal, and partaking of it, we returned to the tent of our friend Mr Loud where we remained for the night.

21 September-October, 1850

Since my last date we have been mining on our own hook, with a pick, pan & shovel furnished by Mr Loud. The weather is scalding hot, and we find it no easy task to ply the "pick" and bend over the "pan."

At 3 P.M. we have realized the sum of \$1.40 for the time and 16 labor we have spent at mining in Cal. and so concluded to go down to Long "bar" to "prospect."

Late in the afternoon we arrived at Long "bar,"* and as we stopped into "Uncle Jeffs House" to make some enquires, a sick man lying in an adjoining room spoke to Josiah, asking him to come into his room and see him. Very much surprised at such a request from an unseen person, he went in, and found a middle aged man lying in a berth sheltered from the burning sun by a single thickness of cotton cloth only, who was so emaciated and reduced as not to be able to help himself, and there lay, apparently in the last stages of dysentary. He came from N. York. in the same steamers with Josiah, where they became partially acquainted, so that now he recognized Josiah's voice. His name was Ashley Stone and [he] was from Wilmington Vt. He requested us to remain on the "bar" until he either recovered, or his disease terminated fatally, as he expected it would. Being in want of a cook at this hotel, I accepted an offer of \$50 pr month to fill this vacancy,

and immediately entered upon my duties so that I could wait upon Mr Stone constantly. Josiah went back up to "Sicard bar" immediately, and got employment at mining at \$8. per day.

By the spring of 1850 there were 1,000 people at Long Bar. It boasted a steady population of 300-400, though in winter, when the mines could not be worked, it was much larger. During 1850 a ferry was established across the river to Kennebec Bar. There were a half-dozen stores, eight or ten saloons, six or eight hotels and boardinghouses, and a post office at this time. *History of Yuba County*, p. 86.

28

The number I have to cook for is small so that I get along very well. I have to bring my water nearly 1/4 mile. Mr Stone is recovering rapidly and will probably soon go into business.

Oct. 4

Mr Stone has so far recovered as to walk out a mile or two. Today he bought out the store of Dr Devant and has sent for Josiah to come and assist him.

5

Josiah came down and has agreed to work for Mr Stone 6 months for \$50. per month.

8

Missrs Dill & Brown proprietors of this Hotel, have failed; but I am fortunate in getting my pay \$25. I have agreed to continue 17 in my culinary operations for the new Landlord (Mr Scott) at the same rate.

Josiah is taken sick with the fever & ague so as to be confined to his cot.

October-November, 1850 18

I am afflicted with sores on my feet so that cannot walk, and can hardly stand. I am not 1/2 mile from Josiah (who is still confined to his bed) yet I have not been able to see him for some time. Circumstances seem to frown at us now but we hope for better times.

25

Josiah has recovered from his disagreeable complaint and now enjoys good health. My feet are much better, and I hope will entirely heal up in a few days. We have concluded to accept Mr Stones offer "to sell out his store for \$260," and the goods at wholesale prices.

27

Commenced taking account of stock which consists of Groceries, Provisions, Clothing, mining tools, &c.

28

Finished taking account of stock which amounted to about \$900. giving our note for \$700. Business is not very driving, but we spend our leisure time in preparing for winter.*

Large quantities of water were necessary for washing the gold-bearing earth or clay so that rain was always desirable in proper amounts for successful mining operations. In summer the miners generally engaged in wet diggings in the river beds or alongside the streams, often throwing up heaps of auriferous gravel from dry ravines to be washed when the rainy season set in about November. When the rivers were full the earth was carried to the watercourse or flumes were built to carry the water to the site of the earth to be washed. Thus in October, before the rains began, business at a store might well be slack because the miners were not at that time panning out any respectable amount of gold. Heavy rains during the winter, however, would halt mining operations altogether, and lead the men to seek amusement in town. *Annals of San Francisco*, p. 515.

29

Josiah went down to Marysville and bought some goods. Among other things he bought 190 yards Drilling for a covering for our tent paying 30 cts pr yard.

Nov. 1

We are both busy sewing our tent covering which is quite a job.

4

The covering is finished and we have just got an extra set of tent poles set up. At 3 P.M. a Sheriff rode up and summonsed Josiah to appear at Court in Marysville tomorrow as juror. Accordingly he assisted me in getting the tent cloth spread and then set out on foot for Marysville.

18

Our building is 52 feet long and 17 ft wide, and consequently the covering is very large so that I could get but a small part of it tacked down.

5

Arose at sunrise and found the "covering" torn badly by the wind but by close application I succeeded in repairing and securing it by dark.

6

Last night at midnight Josiah arrived home, having got through sooner than was expected. Today we have got our house in good order for winter. We take a few boarders at \$11. per week.

22

Since my last date we have been hard at work paving our store with cobble stones, cutting wood, &c.

We get most of our goods by sending to Marysville, by Mr Humphries, a teamster who charges 3 cts pr lb for bringing from M[arysville]. I here add a list of cost and sale price of some of the principal articles:

Salt Pork cost.19 retail.25 per lb

Ham“.43“.50 “

Potatoes“.21“.25 “

Onions“.83“1.00 “

Sugar“.28“.40 “

Hard Bread“.19“.25 “

Coffee“.50“1.00 “

Butter“.75“1.00 “

Flour“.19“.25 “

Tea“.80“1.50 “

Lard“.40“.60 “

Candles“.75“1.25 “

Salt“.12“.25 “

Quicksilver“.85“2.00 “

Molasses“2.50“4.00 Gall

Vinegar“2.50“4.00 “

Tacks“.50“1.50 paper

Picks“3.00“5.00

and other things in proportion.*

A similar list of provisions prepared in 1849 for the prospective miner showed: Mess Pork per
bbl. 28.00

Bacon per lb. 28

Hams do. 35

Sausages do. 40

Flour per bbl. 12.00

Sugar per lb. 15

Tea do. 1.00

Coffee do. 12 1/2

Chocolate do. 40

Beans per bu. 1.50

Rice per lb. 10

Dried Apples do. 25

Jerked Beef do. 25

Lemon Juice per bottle 1.00

Saleratus per lb. 1.00

Vinegar per gal. 1.00

These were San Francisco prices. The author stated that because of high charges for transportation, prices in the mines could be expected to have increased 300 or even 400 per cent. Felix Paul Wierzbicki, *California As It Is & As It May Be, Or, Guide to the Gold Region* (San Francisco, 1849), p. 38.

19

November, 1850-January, 1851 24

Today it commenced raining and blowing a perfect hurricane, so that now the rainy season has fairly set in, and our tent is quite water proof.

Dec. 12

Business is tolerable good, but I remain in the Store and attend to it, while Josiah works out mining, getting from 7 to 8 dollars per day.

27

We have concluded to run an express to Sacramento and San Francisco for letters for miners. Accordingly I went to Kennebec & Ousleys "bars" while Josiah went to Sicard & Park's "bars" and we got some 300 names to get letters for, besides some other errands, so that I went immediately.

Jan. 20

I have just returned from below bringing some 50 letters and \$300. worth of goods. I left San Francisco just after a Steamer came in from the States so that I bought 125 N York & New Orleans papers at the rate of 15 cts each. I have sold them all for 50 cts each. The postage on letters is .40 cts, but we get \$1.50 each, so that the express business more than pays the expenses of the trip, and the goods that we sell can be bought for about 1/2 in San Francisco that they can in Marysville.

Mr Hull (the blacksmith) and Wm. Middleton of Va. live with us. Business is better, and as we have a good stock of goods, we can now compete with older stores.

Mr Stone has been down to San Francisco to find some business but has not succeeded. So he came back bringing some goods, and having bought a tent for \$150. he is now in trade here. He is speculating considerable having bought "Uncle Jeffs House" and sold it again.

25

Mr Stone has sold out his store, and bought a horse & cart and intends to use it in hauling dirt down to the river, but a few days after sold it, and commenced building a store near ours. 20 This he sold as soon as completed and then built another canvass building opposite of our store, and after completing it, went "below" and purchased a large assortment of goods with which he filled his store. When we bought our store and goods of him, he agreed to bring us what custom he could, and not by any means to go into trade in this vicinity. But alas! how forgetful some persons are of their promises.

January-February, 1851 30

Josiah's health is good, but I am troubled with sore eyes, which I expect are caused by the artificial light during these long winter evenings. Business is tolerable good and we get along very well.

Feb. 16

This is my birth day, being 18 years old. I have made another trip to San Francisco, and got quite a number of letters. As soon as I come in sight of the "bar" on my return, the miners drop their tools and run to meet me, in haste to get the letters from their dear friends at home. And those who are so unfortunate as to receive no letters, frequently *rate* their friends at home most severely, for neglecting so important a duty. And as they look upon their fellow-miners (who are more fortunate) reading epistles of friendships and constancy penned in the fine hand of a female, frequently a tear comes unbidden to the eye, while the heart greives at being thus forgotton by

loved ones at home. But sometimes a letter bears a black seal, and I have seen the recipient of such a missive convulsively grasping a lock of hair it bore, uttering lamentations, and sobbing as only one can when he has lost “*one*” whose affection and happiness was closely entwined, and almost inseperable with his own.*

In describing the social life of Californians when the only news from home and the outside world was brought in two or three times a month from New York via Panama, Bancroft says, “This letter-opening at very wide intervals is a sort of gambling with fate, in which hope not unfrequently stakes happiness against fearful odds.” *California Inter Pocula*, pp. 272-275.

While at Sacramento I purchased 320 lbs Quicksilver at .90 per lb.* I bought 150 N York & N Orleans papers at San Francisco and when I got on board the steamer for Sac City I had only \$1.25 in money, and was about 250 miles from home. But at Sac City I sold some \$15. worth, and after paying my passage to Marysville (\$12.), I bought some more papers. So that after 21 selling enough at Marysville to pay the freight on my goods (some \$40.) I had about as many as I started with. My Mottoe was “Energy,” “Perseverance,” and “Economy.”

Mercury has been used from ancient times in separating gold from the impurities in which it is found, and was in general use in California after 1849. The fortunate chemical affinity of mercury for gold made it possible to place a small quantity of mercury—about two ounces to each ounce of gold expected, as determined by a previous test—in the bottom of pan or rocker to which the particles of gold clung leaving the sand and other foreign matter to wash away. The resultant amalgam was then squeezed through buckskin and finally separated by retort. In the Burke rocker, or quicksilver machine, extensive use was made of mercury, placing it behind each of a number of cleats. *Mining in the Pacific States*, p. 133.

February-March, 1851 26

Josiah has just returned from San Francisco, and also a trip to Mokelumne Hill to find Uncle E.G. Hutchins and Cousin T. A. Hutchins, who are mining in that vicinity. One or both of them will come to Long bar to make arrangements for the summers work.

Mar. 8

I have just returned from San Francisco bringing 65 letters and about a ton of goods, among which was 125 lbs wedding cake of excellent quality, it being put up in air tight tins. It cost me .23 cts, and we sell it for .50 cts per lb.*

Wedding cake may seem a strange delicacy in the life of a brawny miner, but these men seemed to indulge their expensive tastes, feasting when their pocket-books and the stock at the grocery afforded the means. "Dame" Shirley wrote of a housewarming dinner at Indian Bar that consisted of oyster soup, fried salmon fresh caught, roast beef and boiled ham, fried oysters, potatoes and onions, mince pie and pudding (without eggs or milk), Madeira, nuts and raisins, claret and champagne, and coffee. Louise Amelia Knapp Smith Clappe (pseud. Shirley), "California in 1851," *The Pioneer*, II (1854) 151. The latest edition of these remarkable letters published serially in *The Pioneer is The Shirley Letters from the California Mines, 1851-1852*, with an intro. and notes by Carl I. Wheat (New York, 1949).

During my absence one of our lodgers, Mr Hull, had all his money stolen from under his pillow early one morning, while he had gone out to kindle a fire in his shop. The whole population of the "bar" was at once aroused, and scouting parties were sent in all directions to bring in any suspicious persons, while large numbers were engaged in hunting about the "bar" to get some clue to it. At last it was found by "Geo Carr" by the side of the path, from our store to the river. Mr Middleton (one of our lodgers) went down to the river after a pail of water soon after Mr Hull went out—and before he missed the money (\$1250.)—and very strong suspicions rested on him, so that at one time, the crowd made preparations to lynch him, but as there was no positive evidence Mr Stone prevailed upon the people to let him go, and he very soon after left the camp.

At another time, a man stole a pick from our store, and it being supposed that he (the thief) was a very bad man, the miners collected and came very near hanging him but finally let him go, advising him never to return to "these diggin's" if he valued his life.*

Charles H. Shinn's book, *Mining Camps: A Study of American Frontier Government* (New York, 1885), cites ample evidence that Stephen's observations of summary, but in general, orderly and just punishments for crime, are accurate. Banishment, whipping, or death by lynching were the only available methods and until an alcalde or justice of the peace was elected, justice was dispensed by an almost immediate assembly of all the miners in a given locality which Shinn calls the "folk-moot of the Sierra." P. 167.

This evening Cousin Thos. A Hutchins arrived from the "Mokeluma." He and Josiah are talking of going to Oregon 22 with the intention of farming, and I encourage them all I can, as I think I should like that country quite as well as this.

11

After a long consultation, Josiah and Thomas have started for Oregon, with the intention of trading or farming. Josiah takes all the ready cash (some \$1300.), leaving me here with a stock of goods to the amount of \$550. to close out by the 1 May, when I am to follow them. At Sacramento Josiah bought a few articles for the store which arrived by Mr Humphries team.

12

Samuel Adams of N Chelmsford, Mass. arrived here today; he had some idea of going to Oregon with Josiah but was too late. He will now remain with me on a visit.

18

I have received a letter from Josiah stating that he had arrived at San Francisco and should leave for Oregon by the first vessel. I enjoy the company of Mr Adams as I should be alone were it not for him.

26

Mr Stone and myself have just concluded a bargain, viz, I am to give our tent, counters, scales, empty boxes, barrells, &c. for a house owned by him in San Francisco on Vallejo St. Said house is about 14 x 18, built of boards, with a single roof. Besides the house there is a Mohogany counter, cooking stove, &c. The ground does not go with it, but belongs to James Lick, who is to receive \$15. per month ground-rent.* The conditions of the sale are that I am to vacate the store May 1st, and he is to pay the groundrent up to Apr 25. Accordingly we passed deeds to that effect.

James Lick (1796-1876) had arrived in California in 1848 with a small fortune which he invested in land, and subsequently grew very wealthy with the increase in property values. Upon his death he became famous because of his bequests to various scientific, charitable, and educational enterprises. Bancroft, *History of California*, IV, 713.

In the afternoon Mr Stone sold the store to Holt & Lowe for \$200. He has already sold his store and stock of goods to Holt & Lowe, and is now engaged in settling up his business.

March-April 1851 27

Today Mr Stone left "Long Bar" for the States. He carried letters and money for several of the miners here to their friends 23 at home. I sent a letter home by him which he will deliver. He carried \$2400. that he had made here, and also the well wishes of all with whom he was acquainted. Perhaps he did not do by us as he agreed to, but he is forgiven. He and Josiah & I have enjoyed many pleasant conversations, and occasionally a prayer-meeting with a few others who might choose to attend.

31

Samuel Adams has gone down to Marysville to seek employment, having made me a very pleasant visit. Trade is very brisk, the rainy season having set in anew. I have the store full of boarders and lodgers, getting \$12. per week for board and \$2.50 for lodging. I bought a ton of Flour of "Bancroft" for \$105. I get letters from home regularly.

April 15

Am very busy in collecting debts, settling, &c. Mr Jacob C. Brown of Iowa assists me. Sold my Quicksilver flasks for .75 cts each.

27

A man charged with stealing ran into Dr Hagers "Drug Store," went behind the counter, seized a two ounce vial of "Laudenum," and swallowed the contents before any one could interfere. A

powerful emetic was immediately administered, so that he recovered, and had his trial. A verdict of “Not Guilty” was rendered.

I have but little stock left, but that being unsalable, sells very slowly. I am boarding at “Uncle Jeffs House.”

30

Two days ago I got out written handbills, stating my intention to close out my stock at auction today. Accordingly at 11 A.M. the sale commenced, Mr Cady of N York acting as auctioneer, and Jas A. French of Mass as Clerk. A tolerable good attendance was present, but goods sold very low. However I closed out, and now have nothing to detain me here except collecting a few bills.

24

May, 1851 4

I have settled all up that I can but find \$100. worth of bad debts. Early this morning I left “Long bar” having bid adieu to friends and hallowed associations. I took passage on an ox team for Marysville where I arrived at 2 P. M. and put up at the Eureka Hotel. Deposited my dust with Messrs Cunningham & Brumagim, Bankers.* I found Kimball Webster of Hudson, N H. and Mr Carleton of Dracutt Mass here and had a very pleasant time with them.* I became acquainted with them at “Long Bar.”

The banking house of Lewis Cunningham and Mark Brumagim, east side D Street between First and Second, was founded in 1850 and had a continuous existence, though under changing names and ownership, down to 1932. *Marysville City Directory*, pp. 28, 69.

Webster was a member of the Granite State and California Mining and Trading Company organized in Boston in March 1849. This party of twenty-nine men had come overland from Independence, Missouri, to the Sacramento Valley (May 3-October 13, 1849). He returned to his home in New Hampshire the latter part of August 1854. Kimball Webster, *The Gold Seekers of '49; A Personal Narrative of the Overland Trail and Adventures in California and Oregon from 1849 to 1854...* (Manchester, N[ew] H[ampshire], 1917). With his friend, George Carlton, Webster mined during the winter of 1850-51 at Long Bar where he had met “two brothers by the name of Davis from Nashua, N.H. The given name of the elder one I believe was Josiah. If I remember correctly they both lived to return home, but both died not very long after. The younger one was not more than seventeen or eighteen years of age at that time, but he was very active and smart. They kept a store in quite a large cloth

building very near our camp." P. 175. Webster also related the story of the robbery of the blacksmith who was living at the Davis' store and boardinghouse.

5

Received a letter from Portland Oregon stating that he [Josiah] had arrived there in the Brig *Grecian* in 12 days from San Francisco, and that he & Thomas were then preparing to go to the Oregon Mines. They paid \$50. passage to Portland.

At 6 P.M. while standing at the Steamboat landing, the steamer *Fashion* from San Francisco came in. When within hailing distance the Capt shouted to the assembled multitude that "San Francisco was in ashes," that "\$10 000 000. worth of property was destroyed by fire on the night of May 3d." The effect produced upon that crowd was so powerful as to be worth noticing. Some shouted, some groaned, some cried, "I am ruined," some seemed completely bewildered, some ran one way & some another; but all felt that a great calamity had befallen California.*

This, the fifth and greatest, fire in the early history of San Francisco razed twenty or twenty-two square blocks causing damage estimated at between ten and twelve million dollars. The entire business district between Pine and Broadway and from Dupont to Battery streets was destroyed in a single night. Within ten days fully one-fifth of the number of destroyed buildings were again fit for habitation and business, or were fast approaching that condition. Nothing was more miraculous than the way in which the city rose phoenix-like from its ashes after each of these holocausts. *Annals of San Francisco*, pp. 603-610.

6

Got my money from the banker's and took passage in Steamer *Jack Hays** for Sacramento, where I arrived at 3 P.M., when I took passage to San Francisco in Steamer *Wilson G. Hunt*.*

Built in 1849, this 31-tonner was the former *Commodore Jones*. Jerry MacMullen, *Paddle-Wheel Days in California* (Stanford, Calif., 1944), pp. 16, 50, 138.

Side-wheel steamboat, 450 tons, the *Wilson G. Hunt* is said to have made a million dollars in her first year in California and had a long career on the Columbia River, Puget Sound, and San Francisco Bay until she was broken up in 1890. *Ibid.*, pp. 20, 49 (picture), 50, 53, 141; *Lewis & Dryden's Marine History of the Pacific Northwest*, ed. E. W. Wright (Portland, 1895), pp. 72 (picture), 73 and n.

7

At daylight I went ashore, and what a scene met my view! Two thirds of the city in ashes including all the most beautiful and prominent buildings, with here and there a chimney or portion of a wall standing as a monument to the departed. As a great part of the city was built out in the bay, (or what was the bay), on piles, for acres around these burnt timbers looked like a timber swamp burnt off, and the streets being planked were so mutilated, if not entirely consumed, as to be almost impassible.

25

And while the stifling smoke was still pouring upwards, from the smouldering ruins and fallen timbers, workman were engaged in erecting small “places of business” for those who had been so uncerimoniously turned out of their Mercantile palaces, and commodious warehouses, showing that “Yankee energy” was not parilized by even such a stroke of fortune. Some had already erected buildings and were now engaged in buying and selling as actively as ever.

I left my “dust” at Moffat & Co's Mint for coinage (1583 dwts).^{*} Found my house in as good condition as could be expected, but the value of it is trifling. I tried to find the owner of the land, but after a long, unfruitful search gave it up. Saw the sch'r *Merchantman* advertised for Oregon.^{*} Went on board to ascertain the price of passage, but the Capt offered me \$35. per month to go as cabin boy with him, which I accepted on the condition that I am to be discharged at Portland.

A private assaying and banking concern on the southeast corner of Clay and Dupont streets. Bancroft, *History of California*, VI, 183 n. In another place Bancroft says that the bankers of San Francisco had agreed in April 1851, during a panic period, to receive on deposit no coin other than that issued by Moffat & Company, who were the only ones faithful in their valuation. *California Inter Pocula*, p. 340. Moffat & Company supplied most of the coinage required for business until April 3, 1854, when the U. S. Mint opened.

A coasting vessel that in 1858 at the time of the Fraser River gold rush carried 200 passengers north from San Francisco on her first trip. *Lewis & Dryden*, p. 68.

16

Having given the charge of my house to “E. L. Morgan & Co” until my return, I entered upon my duties as Cabin boy. The schooner is ready for sea, only waiting for a fair wind. The crew consist of 6 sailors and the Cook, and in the cabin there is the Capt (E L Beard) the 1st & 2d Mates, Mr

DeWitt (the owner) two passengers, and myself. In the afternoon the sch'r hauled out into the stream.

19

Set sail and commenced beating out of the harbor, with the tide in our favor. When just under the headland of the north side of the harbor, the wind died away, while the tide swept us down onto the rocks off Pt Lobos, where she struck very heavily. She lay thumping and beating for some time so that we could not stand on deck, the Capt cursing and shouting, and so frightened that he could do nothing, but at length a flaw of wind came and drove the sch'r between two of the principal rocks, a passage not 4 feet wider than the sch'r. We drifted a mile or two farther and 26 then came to anchor. Had the anchor been dropped when she first commenced drifting there would have been no difficulty.

On examination we found the rudder nearly wrenched off, so that it hung by only one pintle. The timbers and planking were also started, although she did not leak very badly, but it was found necessary to return to port to repair, and as the rudder was so out of order the Capt thought it impossible to sail her up. Accordingly Mr DeWitt the mate & 4 Sailors took a boat and went up to the City to send down a Steamer to our relief.

In the meantime signals of distress were hoisted, but no vessels came in sight. At noon it came on to blow quite hard, and the anchor commenced dragging, each wave sending us nearer and nearer a long line of dangerous rocks which were now less than a mile distant; and as a last resort, the Capt ordered all sail to be set, which was a long and severe task for 5 persons, so that when the anchor was up, and we were fairly under way, the rocks were but a short distance under our lee, the waves about them hissing and roaring, and dashing high in the air as they came in contact, warning us of our fate if the sch'r had struck them. The Schooner barely held her way, in a pallel line with these rocks, under a heavy press of canvas, and we feared each moment, that the rudder would give way, under the powerful strain that was forced upon it. But at length we rounded by the last rock, and

headed up the bay and met the boat coming down to our assistance. Came to anchor for the night off Clarks Point.

20

Got under and ran up to Rincon Point, where we ran ashore at high tide so that "she" is high and dry at low water. A gang of carpenters came to work on the vessel calking, &c, besides taking the rudder away to repair it.

May-June, 1851 31

The repairs are finished and the vessel is in good order. Hauled out into the stream, ready for sailing with the first favorable wind, when the crew and 2 mates left. The Capt shipped a new 27 crew and a 1st mate only. The cost of the repairs amount to \$850. besides detention, &c.

June 2

Early in the morning set sail with a light wind, and the tide in our favor. As we got down near the "fort" in tacking, the sch'r "missed stays" and got within the vessel's length of the rocks before the anchor could be let go.* Soon after, got under weigh for Saucileto where we remained for the night.*

Since "to stay" in nautical terminology is the same as "to tack," which is to bring the ship's head up to the wind for going about, "to miss stays" is to fail in an attempt to go about.

Saucelito was a more common spelling than Sausalito from the time of the American occupation until after 1900. In 1870, when the post office was established, the spelling Saucelito was conferred upon the town. Erwin G. Gudde, *California Place Names* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1949), p. 321.

3

Put to sea early with the ebb-tide and tried to get outside, but could not, so put back to Saucileto to anchor for the night. We begin to think that some strange fatality attends this vessel, or that the Capt does not understand his business.

4

Got under way, and finally succeeded in getting outside. Put to sea, with a light head wind making a course W. by S.

10

We have had a succession of calms and light head winds. At noon "tacked ship" and stood N. E. by N.

21

In the morning came in sight of land and stood in for it, but mistook Killinook head, for Cape Disappointment so that we were obliged to beat up some 30 miles.*

Stephen meant Tillamook Head, thirty miles to the south of the entrance to the Columbia.

22

Took a Pilot from the *Mary Taylor* and lay off until flood tide. Spoke the Bark *Culloma*, Capt Corning, 144 days from N York for Portland. Also spoke the Bark *Keoka* from Portland to San Francisco, as she came out of the river. We also saw the Bark *Louisana* from San Francisco, going into the river. At noon entered the mouth of the river, and at 4 P.M. came to anchor at Astoria. The passage through the mouth of the river is very narrow and intricate and a great many vessels are lost here annually, and also many lives. I saw the remnants of old hulks, two of which were U.S. Vessels of war, lying about this dangerous place.

28

23

The Capt "entered" the sch'r at the custom house. Took a river pilot and proceeded up the Columbia river with a fair wind passing the curious "pyramid rock," &c. The banks of this river are covered

with a dense growth of fir and pine, which is now being sawed into lumber, and shipped to San Francisco.

24

Ran aground on a shoal, and although every exertion was made to “kedge off” we were unsuccessful.* Bought 5 large Salmon of an Indian for a small blanket.

This was an attempt to warp or pull the ship by means of a kedge, a small auxiliary anchor taken out in a small boat, dropped, and hauled against.

25

The Steamer *Williamette* from Portland to Astoria came close by and spoke us, saying that they would “pull us off” on her return from Astoria.

27

The Steamer *Williamette* came along side and hauled the sch'r into deep water, when we set sail and kept running all night. Saw the Brig *Anne E. Maine* and the Bark *Mary Melville* bound down.

28

At 2 P.M. came to anchor at Portland, where we were saluted by the owners & consignees by a discharge of cannon. I went ashore and found letters from Josiah, the latest one being from the Shasta Mines, and was not very encouraging.* I learnt from a man here, that he had returned from the mines and had now gone down to Milton.

Travelers, noting the similarity of geologic structure to the California gold regions in the northern part of Oregon and beyond the Siskiyou range, had begun prospecting as early as 1850 in the Umpqua Valley where there was some success for a time. In 1851 the rich Rogue River diggings were discovered and in various places in the Shasta Valley gold was also found. Earlier, in the summer of 1850, gold was located near the present town of Yreka, California, on the Shasta River, but the party of discoverers was driven back south by the hostile Pit River Indians. Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Oregon* (San Francisco, 1888), II, 185-186 and n.

July 1

I got my discharge from the schooner, and while storing my baggage previously to starting for Milton, Josiah very unexpectedly came down to the vessel and hailed me. He was so sunburnt and otherwise altered in appearance that I scarcely knew him. While on his return he & Thomas was in a severe fight with Indians but at length arrived safe. They think of returning to California.

4

Josiah, Thomas & I took a boat that belong to them and rowed up to an Island above Milwaukie, where we went ashore.* Cooked 29 our dinner which consisted of Bacon & Bread and Coffee by a fire of twigs and leaves and partook of it from the grassy turf with as much satisfaction as though it were a most gorgeous feast. We then came back and saw a sunday school celebration, Steamboat excursion &c.

Milwaukie was up the Willamette River a few miles from Portland. Founded in 1847, it was named after Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the spelling of which varied in the early days. Bancroft, *Oregon*, II, 251.

7

Josiah & Thomas have engaged to work their passage to San Francisco in the Sch'r *Alert* which will sail in a few days.* In the meantime they are at work cutting wood, &c, at about \$4. per day. I have concluded to remain in the *Merchantman* until we arrive at San Francisco, the Capt being very anxious for me to do so, and has increased my wages. My work is not very hard, but very vexatious, to attend to the wants of a nervous and illnated Capt.

Not the ship *Alert* of Richard Henry Dana, Jr., but a Pacific Coast schooner that carried passengers to the Fraser River diggings in 1858 and engaged in sealing some ten years later under the command of captains William Spring and Hugh McKay. Spring was the pioneer of modern sealers. *Lewis & Dryden*, pp. 69, 143, 146-147.

While in the outskirts of this so called "city" I measured a fallen tree that was 320 feet in length, 5 feet in diameter at the butt, and 2 feet in diameter within 20 feet of the top, and in this 300 intervening feet there was not a knot or defect. These trees are burnt down by boring a hole through the butt, and setting fire to the pitch as it oozes out, which finally consumes the whole circumference.

15

The *Alert* (with Josiah & Thomas on board) was towed down to Milton to take on a deck load.

A short time ago the Capt was arrested for cruel treatment to the cook, and in the trial I was brought up as witness for plaintiff. The Capt was fined \$5, and costs.

25

Finished discharging cargo, and ran up to Captain Baker's place "La Roche" to load with lumber.

A few days ago as one of the sailors was swung over the "shore" side of the vessel painting, he fell off the staging into the water, and although his body was recovered in 4 minutes, life was extinct. It being a hot day, it is supposed that he was sun-struck. He was buried without any ceremony, by the Schooner's 30 crew. His name was George McKenzie from Halifax, N.S. He lies in that burying ground unheeded and unknown by passersby while his friends at home will wonder, "why he does not come," little thinking of the sad fate that has befallen him.

July-August, 1851 Aug. 3

The mate, cook, one sailor, and myself took the quarter boat and went up to Oregon City after the Capt. * We were obliged to get out, and drag the boat over the rapids which are very troublesome. In coming down the Capt took the tiller, and as we were dashing down the rapids, the mate saw that we were going directly on to a "buoy" that is anchored here. The Capt did not notice it, when the mate sprang to the stern, jerked the Capt from the tiller, put it "hard aport" and shouted to me (as I pulled the bow oar), "Pull Stephen for Gods sake pull or we are lost," and the next instant we scraped by the huge timber with such a velocity, that now I shudder when I think of it. Had we came in contact with it (as we came very near doing) the boat would have been upset, and in such a current I fear we should have found watery graves. Not long since the Capt had a large party of Ladies & Gentlemen take dinner with him on board the "Schooner."

Oregon City on the Willamette River in Clackamas County was laid out and named in 1842 by Dr. John McLoughlin, chief factor of the Hudson's Bay Company. In the correspondence of the Methodist mission established there in 1843, it was often referred to as Willamette, or Willamette Falls. Lewis A. McArthur, *Oregon Geographic Names* (Portland, 1944), pp. 401-402.

6

The Sch'r came down to Portland to complete loading at Coffins Upper Steam Mills.

12

I went on a blackberry excursion a few days ago, and returned well pleased, and quite successful. Today we have finished loading the sch'r and expect to sail tommorrow.

13

The steamer *Columbia* towed us down to the Columbia river last night where we anchored. This morning commenced beating down the river and at noon arrived at St. Helens, where we came to anchor. The Capt went up to Milton in a boat and returned at 2 P.M., just as the Steamer *Lot Whitcomb* hove in sight. So the anchor was hove up, and we were taken in tow by 31 the Steamer. Soon afterwards the Bark *Culloma* was taken in tow, and the Capt & his wife of the Bark came on board the sch'r and took tea. At 9 P.M. arrived at Astoria where we anchored for the night.

14

I went ashore here and found quite a rural city of som[e] 2 or 300 inhabitants. However there is nothing very enticing or calculated to interest a stranger. The "barracks" contain about 80 Soldiers.

16

Took a pilot from the *California* and put to sea in company with the *Sea Gull* steamship. Met the Brig *Anne E. Maine* coming in from San Francisco. Outside the "bar" we found light head winds, with signs of foul weather. At 4 P.M. spoke the Brig *O* —, Capt J Collins, 30 days from San Francisco bound to Portland.

24

Since last date we have had a severe storm, and head winds all the time. The vessel has rolled so that we can keep nothing secure. There are two Cabin passengers on board.

25

This morning as we are running in towards the land made Point Reyes only one mile distant. There was a dense fog at the time or we should have seen this high land sooner. Soon after a Pilot boat spoke us but we took no pilot, although we ascertained the course to be E. by S. At noon entered the "Golden Gate" and at 3 o'clock came to anchor off Clarks Point.

26

Got under way and ran up to Commercial Wharf where the cargo is to be discharged.* I went to the Post Office and found 5 letters from Josiah, the last of which states that he is at Sac City. Tried to get my discharge but the Capt refused at present.

Wharves had been started as early as 1849 to accommodate steam vessels, and to assist in loading and unloading passengers and cargo. By October 1850 Long Wharf was 2,000 ft. long; Market Street Wharf, 600 ft.; California Street, 400 ft. long by 32 ft. wide; Cunningham's Wharf, 375 ft. long with a T at its end 330 ft. long by 30 ft. wide. The cost of these and other wharves had been more than a million and a half dollars and they provided nearly two miles of artificial streets. *Annals of San Francisco*, pp. 291-292. The largest of all these wharves was Long Wharf at the end of Commercial Street, which reached nearly a mile into the bay by October of 1850. It had cost two hundred thousand dollars. Bancroft, *History of California*, VI, 177-178.

Sept. 1

The Capt paid me this morning and then I went to see my house and found that the receipts just paid the expenses. I took 32 dinner on board the Sch'r, when the Capt urged me strongly to remain with him, but I steadfastly refused. At 4 P.M. took the Steamer *West Point* for Sacramento.*

Side-wheel steamboat, 240 tons, built in 1849 in New York and sent around Cape Horn for the gold rush trade on the California rivers. She was afterward sent to Hawaii and was wrecked on the coast of Kauai in 1856. John Haskell Kemble, "Pioneer Hawaiian Steamers, 1852-1877," *Hawaiian Historical Society, Fifty-Third Annual Report for the Year 1944* (Honolulu, 1946), p.14 and n.

2

Early in the morning I arrived at "Sac City" and found Josiah just going to his work. He is at work discharging vessels getting from 6 to \$7. per day, and he lives on board the Bark *Coosa* boarding himself.

4

Having settled with Josiah, I went down to San Francisco in Steamer *Major Thompkins* to settle up our business there, &c.

5

I bought a draft for \$300. on Adams & co* and sent it to Mary S. Davis Groton Mass.* I then went to White & Storm's and found a box of scythes had just arrived by ship *Scargo* for us that we ordered 9 or 10 months ago. I left them with this firm, on sale. I also got the returns of the "dust" I left at the mint some 6 months ago and found that it yielded about \$17.75 per ounce. At 4 P.M. took passage on the *Major Thompkins* for Sacramento.

Adams & Company had opened in June 1850 in San Francisco. For a discussion of banks see *Annals of San Francisco*, pp. 551-513.
Josiah's wife.

6

Arrived safe and found Josiah well. I live with him on the *Coosa*. We cook our own food, and at night spread our blankets on the deck and sleep sweetly, without any troubled dreams occasioned by sleeping in close rooms, or on feather beds. Cousin Thomas has gone up to Auburn and is mining at \$6. per day.

14

I am taken sick with dysentary today, so that I am not able to walk.

17

Last night it rained, so that it wet through our blankets, and we had a very disagreeable time of it. I have become so reduced that I can hardly stand. I dare not eat any thing, for it makes me worse; and now the disease has got a very strong hold of me.

33

18

I am weaker, and as I can eat nothing, am in a very bad situation. Discharges of blood are very frequent and profuse. Josiah has gone to Marysville as boatman and will return in about a week, so that I am left alone to wait upon myself, and if I want any medicine or anything, I have to go 1/2 mile for it, although Josiah is not to blame for it, as I told him not to remain on my account.

21

Last Sunday I was able to attend the Baptist Church, but today am so feeble that I am obliged to lie on deck nearly all day, groaning and suffering from disease. I fear that I shall never see the friends at home again, and try to prepare myself for this great and last change.

24

The disease seems to be abating slowly, so that I am a little more comfortable. I eat a great many tomatoes which seem to relish, and are as harmless as anything. At noon, Josiah arrived from Marysville after a pleasant trip. We are talking of going home and at length after a hasty consultation, we have concluded to go.

25

Picked up our baggage and settled up business previous to starting for the States. Took passage on board Steamer *New World* * for Benicia, where we arrived at 7 P.M., and having spread our

blankets on the wharf, where we had a fine nights rest beneath the clear blue sky, and the “bright silver moon.”*

This was the famous “stolen steamboat.” Debt-ridden after being built in New York, she escaped the sheriff's men and steamed around the Horn, picking up 300 passengers for California on the way. Put into service on the Sacramento in August 1850, the *New World* was a favorite until finally broken up in 1879. She was a 530-ton side-wheeler of regal appointment and long held the speed record for the San Francisco-Sacramento run with her time of 7 hrs. 5 mins. upriver and 5 hrs. 35 mins. down. *Paddle-Wheel Days* devotes a number of pages to her colorful history. Pp. 7, 13-15, 20, passim.

The base of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company was at Benicia, and it was here that their vessels were cleaned, refitted, and repaired after discharging passengers and cargo at San Francisco. Land was cheaper at Benicia than at San Francisco and deep water came right up to the beach. Here the P. M. S. S. Company maintained extensive machine shops and repair facilities, coal supplies, etc., just as they did at their southern terminus on Taboga Island. *The Panama Route*, pp. 134-135.

26

Went on board the Steamer *Oregon** and upon application to the Capt (R. H. Pierson) we obtained situations on board, to work our passages to Panama. Brought our baggage on board and were put on duty—Josiah as “deck hand” and I as steorage steward. In the evening took a walk over the town.

Wooden side-wheel steamer of 1,099 tons built in 1848 for the Pacific Mail Steamship Company and in regular use between San Francisco and Panama until 1855. *Ibid.*, pp. 239-240.

29

At 4 A.M. got up steam, and proceeded down to San Francisco, where we arrived at 10 oclock along side Long Wharf. Josiah & I are engaged in scrubbing and cleaning. In the evening Josiah 34 went over to Happy Valley to visit Mr Willey, from whom he procured several copies of the “Pacific” a religious paper in which Josiah's “Travels in Oregon” were published.

30

Went to see Messrs “E. L. Morgan & Co” in regard to the house. Also got my money from Moffats & Co's mint and deposited it with the purser for safe keeping to Panama.

After an absence of 13 1/2 months from home & friends we are about to return to the land of our nativity. What bright anticipations of hearty welcomes and joyful greetings fill our hearts now on the eve of our departure. During this absence I have situated so as to attend worship only 4 times.

Oct. 1

This being the day for sailing about 400 passengers, (mostly rough uncouth looking miners) came on board, and also about 80 Mail bags, and about \$1,200,000 in "Gold dust." At 4 P.M. after firing a salute, we left the wharf, amid the cheering of our passengers and assembled thousands on the wharf; but the weather being very foggy, the Steamer came to anchor at Saucileto for the night.* The work of the Stearage waiters is very laborious, there being 350 stearage passengers and only 8 waitors to attend them.

The feverish excitement of Steamer Day at the beginning and middle of each month received more than ten pages in the *Annals of San Francisco*. See pp. 626-638.

2

At 5 A.M. hove up anchor and put to sea, with fine weather and very smooth sea. Today the chief steward ordered me in the first cabin, so that my duties are much lighter and more agreeable, my occupation being to wait upon 5 persons at the table.

3

At 4 P.M. came to at Monterey to exchange mails and land passengers. Was detained about an hour, and then put to sea on our course. Fine weather.

6

Entered the harbor of San Diego to exchange mails. Took on board 4 bullocks, which were swam off from the shore (2 miles distant), and then hauled on board by a rope around their horns. 35 One

of these “wild cattle” got loose on deck and created quite an excitement among the passengers by running about.

October, 1851 10

For the last 3 days, we have been running along only 2 or 3 miles distant from the shore, which is still covered with the deep green verdure of Spring, while the mountains in the background rearing their lofty peaks above the clouds, severed by roaring torrents or clear running streams, shaded by beautiful trees of tropical growth, and fanned by a gentle breeze presenting a panoramic view not to be excelled. Occasionally a valley with its thick growth of bannanna, orange and cocoa trees sent forth its delicious perfume, making our voyage thus far, one continued scene of interest and pleasure.

At 7 P.M. came in sight of the Sugar-loaf peaks, which are the landmarks of Acapulco, (being a few miles to the Northward of this port), and at 11 P.M. came to anchor in this beautiful land-locked harbor.

11

Commenced taking in coal and water, from an old store-ship. Great numbers of boats came off from shore with all kinds of tropical fruits for sale, shells, liquors, &c, and little boys swam off from shore, who dove to the bottom after the dimes and quarters thrown into the clear placid waters of the bay by the passengers, to see the sport of a dozen or more of these “semi-aquatics” darting about and diving, to the great amusement of all concerned. Sharks 8 or 10 ft in length were swimming about, apparently unmindful of these dusky bipeds, when if a white man had attempted this trick, he would have got “taken in” without fail. I sold two dozen bottles (empty) for 150 limes, some of which I carried home. At 7 P.M. hove up anchor and put to sea.

14

Fine weather and smooth sea. My living is excellent, being the same as is served to Cabin passengers. But Josiah living the same as the Stearage passengers fares on rusty salt meats, and very 36 "hard bread" &c. However I manage to supply him with nice lunches occasionally.

18

Doubled "Point Mala" last night, and at noon passed "Taboga Island" where lay the Steamships *Golden Gate* (just arrived from N York in 54 days), and the *Carolina* and *Columbus* from San Francisco, who answered our salute.* At 1 P.M. came to anchor at Panama. This old Spanish town looks very natural although I have not seen it for more than a year.

Taboga was the southern base of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company. Lying some twelve miles out in the Gulf of Panama from Panama City, it was comparatively cooler than the mainland and had an abundant supply of spring water for the ships. Because of the heavy tides, vessels could run in close to the beach at high water and be left dry on the sand when the tide receded, making it possible to clean and repair bottoms without building a dry dock. In 1855 Flamenco Island, more convenient to the city, was purchased by the Pacific Mail for use as an operating base. *The Panama Route*, pp. 133-134.

The vessel was soon surrounded by boats, whose owners were fighting, swearing and scolding in Spanish creating an awful din. Stewards, waiters, sailors and all hands were placed in a line from the treasure room to the gang-way, and in this way the "Dust" was passed on board a large sloop which carries the mail also. Thus I handled the whole of the precious metal, which I afterwards learnt to be about \$2,250,000.

We went ashore in the Specie boat but owing to the tide, were obliged to lay off 2 or 3 hours before we could come up to the market gate when we took our baggage to the Plaza House where we remained for the night.

19

Left our baggage at the transportation office of Mosquero, Hurtado, & Co to be sent to Cruces, for which we pay 8 cts per lb; and at 9 A.M. started on foot in company with two men from Staten Island for Cruces. It being late in the rainy season, the road is a complete mudhole, so deep and

sticky as to render walking very laborious. But we pushed on, passing travellers on foot and Mule-back until noon, when having arrived at the American House, kept by two ladies, we took dinner which consisted of beans and very “powerful” ham, without bread or potatoes, for which we paid \$1. each.

We started on, passing through the narrow deep cuts, over-taking those who started 4 hours in advance of us; but finally we were compelled to slack our pace, the mud being about 3 feet deep on an average. We pressed on however, and although one 37 of our comrades became so exhausted as to almost faint, we assisted him along and at dusk had the pleasure of passing the most forward travellers who were on mules, and soon after arrived at Cruces—the first from Panama today. Went down to the river and washed our clothes and blistered feet, and then secured a bed (i.e. a chance to lay on a floor, made of the stalks of the Sugar Cane, without any bedding of any kind), at the “Strangers House.”

Others soon came in so besmeared with mud and with such “woe-begone” countenances, that one would not believe that their pockets were lined with gold, as many of them were. As for myself, I am certain I never performed such *severe exercise* in my life, and having several pounds of gold to carry, I almost wonder that I did get through as I did. We were so exhausted that we had no appetite for supper, so we retired early. Distance from Panama to Cruces 25 M.

20

Arose and found ourselves so stiff and sore that without the aid of two canes I could not walk, and I find a great many in my condition. At 5 P.M. our baggage arrived in good condition. Josiah is quite lame in consequence of yesterdays “Jaunt.” Frequent showers occur every day, so that we remain in doors most of the time.

21

At 7 A.M. started down the river in company with 7 others in a whale boat. There is a very strong current so that we go very fast. Hauled up for a few moments at Gorgona, then went on, meeting

a great many boats loaded with passengers who were on their way to California. Their enquires in regard to the “gold diggin's” were numerous and amusing.

At noon stopt at a ranch where all but myself took dinner after which they paid \$1. each for it, and were coming down to the boat, when the landlord (a Jamacia Negro) came running down after us, and said that Josiah had not paid for his dinner. I and several others told him that we had seen Josiah pay him, but 38 he refused to listen to us, and with a drawn sword told Josiah that he should pay or ... At the same time another darkey came down to us, armed with a rifle, with the intention of riddling some of us, if Josiah did not pay a second time. I got so enraged that I told Josiah not to pay, let the consequences be what they might; but as our party had no arms, he said it was better to lose a dollar than to get into trouble. So we left with no very benevolent feelings for our landlord, and with a determination not to be caught in such a fix again without arms. In this case, if I had had a pistol, I should have *used it*.

At 6 P.M. arrived at Chagres and after paying \$5. for our passage, put up at the “Irving House.”

22

We find the Steamship *Cherokee* in port, but we cannot get passage on her, she being full. While standing on the levee this morning, a negro came up in his boat alongside the newly painted boat of a white man, rubbing and chafing it badly, which somewhat enraged the owner, so that from words they came to blows, and in this, the negro seemed to get the worst of it. Upon which he jumped into his boat and took from its hiding place a long heavy cutlass, which seemed to be a signal, for immediately all the black boatman (som[e] 150 in number) did the same and jumped out onto the levee at this white man, who ran, and they after him.* The blacks acted like mad men, yelling, shouting, threatening the life of every white man, brandishing their weapons, &c. But soon the “Alcalde” came up, and dispersed the bloodthirsty wretches.

An unsigned letter from the *Panama Star* of October 24, 1851, reprinted in the San Francisco newspapers, indicated that the Boatmen's Club of Chagres claimed the exclusive right to transport emigrants to and from the American steamers. This “closed shop” was not recognized by the natives of Chagres or by the Negro boatmen from Jamaica and San Domingo who were also eager to have a share of the lucrative small boat business.

A postscript from the *Panama Herald* was appended, considerably more grisly than the truth, in which twenty or thirty Americans and perhaps seventy or eighty natives were reported killed. The *Star* deplored such lurid sensationalism. See the San Francisco *Daily Herald*, Nov. 18, 1851, p. 2; San Francisco *Daily Alta California*, Nov. 18, 1851, p. 862.

In the afternoon about 200 of them came over the river in their boats armed with muskets, pistols, swords—landed on the American side—and marched through the streets shouting “war,” “Murder,” &c. * When they arrived at the American Consul's office they riddled the door, which was closed and bolted, with 30 or 40 bullets, and then shot two Americans standing by—one in the leg, and the other in the head—severly. After doing some other damage they retired to their own side of the river. During 39 this affray the Stores were all closed, and the “returning Californians” were standing about looking on, being desirous to keep out of trouble as long as possible, but ready to take part in the quarrel when circumstances should really demand it.

In *The Panama Route* (plate, facing p. 116) there are two views of Chagres, showing the native village beneath the fortress of San Lorenzo and the “American town” on the sand flat opposite.

23

The first thing this morning was to form a volunteer company of those who had revolvers, to protect the town from such gross insults as were perpetrated yesterday, and also to arrest and punish the murderers of the two Americans.

In the meantime boatman were engaged in carying out passengers to the Steamship *Cherokee* and the two blacks who killed the Americans were recognized on the levee. So the Capt ordered 10 of his men, armed with Revolvers, to arrest them. While performing their duty, the whole black population commenced firing at the whites, upon which the whole company came out and fired upon the blacks who now took to their boats to escape the terrible fire of Colts revolvers. I should think that 150 shots were fired in 3 minutes by the whites, and I presume 1/2 of them were effectual, as the distance was but a few feet. And as the blacks pulled off in their boats, I could see them drop their oar, and fall back in the boat apparently lifeless, while others, when shot, would utter a piercing scream and with a spasmodic effort, leap clear out of the boat into the river, which now assumed a reddish hue, while here and there dead bodies were floating, and also those who

were struggling apparently in the last agonies of death. The skill of the whites had done terrible execution, while the rusty horse-pistols and muskets had wounded but 2 or 3 whites, in the hands of the blacks. When these boats arrived on the other side, the women who had come down to meet their husbands found that many of their number were widdows, upon which they set up a loud mournful wail which was distressing to hear.

Some 8 or 10 Americans who were on the black's side of the river at this time were most inhumanly butchered by the exasperated blacks who seemed to be thirsting for blood. One of these Americans was an Auctioneer on J St in Sac City, and came 40 down on the *Oregon* on his way home to Tenn. He was on the bank of the river when two blacks came up to him with drawn sabres, but he seeing them, ran out into the river as far as he could wade and called on us Americans for help! Help!! Help!!! But we could not save him, for a few seconds after, these two black wretches came up, and one of them hit him a terrible cut between the neck and shoulder, while the other cut his body nearly half way in two, and then went off. The wounded man managed to crawl ashore, where he lay down on the bank as one dead. He was alive 3 or 4 days afterwards when I saw him, although terribly mangled.

The boats that left the levee for the *Cherokee* with passengers were scenes of terrible conflict. It is said that one boat load of passengers some 10 or 12 were murrdered by the black boatmen and on other boats several were killed and wounded. And then the cruel wretches seemed to delight in acts of bloodshed, for after cutting those Americans in peices, they called on us to look and see what they had done, and said farther that they would serve us the same way. No great consolation!

The Negro's then went and took possession of the fort on their side of the river, which completely overlooked and commanded the town on the other side. They mounted two 54 pounders and commenced firing round and double-headed shot down into the town, upon which the merchants and others who had valuables commenced moving them out into the woods, and all the stores, hotels &c were shut up and preperations were made for *war*. How I wished that I had some weapon, that I need not stand still, as I am now oblidgeed to.

As I was standing in the door-way of the Irving house, a bullet came whizzing between me and the door casing and several struck the building. A few minutes after, a double-headed shot came tearing down through the roof of this Hotel making a tremendous clatter. It weighed about 60 lbs, and was two feet long. And while Josiah and I were carrying out our baggage a 41 round shot struck in the path we had just trod. We then went out to a creek about 2 miles north of this place and remained there most of the day—so as to be out of harm's way.

We found boats running from here through the surf to the *Cherokee* carying passengers, and bringing cannon, ammunition, &c for the use of the whites. I helped haul this down to town, through the deep sand, and having settled upon a location for it, a breastwork of bales of hay was formed with port-holes to discharge the cannon through. Then a fire was kept up upon the town, but could not reach the fort, it being at an elevation of about 23°, and the guns being small and almost worthless.

At 2 P.M. the Steamship *Ohio* came in and anchored near the *Cherokee* which soon after left. I went out through the serf to the *Ohio* and found about 700 passengers on board, but few of which came ashore. Soon after, Capt Shenck of the *Ohio*, the American Consul and the “Alcalde” went over to the blacks side bearing a flag of truce and endeavored to effect a treaty. But the blacks would not listen to it, so they returned and made preperations for the night. 75 armed men were patrolling the town all night and others were ready at a moments warning to prevent a surprise.

A boat belonging to the Eng Steam Frigate *Medway*, and manned by Capt Simonds and 4 or 5 men, all in full uniform, with the ensign floating at the stern, is the only boat allowed to pass in and out of the river today. And she has been engaged in transporting “Gold dust” from the vault on the black's side to the *Cherokee*, and has succeeded in transfering the whole from its dangerous locality.

This afternoon a Rocky Mountain hunter who came down in the *Oregon*, posted himself behind the corner of a house, and with his long, heavy rifle picked off the black rascals who were working the cannon at the fort and doing so much damage to the town. Although the distance was at least 1/2 mile and at such an elevation, he “brought his man” nearly every time, until about 42 a dozen had

“fallen,” when the rest of the gunners fled from their stations, not fancying the idea of being targets for such a marksman. The rifle which performed such feats was a very old one, the breech being splintered and bruised, and the barrel, battered, so that it looked more fit for a crow-bar than for a fire arm. It had seen long continued rough usage, and for this reason was the more highly prized by its owner, who said that he would only part with it with his life.

At dusk we, in company with some 200 others, went out to the creek and remained for the night. At 9 P.M. it commenced raining, and continued through the night. We were obliged to lay down on the cold wet earth, surrounded by Alligators, Snakes, lizzards and other poisonous reptiles, and could not divest ourselves of the thought that the sable scoundrels might take us all by surprise, and perhaps cut our throats before morning.

Immediately upon our arrival at Chagres I deposited my money with the landlord of the “Irving House” for safe keeping—and he having sent all his valuables on board the English Steamer during the mееlee—I am fearful I shall have trouble in getting hold of it again, thus capping my troubles, so that I probably shall not enjoy a very sound night's rest tonight.

24

According to expectation, Josiah, myself or any of our 200 bed-fellows slept very little during the night and at 4 1/2 A.M. we arose and went down to town, and found everything quiet, and that it had been so nearly all night. But at Sunrise the Blacks recommenced the firing, which was duly returned, and thus kept up till 10 A.M. when a deputation from both sides met on board the Schooner *James Farewell* (anchored in the middle of the river), to endeavor to settle the difficulty, the firing being stopt on both sides in the meantime by mutual consent. On board the Sch'r, there was but very little conciliatory feeling among the parties, and their mission seemed to be totally unsuccessful, as the Blacks claimed (in case of making any arrangement) 43 damages and priveleges, which were entirely unreasonable. But Capt Schenck told the black “Commissioners” if they did not immediately come to terms, that he would bring the *Ohio* close up to the fort, batter it down with his cannon, land 500 men armed to the teeth, burn and destroy their town, shoot every

black that could be found, &c. Although he was overrating his power, yet this speech had the effect to bring about an amicable arrangement and peace was concluded at once.

By the terms of the treaty the Blacks are to evacuate the Fort, and to destroy the bridge that connects it with the mainland, which is the only means of access to it, while all are to resume business as usual, forgive & forget, &c. So that soon the martial appearance of the place was changed to what we found it a few days ago. Notwithstanding the treaty, there is great hostility in feeling, which occasionally bursts forth, but with no very serious consequences.

This morning as the Iron river steamer *Gorgona* was going out of the mouth of the river she was assailed with a perfect shower of bullets, so that all hands on board were obliged to shelter themselves “below” until she was beyond the reach of their “leaden rain.”* Also a heavy shot from a cannon in the fort, was discharged at them, but fell in the water beyond the Steamer. This was before the treaty was concluded.

Iron-hulled steamer built by the Panama Railroad and sent to Chagres to tow barges of materials up the river for use in constructing the railroad. *Ibid.*, p. 171.

The Hotels, Stores, &c. are now open, vessels are unloading, and everything assumes a business appearance. In the afternoon I went out to the *Ohio* as oarsman in a boat to bring her freight ashore. The sea was very rough so that our boat came near swamping. And when we came alongside the *Ohio*, sometimes a wave would dash us up to her gangway, and the next moment we were under the wheel, and it was only by our most powerful exertions that we took a small cargo and got away safely. Soon after we started we saw the corpse of a white man with a rope around his neck floating on the “briney deep,” but the sea was so rough that we could not attempt to bring him ashore. And 44 before we came to the entrance of the river, it became so dark that we found our way through this intricate passage by the lights of the town—a mile distant—and finally arrived safe, thankful for our good fortune. Josiah & I have had nothing to eat today except a few mouthfuls of bread, there being no provisions in town.

October, 1851 25

This morning the Office is open for the sale of tickets on the *Ohio*.^{*} Price in the Cabin is \$100. to N. York and \$80. to New Orleans. Price in Stearage to N York is \$60. which rate we paid for our passage. I got my money from our landlord who fortunately was honest, and had just got it from the Eng Steamer. I then bought 12 oz “Gold dust” at 16.25 per oz. and at 4 P.M. took passage for the Steamship *Ohio* in a crazy old boat, and when we got outside found so heavy a sea running that we were in imminent danger of being capsized, but by great exertions arrived on board the Steamer completely drenched, and our baggage in the same condition. At 7 P.M. the Steamer got under way and put to sea for Havanna.

Wooden side-wheeler of 2,432 tons built at a cost of \$450,000 in 1848 for the United States Mail Steamship Company and placed in service between New York and Chagres. *Ibid.*, p. 239.

29

This morning at 4 oclock we rounded Cape Antonio, and saw the lighthouse theron, and nearly all day we are running near the coast of this lovely Isle and thus witnessing its charming landscape, and sea coast in this panoramic manner.

30

At 2 oclock this morning the steamer arrived off the harbor of Havanna, but by a odious Spanish law were detained from entering until Sunrise, when a pilot came out from the City in an open boat rowed by 12 men, took charge of the vessel and soon ran us in past the Moro Castle, (where we were hailed), and in full view of this magnificent City, which is situated on the northern shore of this, the prettiest harbor in the world.

As this is only a month after the “Lopez Invasion” there is great excitement in consequence, and large bodies of brilliantly 45 dressed soldiers are moving to and fro, drilling, &c.^{*} As we came into the harbor, I saw a body [of] troops on the flat opposite the “Moro,” amounting to several thousands, whose ornamented uniforms glistened in the morning Sun, and who were performing various evolutions to the music of a splendid “brass band,” while the huge battlements and heavy

fortifications of the “Moro,” surmounted by the gorgeous “colors” of “Spain,” presented to me a novel and interesting spectacle.

The Lopez filibustering expeditions of April 1850 and August 1851 were armed attempts by Cuban revolutionists and American annexationists, led by a Venezuelan adventurer Narciso Lopez, to free Cuba from Spain. Both attempts were unsuccessful; the second had been put down by the Spanish troops which Stephen saw drilling, and Lopez and fifty of his followers had been executed. The spirit of “Manifest Destiny” in the air, the hundreds of restless Mexican War veterans, American speculation in Cuban bonds, as well as the attitude of the United States government all combined to favor Lopez. Thomas A. Bailey, *A Diplomatic History of the American People* (New York, 1940), pp. 305, 307, 308. A monograph, R. G. Caldwell's *The Lopez Expeditions to Cuba, 1848-1851* (Princeton, New Jersey, 1915), is cited by Bailey, p. 308 *n*.

The *Ohio* proceeded to the opposite of the bay from the city, made fast to a wharf, and commenced coaling. The Steamship *Empire City* sailed from here for N York at 10 A.M., about which time the Steamship *Philadelphia* came in from N York bound to Chagres. Sentinals are stationed about the vessel, on the wharf, and all over the harbor in boats, so that the passengers cannot go off from the wharf without a “permit” which is difficult and expensive to procure. All kinds of tropical fruits are here in abundance, and of excellent quality.

31

This morning the Steamship *Georgia* arrived from N York, and passengers on the *Ohio* for N Orleans were transferred to that vessel. I bought 150 Oranges at 1 1/2 cts each, some shells, &c. and at 3 P.M. the *Ohio* put to sea for N York with a fair wind. The scenery along the coast was magnificent, and also the marine view, with its numerous vessels of all classes, and steering all directions.

There are now only 40 passengers in the cabin, and 50 in the stearage. The stear[a]ge fare is much better than in any stearage I every was in before, consisting of Turtle steaks, and soup, and all kinds of fresh meats and vegetables, fresh bread, &c, and as we are not crowded, we enjoy ourselves very much, considering.

November, 1851 Nov. 3

Last night one of the passengers named Swetser from Portsmouth, N H. jumped overboard in a fit of insanity and was drowned, although the Steamer was immediately stopt, a boat Lowered, and every effort made to rescue him. It was said that 46 he had been one of a company in search of hidden treasures supposed to have been burried by pirates on some of the Islands in the Gulf of Mexico, and having spent a fortune in a fruitless search, was now returning home a maniac.

The wind has got around in the north and is quite severe and cold.

4

This morning a man named Harrison from N York died from Isthmus fever, and after being sewed up in his canvas shroud, was committed to the deep, the Capt reading the Eng burial service. To me this occasion was very solemn, knowing that the deceased was returning from the "land of gold" after an absence of many months, to receive the warm greetings, and hearty congratulations of his friends and the sincere welcomes of his family and kindred. But just before he came in sight of his native land, he is called to depart from time to eternity, surrounded by strangers to none of whom did he chose to confide his dying charge to his family.

5

At 5 A.M. took a pilot, and soon after came in sight of the coast off Barnegat, the wind, blowing strong and cold from off the land, reminding us of the frigid climate we were approaching. We passed several vessels outward bound, and at noon passed the Narrows and came to at the Quarantine ground, and after being slightly detained, proceeded on to the city and at 2 1/2 P.M. came up along side the wharf.

The day was cold and my dress consisted of tattered summer clothing so that I presented quite a woe-begone appearance, but the hack-drivers and runners were as polite and chivalrous as though I was worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. Accordingly Josiah and I took a hack and went to Crook's Dining Saloon where we put up for the night.* We went to Beebees & Co's, Wall St where

I sold my “dust” for \$17.65 per oz. The remainder of the afternoon we spent in procuring new outfits, &c.

J. H. Crooks ran an eating house and hotel at 195 Washington Street. *The New-York City Directory for 1853-1854* (New York, 1853), p. 161.

47

6

Went to a barber shop & bath house in our California rig, and came out completely transmogrified, somewhat after the fashion of people in this part of this country. Then went down to the “Collins Dock” and saw the Steamer's *Pacific* and *Arctic* that run to Liverpool.

At 4 P.M. took passage in Steamer *Connecticut* for Nashua via Norwich & Worcester, but at the wharf just before she started I saw Mr. Senter and another man from Nashua who were just starting for “Cal.”* My advice and information upon this subject was as freely given as sought for in the short time we had for conversation. Mr McQuestion of Nashua who came on to see them off, returned in in this boat, so that I had a fine time to converse with him and get the news from Nashua—and among other things that Mr J. L. Doty had started for “Cal” two months before.*

This was the *Connecticut* (2nd), fastest steamer of her day. She was operated on Long Island Sound by the Norwich and New London Steamboat Company in connection with the Norwich and Worcester Railroad. Fred Erving Dayton, *Steamboat Days* (New York, 1925), p. 163.
Stephen's stepfather.

November, 1851 7

At 8 1/2 A.M. we arrived at Groton where Josiah left me to see his wife at Uncle Thomas Hutchins' while I went on to Nashua where I arrived at 9 o'clock. As we had not written to the friends of our intention of returning, I took them entirely by surprise, but found them all well and glad to see me.

8

Josiah & wife came over from Groton and will stop a day or two. We have a great many questions to answer, information to give, &c but pass the time very pleasantly indeed.

Thanksgiving day in N H. we observed by gathering the family together at “Mothers” to partake of “Dinner,” and then spent the afternoon in pleasant conversation. And among other things the question was asked “when shall we all meet on a simalar occasion?” How little did we realize that never in this world should we be permitted to enjoy this privelege.

Thanksgiving in Vermont being one week later, Josiah & I decided to accept Mr Stone's invitation and spend it with him. * Accordingly we started from here the day before, but were detained at Groton Junction so that we could only go to 48 Brattleboro that night. Ascertainig that there was no means of conveyance to Wilmington until the next afternoon we determined to foot it in the morning.

Especially in New England Thanksgiving was a day of family reunion, but observance of a particular day was not binding upon every state.

Thanksgiving at Vt 1851.

The next morning we arose at 4 o'clock and started on foot for Wilmington, a distance of 20 miles. A storm had been raging for the last day or two so that now the snow was from 2 to 3 feet deep, and as the roads were but slightly broken out, we found it very tedious travelling. At 8 o'clock we stopt at a farm house (Mr Eames) for breakfast, and fared most bountifully. Having hinted that we had been to Cal, we were beset by such a torrent of interrogatories that we spent an hour very pleasantly. Notwithstanding pressing invitations to remain, and to revisit them, we again set forth on our toilsome journey.

We occasionally got a ride on some wanderer's sleigh, and at noon arrived at Wilmington finding Mr Stone well and glad to see us, also his family. At 2 P.M. we all rode up to Mrs Stone's father's where we were welcomed by the kind people in a hospitable manner. We partook of a splendid dinner and spent the afternoon very agreeably in conversation upon our former acquaintanceship in California, &c.

At dusk we rode over to Dea[con] Wilson's where we were introduced by Mr Stone, and finding a very pleasant family were soon on familiar terms and passed the evening in singing, conversation, &c. to our mutual satisfaction, and then rode home with Mr Stone.

The next Sunday

I acted as bearer at the funeral of a young Lady who died a few days previous. In the evening we attended the prayer & conference meeting in the Baptist church which was made very interesting by remarks of Josiah & Mr Stone.

Monday.

This morning Josiah and Mr Stone went and looked the farm of Mr Fox, Mr Stone in the meantime advising Josiah to buy it. After a great deal of bargaining, Josiah at length 49 agreed to buy it, paying \$1700. At present Mr Fox and Josiah each deposit \$20. in the hands of Mr Stone as forfeit money.

Tuesday.

In the morning took the stage for Brattleboro, and at night arrived at Nashua, where we found the friends somewhat surprised on learning what had been accomplished during our visit. And upon consideration I think Josiah was sorry that he had made such preparations to "settle down" so far from the family, but he had "pledged his word" and now must go.

January, 1851 Jan. 1

I am now making preparations to return to Cal, and am constantly receiving applications for companions and hardly an hour passes in the day but what I have "callers" to get information and advice on this subject.

The weather is so cold compared with what I have been in, that I do not enjoy good health and then I find no opening in business to suit me. For these reasons I shall return, although my friends do not wish me to go out alone again.

19

Having procured a good outfit of clothing, Revolver, &c, I am now all ready to start at 5 oclock this afternoon, when the following persons will accompany me:

J. W. Clark

Tolles Roby

Granville Dodge

Horace R. Dodge

Frank H Fisher

John Robinson

Wm Taylor

Henry Roby

Joseph Wyman

Dr Woodbury of Nashua

George Cummings Josiah Cummings of Tyngsboro.—

Wm Parkhurst Dea Thos. Parker of Dunstable.

Sumner Stewart of Vermont.

Assembled the family together, with the exception of Josiah. Attended prayers and I bade adieu to these objects of my 50 affection, with an aching heart, but which was soon forgotten in the excitement at the "Depot" where a large number of people were collected to see us off for the "El Dorado" of the Pacific. As we embarked on the Cars, many a tear was shed as the "Good Bye" was uttered, and the last admonition received. But soon we left them, with waving handkerchiefs for our colors, which were duly answered by the friends at the "Depot" as long as we could see them. How solemn the thought, some there saw the familiar faces and forms of their friends, and bade them farewell, for the last time on earth! We arrived at Norwich at 11 in the evening, where we took the boat for N York.

20

The weather for the last few days has been the coldest known in 20 years, and consequently the Sound is frozen up in many places, so that our progress during the night has been slow, and at 6 A.M. we find ourselves 30 miles from N.Y. in the midst of a sheet of ice filling the entire channel and being from 2 to 12 inches in thickness.

As the California Steamships are advertised to sail from N York today we feel a great deal of anxiety to get there. Some of the passengers who had already purchased tickets to sail today took their baggage, got on to the ice, and went to the nearest R. R. Station (5 miles distant) on foot, if they could not charter a team, and thus got into the city before noon.

The Steamer in the meantime made very slow progress as she could only get through at all by backing herself away from the ice, and then running into it with all her force, and repeating this operation for miles. The Steamer damaged her wheels and cutwater severely, but finally arrived at N York at 4 P.M. where we found the East River frozen over so that crowds of persons were walking over from Brooklyn to N York.

As soon as we got ashore, I went to the different Cal Steamship Offices, and finding no through tickets for sale, except on the Steamer *United States* to sail tomorrow,* accordingly our party bought tickets of B. S. Haight, 7 Battery Place for \$160. 51 steorage fare. We then put up for the night at "Dunlap's Hotel" on Fulton St. and in the evening got some articles of outfit.

Wooden side-wheel steamer of 1,216 tons built in 1851 and chartered to the New York and Galway line in November of that year. From January 1852 until February 1853 the *United States*, owned by Henry W. Johnson and others, was operated by an independent combination known as the New York and San Francisco Steamship Line in the New York-Chagres service, competing with the regular mail lines. See *The Panama Route*, pp. 64, 250-251.

21

In the morning I filled a box with soda biscuit, salt cod fish, cheese, apples & smoked Beef for my provision while I crossed the Isthmus; and at 10 A.M. we all embarked on the *United States*, Capt Berry.

At 2 P.M. we left the wharf amid the cheers of the crowd assembled, and were soon crushing our way through the ice, which so filled the harbor that the Steamers could not leave yesterday but were detained until today. The Steamer *Daniel Webster* for San Juan (Greytown) took her departure one hour before us, so that we kept in sight of her all the afternoon. At Sandy Hook we got clear of the ice, discharged the pilot, and put to sea with fine smooth weather. The Steamer is crowded with passengers so that comfort is unknown, and the culinary department being incompetent to supply so large a number, the food is of a quality, and served in a manner, decidedly repugnant to me.

22

The weather is cool and damp. At 4 P.M. entered the Gulf Stream, finding the sea smother than we expected, but a thick fog enveloping us. I am not very sea-sick but feel quite out of order in the region of the Stomach, in which condition several of our party were in. At noon distance run 260 miles.

23

In the morning 4 vessels in sight, also the Steamer *Danl. Webster* is abreast of us 15 miles distant. In the afternoon the Purser took our tickets and found 2 men without any who were put to work. Fine, clear and beautiful weather, and not very cold.

24

The weather is damp and rough so that more than one-half of the passengers are seasick, and some of our party are home-sick also. The *Danl. Webster* is in sight and ahead.

52

25

Last night it rained so hard that I could not sleep on deck as usual, but took my lodgings on the cabin floor, as I have no berth or place to sleep. Our fare in the steerage is quite hard so as to cause much grumbling among the passengers; but Capt Berry does all in his power to improve our condition, and is a noble generous man.

26

Fine weather and quite warm. We are in sight of Crooked and Inagua Islands. There are 4 sail in sight, and the *Danl. Webster* is almost out of sight ahead. Our party enjoy themselves quite well by reading, conversation, &c.

27

Early this morning we passed between Cuba & San Domingo. At 5 P.M. passed Jamaica within 15 miles of the high land that surrounds Kingston. At noon the fireman's mess boy was sunstruck while sitting on the rail. He has lost his reason and his life is despaired of. Fine weather but very warm.

28

The sea is not quite so smooth and calm as yesterday, but the weather is very warm, the thermometer standing at 90°.

29

The sea is a little rougher than usual. Saw breakers and two Islands to the west of us. Mr. Stewart of Londonderry, Vt. is quite sea-sick, homesick, besides having symptoms of a fever. He has not been well since we left N York.

30

At 11 A.M. took a pilot and ran into the harbor of San Juan, where we arrived at noon. We found the *Danl. Webster* had arrived two hours before us. In port are 12 vessels among which are the U. S. sloop of war *Albany*, a British Sloop of war, and the British Brig of war *Express*, the one that fired into the Steamer *Prometheous*.*

Refusing to pay port dues at San Juan, Nicaragua, which he deemed unlawful, Commodore Vanderbilt in his steamer *Prometheus* started to leave the harbor in the fall of 1851. Upon authority of the British Consul, the *Express* fired across the bows of the *Prometheus* and forced her to lay to until the enraged Vanderbilt had paid the charges. The affair ended peaceably by an interchange of notes, of protest and disavowal, between the United States State Department and the British Foreign Office. Wheaton J. Lane, *Commodore Vanderbilt, An Epic of the Steam Age* (New York, 1942), pp. 100-101.

I found upon going ashore that the town was situated on low land, and in fact the country round about here seems to be of a low marshy character, covered with a thick growth of 53 underbrush and in some places with a fine forest. There are some good frame houses brought from the U. S. but most of them are bamboo huts, with thatched roofs. The population consists mostly of natives with a few white men from all parts of the U. S. and Europe, and taking them all together, I believe that they are the most depraved, corrupt and rascally set of people that is often found in one locality. I found the tropical fruits here in abundance, but not of good quality. I bought a lemon measuring 13 inches in circumference here.

I went on board to supper, and then 39 of us hired a long boat and went ashore where we remained until 11 o'clock seeing the sights, among which was a fandango that was quite a novelty to most of us, and which I was not very much interested in. As we had got into the boat to come on board two bullets were fired at us from the opposite side of the bay, one of which struck a man's boot, and the other grazed a man's arm; and it is wonderful that some of us were not seriously hurt, but we finally got on board and took lodgings for the night on deck.

January-February, 1852 31

After taking in 100 tons of coal, at 10 A.M. we got under way for Chagres. While on our way out of the harbor, a boat containing 5 or 6 of our passengers came off from the town to come on board but were too late. The weather is very warm with occasional showers. At 7 P.M. we passed a steamer about a mile distant steering W.N.W. A man in the steerage is sick with small-pox.

Feb. 1

Since we left San Juan we have been running in sight of the coast, which is very uneven and mountainous, and at 11 A.M. we came to anchor in the roadstead of Chagres. The steamer *El Dorado* from N York came in two hours before us. Upon going ashore I found business going on quietly and things looking quite different from what they did 3 months ago.

I hired a yawl to carry 11 of us to Gorgona at \$5. each, and started at 4 P.M., but as we had but 3 boatman, we did [not] go as fast as some of the boats. At 7 o'clock we came to Gatun, about 54 10 miles, where we stopt for the night. There was a grand fandango in the eve in honor of "Los Americanos" but I did not attend. I saw some prisoners in the stocks here and find that this, and execution, is usually the only punishment administered. I slept in the boat on the baggage, although most of our company went ashore.

At 2 A.M. started on our tedious journey up river, and at 7 o'clock arrived at "Dos Hermanos" where we took breakfast. Then proceeded on to the R.R. Station, where all but one of us got out and walked up on the R.R. track 4 miles, where we waited for the boat to come up. Then got on board, and went up to within 2 miles of "Palenquilla," from where we footed it as before. We started from Palenquilla at 4 P.M. up the river and passed the most difficult navigation of the river, and the most dangerous rapids; and at 7 P.M. hauled up alongside a sand bank, where we built a fire, cooked our supper and then spread our blankets on the river bank where we slept soundly for the night. The boatman have used poles today, to propel the boat, and as we were in the midst of dangerous rapids, one of the boatman missed his hold, and the next instant we were dashing down stream with the torrent onto some rocks, which had we touched would have capsized, if not drowned, us, but by great exertion we managed to get ashore unharmed. Tis said that many boats have been lost here and several lives.

3

Arose early, so that we had our breakfast cooked and ate, by daylight, when we started up the river—the most of us walking in a trail along the bank—which was shaded by a natural arbor, consisting of short bushy trees on each side interwoven at the top wild vines, and covered with flowers of every variety, color and perfume.

At "Adams's," 6 miles below Gorgona, all but one of our boats company started on foot for Gorgona. After travelling one mile in sight of the river the main trail diverged from it, and 55 *February*, 1852 according to instructions, we followed it; but soon suspecting we were wrong, took another trail leading (as we supposed) towards the river, and in a S.W. direction. Finding we were a long ways out of the way, we struck out for the river, as near as we could judge, and could find trails, as we could only go where they led, the thicket was so impenetrable. We kept on in this way for about 8 miles when we passed a deserted "Ranche" in an opening in the forest, but as we could get no information here we pushed on until the trails became so indistinct and unpassible, that we could go no farther, when we held a consultation, in which the whole company called upon me to extricate them from this disagreeable "fix," thinking that as I had crossed the Isthmus twice

—although I never was within 10 or 12 miles of this locality—that I must know all the nooks and corners of Central America and thereby rescue them from their somewhat perilous situation. Mr Wyman in particular felt very bad, and rated us soundly for piloting him here, while at frequent intervals he uttered sobs & prayers, groans & curses at the bad luck. We finally concluded to retrace our steps, and when we reached the “opening in the forest,” we found about 100 of our fellow passengers who had got onto the wrong track as well as ourselves.

We were fortunate enough to get a native guide to pilot us in to Gorgona so that we arrived there at 4 P.M. and found the boat had been there two hours. We engaged Mr John McCall to transport our baggage to Panama at 7 cts pr lb, and at 7 P.M. a party of 23 of us started for Panama, and having gone 4 miles, stopt for the night at a native's hut. I, being the only one who could speak Spanish, was employed as interpriter to secure food, lodging, &c. Being all very tired from our long day's walk, we slept soundly on our bed of poles.

4

We arose very early, took a lunch, and as soon as we could see resumed our journey. This being the “dry season” the road is quite dry although very rough so that I get along very well; and as most of our company do not choose to travel very fast, 56 but take the whole day to get to Panama, I pushed on, stopping at all the houses on the road to rest a moment, and arrived at Panama at 2 P.M., putting up at a French Hotel outside the walls of the city. Passengers from the Steamer U S were coming in in squads until late in the evening.

As we came on the pioneer Steamer of the “Independant Line” (a new company) there is no Steamers to connect on the Pacific. But an Agent came out with us to purchase or charter them, to convey us to San Francisco. This Agent is here, but has not as yet been able to make any arrangements in securing a Steamer; and I am afraid that he will not succeed as there are no Steamers in port that have not a full complement of passengers engaged, and sailing vessels are scarce. And there being a number of persons here waiting passage to San Francisco, the prospects for a speedy departure seem quite doubtful.

5

This morning I feel “stiff” and somewhat “used up” from the effects of my journey, but well otherwise. Our baggage arrived this morning in good order. Wrote a letter home to Stilman.

6

The Agent redeemed our tickets this morning not being able to secure us a passage, so that now we must each one lookout for himself. At 4 P.M. I started for Taboga in the Sloop *Cora*, where I arrived at 8 oclock and put up at the Taboga House. As this Island is the place where the vessels refit, coal, water, &c, I came down to see if I could not get a situation as waiter on some of the vessels bound to San Francisco and thus save \$150. or \$200.

7

After taking a thorough search I find no situation, and 8 A.M. came back to Panama in Steamer *Taboga*.^{*} I then bought a ticket on the ship *Blonde* of the American Consul, paying \$122 1/2. Several of the Nashua Boys bought tickets on the same vessel.

The *Taboga* was a 189-ton side-wheel steamer built in 1849 for the Pacific Mail Steamship Company.

8

The Steamer *California* sailed today for San Francisco with 600 or 700 U.S. Troops. Passengers from the Steamer *Georgia* from 57 N.Y. (1500) in number are coming in from Gorgona. Frank H. Fisher is quite unwell being threatened with a fever. Wrote home to Josiah.

9

Fine weather. I enjoy myself very well in conversation with friends, reading, &c. The fruit here is very fine now and I eat a great deal, which has a beneficial effect on my health. The Pine apples,

Oranges, Melons & mangroves are as fine as I wish to eat. Stearage tickets on a Steamer to San Francisco are selling for \$200. to \$250.

10

In the morning a party of us went out to a creek 2 miles from town and bathed, washed our clothing, &c.

11

This afternoon the Doctor and a few more of our party went down to the beach to embark on the Steamer *Golden Gate* as she is advertised to sail today. But as she did not come up from Toboga, they went down there in the Steamer *Toboga* at 4 P.M. Stearage tickets on the G. G. sell for \$150.

12

This afternoon the *Golden Gate* sailed for San Francisco with a large number of passengers, some say as high [as] 1600 or 1700.

13

Sold my ticket for \$7. less than I gave for it, intending to go by Steamer.

14

Beautiful weather. There are some 4000 persons in this city waiting passage to San Francisco. Hundreds of persons are encamped in the edge of the forest one mile back of the town, where they cook their own food and sleep on the ground. And consequently there is a great deal of sickness, and considerable mortality. Small Pox, Measles, Isthmus Fever and Yellow Fever are the prevailing diseases. Of those who reside in town having comfortable accomodations, there is but little sickness.

58

15

The Steamer *New Orleans* sailed today for San Francisco with 500 passengers among whom are Granville & Horace R. Dodge.

16

A fine shower of rain today for the first time during our stay here. Mr Stewart is sick with Panama fever, but we are doing all we can for his recovery. His system is in a bad situation, being completely relaxed from the effects of so sudden and severe a change of climate. His mind is also torpid, and seems to be somewhat affected with his body, though he is perfectly sensible of everything around him.

17

At 3 P.M. the passengers for ship *Blonde* went on board, and upon consideration Mr Stewart decided to embark, as he has a ticket on this vessel and as F. H. Fisher, J Parkinson, J. W. Clark and some others have tickets on this vessel, so that he will have friends to take care of him, he went on board. In the evening the *Blonde* dropped down to "Taboga" to take in water. Of all the company who came from Nashua I am the only one left here now and am indeed a "Stranger in a strange land." I am stopping at the "Franklin House" of which Mr Smith is landlord.

18

Went down to the market and bought 20 doz Eggs at 42 cts per doz. Also purchased a stout barrel, and 200 lbs Salt, to pack the Eggs in. I am intending to fill the bbl and carry the Eggs with me to San Francisco on a steamer, where I think I can sell them to good advantage.

19

Frank Fisher came up from Toboga where the *Blonde* now lays, and tried to sell his own, Mr Stewart's, and Mr Parkinson's tickets. He does not like the ship, she being old, badly ventilated,

badly provisioned, crowded with passengers, &c. Mr Stewart is on board and is no better, and we have made arrangements with the American Consul to refund the money on these three tickets, so that Mr Stewart will have an opportunity to recruit. In the 59 afternoon Frank went down to Taboga, to get Mr Stewart ashore soon as possible. I bought 20 Doz Eggs at 52 cts per doz.

20

I have thought of purchasing a Resturant here that is now doing a large business, but the price asked is enormous, so I have given up the idea. Today I bought 50 Doz Eggs at the same rate as yesterday, and packed them all in the bbl. The Steamers *Cherokee*, *West Wind* and *Crescent City* have arrived at Chagres with 1500 passengers-most of whom have arrived in town.

21

Last night two Irishman got into a quarrel in which one of them came very near getting killed. Frank Fisher came up from Taboga where he left Mr Stewart sick, in about the same condition as while here. As Frank is going back to wait upon him, I am to remain here to purchase tickets on the next Steamer for the party.

22

It is Sunday and there being no protestant worship I attended the services at the Cathedral, which consisted of the ceremonies, formalites and rites of the Catholic Church in all their bigotry and supstition.

In the afternoon I followed a body of Priests to a cock-fight which is got up under their superintendance and for their special benefit. I did not enjoy this bloody scene and soon after left, and saw the ceremonies of a funeral of a woman of high rank, and I thought them to be of a revolting character, to any but Savages. The burial place here consists of a wall about 7 feet thick and 9 feet high enclosing a square plot of ground of about 1/2 acre. This wall is filled with cavities,

resembling ovens, which open into this enclosure, there being 3 rows one above another running around the wall, and into these tombs the corpses are laid away and the entrance sealed up.

23

At 9 A.M. John Parkinson came up from Taboga, and reports Mr Stewart about the same. As this is a Holiday with the natives I 60 went outside the "Gates" to witness the ceremonies and festivities of the occasion. 10 or 12 men were dressed in disguises, Masks, Cockades, feathers, &c. presenting a most ludicrous appearance as they cut up various antics, shouted, hallooed, and ran around among the crowds, who were assembled to witness the Sport. I lent a man \$2. who said that "he had not a dime in the world," and begged most piteously for alms.

24

The Steamer *Fremont* arrived 22 days from San Francisco, with 40 passengers. The Steamers *Ohio* and *Sierra Nevada* have arrived at Chagres with 1500 passengers. And the cry is "still they come." There are about 5000 persons here now waiting passage to San Francisco and there is a great deal of sickness and suffering, there being several fearful contagious diseases prevailing.

25

The Office of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company was announced to be open at 9 o'clock this morning. So Frank Fisher, John Parkinson and myself stationed ourselves at the Office door 3 hours beforehand so as to be sure to be "first," as there are only 17 tickets for Sale. But before the door was opened, about 1000 persons were assembled to be the "lucky ones," and although we exerted every nerve to maintain our position we found it impossible, as the violent heavings of that excited mass of human flesh could not be resisted by a few men, but when the door opened the crowd rushed for the "ticket delivery" with frantic efforts, and with such force as to make the building tremble like an aspen leaf; and I found myself 3 or 4 feet from the loop-hole from where the tickets were to be obtained, and with no immediate prospect of arriving at this important position. The crowd was terrific, so that I was thankful that I had eaten no breakfast and as it was got along

without serious injury. But to make a long story short, Fisher & Parkinson bought tickets No 16 & 17, and if there had been one more I should have got it, but as it was, I was “just too late.” Wrote down to Stewart, advising us [him?] to come up here if he was able, and if not able, to write.

61

26

As we received nothing by the boat this morning Fisher & Parkinson will go down at 4 P.M. to see and take care of Mr Stewart. In the meantime they have sold their tickets that they bought yesterday for \$200. each, thus making \$50. each by the operation. The Steamer *Tennessee* and ship *Rowena* sailed for San Francisco with 1100 passengers.

27

By this morning's boat I received a line from Frank Fisher, stating that Stewart was quite sick, and requesting me to get the hospital physician “Dr Dudley,” and with him come down by the afternoon boat, also to bring some medicines. I saw the Doctor who could not go. But at 4 P.M. I went on board the Steamer *Taboga* and at 6 o'clock landed at Taboga, where I met Frank, who told me that Mr Stewart died that morning at 9 1/2 o'clock, and that he had buried him in the American burying ground on a distant shore of the Island. His disease was an inward fever caused by being partly sun struck while crossing the Isthmus.

His spirits have been drooping ever since we left N York and so sudden a change of climate from cold to hot, enervated his system so as to invite disease. And while walking across the Isthmus he experienced sufficient exposure to implant the seeds of the fatal disease from which he died. A doctor attended him during his sickness, but did not consider him very sick until a few hours before he died. And to us all his death was quite unexpected. The last hour of his life he seemed unconscious of what was passing around him and Mr Fisher could not get anything from him in regard to his wishes in the disposition of his money, clothes, &c. The “last few moments” he seemed quite at ease, and finally dropped away without a struggle.

Mr Fisher took his money, \$287, clothes, &c, got a coffin made, and at 1 P.M. carried the corpse in a boat to the grave on the slope of the Island, and under an Orange tree, with a round stone at the foot of his grave, is all there is to mark the last resting place of Sumner Stewart.

Frank Fisher went with me to the grave, and I thought how 62 sad it must be to die in a foreign land, among strangers—without father, mother, brother, or sister to offer consolation, sympathy, and the many little offices that affection would devise. His grave is surrounded by the lifeless bodies of his countrymen, who like him have paid their lives a forfeit, in their haste to get Gold. His grave is in one of “Nature's” loveliest dell's, where the soft balmy breezes that ripple along the smooth surface of the bay, and rustle through the branches of those beautiful trees loaded with their rich-hued tropical fruit, together with the long heaving swell of the mighty Pacific, continually beating against the rocky shores of the Island on which his body is to remain until the “Resurrection Day,” sing a mournful requiem over his grave.

The tidings of his death came so suddenly upon me that I was almost overpowered, and I thought I would have given anything to have been with him in his last hours, perhaps to express some consoling word before he should “go hence to be no more.” The expenses of his sickness and burial amounted to about \$65. and as Frank has attended him, and is somewhat acquainted with his affairs, he will take charge of them now.

February, 1852 28

We collected the clothes, &c of Stewart's and went up to Panama. Gloomy thoughts come over me when my mind recurs to the scenes of the last two days, and it reminds me of the importance of being prepared for the “last great change.”

29

Today is Sunday, and I again feel my lonely condition at passing my Sabbaths where there is no protestant worship. A few days ago as I strolled down to the market early in the morning, I saw the body of a man—apparently an American—lying on the ground very much distorted and swollen

and covered with vermin. He had probably been attacked with some of the epidemics so prevalent and fatal here, and died before he could receive assistance. The body remained here 4 or 5 hours after I saw it, when the American Consul had it removed.

63

March, 1852 1

Fine weather as usual. Frank Fisher and I are engaged in selling the clothes of Mr Stewart, and as we sell mostly to the natives, my little knowledge of Spanish is quite useful.

2

Passengers by Steamer *United States* are coming in from N York who started one month after I did, and among them is Mr N. C. Martin of Nashua.

3

The Steamer *Panama* 15 days from San Francisco arrived with 250 passengers among whom is Mr Abbott & Son of Long Bar, an old acquaintance of mine.

4

The Schooner *Josephine* advertised for San Francisco slipped her cable, and ran off to sea last night, after her agents had sold 60 Tickets at \$150. each. And this morning soon as it was found out, a grand indignation meeting was held in the "plaza" by the "victims" and other Americans in the place, into which the Agents, Messrs Oatman & Scott, were brought by main force, and would soon have been torn into piecemeals by the infuriated crowd, had it not been for the American Consul, who put the agents into prison until a fair and impartial trial should take place. The victims of this swindle are very poor, not having money enough to carry them back to New York, or to San Francisco, and thus are placed in a bad situation. Fisher & I have sold the larger part of Stewarts clothing to the natives here.

5

Fisher, Parkinson & myself, have bought Stearage tickets on the Steamer *Fremont* to San Francisco for \$255. each.* There have been several indignation meetings on the plaza today in regard to the *Josephine* affair; and the general tone of the people seem to be, to bring out the prisoners and hang them.

Note that Stephen later calls her a "propeller," or screw-driven vessel; she was unlike most of her contemporaries, which were side-wheelers. Tonnage was only 559. *The Panama Route*, pp. 225-226.

6

Passengers from Steamer *El Dorado* are coming in from Chagres. I sold my Eggs at a Resturant for about what the[y] cost me. In the evening the purchaser came to me "jumping mad" and 64 ordered me to pay back the egg money, which I respectfully declined doing. Upon which he swore, threatened and intreated but all to no purpose, as I sold the Eggs as *they were*, and was determined to stick to the bargain. Wrote a letter home. Tickets on the *Fremont* are selling for \$200.

7

Bought a lot of fruit, and at 3 P.M. Fisher, Parkinson and myself took a boat for the *Fremont* where we arrived in safety. Before I went on board, the "egg purchaser" came to me and made the most profound apologies for his conduct to me yesterday, and desired that everything might be forgotten. So we shook hands, and parted as friends.

At 6 P.M. the *Fremont* got under way, and passed Taboga where she landed the Agent, and then soon came into the broad bay where we felt the heaving and throbbing of the mighty Pacific. Good Bye to Panama.

8

We are running in a southerly direction within 2 miles of the N.E. coast of the bay where the scenery is delightful. At 3 P.M. we passed the Steamer *Isthmus* bound to Panama from San

Francisco. The *Fremont* is a propeller, and is only about 500 tons burthen, but has some 500 passengers who have poor accommodations and are crowded.

9

This morning we left the mouth of the Bay and put to sea. Saw 2 Ships in the offing, beating their way into the bay.

10

A rough sea, with a head wind. We are now off the Gulf of Tehuantepec. Fisher, Parkinson & I sleep on the hurricane deck on a lot of trunks.

11

At noon passed a large Eng Ship bound down with a fair wind. Broke the crank of the propeller by which we were detained 8 hours. And while thus disabled a Small Schooner passed close under the stern, in which a large number of piratical looking 65 fellows seemed to take some interest in our welfare, but did [not] trouble us.

12

Warm weather and quite smooth. Saw multitudes of blackfish, also a shark and a sun-fish.

13

The passengers in the Stearage issued a series of complaints in regard to our fare. Upon which the Capt (John M. Dow) came forward and attended to our wants in good shape. At noon we are 1060 miles from Panama, and 350 from Acapulco.

14

Sea Smooth and weather warm. Our progress is so slow as to be almost discouraging.

15

This morning came in sight of land for the first time in 5 days. Sea is smooth, and weather warm.

16

In sight of the coast all day. At 4 P.M. entered the harbor of Acapulco, and made fast alongside a coal-ship. Found the Steamer *Pacific* just leaving for "San Juan Del Sur" with 900 passengers, she having arrived here this morning from San Francisco.

We here learned that the Steamer *North America* bound from San Juan to San Francisco with 900 passengers on board was run on to the beach 100 miles below here, on a clear starlight night so that the vessel was a total loss, although the passengers were all saved, but suffered severly on their journey up here. They are all here now, but some in a starving condition, having lost all their money, clothes, &c. Some of them have a little money, but not enough to pay their passage to San Francisco, and others are without a dollar, and are suffering from sickness and privation and their case is worse than that of the emigrants at Panama.

Fisher, Parkinson, & I put up at a "Chinese House," the best in town, where we partook of a fine supper of Eggs, Chickens, fresh pork, &c, which was an agreeable change from our Ship fare. I also found the best Chockalate here that I ever tasted. 66 Frank Fisher found one of his old acquaintances who was a passenger by the *North America* stopping at this Hotel. He is foreman of the "Alta California" Office at San Francisco whither he is returning after a visit to the States.

17

We slept on nice cot-beds last night and enjoyed ourselves finely. I was offered \$300. for my ticket to San Francisco but refused. Frank & I went out to a creek about a mile from town where we took a bath that refreshed us very much.

At the American Hotel I came across Geo D. Hager of Nashua who was one of the wrecked passengers, and is now without any means of getting to San Francisco having only 10 or \$12. He asked my advice and assistance and finally entreated me to assist in getting him on board the *Fremont*, to which I finally assented, though with some doubts of our success. Accordingly, Fisher, Parkinson and I went on board showing our tickets at the gangway as required. I then took Fisher's ticket and my own and went ashore where I found Hager anxiously waiting my arrival with his carpet bag of clothes, all he had saved from shipwreck. I then gave him my ticket and took his baggage and went on board telling him to follow in 1/2 hour. I got on board safely, and also slyly got the carpet bag on board and then waited for the result of the operation. Soon after he came off in a boat with a lot of others, and came up the gangway, showed his ticket to the Purser and was about to pass, when he was detected by the Steward as a stranger and an investigation was had in the matter, which was concluded by the Purser taking the ticket from Hager, and sending him ashore. Soon after I went to the Purser after the ticket, when he informed me that I had lost my passage by giving my ticket to another person, and that I must pack up and go ashore. I remonstrated with him but to no purpose, and he finally preemptoryly commanded me to go ashore, or he would put me there. So I gave some directions to Fisher in regard to my baggage and then stepped into a boat and started for the beach, but had not proceeded far when the Purser called me back and told me to come on board, which I did, when he told me that I might go in the *Fremont* to San Diego and in the meantime he would enquire into the matter. But I found the reason of his calling me back was that the passengers expostulated with the Purser, and told him that it was a shameful proceeding in him to leave a boy like me in a foreign land, &c. So to preserve his own reputation, but not with any friendly feelings to me, I was permitted to go on. He earnestly entreated me to explain the whole affair, but I refused fearing that he would again send me ashore.

At 3 P.M. the passengers were all sent onto the coal-ship along side and the Steamer searched for stow-a-ways. Two men were found in the coal-bin completely covered up with coal, who were uncerimoniously taken out and put ashore. Then the passengers were transfered to the Steamer by showing their tickets, myself being an exception.

At 4 P.M. got under way and put to sea, running out through the North Channel (a narrow rocky passage), and were soon breasting the billows of the Pacific.

18

Fine weather, with head winds. The high mountainous coast of Mexico in sight all day.

19

Beautiful weather and tolerable smooth sea. The air is somewhat cooler than it was a week ago.

20

Passed in sight of Cape Corriantes. Fine weather as usual.

21

This being Sunday there was preaching on the Quarter deck by a Methodist Minister, the first protestant worship I have had an opportunity of attending since I left home. Saw a huge shark.

27

Nothing of importance has taken place here for the last 6 days, having had good weather, although we do not enjoy ourselves first-rate we get along so slow. At 11 A.M. we were spoken by a Pilot boat but did not take a pilot, and an hour after entered the harbor of San Diego where we found the Steamer *Panama*, which left Panama 8 days after us.

The American town of San Diego is situated on the shore of the bay in front of the anchorage, and consists of a few scattered houses, the most of which are grogshops. We could not purchase any bread or fruit although it is said that everything is in abundance at the Spanish town, 9 miles from here at the head of the bay. I did not go up there, but went ashore at the American town and

found that the apathy and indolence of the natives had supplanted the energy and industry of the Americans. This Bay is surrounded by a ridge of hills, which protect it on all sides except the S.W.

After taking in coals & water, at 7 P.M. in company with the *Panama*, the *Fremont* again started for San Francisco. Upon getting outside found the sea rising and a storm gathering from the N.W.*

The historian, H. H. Bancroft, was aboard the *Panama* en route to California. In *California Inter Pocula* he devoted four pages to describing the storm the following day, beginning with "I may safely say it was one of the severest storms I ever encountered." P. 217 ff.

28

A severe storm raging, and the bold rocky coast in sight on our lee, about 8 miles distant. The Steamer ships a great deal of water, and labors severely in the heavy sea, so that the propeller was out of the water much of the time as her bow dove down into the trough of a sea, and the next moment the stern was buried in the sea up to the deck. In consequence of which the Engineer stood at his post for a long time shutting off steam as the propeller rose out of water, and putting on steam as it sank back again, thus getting all the power that could possibly be applied, which did not increase our distance from the dangerous looking coast that was still close under our lee at dark. And had the gale increased we must have gone ashore where a terrible fate would have awaited us.

29

During the night the gale abated but there is still a heavy sea on.

April, 1852 Apr. 1

Early this morning the Steamer was stopt, as it was so foggy that nothing could be seen 1/2 mile distant, and the Capt concluded 69 that he was in the vicinity of San Francisco. And at 9 A.M. the fog cleared up and displayed to our anxious vision the "Golden Gate," or entrance to the harbor, a few miles distant. So we were soon in the calm and placid waters of the bay and then observed the Steamer *Panama* coming in about 9 miles astern. I afterwards learned that she put into Monteray for fuel.

At 1 P.M. we came up alongside Long Wharf at the same time as the *Panama*. We succeeded in making our way through the dense crowd collected on the wharf, and got our baggage carried to the National Hotel on Pacific St. where we put up. On the passage I made some agreeable acquaintances among whom were Col Wm F. Buel, Geo. P. Morriss of Indiana and N.C. Martin of Nashua.

2

Found 4 letters in Post Office for me containing good news from home. In the afternoon went over to Happy Valley and called on Rev S. H. Willey, where I spent a pleasant hour. He and his family are in good health and pleasantly situated. His people also have built a new church.

3

I settled with E. L. Morgon & Co, receiving \$12. rent for my house on Vallejo St for 7 months. Also received \$78. from Bel[k]nap & White for Scythes consigned to them a year ago, which proves a bad speculation as they cost over \$110.

4

Fine weather and warm.

5

I purchased 20 Sacks Potatoes at 3 1/2 cts. pr lb. also pickles, cheese, segars, &c. to the amount of \$150. In the afternoon, Fisher, Parkinson, Buel & Morriss went up to Sacramento. The Steamer *Golden Gate* sailed for Panama with 900 passengers.

6

Shipped my freight on board the sloop *A. V. Frazer*, Capt Johnson, for Stockton. I left my trunk on board a storeship and 70 prepared for a journey to Sonora by taking a box of crackers which with one of my cheeses is to be my provender.

7

I embarked on board the sloop at 5 A.M. and soon after got under way with a good breeze. The Capt has been engaged in this business 4 years and understands the route completely, so we experienced no such mishaps as on my first trip to Sacramento. The Capt, one man and myself are the only persons on board, who eat and sleep in the cabin, my couch being a bench. At night came to anchor in the San Joaquin river 20 miles above N York and 80 miles from San Francisco.* During the night it rained severely.

This was New-York-of-the-Pacific fifty miles above San Francisco on the southern shore of Suisun Bay. Bayard Taylor said that despite "its aspiring but most awkward name...there never will be a large town there, for the simple reason that there is no possible cause why there *should* be one." *Eldorado*, I, 217.

8

At 5 A.M. hove up anchor and got under way with a fair wind but at 7 o'clock came to a bend in the river where there is a head wind and tide. So came to anchor waiting for a fair wind. Steamers and Sail vessels are constantly passing us.

9

At 4 A.M. all hands warped the sloop up stream 1/2 mile, from where we had a fair wind up to Stockton where we arrived at noon.* Could not find a team to take my goods to Sonora at a reasonable price.

Stockton, at the head of a slough extending three miles from the San Joaquin River, was the supply point for the Southern Mines. Though it was 130 miles from San Francisco, tide water reached to its harbor which could accommodate 100 steamers in the heart of the city. *The Stockton Directory and Emigrants' Guide to the Southern Mines* (Stockton, 1852), pp. 22-23.

10

Bargained with Mr Peyton to transport my freight to Sonora or Shaws Flat* for 3 1/2 cts pr lb. Also settled with Capt Johnson paying \$6. per ton freight, my passage free. Loaded my freight on a 4 mule team and started for Sonora at 3 P.M. Got stuck in a mudhole, but finally arrived at the 14 mile House where we put up for the night, although I slept on the load of goods.

Shaw's Flat, a few miles from Sonora, was on the east slope of Table Mountain, a ridge that dominates the landscape in Tuolumne County, and was named after Mandeville Shaw, who planted an orchard there in 1849. H.E. and E.G. Rensch and Mildred Brooke Hoover, *Historic Spots in California; Valley and Sierra Counties* (Stanford, Calif., 1933), pp. 498, 518-519.

11

At 6 A.M. the team started in company with 12 or 15 others, one of which was loaded with Chinese goods and followed by about 50 Celestials on their way to the mines. At 10 A.M. my team got into a mudhole, and in pulling out, broke the axle. So we were obliged to unload and get another waggon which detained 71 us 2 hours. At 7 P.M. arrived at the "Mountain Brow" 3 miles north of the Stanislaus where we remained for the night. I slept on the waggon, and as my money is getting short I subsist on my crackers & cheese, so that my expenses are little or nothing. The Chinese camp here also, and make night hideous by their uncivilized "powwow," which was kept up all night.

12

At sunrise we resumed our journey and soon arrived at "Knights Ferry" where we were detained an hour waiting to cross.* I sold 2 or 3 sacks of potatoes here, and at the Hotels on the road. We went on 12 miles farther to the "Tuolumne House," when I struck off for the "Chinese Diggings" and arrived there at 5 P.M., where I was told that Mr J. L. Doty kept a boarding house but found that it was not so.* But I found some old acquaintances with whom I spent the night pleasantly. I find walking so much very tiresome as I have walked about 25 miles today.

The first ferry to be established on the Stanislaus River, about thirty-eight miles southeast of Stockton. William Knight of Indiana had settled here in 1849 and in November of that year upon Knight's death the business passed into the hands of John C. and Lewis Dent, brothers-in-law of General U. S. Grant. *Ibid.*, pp. 449-450. This was Chinese Camp on the road from Knight's Ferry to Sonora, about ten miles southwest of Sonora. So named because many Chinese worked the surface mines in this vicinity; it is estimated as many as 5,000 by 1856. *A Memorial and Biographical History of the Counties of Merced, Stanislaus, Calaveras, Tuolumne, and Mariposa, California* (Chicago, 1892), pp. 186-187.

13

At Sunrise started for Oak Springs where I found my teamster with one of his mules so lame that he could not go on, but he got another one and started on. At 3 P.M. we arrived at Shaws Flat where I sold part of my load, and my teamster refused to go farther, which left me in a bad fix; but by the kindness of Mr Crow I stored my goods in his butcher's shop, which was an open building but was the best I could get. I paid my teamster about \$90. and he started back immediately. In the evening I found George Hale from Nashua who is mining here, and stopt with him over night.

14

In the morning went over to "Humbug Flat" and saw Moses F. Kimball for whom I had letters. He is cooking for a sawmill company, and George A. Johnson is engineer for the same company. I remained here to dinner and sold my Colt's Revolver to Kimball for \$35, and have partly agreed with him to purchase my goods. Returned to "Shaws Flat" but did not succeed in selling anything.

72

April, 1852 15

Became acquainted with Mr Munroe of Nashua with whom I took a stroll through the mining regions about here and visited several Quartz veins. After, we went over to Sonora.* In the afternoon returned to Geo Hale's cabin, which for the present is my home.

Sonorian Camp, as it was first known, was established by a group of Mexican miners from the state of Sonora in 1848. It has been estimated that gold valued at forty million dollars has been mined within a radius of two miles of Sonora. *Ibid.*, pp. 508-511.

16

Sold some of my goods at remunerative rates. I also washed my clothes and cooked some. Mr Hale is at work by the day at \$4. and does not come home to dinner.

17

I find trade very qui[e]t. In the evening Mr Hilliard of Nashua came over from Chili camp and I had an introduction to him for the first time.

18

In the morning went over to Sonora after letters. And at 10 A.M. in company with Kimball & Hale started over to Chili camp where we arrived in season to partake of a fine dinner at the boarding house of J. L. Doty who is engaged in this business in company with Mr Lossee. They have bought a house and have 20 or 25 boarders, and are now doing well, but in a month or two the dry season will come on, when the miners will all leave. In the afternoon Kimball & Hale returned to "Shaws Flat" while I have concluded to remain here a few days.

20

I have been looking about here but find no encouragement to go into business. Doty & Lossee own a share in a mining claim here but do not [get] much if anything from it. Mr Doty is very anxious for me to buy out his partner, with whom he does not agree very well, but I do not think it would be good policy so I shall not. Mr Hilliard came over from Sonora, in search of employment, but does not succeed.

21

While eating breakfast Mr Hilliard invited me to go with him down to Mariposa to see some of the Nashua Boys; and also to 73 "prospect" and to see what opportunities there are in that direction for business. I accepted the invitation and in a few moments we were on the way in company with an old miner named Quigley. There being no road or trail, we took a southerly direction as near as

we could by the sun, and after wandering 2 or 3 hours over the hills and valleys, which were now covered with grass about a foot high, and interspersed with flowers of every color, shape, size, and variety while the delicious odors, arising with the morning dew, filled the air with their fragrance and was almost intoxicating to my delighted senses.

As we arrived in sight of “Page's Ranche”—which is situated in a valley surrounded by towering hills, while a clear limpid brook, gurgled along through the park-like grounds by the house and was soon lost in the forest beyond—while surveying this scene and drinking in the loveliness of the landscape with my wondering eyes, I thought it a “Paradise on earth,” as the very place my imagination had pictured to me in younger days, as the realization of all the airy castles I had built in my romantic spells, where I would live and die, away from the selfish, wicked world in some retired spot, “some lovely dell,” where nature has lavished all her charms, where the air is filled with the perfume of a thousand flowers, and where the sweet warbling of multitudes of beautiful feathered songsters combine to make it a residence more suitable for angels than for men.

We took the beaten trail from here down, down, down, to Steven's bar on the Tuolumne river, where we rested an hour and partook of our lunch that we brought with us, and then crossing the river resumed our journey, following up Moccasin Creek about 6 miles and then commenced scaling the mountain that follows this creek on the eastern side. It required 2 hours hard travelling to arrive at the summit, from where a most romantic view was before us. Almost beneath us, on the other side of the mountain, was a dark yawning chasm through which a small stream of water was dashing and foaming down the steep rocky acclivities, while huge masses of rock hung to the almost 74 perpendicular bank, apparently by a root or twig, ready to be dashed down the precipice by the weight of a sparrow, while from the thick tangled forest beyond, came the harsh discordant screeching's of the “Mountain hawk” or the “wild Eagle,” which accorded well with the wild appearance of nature around.

In the other direction the country gradually assumed a level, the mountains and hills gradually diminishing in size, until the eye rested on a vast plain which extends for hundreds of miles in the valley of the San Joakin. This being the first time I ever witnessed a scene of such variety and

extent, I stood spell bound with astonishment and wonder, and I thought if the Atheist could see this landscape he would no longer say "There is no God."

We proceeded on down the mountain on the other side which was steeper, but not so long, as on the other side. Our path now lay over a very uneven country intersected by deep revines, and covered with a thick underbrush called "Chapperel," the very place of all others most favorable for highwaymen and land pirates. At 5 P.M. we came to the "Peña Blanco House" where the wagon road comes in from Stockton on the way to Coulterville.* We resumed our journey after resting a few moments, and at 6 P.M. arrived at Coulterville on Maxwells Creek just as the supper bells were ringing.* So we sat down to a bountiful table at Cashman & Sullivan's boarding house and partook of a hearty supper after our walk of 30 miles. We found N. E. Hale, Dr. Woodbury, J. A. Hood, G. Dodge, Wm Taylor, John & Joseph Langdell and Blodgett of Nashua located here for the present, and most of them with good prospects.

Peñon Blanco was the Spanish name for the large gold-bearing quartz ledge that cropped out about three miles northwest of Coulterville. Catherine Coffin Phillips, *Coulterville Chronicle* (San Francisco, 1942), pp. 77, 120. The founder of Coulterville, George M. Coulter of Pennsylvania, brought a load of provisions there in the spring of 1850. He set up a store under a tree and hoisted a large flag, called by the Mexican miners *banderita*, to advertise his presence. The place was called Banderita for a time but Coulter's popularity with the men was such that it became Coulterville when the post office was established. Chapter VII, "The Formative Fifties", of Mrs. Phillips' book is a winsome account of life in the settlement when Stephen was there. *Coulterville Chronicle*, pp. 96-136.

22

It rained through the night and now is pouring down, so that we cannot continue our journey. But I enjoy the time in company with our Nashua friends too well to consider it any loss.

23

The Storm still continues, but we are in good quarters and good company also.

75

This morning the rain has abated although it is still cloudy; but at 8 A.M. I got a “Donkey” of N.E. Hale, and Hilliard and I started for Mariposa, taking the trail down the creek to the Quartz Mill where we turned off in the direction of the Merced River.*

As soon as alluvial gold was found in the creeks and along the streams, men of mining experience began to search for the source veins from which the deposits had come. The first gold quartz vein was discovered near Mariposa in 1849 and mills for the pulverizing of the gold-bearing quartz were established in that year. The area around Mariposa and Coulterville, in the southern part of the mother lode, was exceptionally rich in quartz and other gold-bearing ore. Donald C. Cutter, “The Discovery of Gold in California,” *The Mother Lode Country*, California Division of Mines, Bulletin 118 (San Francisco, 1948), p. 16.

We soon reached an eminence from where we could look down and see the “Merced” some 3 miles distant, apparently not more than 2 or 3 feet wide, and separating two ridges of mountains, one on each side. This elevation is 3000 or 4000 feet above the river and from it can be seen the plains below Mariposa, the country about Sonora, the Snow-capped “Sierra Nevada” Mountains, and the plains in the direction of Stockton. We soon arrived at “Split-Rock” Ferry where we crossed, and followed a trail up the bank of the river 3 miles to Ridley's Ferry where we rested a few moments and saw a Quartz Mill in operation. We then commenced climbing the mountain, and I found it the most tedious job I ever attempted, for after travelling about 2 hours, we met a man coming down of whom we asked the distance to the summit, and his answer though not very consoling was true, when he told us, “He reckoned we were about half way up the hill.” The Sun was very hot, and my “Donkey” was not able to carry me. I was very much fatigued when we arrived at the top of this, the highest point of land I ever was on, and from where a magnificent birds-eye view of the adjacent country is to be obtained.

At 3 P.M. we arrived at the settlement in “Bear Valley” where we got a most unwholesome lunch, and then pushed on.* But in the labyrinth of trails we got onto the wrong one, and were soon heading for Stockton; but meeting a man of whom we enquired, we were put on the right track. Soon after leaving the Norwegian tent I was chased by a wild Bull and think I should have been seriously hurt, had it not been for the “Donkey” who I used as a breastwork to keep off this dangerous enemy. Hilliard in the meantime kept at a safe distance behind with the only pistol we had. But we finally got rid of this troublesome customer 76 and pushed on to Mariposa. But at dark

arrived at a miner's cabin hoping to stay over night, but were sternly refused, and directed to "Agua Frio" about 2 miles distance.* So we went on, getting lost 2 or 3 times, tumbling into ditches, holes, &c, and at 9 P.M. arrived at this town, putting up at a Dutch Hotel and paying \$1. for the privilege of spreading our blankets on the ground, which was wet and muddy, inside the tent.

Though there are thirty Bear Valleys in California, the one Stephen traveled through was named by John C. Frémont in 1848. The town of Bear Valley, built and owned by Frémont, lay about thirteen miles northwest of Mariposa. *California Place Names*, pp. 25-26.

Hidden from the sun all day long, a cool stream of water gushing from the mountainside gave its name to the mine at this spot, as well as to the settlement that sprang up around it. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

25

Passed a sleepless night and arose early and went over to Mariposa where we found Wm Ward, J. B. Knowlton & C. C. Hill of Nashua by whom we were cordially received.* After dinner Ward, Hilliard & I went down the river about 4 miles prospecting, and found some tolerable good claims, but did not conclude to work any of them. Arrived back in the cabin at sunset.

Mariposa, the singular form of the Spanish *Las Mariposas*, "The Butterflies," grew up in 1849 when gold was discovered at this place lying within the borders of Col. Frémont's land grant of 1847. *Ibid.*, p. 205.

26

After looking about we see no very good opening for business, so at 10 A.M. we started back for Coulterville. We got lost in "Bear Valley" but finally came out all right and arrived at Ridley's Ferry at dusk, but concluded to go on to Split-Rock Ferry, which we reached at 9 P.M. and spread our blankets in the ferry house for the night.

27

At Sunrise started on leisurely and at 10 A.M. arrived at Coulterville and were very glad to rest the remainder of the day, as I have walked about 70 miles in the last 3 days, and slept on the wet ground. Granville Dodge is here and is quite feeble in health.

28

It rains so that we cannot resume our journey to "Shaws Flat" as we intended. Mr Geo. A. Johnson came over from Sonora after Mr Boynton, and both intend to return there with us tomorrow.

April-May, 1852 29

At 7 A.M. Johnson, Boynton, Hilliard, and I started for Sonora & Shaws Flat. We took dinner at "Pages Ranche," and arrived at 77 George Hale's cabin at 7 P.M. very much fatigued, well-fitted for a good nights rest which I enjoyed.

30

Visited Mr Kimball and got pay for some goods he has sold for me during my absence. Then came back to Shaws Flat which I make my home.

May 1

In the morning Hilliard and I went over to Sonora and made some enquiries in regard to business, but don[t] see anything lucrative [t]here. So we have partly concluded to go into business at Coulterville.

2

Went with Mr Kimball over to Columbia, Santiago and Springfield. Saw Mr Jaquith of Milford, N H. at the former place. In the afternoon went over to Sonora for letters, as the mail is just in from the States, but there is none for me or Mr Doty. I have sold out my goods that I brought from San Francisco, but did not make much. Hilliard and I are still staying with Geo. Hale and paying our share of the expenses.

3

Hilliard and I have decided to go into business at Coulterville soon as possible, so we both went out in search of capital, he having none, and I only \$200. I went to Mr Kimball and sold him 2 shares in Nashua & Lowell R R for \$208. and borrowed \$50. for which I gave my note.

4

At 9 A.M. I started for Chili camp where I arrived at noon. Found Mr Doty in good health but business dull. I received \$100. for Mr Doty, giving him an order on Brother Stilman for that amount, and having rec'd \$177 1/2 of Hilliard, am now on my way to San Francisco to purchase goods.

5

At 10 A.M. I started on foot for Stockton, Mr Doty accompanying me about 2 miles, when I went on alone 10 miles, and then 78 took passage on a mule team and arrived at the Blue Cottage at 8 P.M. where we remained for the night.

6

Early in the morning started on, and at noon took dinner at the "14 mile house" and arrived at Stockton at 3 P.M. Upon looking around I find that I cannot purchase goods to advantage here. Put up at the "Eastern Exchange."*

The Eastern Exchange Restaurant was near Montgomery's Auction Store on Levee Street. Here Tucker, Mitchell & Company kept permanent and transient boarders, with or without lodging, serving meals at all hours. Advertisement in *Stockton Directory* (1852), p. 78.

7

At 3 P.M. I took passage in Steamer E. *Corning* for San Francisco.*

This little 86-tonner had been one of the steamboats in the rate war beginning in December 1851 on the San Joaquin River, when the deck passage from Stockton to San Francisco was only \$1.50. She succumbed to competition about April 1852, and was later reported to have supplied the mines on the Tuolumne River in

periods of high water and also to have engaged in a twice-daily ferry service from San Francisco to Oakland. *Paddle-Wheel Days*, pp. 44, 81-82, 137.

8

In San Francisco. Recd 2 letters from home, and bought a few goods.

9

This is Sunday, but I am quite unwell so I do not go to church.

10

Dull and misty weather, with some rain. Bought a few goods.

11

Stormy and very disagreeable weather. I bough about \$400. worth of goods. Also met Mr Barr of Nashua who has lately arrived from the States.

12

Hired a man and tore my house down on Vallejo St. and carried the old lumber to a "yard" for sale on commisson. In the afternoon received a letter from Hilliard stating that things were taking a different turn from what he expected and requesting me to defer purchasing any more for the present.

13

Stored the goods I have purchased and at 4 P.M. took passage on the Steamer *El Dorado* for Stockton.*

The *El Dorado* displaced 153 tons and was a competitor of the *Erastus Corning*. Ibid., pp. 43-45, 137.

14

At 9 A.M. arrived in Stockton, which was too late for the Stages, so I am obliged to lay over until tomorrow.

79

May, 1852 15

At 6 A.M. in company with James H. Barr and Wm Gardiner, I took the Mariposa Stage, arriving at noon at Heath & Emory's Ferry, * and at night at Dickinsons Ferry on the Tuolumne River after a hot, tedious and dusty ride. I slept in the Stage with a generous old Spaniard, who was a very agreeable companion. Being low in funds I carry my food with me, so my expenses are very small.

Heath & Emory's Ferry was situated on the Stanislaus River twenty-seven miles from Stockton on the road to the Mariposa, Merced, Tuolumne, and San Joaquin diggings. The road via this ferry was said to be the only good winter road to the mines. *Stockton Directory* (1852), p. 59.

16

I was aroused at 4 A.M. by the passengers taking their seats for Mariposa. So I bade good bye to Barr and Gardiner who went on in the stage while I started on foot up the river for Coultersville carrying with me a bundle of blankets and provisions. At 8 A.M. I arrived at Branche's Ferry just as a team was starting out for Coultersville, and as I was unacquainted with the route, I accepted the teamster's offer to accompany him and put my bundle on the waggon. The road lay over a barren rolling country and the sun being very hot we were glad to come in sight of the "New Diggins Ranche," where we halted for dinner, and at 1 1/2 P.M. started on, but were soon brought to another halt, in going up a steep hill, where we were obliged to unload part of the cargo before we could proceed. The road now lay over a very rough road, but we were successful in reaching the "Dutch Ranche" at 9 oclock in the evening without any accident. I have walked 25 miles today.

17

Early in the morning I started over the mountain for Coulterville where I arrived at 10 A.M. finding Hilliard who had just arrived from Sonora. We are stopping at the tent of Dodge & Langdell, consulting in regard to future operations.

18

Raining as usual when I am at Coulterville. Our business is arranged, and I shall start for San Francisco as soon as the weather will permit, to bring the goods here, while Hilliard and Dodge are erecting a house for us.

80

19

In the morning started for Stockton on a team and stopt for the night at Branch's Ferry on the Tuolumne.

20

Resumed our journey early but travelled quite slow, and at night put up at the "Lone Tree House."

21

Started very early and went to the "14 Mile House" where we got breakfast, then went on and arrived at Stockton at noon. Distance from Coulterville 80 miles. I drove a 4 mule team, and paid \$6. besides for my passage. At 4 P.M. I took passage in Steamer *Sophia* for San Francisco.

22

Waked up and found myself in S.F. I hurried around and bought \$200. worth of goods, and shipped them with those I had previously bought on board the Steamer *Sophie* for Stockton, and took passage in the same vessel.*

The correct spelling is *Sophie*. She was a side-wheel steamboat of 148 tons, making three trips weekly between Long Wharf, San Francisco, and Stockton. *Paddle-Wheel Days*, pp. 20, 50, 141.

23

Arrived at Stockton Sunrise, but it being Sunday I did nothing, and am not in suitable condition to attend church. I saw Geo. D. Hager who I left at Acapulco. He arrived at San Francisco a day or two ago in the Clipper Ship *Northern Light*, which was sent down from there to bring up the wrecked passengers. He is now on his way to Columbia, and being very short of money, I supplied him with a few dollars.

24

I chartered a 6 mule team, paying 3 1/2 cts per lb freight. But it could carry only 4000 lbs so I was obliged to leave the remainder 1450 lbs in "Seaman's Stable" to be sent on the first opportunity.* Started out in season to arrive at the "Lone Tree Ranche" at sunset, where we remained for the night.

J. W. Seaman's livery on Centre Street above Market. *Stockton Directory* (1852), p. 15.

25

Started on and at noon arrived at Heath & Emory's Ferry, where in crossing the floating bridge, we could not pull up the bank on the other side, until the load was removed. At night we stopt 81 at "Davis' Ranche" on Dry Creek where we found a team from Coulterville with a passenger on board, sick with the Small Pox.

May-June, 1852 26

Started on and walked 12 miles in the hot sun without finding any water, so that when we reached Branch's Ferry we were quite exhausted. In crossing the river which was very high, and the current very swift, our team loaded the boat so deep that the water boiled over the gunwale, and we expected to sink every moment, but by great exertion managed to get over before she filled with water. It made me tremble to think how near I came of losing my life and property all at once. At

sunset we arrived at Martin's Ranche where we remained for the night. We have left part of our load at this the "New Digging's Ranche."

27

At 10 A.M. started on, and found much difficulty in pulling up the hills, but finally arrived at George's Ranche with one wheel "used up."

28

Unloaded the wagon and the teamster (Geo Hirst) started back to Stockton after another waggon, while I walked over to Coulter'sville, where I arrived at 2 P.M. and found Hilliard and Dodge waiting for materials, goods to complete the house.

29

One of us will go out to George's Ranche with "Donkeys" to bring in 2 or 3 boxes which contain the tentcloth, tools, &c as soon as we can secure the services of these useful animals.

30

Hilliard started out with 2 "Donkeys" and brought in the desired articles, after a great deal of trouble.

31

I am at work sewing the tentcloth in an old log-hut, while Hilliard and Dodge are finishing the frame.

June 1

We are at work as yesterday. At noon Mr Doty came over from Chili Camp, having closed business there without making anything, and is now in search of employment.

82

2

The 1450 lbs of freight left at Stockton arrived today by packmules at 3 cts pr lb. We are employed the same as usual.

3

Dr Woodbury gave Mr Doty a claim 1/4 of a mile from here, and I found a pick, pan & shovel. So Mr Doty went up and prospected it, but as it never has been worked, the ground is very hard, and also very rocky, so that it required the hardest kind of work to get into it. He found some gold but not as much as he would like to.

4

Hilliard is helping me today sew the tentcloth, so that we get along quite fast. Mr Doty worked a little in the claim, but has finally concluded to abandon it.

5

We have finished our tentcloth, and in the afternoon took our "Donkey" and went over the hills two miles, and dragged some timbers down for our house. The frame is nearly ready for covering.

6

Sunday. Last night I was taken with the bowel complaint severly, but this morning feel better after taking a bath in the beautiful creek here. The weather is clear and beautiful. Mr Doty went back to Chili Camp, not liking the Digging's about here. Yesterday Mr Knowlton passed through here on his way to Mariposa from Sonora.

7

We have got the cloth on the frame and Dodge is at work finishing the inside. Some Irishmen have gone into the claim, abandoned by Mr. Doty and are making about 2 oz each per day^{*}

On Maxwell's Creek the diggings were rich at this time. J. Ross Browne noted that the common yield there in 1852 was fifteen to twenty dollars per day per man. *Resources of the Pacific Slope...*(New York, 1869), p. 20.

12

We have got the counter & shelves made and are getting along very well only that I have a very troublesome "boil" on the 83 under side of my right hand, so that I cannot work, or sleep but very little.

June 19,

We have opened our shop for business today, although everything is an unfinished state, and the prospect for business seems to be good. Doct Woodbury has lanced my "boil" which is now some eas[i]er, although very sore.

26

We have a fair amount of trade and hope to do well. We are still improving and finishing our store so as to make it attractive and convenient.

July 3

We have got our building lined, an awning up, and hope soon to finish our building operations. I have 2 "Felons" on my right wrist which the Dr has lanced, and are very painful.

4

Independance day! Nothing of importance occured, except a great many miners from the adjacent country are in town to have a "good time."

Aug. 15

As the streams about here are dried up, or too low to work, most of the miners have gone to the rivers until the rainy season sets in, so that trade is quite dull.

Dr Woodbury has left an excellent run of practice, and gone to San Francisco and most all of the other Nashua Boys have taken their departure. Since we came here, we have boarded with G Dodge, paying about \$11. per week, each, and \$7. per day for work. But as he has now broke up house-keeping we board with Mr Brock.

Sept. 1

A day or two ago Mr Brock & I went over to Sonora mule-back, via Chili. We started in the morning, took dinner at Stevens Bar, and then struck up Woods Creek passing through Jacksonville, and 2 or 3 chinese camps, and stopt for the night at a Dutchman's tent. The next morning started early, over the mountains that 84 lay on each side of this creek, and reached Chili camp in season for breakfast. I found Mr Doty had gone on to the Stanislaus River cooking for a party.

We arrived at Sonora in season for dinner which we partook of with a friend of Mr Brock, who is in the provision business here. We remained here until the next morning when we returned, after a pleasant but short vacation from our secular pursuits.

22

I have just returned from a trip to San Francisco on which I started a week ago from here in company with Mr Quigley, a merchant of this place. We left here at 3 P.M. expecting to lodge at Branch's Ferry. But the evening was so dark that we were obliged to camp down near the "New Diggings" using our saddles for pillows, using the saddle blankets for our covering. We arose very early the next morning and took breakfast at "Branche's," then went on to the "Lone Tree Ranche," where we put up our jaded horses for the night. The next morning we arrived in Stockton at 9 A.M. I put up my horse at a stable, delivered 36 oz Gold Dust to Messers Hager & Kimball for Mr Brock,

completed some other business, and at 4 P.M. took the boat for San Francisco. I found the cholera raging here, to some extent.

25

I arrived at San Francisco and spent a few days purchasing goods, then started back with my freight to Stockton. The Cholera is raging at S. F. although not very severely. There are plenty of luscious pears and grapes in the market which may be the cause of this fearful disease. I shipped my goods to Coulterville at 3 cts per lb. then got onto my horse and rode back to Coulterville].

Oct. 1

Hilliard in company with Brock have gone to whip-sawing lumber to be used in making toms, sluices, &c.* Their pit is 85 about 1 1/2 miles from here, where they live in a tent, leaving me in charge of the store. Their Lumber sells for .37 pr foot.

Sluicing was the most important of all mining inventions for washing dirt. Built of 1 1/2 in. boards 12 or 14 ft. long, sections of the sluice were fitted together to form troughs of 50 to 1,500 feet and even longer. The sluice was set with an inclination of from 1 in. to 1 1/2 in. fall per foot; it was fitted with numerous riffle bars along its whole length. The largest size sluices could wash as much as 450 cu. yds. a day, and a small sluice could wash all the dirt thrown in by a dozen men or more. The riffle bars and all exposed wood rapidly wore away under the great body of water and large stones so that lumber to keep the sluice in repair must have been much in demand. *Mining in the Pacific States*, pp. 134-138.

Dec. 13

While it was yet so dark this morning that we could just pick our way, Alex. Stair, Stetson and myself mounted on horses, started for San Francisco.* I had \$800. of my own and \$2000. for Mr Brock to be delivered in Stockton. We arrived at Don Pedro's Bar at 8 A.M., took breakfast, and Stetson finally concluded to go no farther. So Stair & I started on, but as he had the best animal he got ahead of me, and thus left me to pursue my journey alone. At 11 A.M. I arrived at Knight's Ferry, my horse completely worn out and unable to go farther; in fact, I feared she would die, as she

would neither eat or drink anything. I hired her taken care of at \$1.50 per day and the next morning took the Stage for Stockton.

Alexander Stair was a friend of George Coulter. With James Mason Hutchings, the celebrated San Francisco journalist, and several others, he made the first tourist expedition to the Yosenite Valley in 1855. *Coulterville Chronicle*, pp. 125-128.

The roads were in an awful condition, it having rained almost constantly for the last two weeks. But we managed to get into French Camp at 7 P.M. All about here seems to be one vast mudhole, except occasionally a sheet of water covers a few acres of land. It is impossible for teams to go into Stockton, the ground in this vicinity being low and completely saturated with water. The next morning I went in a boat to Stockton which is 7 miles distant by water and 2 by land.

I delivered Brock's money to Hager & Kimball, and at 2 P.M. took passage on Steamer *Sophie* for San Francisco. On board this boat I found Parker Dodge and Frank Robbins of Nashua, from whom I heard from the other Nashua Boys and that J Wyman was dead.

16

Arrived at San Francisco and purchased 200 books, pamphlets, magazines, &c, also some Rubber Boots, &c.

18

It has been raining here incessantly for the last 5 days, so I have concluded to wait no longer for it to cease and have shipped 86 my goods on board Steamer *C. M. Webber*, and took passage on her for Stockton.*

Side-wheeler of 144 tons, which had been named for the founder of Stockton. *Paddle-Wheel Days*, p. 135.

19

At 9 A.M. arrived at Stockton, and found it inundated. The wharf was mostly under water. Several bridges were swept away. A few buildings also were carried off by the flood, which was rising every hour, and was already in many of the Stores so as to compel the occupants to remove goods

from the floor onto shelves, counters, &c. Ferrys were established across the principal streets which were now foaming cataracts, and unsafe to cross, or traverse with carriages. A large wholesale produce store got adrift and commenced floating down stream but finally got caught, and settled down on a corner, where it remained in a very peculiar situation. Although a great deal of property has been moved from the first to the second stories of the buildings, yet the loss is immense. The water is from 1 to 4 feet on the first floors of the stores here, and produces great consternation among the merchants.

For miles around a vast sheet of water presents itself to view, with a fleet of houses, some apparently at anchor and some in motion, while boats are out in every direction stemming the flood, rescuing families from their aquatic situations, and also picking up goods that are floating in [every] direction. Those who have farms are obliged to go and come in boats, perhaps over the same roads that they trod dry and dusty one month ago. I have got my goods stored at Hager & Kimballs, and lodge at their store with Mr Chase, their clerk.

22

For the last 3 days I have been waiting for the water to fall, but as it still continues to fall *from above* and there is no cessation of this weather, I am determined to get home as soon as possible. So I filled my saddle-bags with late States papers, bought a Rifle, and took my India Rubber Boots in a sack, and at 2 P.M. took a boat for French Camp where I arrived at dark.

87

23

Paid \$12 1/2 passage to Knights Ferry and started at 6 A.M. in the face of a cold storm and over the worst road I ever wish to see. And after a most tedious day's journey we arrived at Heath & Emory's Ferry, a distance of 20 miles, where we put up for the night. The stage was crowded and there was no accommodations for us here, so I passed the night shivering and thinking of better times.

24

Started on and followed up the river which is now a foaming, turbid torrent and at noon arrived at Knight's Ferry at noon. The weather is still rainy but I found my horse in a better condition than I left her, so I determined to push on home. Taking my Rifle, Saddle-bags and bag of Boots (which I found very inconvenient), I mounted my steed and started towards the snow-covered Mountains, which are not a long distance off. At dusk I arrived at the Tuolumne House where I put up for the night. After supper the Landlord treated all hands to the best the house afforded, of both eatables and drinkables, that they might be better able to celebrate Christmas Eve. that was now passing away. Except myself, all present were in *high spirits*, and amused me much by their songs, stories, and drolleries. In the course of the evening I sold quite a number of my "papers." The celebrations were kept up until a late hour, and then my bed was so cold and wet that I slept very little.

25

This morning the people here seem somewhat ashamed of last night's proceedings, but console themselves by saying that Christmas comes only once a year. I pay 25 cts per lb for hay for my horse, and \$1.50 per meal for my food, and as the expenses are thus very high I started out in the midst of a severely cold rainstorm for home.

The road is in such a terrible condition that my horse cannot go faster than a walk, which is very tedious for me in the face of this severe tempest. At 3 P.M. I arrived at Don Pedro's Bar and 88 baited my horse while I went around to the miner's cabins selling my papers of which I sold quite a number.*

Names for Pierre ("Don Pedro") Sansevain, a French pioneer of 1839, who mined here in 1848, and was a member of the constitutional convention. On the Tuolumne River the Don Pedro Reservoir now covers the site of the old mining camp. *California Place Names*, p. 97.

At 4 P.M. just as I was starting, Mr Stair came in from Stockton and with him crossed the river, and commenced ascending the mountain on the opposite side. But as his animal was not loaded as mine he went on ahead, and I was again left to slowly plod along home alone. I was now surrounded by snow which was still falling. At Dusk I arrived at the "Dutch Ranche" but could not get accomodated with food for myself, or fodder for my horse, and was thus compeled to keep on

home. In going up the mountain my horse almost gave out, and I feared I should be obliged to leave him there and go on afoot, but I got along until I commenced descending on the other side. The snow had covered the road, but was partly melted now by the rains, and it was so dark that I could [not] see the road while sitting on the horse. And to complete my troubles the horse refused to go on unless guided. So I was obliged to dismount, hang the bag of boots on the end of the rifle, which I threw over my shoulder and then feel the road (as it now so dark that I could not see it), and lead my horse down the steep declivities for 3 or 4 miles.

In the meantime the storm was raging most furiously, so that branch's of trees were snapped off and hurled to the ground with a force that shattered them into splinters, while frequently whole trees were dashed to the earth with a crash that was heard above the roaring of the elements, making me shudder at the thought of my proximity to these fearful yet unseen dangers, while above all the sharp shrill bark of the prairie wolf was heard, seemed to crown nature's effort to create a series of fitful sounds most unharmonious to the ear, under existing circumstances.

I lost my way two or three times but was fortunate in finding it again, and when half way down I came in sight of the Peña Blanco House which was brightly illuminated by the lights in the inside which shone through the cloth covering. And then I no longer lost my way, for keeping this "Lighthouse" in view, I pressed forward and was soon under its hospitable roof, where I sold some papers and then started on home. The intervening 3 miles was to me, the longest I ever found, but everything must have an end; and at length I came in sight of the lights of Coulterville, and soon after was comfortably ensconced in our store which I found had been flooded by the high water during my absence. Come to get off my horse I found myself sore, stiff and hungry and nothing here to appease my hunger except potatoes and salt, which is all Hilliard has had to live on for several days. Stairs got in two hours before me.

January, 1853 Jan. 1

I have sold my Rifle for \$20. more than I gave for it, my boots at 100 pr ct profit and most of my papers also, so that the heavy expenses of my journey are more than paid from the profits already.

For the last 30 days it has rained almost incessantly, so that this creek is higher than ever known before, and cannot be crossed, as there is no bridge & it is impossible to ford it. There is no provisions in town, nor can any arrive while the roads are in such a situation, and many miners are compeled to go to the cities in consequence. The last flour that was in town sold for \$130. per bbl. and hard bread for \$1.00 per pound. The City of Sacramento is completely inundated, the water being 18 inches higher than ever known before.

10

An evening or two since as a party of us were sitting up in our store until 11 or 12 oclock, we heard a stifled breathing of snuffling sound; but supposing it to be some hogs smelling about our tent, we did not mind anything about it. But the next morning we found a man lying in his tent, (3 or 4 rods from ours), with his throat cut from ear to ear, and still tightly clenching the fatal instrument (a sharp case knife) in his hand. He had rolled out of his bunk onto the floor, and the noise we heard must have been his last struggles for breath. His partner was a venerable looking, white-headed old man, who lay in his berth on the 90 opposite side of the tent, and says he heard nothing of what took place. The[y] were both criminals from Sydney, and had *drank* to excess of late. Many of the townsmen here think there was foul play, but as there is no evidence, nothing can be done. The corpse was laying in the same position in his grave, as when found on the morning after the bloody deed; and soon after his partner left the place with \$800. belonging to the deceased.

17

Last night Brock's store was cut into through the canvass, and a trunk containing \$1600. was taken from the sleeping apartment, a room about 8 x 12 feet over his kitchen, in which R R Brock, Granville Dodge, Edmund Foster and Thomas C. Connor were sleeping at the time. A ladder put together with ropes was used in climbing up on the outside to where the trunk was, with only a thickness of canvas to protect it from invaders, although as Connor lay on the floor his head must have touched it. The citizens turned out in all directions, and soon found the trunk with the

valuables abstracted, in a deserted cabin. No clue can be obtained of the thieves, although Connor is suspected of being an accomplice. Foster lost about \$300. that he had deposited in the trunk.

20

Mr Doty came over from Chili camp and will spend a few days with us. He has a severe boil on his hand.

Mar. 20

Late last evening, as a party of us were sitting around our stove, we were suddenly disturbed by a howling of dogs. Upon going out to ascertain the cause, we found a mad dog chasing and biting every animal he could come across. We armed ourselves, and went out in search of the brute, and although several good shots were obtained we did not succeed in killing him. The next morning all the dogs in town, except those chained were shot, and also one hog that was running mad. The dog that caused all this disturbance was killed at Colorado Bar by a miner.

91

3

Mr Cruikshank and his partner found a "chisper," or lump of gold & quartz, weighing 15 1/2 lbs. They found it on Gentry's Gulch, about 8 miles from here, lying on the top of the ground, near the trail where hundreds of persons had passed. Upon breaking up the "piece" they obtained 135 oz's gold of which I got a few specimens.

27

Mr Hilliard has sold out to me and this morning started for San Francisco, via Sonora, on his way home. The reason of his starting so suddenly is because he has received intelligence of the severe illness of his mother, and he fears he shall never see her again alive. He carries about \$1650. in Gold dust with him and the good wishes of us all.

29

A violent rainstorm is raging which makes business quite good in town. Last night Mrs Coulter presented her husband a fine little daughter, this being the second birth in town. The other was a daughter of Mr & Mrs Carman's, born about 3 months ago.

May 6

Received a letter from Hilliard dated "San Francisco Apr 30," stating that he was about to embark on board the Steamer *Golden Gate* for the States.

June 15

A few days ago James Shimer and I started from here in the morning for Chinese Camp, to take the stage the next morning for Stockton. I carried 8 lbs of Dust for Mr Brock, and 10 lbs for myself, and found it a great burden as I walked the whole distance, 25 miles, in the hot sun. In fact I galled my feet so that I did not get over it for a long time. Took the stage the next morning as I intended, and arrived at Stockton in season to take the boat for San Francisco.

Spent the next two days there in purchasing goods, of which I purchased about \$1200. worth, among which are tools and hardware sufficient for erecting a wooden building for me next fall. I also purchased a large quantity of preserved provisions, fruits, &c.

92

I came to Stockton, and shipped my freight to Coulterville with Shimer's goods at 3 cts per lb. Then took the Stage for Green Springs from where I walked to Coulterville. The freight arrived a few days afterwards, some of it in a damaged condition. Albert Cleaves is at work on the mountain Ranch getting out lumber for my new house. During my absence Wm Norton takes charge of my store.

July 4

A public dinner and Oration came off here today with great *eclat* and was quite a celebration for this country. Tickets for the dinner are \$5. There are a great many persons here from the surrounding mining region. Towards night, everybody had celebrated so *hard* and *freely* that it occasioned several severe quarrels. In the evening quite a display of fireworks were exhibited.

27

I bought of Lewis Anderson 1/10 of the Virginia Vein, and 1/4 of the Texas Veins for \$1200.* He was owing me about \$135, the remainder of which I paid him in cash. This is my first dealing in Quartz property although I have been frequently advised to purchase. G. Dodge commenced work on my house today, while J. W. Clark who has recently come in here, is his partner, and is working his mining claim. I pay Dodge \$6. per day and board.

The Virginia was a large outcropping quartz vein in Mariposa County from which a good deal of gold was mined. *Resources of the Pacific Slope*, p. 16.

31

Tore down my old house and am therefore obliged to suspend business for the present. We are putting up the new frame on the site of the old one. The old building was 18 ft square with an L, while the new one will be 24 feet square, with an L and a chamber.

Sept. 4

While shingling the roof with Dodge I was partially sun struck, and for 2 or 3 days lay on the floor of my new house, nearly crazy with the brain fever. I finally got bled very powerfully, when I felt a little easier, and the disease of my brain left there and settled in my right ear causing a total deafness there.* I pay \$16. per load for hauling my lumber 4 miles, and very small loads at that.

Brain fever was what is now known as acute cerebral meningitis. It may be derived from a shock, from inflammation in adjacent structures, or from tuberculosis.

93

October, 1853 7

Opened my house which I like very much, as I now have a comfortable bed in my little chamber which is much better than to sleep on the ground, or counter, without any mattrass, as I have done for the last 18 months. Trade is good.

12

In company with Mr Shepard, Wm.Norton, Mr & Mrs Coulter and baby and son *George* (who I carried), I started on horseback for Green Springs. We left Coulterville at 3 P.M., took tea at Don Pedro's Bar, and at 10 oclock arrived at Green Springs, where we found everybody retired. But upon making known our wants, we were speedily furnished good lodgings and our weary animals, good stabling.

The next morning at sunrise we took the stage for Stockton in season to arrive there before the full heat of the day set in. Immediately went to San Francisco, made my purchases, shipped my goods, and arrived home in less than a week.

22

While at work cleaning my lamps J Hilliard came in, very much to my surprise and joy. He left N York the 1st of Oct. and has had therfore a very short, and he tells me a pleasant trip. His mother has recovered and now enjoys very good health. So he has returned to take up his abode in Cal. for an uncertain length of time. In answer to my thousand questions in regard to the folks at Nashua, he reports favorably, except in Josiah's case, who he says is very sick, and fears he will not recover soon.

Nov. 7

I have hired Hilliard one month for \$100.

24

This is Thanksgiving, which is celebrated by us by partaking of a dinner of wild ducks roasted, stewed quails, mince pie and a very fine watermelon just picked from the vines, all of which we heartily enjoyed.

December, 1853-April, 1854 Dec. 7

I have hired Hilliard for \$80. per month and board until Spring. This town is much improved of late, there being several new 94 houses in operation, besides one very large one being now erected by Chas. Holmes. I came very near being killed a few days ago by a careless fellow who discharged a double shot gun so near me that I was stunned, the charge striking about 3 inches from my head.

Feb. 20

The Quartz Mill one mile below here, that has been in process of erection for the last 8 months costing some \$80 000., started on today on trial, so I went down to witness it. The Engine is from England, of 80 horse power, and works finely, and the prospect is that the Mill will be successful.

The machinery and buildings are built very firm and must be capable of great wear.*

This was a stamping mill for crushing the quartz ore. Quartz mining required more capital, more expensive machinery, and more scientific knowledge than placer mining, but essentially the processes were similar. After quarrying, the gold-bearing quartz was broken to the size of a hen's egg and pulverized. At first the crushing was done with heavy stones in the arrastra or in the Chilean mill. But by 1861 95 per cent of all quartz was pulverized by stamps. The stamps were wooden shafts shod with heavy iron shoes, and driven by machinery. The quartz was pulverized either wet or dry, but in either case water and quicksilver were generally used in the stamping box to carry away and amalgamate the gold. The amalgam was caught in a coarse blanket or cowhide, washed from time to time, and retorted, or washed over a sluice box, as in placer mining, where the amalgam was caught behind the riffle bars in the bottom of the sluice. Probably from 10 to 20 per cent of the gold was lost in both placer and quartz mining, but improved methods in quartz operation have been devised since the gold rush. Improvements are in methods of separation; stamping the ore remains an important step in the process. See *Mining in the Pacific States*, pp. 155-160

Mar. 1

Being 21 years of age I was drafted as juryman on a case before the Justice (G. W. Harrison), a few days ago. Hilliard has been to Mariposa and ascertained that Wm. Ward is intending to return to Nashua about May 1 and I am hoping to settle my business so as to accompany him.

April 23

Last evening, Knowlton, Ward and his partner came over from Mariposa on their way to Sonora. They departed this morning for Sonora, where Ward will take the stage for Stockton day after tomorrow, where I shall meet him, and the other two will return to Mariposa.

24

After settling up my business as much as possible, I am at length ready to start home. It is now 2 1/4 years since I left Nashua last & the friends have been urging my return for some time. It is but a short time since I heard of brother Josiah's death, which came upon me so sudden and afflicting, that I desire to be with my friends and kindred, and not be a wanderer in this cold and wicked world. I have given a power of attorney to J Hilliard, giving him full and unlimited charge of my property which consists of the Store & goods, Quartz, (from which I have already rec'd \$350.) notes & accounts, &c.

95

At 9 A.M. after receiving the good wishes of the people here (especially of Genl. G. W. Harrison), I set forth in company with R. R. Brock & Mr Nelson for Green Springs. As my horse walked slowly up that beautiful valley, I looked back at my house, the place that for 2 long years had been the scene of my labors, toils, anxieties and privations. And now at the hour of departure, my heart ached at the thought of bidding adieu to that loved spot and to this lovely vale now clothed in her richest garb of green interspersed with myriads of wild flowers, the almost intoxicating perfume of which is wafted along on the gentle morning breeze, while the feathered songsters are making the air resound with their melodious praises to their Creator. And to bid adieu to long-tried and true friends, and to some of them *forever*, was a thought that almost overpowered me. As I rode along,

a feeling of gloom and loneliness came over me, which I could not entirely dispel, for I was now leaving a home that I had built up and established here in the wilds of Cal by my own energies and exertions.

But we were soon engaged in enlivening conversation as we dashed along past those venerable hills and forrests that I was now viewing, perhaps for the last time. I had with me as the result of my two years labor, 190 ounces Gold dust and a check on W. B. Agard, the Agent of the quartz Co. payable June 15. We were all armed with Colt's Revolvers, besides Brock's dog "Top," who was a noble animal, and would have done us good service had it been required. I took these precautions, as a great many Mexicans knew of my coming away with money, and I determined to be prepared for whoever I might meet. At 11 we arrived at Don Pedro's Bar where Mr Nelson remained, while Brock & I pushed on to Green Springs where we arrived at 4 P.M. after a hot and dusty ride.

25

Arose early and took breakfast. Then settled with Brock, paying him \$10. for his services, besides the Hotel bill which was \$9. At 7 A.M. the Stage came along for Stockton, on which I took 96 passage, while Brock returned to Coulterville. Arrived at Stockton at 3 P.M. Left my "dust" at the store of Ruggles & Nudd* and put up at the Weber House.* In the evening went to the City Hospital and made enquires after John Watson of Nashua who died here last Feb. of Lung difficulty. A Mr Kingsley was with him in his last hours, and took possession of his effects.

Ruggles, A. D. Nudd & Company were at 2 Merchants' Row. *Stockton Directory* (1852), p. 13.
R. Manning, proprietor; corner of Main and Centre streets. *Stockton Directory* (1856), p. 66.

26

I saw Mr Quigley and Esquire Hart. And in the afternoon Robert Perkins of Coulterville, with his two slaves, arrived from Sonora on their way to North Carolina. I visited Mr Kingsley (from Manchester), who is an engineer in a flouring Mill. From him I gained some information in regard to the sickness and death of J Watson. At 4 P.M. took passage in Steamer *Sophie* for San Francisco.

27

Arrived here at San Francisco this morning and put up at the Franklin House where I found Ward. After breakfast got my money from the safe of the *Sophie* and got my trunk also at the hotel, when I went to the U. S. Branch Mint to get my dust coined. But as it could not be done for a week, I concluded to carry it to N York with me. Accordingly sold 20 oz's to Wells, Fargo & Co to defray my expenses home. * I tried to get my Draft discounted but could not short of 10 per ct per month so I left it in the hands of Page, Bacon & Co for collection and remittance.*

"Wells, Fargo & Co's New York, California and European Express and Banking Company. Capital \$500,000...Express Buildings, Montgomery Street...dispatch an Express, in charge of special messengers, on Each of the regular Steamers running between New York and San Francisco, both by the Panama and Nicaragua Routes. Treasure and small parcels received for shipment by either route up to the latest moment. Insurance effected in the Best Companies..." *LeCount & Strong's San Francisco Directory for the Year 1854* (San Francisco, 1854), p. 140 (advertisement).

Page, Bacon & Co., Bankers, Montgomery, Corner of California Street, San Francisco, Draw at Sight, or on time, in sums to suit, on London, New York, Boston, Philadelphia...Gold Dust and Exchange Purchased at Current Rates." *Ibid.*, p. 28 (advertisement). A complete list of banking houses in San Francisco will be found in this directory on p. 232.

28

The Steamers *Uncle Sam*, *Panama* and *Cortes* will sail May 1, the 2 first for Panama, and the latter for Niceragua. There are a great many persons here on their way home, so that probably all the Steamers are likely to be full.

29

Mr Ward & I bought 2d Cabin Tickets on the Steamers *Uncle Sam* and *North Star* for N York for \$100. each.

30

I attended divine service at the 1st Baptist Church both in the morning and evening. Rev Benj. Brierly (formerly of 97 Manchester) is the pastor.* The number present was not large, but the services were very interesting.

"First Baptist Church—Washington, Street, between Dupont and Stockton, Services at 11 A.M. and 7 1/2 P.M. Sabbath and Bible Class at 2 1/2 P.M. Rev. B. Brierly Pastor; residence, Jackson Street, three doors from Powell Street." Ibid., p. 238.

May, 1854 May 1

John S. Holmes of Paris Me., Mr Lund of Nashua and Robert Perkins and his slaves took passage in Steamer *Cortez*. Ward & I got our baggage on board the *Uncle Sam* in good season;* and I deposited my money with the "Purser" for safe keeping, taking his receipt for the same, and paying 1 pr ct therefore. After the usual confusion and excitement of such an occasion, at 4 P.M. we cast off from the wharf which was completely crowded with spectators and put to sea. About the time of leaving the cheering was so enthusiastic that most of us made ourselves [hoarse]. Capt J. M. Aikin was present to witness the departure of his brother for the "States."

Wooden side-wheel steamer, 1,433 tons, designed to carry 800 passengers. *The Panama Route*, p. 249.

The Steamers *Cortes & Panama* started an hour before us, so that when we passed Clarks point, only one was visible. As we were steaming out of the bay I looked at the City as long as a trace could be distinguished, thinking that this would be my last view of the Queen City of the Pacific. We soon felt the heavy swell of the ocean which was very destructive to the happiness of several on board, although I did not suffer from the effects of it. There is about 1200 passengers on board so that we are badly crowded or we might enjoy ourselves as the Steamer is one of the finest afloat.

2

The sea is tolerable smooth, with a light breeze in our favor. It is quite cool on deck, so that most of the passengers remain below. I am troubled with sea sickness today although not severly. Saw a schooner to the Eastward.

3

The weather remains rather cool with a smooth sea. Quite a number of the passengers are sea-sick.

4

Fine comfortable weather with light breezes in our favor. At noon the distance from San Francisco is 700 miles.

98

5

Passed in sight of Maguerreta Island where the Steamship *Independance* was lost with 150 lives last summer. * Distance run 245 miles.

This was one of the most terrible of all maritime disasters in the fifties. The *Independence* (Vanderbilt's Independent Line) struck a sunken reef about a mile off Margarita Island, off the coast of Lower California; the sea was smooth, the time was just before dawn February 16, 1853, and the atmosphere was perfectly clear at the time. As she was being beached about five miles from the place where she first struck, it was discovered that the vessel was on fire and panic seized the ship. Almost half of the 400 persons aboard perished. *Annals of San Francisco*, p. 436.

6

At sunrise passed Cape St Lucas. Fine weather and light favorable winds. Distance run 278 miles.

7

In the morning divine service was held on the quarter deck, one of the steerage passengers, who is an aged Methodist preacher, officiating. The Capt (Wm Mills) attended with marked interest, and I presume is a proffesser of religion. In the afternoon came in sight of the Mexican coast and find the breeze blowing off the coast to be very warm and fragrant. I now sleep on deck nights instead of the confined place allotted to us. Distance ran 250 miles.

8

Last night passed a Steamer bound to San Francisco. Fine weather and warm, and are running in sight of the mountainous coast of Mexico. In the Afternoon passed in sight of the high peaks of land near Acapulco. Distance run 261 miles.

9

This morning a young married Lady died of consumption, and was immediately buried in the ocean with the usual ceremonies. The prominent head lands of the coast are just visible in the N.E. At 4 P.M. the thermometer stood at 90° in the shade. Distanc run 250 miles.

10

The sea is smooth and glassy, and the sun burning hot. In the evening, it clouded up and we saw severe Lightning. Latt 13-21, Long 94-14. Distance run 255 miles.

11

Last night we had a fine shower, and this morning the air is pure and much cooler, the thermometer standing at 95°. Sea is smooth 99 without any breeze. Latt 11-24, Long 90-03. Distance run 270 miles.

12

Last night a fireman died of heat and over exertion, and this morning was buried with the usual ceremonies. The day is cloudy which terminated in a shower very much to our comfort. Saw a great many whales. Latt 9-50, Long 86-16. Distance run 240 miles.

13

Saw the land last night, and also this morning. At noon saw two vessels inshore of us. In the afternoon saw very high land, and at 3 P.M. passed between the Island of Montiosa and the main

land, while two hours after we were dodging among the Quibo Islands. The weather is misty and showery. Latt 7-44, Long 82-44. Distance run 240 miles.

14

At 3 A.M. doubled "point Malo," and entered the bay of Panama. At noon passed the Island and town of Taboga, exchanging salutes with the new Steamer *Sonora* lying here, and at 1 P.M. came to anchor abreast of Panama.

The crowd was so great to get ashore that Ward and I did not land until 4 P.M. and then in different boats, the one in which I came being so leaky, that one man was obliged to bail constantly to keep her free. We sent our baggage to Aspinwall by Express paying 15 cts pr lb, and then put up at the American Hotel, paying for Supper, Lodging and Breakfast \$3. in advance. Several started across to the Railroad on foot, but it soon came on to rain, and we were glad we were not of that number. At noon Distance run 264 miles.

15

Slept with my money under me, as there are about 20 lodgers in the same room, and the house is accessible to all the bandits of the Isthmus. We were awakened by the gong at 1 A.M. to prepare for breakfast, which was served an hour and half afterwards and was the most disgusting meal I ever saw. Then Ward, Mr Stevens 100 of Ind. and I hired mules for \$15. each and started across to Obispo. We had only proceeded 10 or 12 miles when Ward's mule became so exhausted that he could go no farther, and he was obliged to walk. 2 or 3 miles farther on my mule gave out and I was obliged to go on afoot, but Mr Stevens kindly carried my 15 lbs of gold for me on his mule, while I kept along as fast as his mule would go. But it soon set in to rain and the roads being very bad I blistered my feet severly, the distance seeming very long. But at noon our drooping spirits were revived by hearing the familiar tone of a locomotive for the first time in 2 1/2 Years.* And hurrying on we soon arrived at the Depot where a large number of our passengers were waiting to take passage in the 2 oclock train for Aspinwall.*

The Atlantic terminus of the railroad was at Navy Bay, said to have been discovered and named by Columbus on his third voyage. It was a much better anchorage than the open roadstead at Chagres. Clearing at Manzanilla Island had begun in May 1850, and the first train of working cars had passed over the rails to Gatun October 1, 1851. On January 27, 1855, the last rail was laid and the following day an engine crossed from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Fessenden Nott Otis, *Illustrated History of the Panama Railroad* (New York, 1861), pp. 26, 32, 33, 36, 46. The little settlement which grew up at the docks on Manzanilla Island in Navy Bay was not given a name until February 1852, when it was formally called Aspinwall after William Henry Aspinwall, the chief member of the firm of Howland and Aspinwall, and president of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company (1848-56), whose vision and enterprise had made the Panama railroad possible. *The Panama Route*, pp. 178-199, provides an admirable summary of the building of the railroad.

At the appointed time the train, consisting of 8 long passenger, and 3 baggage cars, started for Aspinwall. The distance is about 30 miles and the fare \$12 1/2. We arrived at our destination at 5 1/2 P.M. after a pretty ride through very romantic scenery. I deposited my dust at the Rail Road Office, and put up at the "Gem House" and soon after came across Mr Ward who unknowingly to me came down in the same train.

16

Came across Joseph. F. French of Haverhill, Mass. with whom I became acquainted at Long Bar. Also his partner Isaac—. They arrived at Panama 3 weeks ago in the Steamship *Santiago* from Callao, Peru, where they arrived in a ship from Australia, where they have been mining for the last year with good success.* They saw Fred. A. Crosby, formerly of Coulterville, at Callao where he afterwards died of yellow fever. French thinks of going back to Callao to open a clothing store, and says it is a beautiful climate, the conveniences of living are excellent and the pecuniary prospects good. He goes to N York in the Steamer *Illinois* which sails in a few days.

The great rush in Australia began in August 1851 with the discovery of gold first at Ballarat, then later in the Mt. Alexander region, and in 1852 at Bendigo and the Owens River, all in the colony of Victoria. The influx of foreigners, though perhaps 15,000 per month in the last four months of 1852, mostly from the British Isles and Europe, never approached the magnitude of the California immigration. Victoria had by 1855 grown from less than 100,000 to over 400,000, and in 1856 the colony became self-governing under its new constitution. William P. Morrell, *The Gold Rushes* (London, 1940), pp. 200-259.

This town is located on low, marshy land and must be unhealthy, and also a very disagreeable place to reside in, the weather being hot, sultry and showery.

101

At 3 P.M. the Purser of the Steamer *North Star* notified the passengers to come on board tonight.* Accordingly I got my "Dust" from the kind hearted old man at R.R. Office, who congratulated me on my success and charged me to be careful not to lose it, and delivered it to the Purser of the *North Star*, taking his receipt and paying one per ct freight. At 6 P.M. the cars came in with the remainder of the passengers, and all the baggage. Consequently all hands rushed to the Express office to be the first to get their baggage, fearing that all would not have time, before the Steamer sailed. But the Capt of the *North Star* came in and told us that all should have ample time. The process of delivering so large a quantity of luggage by the single package promised to last a long time. So I bribed one of the attendents to bring my trunk from the farther end of the room where it lay, so that I got it by waiting an hour while many were compeled to wait 6 or 7 hours. I then took my trunk on board the *North Star*, found my berth and went to bed.

Wooden side-wheel steamer, 1,868 tons, built in 1853 for Cornelius Vanderbilt and used as a private yacht for a European excursion. She entered New York-Aspinwall service for Vanderbilt in February 1854 and was later (Sept. 1854-Jan. 1855) operated for the United States Mail Steamship Company. *The Panama Route*, p. 237.

17

Arose early, went on deck and found we were at sea, with the high lands of the Isthmus looming up astern. The weather is fine, but very warm, and the sea smooth. At noon made 101 miles.

18

Steering N.N.E. with quite a heavy Easterly wind, but towards night both wind and sea calmed down. Distance run 260 miles.

Since leaving San Francisco I have become acquainted with a young man named Chas. A. Barkley of Mok Hill and formerly of N York where he is now going to visit his friends. Also with Ephraim Case, of Bradford Co. Pa, who wishes to sell me his Ranche on the Sacramento and Jackson road, called the "Keystone Ranche" for \$4900. Geo W. Morriss of Ind also came with us from S.F. who went up from Panama to S.F. 2 years ago in the *Fremont*. An Italian is on board, who found a lump of pure gold weighing 25 lbs at Columbia. He is now a lunatic and confined on board, and report

says the reason of it is that he has been 102 swindled out of a large portion of this fortune. Mrs. John A. Foster of Nashua is returning home with her child.

19

During the night and this morning the sea is quite rough, with a heavy head wind, and frequent showers. At 10 A.M. made the Island of San Domingo and 3 hours later came abreast of it, and only 3 miles distant, so that we could see the smoke curling upwards from the cabins which were concealed from our view by the tropical foliage. Distance run 255 miles.

20

As my berth is near the engine room I was awakened at 5 o'clock this morning by a violent ringing of the signall bell, upon which the Engines were immediately stopt and reversed. I immediately went on deck and found that the steamer was heading on to rocky beach which was not 1/2 a mile distant. The rock-bound coast extended round on each side, on which the breakers dashed their foam high in the air, and had the Steamer gone on 5 minutes longer probably a large number of our 1200 passengers would have been lost. The Steamer backed about a mile, then altered her course and pursued her way. The cause of this circumstance was that the night had been dark and foggy so that nothing could be seen until the fog lifted just in season to prevent our noble steamer from being dashed in peices on the rocks, and this being a dangerous locality in consequence of the numerous Islands and the heavy wind a beam which had drifted us out of the course intended. At noon saw low land on the starboard beam. The sea is quite rough, with a heavy head wind. Saw a brig on our larboard beam. Distance run 244 miles.

21

The sea is quite rough and a gale is blowing from the S.E. At noon saw a schooner close-hauled on our Starboard beam.

It being Sunday the Purser distributed tracts among the passengers, it being too rough and wet to hold divine worship. Distance run 250 miles. Distance from N. York 875 miles.

103

May, 1854 22

A heavy sea running with occasional showers. At 10 A.M. met a large Barque on our larboard side. In the evening the wind died away. Latt 30-22, Long 74-04. Distance run 252 miles.

23

The weather is very fine and the sea is tolerable smooth, but the Steamer rolls heavily in consequence of running in the trough of the sea. Latt 34-47, Long — —. Distance run 265 miles. In the afternoon passed close to a ship and a barque both bound South and towards night saw a number of sail.

24

The weather clear and beautiful and a smooth sea so that our steamer is gliding along the water very fast. Passed very near to several vessels and was spoken by Pilot boat No 6, but did not patronize, as there is a pilot on board who was brought from N York the last outward passage.

At 10 A.M. I counted 30 vessels in sight, and an hour later came in sight of Barnegat, passing up in full view of the low Sandy shore of New Jersey. At noon we were within 10 miles of the high lands of Navesink, having made 291 miles the last 24 hours. At 3 P.M. the Steamer came to at Quarrentine where we were detained 2 hours in landing 4 sick persons, 2 Girls & 2 boys, all of one family, who had lost their father and mother on the Isthmus by Panama fever, and which now had prostrated them.

In going up to the city I got my money from the Purser who strictly charged me to be very careful and not get victimized out of my money in this great metropolis. At 6 P.M. made fast along side

the wharf, but the crowd was so great that we did not go ashore until 7, when we took a carriage for Lovejoys Hotel. But finding they were full, we finally put up at Wilsons Hotel for the night.*

Lovejoys Hotel at 34 Park Row, corner of Beekman Street, was owned and operated by James S. Libby who was also president of the 6th Avenue Railroad. William Wilson kept a hotel at 127 Liberty Street. *The New-York City Directory for 1853-1854*, pp. 386, 697.

25

This Hotel is supported and carried on by a rowdyish class of people and therefore we took measures to repel any attack that might be made, for they knowing we were from Cal. would naturally suppose we had money. But we passed the night in 104 safety and [paid] our bill, which was outrageous, glad to get away from such a set of Sharks at any price. We went down to Wall St to sell our dust but found the banking houses not yet opened. So we got some clothing, took a bath, &c. and then sold our "Dust" to Beebee & Co. I had 170 oz's which I sold at 17.60 and Ward had 72 oz's for which he got \$17.65 per oz his being much better than mine. I took a check on Gilbert & Sons of Boston for \$2900, Ward taking all his in cash. After dinner, we looked about the city until 4 P.M. when we took passage on the Steamer *Connecticut* for Norwich, and thence to Worcester and Nashua by cars.

26

At 8 1/2 A.M. we arrived at Nashua in safety and found the friends glad to see us. But I miss Josiah. He is gone.

Mr Dotty arrived home about a month ago and is now at work for A Willoughby in the shoe business. Stilman is at work in Barr & Co's Store, Mial is clerk for S. N. Wilson & Co, and George is in the bookstore of W. R. Wilcox.

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