

Abbie Bright diary

Section 2, Pages 31 - 60

Born in Pennsylvania in 1848, Abbie Bright traveled to Kansas in 1870 as a young woman and her diary is primarily an account of this trip. It gives excellent accounts of daily life and settlement activities. The "diary" is actually composed of two different manuscripts and both are presented here. The first is an eighty-six page loose-leaf diary with consistent entries from September 2, 1870 - December 20, 1871. The second is a bound composition book with 129 written pages. This book begins with a childhood reminiscence written in Iowa in 1914 (p1-23), followed by a reminiscence of her Kansas trip written in Iowa in 1921 (p24-36) that covers Aug 23, 1870 - Jan 30, 1871. The book then includes some recipes dated 1868-1871 and a receipt dated 1884 (p37-41), and finally consistent diary entries from February 2, 1871 - December 21, 1871 (p41-129). A complete, revised transcription of both manuscripts is available by clicking on "Text Version" below. A previous, annotated transcription that combines the 1870-1871 entries from both manuscripts was published in the Kansas Historical Quarterly in 1971 and is available through a link below.

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31 team, so I wrote a short letter home, and gave it to him to mail, as W- is the nearest P. O.

I then went over to the house, which was a dug out, and across a little draw. It was built in the bank. Mrs. Mc Lain was very cordial, not having seen a woman for some weeks.

She had rheumatism, and was not very strong. Her daughter of twelve - and a negro girl of fourteen did the work. Some of the freighters took their meals there, while waiting for the water to go down.

I slept a while in p.m., but not long. Mrs. Mc - wakened me. She said, "You have slept long enough, I am lonesome for some one to talk to." I went a little walk up the river, but she was not strong enough to go far.

There were sheets stretched across the room, dividing her bedroom, from the kitchen, where I slept on the floor with the girls. It was not a sound sleep, and when he came in at a late hour. I heard her say "I am so glad you have come. I was afraid you never would", He told her there was no danger, but I heard that there often were sought times at the ranch when so many men got together. When morning came, I hurried to the river to see if it could be crossed. The first man I met, said they would try in a couple of hours. After the men had breakfast - Mrs. Mc Lain the girls and I ate, then she gave me a sunbonnet and we went to where they were dubbling teams, and taking one waggon across at a time. It was hard going, I thought one little team would drown, but they made the other side - and were soon on the old Texas trail. Then one team - the big team was taken back, and hitched as leader to another waggon, and that crossed safely. It was quite exciting to watch them.

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32 Mrs Mc - knew how anxious P was to get to my brother, and told one of the men, "See right she can get up on my waggon", he said. P was helped away up, untold of perishable goods which were piled high and soaped on. Those in the waggon box got partly wet. What a trip it was - past a few cottonwood trees, then down into the water, which had a swift current. By the time P began to get dizzy - the leaders struck sand, and we were soon on the old trail, where horsemen and teams were waiting to cross north, but waited for the freighters to come over first.

When the driver came to help me down, he asked "where are you going?" To my brother, two miles up the river, I told him. "Have you ever been there" he asked. No, but - I can easily walk that far, I answered. "You know nothing about it, stay where you are until we get up to Murry's Ranch - he will help you". There P stayed for he drove on and when we reached a log house - he called to a man at the door - "Murry this lady wants to go two miles up the river", then he helped me down, P thanked him, and he drove on.

I told Mr. Murry who P was - He said P could not walk, he would get me a horse, P should go in and wait, and off he started. I looked around the room, which was lined with shelves - on which were goods, those usually kept in a frontier store. The ranch was built of logs. You stepped over the lower one to get in.



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33 While I waited - ^{army} ~~army~~ wagons, drawn by six and eight oxen went by. They belonged to the 6th U. S. ^{Cavalry} ~~Cavalry~~. I saw a number of officers ~~passing~~ ^{passed}; see this time Mr. Murray had been driving a bunch of horses and ponies into the ^{corral} ~~corral~~ that was near the ranch. He brought an Indian pony to the door, put on it a mane saddle, and then I mounted from the log across the door, and he told me how to go.

I could not see the North house - it was beyond a strip of scrub trees along a draw or water course. I was to ride up around that; then I would see the North house, and they would tell me where to find Philip. He also gave me a letter that had been left with him, for Mrs. North.

So I started, on what I hoped to be the last leg of my journey, with the six or eight loose horses and ponies, trotting along, sometimes a head and sometimes behind. I was fearful they might get kicking or do something to excite my pony and make me trouble. However they were all peaceable - and seemed to enjoy the going.

After rounding the draw - I could see the North house way down toward the river. There was a garden in front of the house, and not wanting the horses to spoil it, I stopped some distance back and called to the woman at the door to come and get a letter. When she came - I asked where I could find my brother, "He is here" she said and called him.



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At last, at last, I was so glad I believed I cried a bit. After telling how I crossed the river - and Mrs. Murray there were all men down there, he said "Behave like a lady, and you will be treated like one". I shall never forget his saying that; All the same, I felt out of place although I could not at any time have been treated with greater consideration.

When I told him the 6th Cavalry were going to cross, he said he knew men in that reg. and would take the pony and her bunch of followers back to Murray, and see the men.

It was then arranged that for the present I should stay with Mrs. H - Mrs. H - was a talker, and I soon had the lay of the land. A Rose Scotch family by the name of Rose, lived across, and up the river. When a party of young men came here last fall to locate, they stopped with or near the Roses, and helped build some houses. North's and Philip's and a dugout near North's were some of them stay-

Mrs. H - was clerking in Wichita, Mrs. Smith freighting some doing carpentering work it. All earning money to pay for their claims. The men in the vicinity had gone on a buffalo hunt. Philip was going along, when he accidentally cut his leg. He was fishing, and after cutting bait for the hook, stuck his hunting knife into his boot, then stooping suddenly had cut his leg. So he stayed that he could better care for it. A neighbor woman stayed with Mrs. H - at night, and Philip had come up from his cabin to the dugout to be near the woman while the men were away. When Mrs. H - saw me coming, and the

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35 loose horses racing around, she thought a party of Indians were coming, and called Philip to stay with her until they moved on - that is how he happened to be there, and fortunate it was for me.

May 2nd Left Red Oak Shelter the 25th on the train that night, the next at Cottonwood Falls - next at Wichita, and the next at Mc Lains ranch - and then here the 29th. Had no chance to write in journal until yesterday, when I wrote until tired. This house is about 14 by 12, built of cottonwood logs, which grow along the river. The furniture consists of a bed, stove, table, two stools, boxes used for cubboards, a bench and trunks. My trunk and bundle came up to day, the water has gone way down - no trouble to cross now.

Mrs. N- is a gentle woman from Ohio. I by fitted for a pioneers life. She longs for the time they can pay for their claim, and move to town. This is a new settlement. A year ago I understood there were no white women within 15 or 20 miles. Last winter the Osage Indians camped along the river, their tepees are still standing, I have been told.

8th Mrs. N- and I walked to the river, I wanted to see the Indian tepees. When nearly there, a skunk blocked our way - and we fled in haste. As soon as Philip gets to Wichita and lays in a supply of provisions, we will move to his cabin. This is the Osage Preemption Land, or The Osage Trust Lands. You select a claim of 160 acres, then you "file on it." After living on it six months, and doing a certain amount of improvements, you pay \$1.25 an acre, and then it is yours.



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36 Philip has been on his claim that long, has broke some land, and planted corn. He and some men have selected my claim, and when he goes to W- he will "file on it". Then no one can file on the same land. He selected a suitable place, and plowed it for a garden, not having a ~~garden~~ harrow, he hitched the oxen to big brush and dragged it back and forth until it was well raked.

The garden is about a mile from North, I have no hoe yet, but with ^{the help of} a stick, I have managed to plant a number of seeds. Katura gave me garden seeds. I hope they will grow.

One day when going to the garden - I saw three antelopes and a coyote. There are three deer around, the men see them and I see their tracks in my garden. There is a herd of buffalo twenty miles out. The boys have promised to take me along when they go again. The last time they were out. they brought in a lot of meat, and that is what we are using now. Provision is scarce - potatoes \$3, a bushel. The railroad 100 miles away, and the men on claims raising their first crop.

They have been breaking sod near here with three yoke of oxen. One man driver, one plow - and one follower with an ax - he chops into the up turned sod, and drops corn in the cut, puts his foot on the place, and takes a step and repeats. I will watch that piece, and see what it amounts to. We live on buffalo, fish, bread, molasses and coffee. All have good appetites, I don't drink coffee - but we have good water. Mrs. N - don't know how to bake yeast bread, but bakes salt rising, which is good, "for those who like it," as some one said. Mostly however she makes biscuits. She saves all scraps of bread or biscuit

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37 puts them into a a two qt. pail and covers them with water. After a time it gets sover, I have seen it work and run over on the bench. When she wants to make biscuit, she pours of as much water as she wants to use, and then with soda makes biscuits.

Mr. Rose, the Scotch man, was talking about shooting, he said he liked to shoot crane, "They come down like an old pair of pantaloon", As to the truth of prairie dogs - rattlesnakes and owls, living together, he had not been able to prove it.

May 12 Last week a party of Indian Chiefs - passed up the trail, on their way to Washington, D. C. They said they would stay "two moons". Now I must write letters.

16 Yesterday I finished a shirt for Philip, and got dinner. Buffalo steak, radishes, bread, molasses, steamed peaches, and coffee. A greater variety than usual. At 3 p.m. I walked down the river a mile or more to see Mrs. Lane. I can cross the draw near the river, when the water is low, and there I saw three gars - a kind of fish, but not good to eat - they say. Coming home, Jake who had been working down the river, overtook me. He and Philip sleep in the dug out. The Lucky woman, who had been spending the nights with us, has company and dont come now.

Philip's ankle has not healed yet, from the knife cut. I feel uneasy about it. I am so anxious to go to his cabin, I think it would be better for us both.

19th Early in the morning we can hear the prairie chickens drumming. I wonder if it is their mating song, or are they hunting nest locations. Yesterday I went up to the garden, was gone from 10 to 4 p.m. I brought a hoe, Hoed the beans - peas - planted corn ct. It was very warm, and I was tired out.



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38 We have little twilight here. The sun sets, and in a few minutes it is dark.

Monday 22 Mr. H. spent Sunday here. He brought our mail from Wichita, a bundle of papers and letters. There is some talk of having a post office at the crossing. We would get our mail more regularly if they would.

Brother started to W. early this morning. Now I hope we can go to the cabin soon. He has been working up on my claim when he felt well enough. Katura gave calico before I left - and Pam making a dress. My wardrobe is rather a slim affair, but it does for this frontier life.

25th This has been a busy week. Mon. worked in garden and sewed. Tues. washed and ironed. Wed. made a tick and two sheets.

Today went down to the cabin where we will live, until the dug-out on my claim is finished. Coming back it rained, and I got wet through my clothes. So many new flowers; mats of sensitive plants - with a ball of red bloom. Prickly pear in bloom and many new plants I do not know. One day I saw what I thought was a white cloth on a stick, way beyond my garden. So I walked to it, thinking some one had staked out a claim. Behold it was a white flower on a long stem.

27th I am baking yeast-bread, with dry yeast Katura gave me. Will write while it bakes. When finished I will go down to the cabin, and hope to stay. Would have gone yesterday, but my bed tick, was not yet filled with wild hay. This is frontier life for sure. The bread is baked, and a perfect success - I am jubilant over it. Wont Philip enjoy it.

29th Keeping house at last; moved last week. The cabin is back from the river, with big cottonwood trees in front. The wind in the tree tops keep up a constant sing-song. The cabin is 12 by 12 feet, with a fire place made of sticks & daubed with mud. My bed is a curious affair. Sticks with crooked ends are driven in the ground, their limbs laid a cross, and resting



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39 at the head on, one of the logs of the house, then poles are put across - and the tick, and so my bed is fashioned. Along one side I have stretched the double blanket-shawl, and the single shawl across the end. It is very nice, but a warm place to sleep. Cook in the fireplace, Have a dutch oven, a skillet, teakettle, and coffee-pot. When Philip batched - he had a kettle in which was water and flour, hanging up outside the house, when he wanted biscuits, he poured off the sour water, now we have yeast-bread, and don't need anything of the kind.

Mrs. Lane told me how to make pie out of sorrel leaves - or wild oxalis, the kind that has a purple flower. I could not find any, and as the crust was made, I patted it flat, and made a crumb pie, which I knew Philip would like.

31st Mrs. H - moved to town. She gave me her cat. Cats are very scarce here. J. R. an acquaintance of brother's is stopping here. not very convenient - to have him. He has selected a claim next to mine. Pam kept busy, sewing for Philip's earring for the garden and ~~to~~ cooking. The baking is tedious, can only bake one loaf at a time in the dutch oven. I knead a loaf out, when that is light - I put it in the oven, and knead out another - and when the first is baked, the second goes in over, and the third is kneaded out. All the time I must keep the oven hot enough to bake and brown the bread, which is quite a task and takes three hours or more. But Philip likes it, and so I enjoy baking. It takes me all fore noon to bake a batch of cookies, can only bake five at a time.

June 2nd We have a table now, Jake said we should have the one up at the M - house. I believe he made it. He was down for dinner, and took J. R. back with him. Super is ready, I was to the garden - It is so far away - and some places I wade through grass almost up to my shoulder.

June 4th This has been an unusually long day - and I feel depressed. A shower is coming, hope it will cool the air.

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40 The heavy rains, raised the river, and a herd of cattle in crossing, stampeded, and 15 or 20 were drowned. Every week thousands of Texas cattle are driven north over the trail. If the cattle stampede, and don't want to cross the river, the herders yell and fire of their revolvers.

Sometimes we hear them here, and it sounds as I suppose a battle does. It is the cattle that keep the trail worn so smooth. Their droppings are called "cow chips" and when dry, are burned by those who have no wood.

Before Mrs. N. left - two skunks fought on her door step - then ran to the spring, and scented that, that they could not use the water. Mrs. Lucky carried a revolver at her side, but when a skunk, scaled her she forgot to use it. I have not seen her since Mrs. N. moved, I think she moved too.

It is windy, and the cotton wood seed is flying - each with with a bit of cotton, making it look like a snow storm. Here come the boys and the train too.

6th Packed to day. A family of Springers live not far from Lane. They are from Virginia. Their son is here part of the time, and goes hunting with the boys. Some time ago, he gave me three arrows, he had taken from a Buffalo, he had shot. The Indian had shot the arrow - but none went deep - and the buffalo got away from them, and was killed later by Mr. S. Philip says you cannot kill a buffalo - unless he is shot in the eye - or back of the shoulder, and hits the heart.

Philip put a couple of sticks or canes at the door, and charged me never, never to leave the house, with out one. There are some snakes around - one passed the door this a.m. and ran into the brush, before I had a chance to kill it.

June 8th P. brought letters, papers - and a pack of seeds from

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41 the ranch. They talk of making it a post office, I wish they would. Then we would get the mail regularly, now who ever goes to W- takes letters along, and brings back mail for the settlers. The sun is setting, and the sky is gorgeous. Yesterday I went down to Lanes - across the draw - or branch, which was so high I had to wade, Always a trouble to put on shoes and stockings again. Today I baked and finished reading Sena River. Am now reading Martin Chuzzlewit.

One of the boys gave me a bunch of buffalo sinews. They use them for thread, and to fasten arrow heads to arrows. P- showed me some bushes - called arrow wood, that the Indians make their arrows from.

Mr Rose gave me some seed of "pie melon". He said I should "ask permission of the neighbors to plant it, as it grew so fast it would soon be over all creation".

Three weeks since we moved, and in that time there has been but one woman here. No church, no nothing - Plenty of time to "commune with with nature, and natures God".

Soon after P came, while I was with Mrs. North - a minister came from W- to go on a buffalo hunt. He preached Sunday, we went to hear him, at Springers, Monday he went hunting with the boys. I saw a deer leaping thro' the grass - over toward the garden.

17th Mr. Rose called across the river, that there were letters at the ranch for us. Philip will go down, and P can send what I have written home, to be mailed.

18th Good long letters, and papers from the East - came yesterday. Very warm but not dry. Back a way is a big bunch of cow tongue cactus in bloom. If it was home how it would be admired. Is warm to walk now. When P came P enjoyed walking, and did quite a bit.

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42 Early in the spring, before the Indians left, they burned a strip from the river towards the prairie. The dried grass all gone, one could see piles of buffalo bones, and their wallows - where they had roiled until the sod was gone. Into these wallows, sunflower and other seeds had drifted and grew, and now are nearly as high as I. This morning I washed, hung the clothes in the bushes to dry. Brewed coffee, and put more hay into my bed tick. Now it is 3 p.m. I am going to the garden for radishes and peas for dinner to morrow.

20th I visited at Roses to day, this is the first time I have been across the river since I came. Of course I had to wade - The river is low. I wore my new calico dress and a white apron. Thought I looked nice. Wonder if I did.

I carried a cane - not because I looked gay etc. but on account of snakes - and no rocks to pett them with. Perjoyed my visit very much. The Rose children have been down several times. They are very interesting. The eldest will soon be a young lady.

A Mrs. Ingraham called while I was there, I will try and call on her soon - She did not seem well. It is so different on that side of the river - A high bank, then prairie as far as the eye can see - The trail to W- too is in sight.

29d. I was too busy to write yesterday. Baked such good bread, then dressed the biggest turkey I ever saw, Philip had been saying for a couple days - that if that turkey did not stay away he would shoot him. The breast I sliced and fried like steak. Mrs Lane ^{came} in time for dinner, I went part way home with her. We were resting in the shade when Jake came from work. She urged me to go home and spend the night. Jake said if I would he would go down

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43 and get supper and breakfast for Philip.
Philip is not well, and I feel I could not leave him that long. I told Jake to go with me and get some turkey, which he did, and after supper went home with enough for two meals, and Mrs. L took enough for her and Mr. Lane two meals - and we have some left yet.

Brother has been ailing all week, think he is a trifle better this eve, the bugs are coming in, I must put out the light.

24th Philip had the ague very bad today, Jake brought me some fine wild plums he had found.

25th This morning it was so rainy and Philip so sick he could not attend to his oven, when the bread was baked, I put on his boots - and went up to get someone to move the oven, I was a wet fright when I got there, and did not go in the house, Mr. Smith was there, I met him when I came down in April, but he had been away several weeks freighting, He is from Maine, and one of the nice men I have met in Kansas. He wanted me to ride one of his horses back, but I declined, as I was wet already. I hurried back, and he and Jake soon came to see Philip.

Last Fall Mr. Smith had several acres broken on his claim, this Spring he was away when it should have been planted, the high winds carried sunflower seed over it after the sod was turned, and I saw it the other day two or three acres in solid sunflower bloom.

27th The Rose girls were here yesterday, and I exerted myself to entertain them, they wanted to go to Lane - but it was too far. Then they teased to go and see Jake. Found him writing letters. All these young men came here last fall as did the Roses, they helped the Rose house - a two story one - and stayed there while locating their claims, and building another house or two.

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44 Mr. Rose told me many funny things that happened last fall and winter, and some more provoking than funny. "When the house was roofed, they all slept in it but your brother, he slept by a hay pile. I had gone up to W- and bought a load of corn. Every day that pile of corn grew less, and I thought your brother was feeding it to his pony at night. Well after a time all that slept in the house were ^{had dice} lousy. Then we knew why he preferred to sleep out, and he was the only one who was not lousy. I found out too - where the corn was going, and that party soon left these parts."

Jan 29th A little rain this a.m. and cooler since yesterday p.m. I went to Roses. Her parents and brother have just settled on a claim not far away. They were going over and asked me to go a long and call. I had a merry ride and a pleasant call. I do like to hear Scotch people talk, although I cannot understand all they say. The river is very low. The Rose children caught a 25 lb. catfish in a pool. No trouble to cross the river now. But one must be careful not to step on sand-bars before getting stockings and shoes on again.

Mr. Smith brought me a letter from Mother and three from friends. All keep well at home. I made two fans from the feathers of the turkey Philip shot, also one for Mrs. Rose from feathers of one he shot last winter. Philip's axe is broken, but he looks so bad.

Was in the garden this a.m. brought down a lot of cucumbers, and sent them up to Roses.

30th Went to Lanes this a.m. Had intended intended going to see Mrs. Springer, but she was not home.

Two more Companies of U. S. Cavalry went north. They spent one night at the crossing. The Majors name is Harper. He is from Bucks Co. Pa.

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July 2 Last evening I saw a deer leap over the sand hills. A shower is coming, we need rain badly. The boys brought more wild plums.

3rd. I had expected to spend the 4th at home. Saw Jake to day, and he says there is to be a picnic down at the old Indian Encampment, and all the neighborhood are invited. Mr. Smith is coming for me etc.

Baked in a.m. Good bread, How Philip enjoys it. Called at Ross this p.m. Mr R- gave me a snake rattle with 10 buttons, It must have been a big snake. Mosquitos so bad I must stop

4th The glorious fourth, not a cloud in the sky. Mr. Smith came for me with a two horse wagon, and we took other women along on the way. There were two dozen there counting the children. Five or six bachelors, & the only single woman - the rest married folks and children.

Of course they teas me, they think I am an old maid 22 and not married. Girls marry so young out out there. As I have no stove - they had sent me word not to do any baking. Mrs. Ross - Mrs. Lane and Mrs. Springer had all baked a plenty. Then we had canned fruit, lemonade - coffee and roast meats. A sewing for the children, gay conversation for the elders.

Pam tired this evening. Philip did not go to the picnic.
5th Washed this a.m. to the garden this p.m. From here it is quite a walk, over a mile. From the garden it is not far to where my sing out is to be. I wish it was finished, for I think Philip would be better if we were farther from the river.

A little way from here and toward the garden, are sand hills. Sometimes I walk across them, and

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46 sometimes around them. The biggest is 15 or 20 feet high, and hollowed out like a saucer. The wind blows the sand that way. There are fine peccas growing there, with bloom stalks higher than Pam. The other way from here - toward the waste house - is Philip's corn and melon field.

A Mr. Philips was here for supper. He and a Mr. Cramer have claims up the river - and live in a dugout.

6th While Pam not living on my claim, it is being improved all the time. The dugout will soon be finished, and for Philip's sake I will be glad to get away from the river.

The people here think Pam a bunch of contentment, because I don't get homesick, and fuss. If I do not feel well, or am blue, I don't tell every ~~body~~ Tom, Dick or Harry, that is all, except that I possess a big bump of adaptability. When brother is not well, I try to be cheerful and hopeful, although I could say, and with truth,

"I am not-merry, but would feign disguise

The thing I am, by seeming otherwise."

7th This a.m. went to Rose and ground a lot of coffee. Sometimes I pound it in a bag. Mr. Rose brought me a big letter from my home. He said "Miss B - if you don't get decent letters, you need not expect me to hurt myself carrying them to you." He keeps a supply of quinine on hand, and some other drugs, and supplies those who have a que - and there are several afflicted now.

But it is Mrs. Rose who is the Good Samaritan in this locality. One day when I was there, she was taking care of a sick header, who was lying in the shade of the house. She was making broth for him etc.

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10th Last Saturday I walked way past Lanes, down
to Marklies, Mr. M. had told Philip he would be
away over Sunday, and his wife was so timid, so I
suggested I go and spend the night with her. She was so
glad to see me, she could talk of nothing else for a while.

They are only half a mile from the trail, Sunday a.m.
we saw coming over the divide a great herd of cattle -
and some hours later another herd, they crossed the
river and moved on toward Whichita.

While we were eating dinner, we heard a noise, and
some two dozen deer had come over the river and
were in her garden - We yelled - and with a broom
broom tried to drive them away - then they went to a
corn patch, and it was not safe to leave the house - as
they get cross - and their immense horns are wicked
looking. Mr. Rose told me he had seen steers whose
horns were five and six feet from tip to tip. He also said
they were driven north - butchered, and the meat packed
in their own horns - and shipped to Chicago. Such yarns
I hear a plenty. Well it was 4 p.m. when some men came
siding a cross the river for the cattle, and in that time
they had nearly destroyed two acres of corn.

I had promised to go to the grove where we had the
picnic, and help organize a Bible class. But it was
so late before it was safe for me to leave, that I went
direct home. J. R. had been sick. Jake had been down
and took him up with him - I have not done much today.

Looks like a heavy storm was coming.
11th Baked, slow raising and took one all morning. Plenty of rain last
night. The storm must have been terrific out on the prairie.

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- 48 Philip saw a header who told him a herd of 2000 cattle had stampeded ~~etc~~ in the night, and scattered in every direction, not likely they will ever find them all. I am so glad they never come this way.
- 12 I am out of sewing. The river is high to go to Rose, and it is too far with the Springers to get some stitching done. P- has had a touch of a que again. Fixed some plums to dry. Wrote a four page account of the picnic. Will send it to a W-paper.
- 19th The warmest day we have had, Between the sand hills and the trees, we get little breeze. I scarcely know what to do, just now I am seeing considerable of the unromantic part of life in Kansas. Even too warm to sleep.
- 15th yesterday went to Rose. Sewed, and stayed to supper. This a.m. the children came, we forded the river, and went pluming. Gathered eight-quarts.
- 16th A cool windy night, and a good sleep. Some of the boys are down from W-. They stop at the North house, which we call Bachelors Hall. They called this a.m. B brought me some mail. They were free of fear, they are working hard to pay for their claims. Wichita is 18 months old, and claims 1 per inhabitant. It is a fast place in more ways than one.
- 17th Washed, hung the clothes on the bushes to dry, will borrow Mrs. Rose's iron to iron a few pieces. Do not iron often. Glad when the clothes are clean and smell good. Nearly out of writing paper. Home folks keep us in stamps. Mother send hops - and I make hop yeast - that is why the bread is so good and sweet. Jake rode down on a mule this eve. He is going to town to morrow. Philip is sending along for some things. P asked him to bring me a penny's worth from town. When he left - P said don't forget the penny's worth. and as P- was walking up the path with him, I called, I must remind you of that



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49 pennys worth. He just haw hawed and laughed.

Some of these young men are so nice, and we do have
of merry times, but it could not be, if my brother was
not here. He is so quiet and particular, and would
soon rebuke me if I should be indiscrete.

He is a good brother, The Rose, Jake and others
think so much of him. Jake deserves a good wife,
and I think there is one waiting for him in Ohio.

19th ^{Monday} went for plums, In p.m. sewed a while, then put the cabin
in order, and started down the river wading from
one sand bar to another, so much easier, and nearer
than going through the high grass, and not so likely
to meet snakes. Today I saw the skeleton of a very
long snake caught in the brush. It must have lodged
there during the high water.

Mrs. Lane urged me to stay all night, but her brother
is with her for company, and Mrs. ^{Morley} Meikle is alone
again, so I went there, which I knew would please my
brother. She was glad to see me. Her baby is too heavy
to carry - so she stays at home when he is away working.

After breakfast, I called at Springers, and she went
with me to Lanes. Found Mrs. L- in bed shaking with
ague. Left Mrs. L- there and went on home - It was almost
sun down. I was in the middle of the river on a sand bar -
dress up - shoes in hand, when I stoped and looked around.

The river made a turn, and the trees seemed to meet
over the water. It seemed like a lake. On one side a
high bank - the trees coming to the water edge on the
other. Oh it was beautiful, think I will never forget
the scene.

20 The usual a.m. work, then cut out a basque or sack for me;
am getting out of every day dresses, but have lots of

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50 petticoats, called at Rose's this eve. She had so much to tell of her trip to town, and P of my call down river. we just laughed. The sun went down - and P had to hurry home. I don't like to cross the river unless P can see the sand bars, and it takes time to put off and one stockings and shoes. I promised to go back as soon as my sack is finished, and tell her all P knows. "Yes", she said, "and you can manufacture some more in the meantime." The evenings are cool, the mosquitos not so bad. Brother tells me Jake has the ague. Ter bad. Papers from home. How they remember us.

22. Put off writing yesterday until evening, then I had bread to set - and beans to shell, then it was too late. The melons are almost ripe. The boys are working at my sugarcut. It is near our garden. Went up this p.m. to where they are working, then to the garden, and brought eatables home. Philip spoke to me about the old dress I had on, I like to please him so I will wear another. Mr. R. has been to the post office - we have one at the ranch now called Clearwater I believe - He is calling, and the boys have gone across the river. He is horse back, and unaccount of the quicksand it is dangerous to cross at night with a horse. Two letters for me.

24th. I wanted to wash but it was cloudy, I baked however, and seeded. J. R. will not be here this week. he will help Jake make hay. It is much pleasanter for me, when brother and P are alone. Jake rode by this eve with a big bunch of onions, when P asked for my pennys worth, he said it was up at the house, and if not worth coming for. I could not have it. Then he threw a big onion at me, and rode on.

I am to help Mrs. Rose with her sewing some day this week. Mr. R. wanted to know who Observer was - that wrote up the picnic for the paper.



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51 July 30th

Have not written for some time, as I am nearly out of paper. We had a terrible storm last night, and this morning it just poured down. The roof leaked for the first time. I slept very little and am no doing now. The house looks very untidy, only one side leaked which was fortunate.

31st The end of the month and I have accomplished so little.

A good letter from sister Mary, all well at home.

Aug. 2nd Yesterday washed, cloudy so put clothes on the grass to bleach. This a.m. washed - starched, and hung them up to dry. Pinned them as fast as they dried. Mrs. Rose lends me her iron. Baked two loaves and a pan of yeast biscuits, made some medacine for Philips, by boiling some roots, stewed plums for supper, mended, went up the river on this side, and picked 3 qts. of plums. There are many green ones yet, and we have been using them six weeks. Wish they would last another six. This was my busy day. We have had corn some time, and the mellons are ripe.

3 Went to Lanes. They are going to town, and we sent along for \$10 worth of provisions. Coming home I killed an ugly snake. Letters to day.

The P. Oraster says! B's sister gets more letters than any one else.

4) Raining to day, Had expected Mrs. S- and Mrs. L- to spend the day here. Mr & Mrs. Lane were here for tea, we had the biggest mellow Pever saw, but ever. Have been all week making a doll for little Pda S-

6th Baked up all my flour yesterday, went up to P- in p.m. Should have gone before. Several of the family have the ague. Their roof leaks - and that is bad. We have so many mellons, my limbs and head ache,

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52 Hope P am not getting the ague. P. got flour, Did not get any letters last eve, the Bear Skin creek is so high, no one can cross. There are three streams to cross to get to Wichita the Nemacah- Bear Skin and Arkansas, and usually one or the other are high. It has been cool for two weeks, and we have had much rain. The crickets are so bad, when P turned my bed tick, there was a handful in the corner, next the wall. They eat holes in cotton goods. Last a handkerchief up near the garden. When P found it, it was full of holes, and they were having a hop on and around it.

7th Wonder if P am having the ague, Have had fever some days.

8th Brother says we will move soon. Felt well this a. m. Gave the cabin a good cleaning. The cat had dragged a rabbit under my bed, and eaten a part. Tom is a nice pet, but sometimes he is a nuisance.

Later P took the tub to the river, and washed the colored clothes. In p. m. went up river, on this side, and found two qts. of plums. Tired and dizzy when P got home.

10th Baked yesterday, in p. m. fever came worse than ever. P. said P was getting ready for the ague, and had better take quinine. So P did, and this a. m. another dose, by tomorrow P think the quinine will help me. I do not have chills. Shall not tell the home folks, it would only worry them. Philip went to W- this morning, and will bring me writing paper. Copies of a W- paper and their compliments et. came. P will write another article - as soon as P am free of this pestiferous ague.

12th Last eve Philip brought me three letters. Have corner the waggon and we move.

18th Moved at last. All P rem^{em}ber of the moving, was sitting in the waggon, holding the cat. When we



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5³ got here, the fever had me, and I could not do a thing. Philip made a bed on the floor, and I laid down. My bed was not fixed yet. When evening came, I was better but scarcely able to walk. Philip had worked all day - besides moving, had hauled two loads of wood, and Sunday, was not able to be up. J. R. who has been working on his claim ^{and sleeping there}, came over, but he is poor help.

We had callers to ^{and} the house all in confusion.

Monday I managed to bake, and Philip fixed things around the house, but at 11 had to lie down with a chill, and in the p. m. I had to do the same. I had taken quinine but not enough. My fever was over by sun down, but it kept up all night. Yesterday a. m. it left for a short time, then came back, and he was delirious. When I cooled his head with wet towels, the tears would fall. I was in trouble.

When J. R. came for supper, I had him go and see Mr. Rose, who came back with him. He said it was an attack of billous fever, and left me a cure. This a. m. Mr. Rose came again. Brother is better. I am so thankful - thankful -

This is my day for a cure, but I have taken such big doses of quinine, it may not come back, but the quinine its self makes me half sick. Philip does not complain, he is so patient. I must lie down part of the time, but hope we will soon be well. I think it would have been better for us, had we moved from the river sooner.

17th. A letter, two papers, and two pens came, glad for all. Did not need to lie down all day. It is 4 p. m. have just one hour to write. Brother is still poorly, has fever sometimes, and don't know what he says. My appetite is coming back. These are our dark days, but I am not homesick. I am glad to be with P - every once in a while I can do something for him.



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- 54 Some times I think if P had not come, he would not have stayed in this agree infected place.
- 18th Last night he was wild with fever. I cannot write what P suffered. To day he is quite sane, but so weak. Washed this a.m. and baking now.
- 19th The usual work - then spent the rest of the day, trying to make something to tempt his appetite.
- 20th This is Sunday, had expected to write so much. When my work was finished, but not dressed yet, Mrs. Springer and son came. The mail came ~~the day~~ yesterday - a letter from sister Mary, in it a very handsome collar, and Mrs. S - sent along fresh buffalo meat. So P was fixed for dinner. J. R. had put a big mellen in the well to cool. After dinner when he brought it in, it slipped out of his hands shot right at Mrs. S - , fell at her feet and broke in two - It was so funny, P was glad to have something to laugh at. It eased a nervous strain I was suffering from. After they left I wrote a long letter home. Jake went to W - and has been ^{Sick} and not returned yet. So many have, or had the ague, I believe it is always so in new settlements. Brother is getting well slowly, but his appetite is poor. Had intinsed having soup for dinner of the buffalo meat, but was too inexperienced to make it for company, he had for supper however, and it was good, and he ate a little of it.
- 21st. I call this place Cottonwood Rest. I want to describe it, if I can. So if I read this journal in years to come, I can then shut my eyes, and know just how it looks now. This is Township 29. Range 2 west, in Section 29. I think this description is correct. We are about a mile from the river. There is a bank here, which many think was the bank of the Inim- scha - at some time back. From here to the river it is

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55 very level, and my garden is on this level meadow not far from the dugout. Back of us is prairie a little rolling. The men first dug a well, and at 6 or 7 ft. found plenty of water. They covered it, and it is reasonably cool. Not far from the well they dug a trench like walk into the bank, when the sides were 4 ft. high a 12 by 14^{ft} hole was dug out, logs laid to fit the sides, when high enough - a big log was laid across the middle the long way, then split limbs and brush were fit on top for a roof, and that covered with dirt piled on and pressed down. A fire place, and chimney, were dug out and built up, at one end, plastered with mud and answered well.

The logs used in Philips cabin as well as in this dugout, were trees cut down by Squaws the last two winters. Owing to a scarcity of feed, caused partly by the grass having been burned in the fall, and an unusual amount of snow, the trees were cut down for the horses to eat the buds and limbs.

This room is a little larger than the cabin. My bed in the corner has one leg. A limb with a crotch at one end, is sharpened at the other end, and driven into the ground, 6 feet from one wall and 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ from the other. A pole is laid in the crotch - with one end driven into the ~~door~~^{ground} wall. This supports poles the ends of which are driven in the ground wall at the head of my bed. Then comes my hay filled tick, and my bed is a couch of comfort. The double share

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56 along the side, and the single one at the end - and it looks neat. Next to the bed, is ~~the~~ trunk, then the table - The next side has the fire place. The door is opposite the table, ~~stands~~ the buffalo robes on which brother sleeps, and his roll of blankets. While in the corner at foot of my bed are boxes and various things including the tub, which is often pushed under the bed. Boxes are nailed to the wall, in which the table furniture is kept; also some groceries. Our chairs are pieces of logs.

22nd The day has been warm, the sun will soon set. I am sitting on the wood pile. The view from here is beautiful.

In front is the meadow with its tall grass - and a few buffalo wallows, which are filled with sunflowers.

Across the river with its fringe of trees - is the Pamine dugout, that is the only sign of civilization ~~in~~ ^{in my} circle of vision. Then toward the right, a little back of the river are the sand hills and a clump of cottonwoods.

While farther on are Philips big trees - and the cabin which we cannot see from here - Still farther on are his corn and melon field. While still farther on is the branch, with scrub trees, which shuts off the view of the hothouse, where the men batch, and beyond that is another branch and brush, which cuts off their view of Lanes - Springers and Merhels.

"Beautiful for situation" this certainly is.

23^d Set the home to rights. made yeast, then went to the garden. Gathered two dozen late cucumbers - a cantelope and a melon - and came back J. R. came with corn and we

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58 help it. After resting, felt better and got supper. Another heavy shower and it came in at the door.

Munday put the house to rights, packed provision and bedding - and were ready when Jake drove up with a team of mules to a waggon, and J. R. and George, who lives with Jake, rode the other two. They loaded an open barrel in which to pack the meat, a sack of salt, wood to cook with, Bacon & skillet, Bread and coffee pot, etc. The driver called to me "Here is a good place to sit," and I climbed up to the spring seat, over which a blanket was folded. "All ready" and away we went to the south west, away from the Minnescah, all in gay spirits.

Phad given up going on a hunt, after we had so much ague, now we were on the way, and it was quite exciting.

The buffalo had been within six or eight miles of us a few days before. The hearers had shot some, and driven others away. Now there was no telling how far we would have to go, or if we would see any at all. When out about six miles we passed two carcasses that had lately been shot.

We went by a dogtown, and saw them fish into their holes.

We also saw antelopes, prairie chickens and a gray wolf. This was upland prairie, short grass - buffalo grass, no trees or brush in sight.

All watched to see the first buffalo - which we spied some five miles on, and to our left. We went on, and soon saw five more, within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile. It was decided, that as Brother H - and cousin Tom - had to hurry home, the hunters would try to get one or more of those, and go no farther. So we camped there at Sandy creek, fed the mules - and had lunch. Philip and Jake being the best marks men - started in the direction of the buffaloes. The depression of the creek, hiding them somewhat. They are very hard to kill, unless close enough to shoot them in the eye, or

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59 back of the shoulder. Rather than run a chance of losing them, they decided to wound them that they could not run far. The one Philip shot, had its leg broken and went a little farther, but the other one though wounded went about a mile. The men hitched the team, we drove near the first one, and ~~the men~~ ^{we} all got out of the waggon, they walked near. I stayed by the team. We were all looking at the fallen monarch of the prairie, when unexpectedly he jumped up made a dash toward the team, which ⁱⁿ ^{turn} dashed to run, I being near grabbed a bridle, and managed to hold them.

That was the buffalo's last effort, he fell and was dead. The boys complimented me on "saving the day" as they said.

They began at once to cut up the meat, some at one anamel, and others had driven over to the one farther away. They saved only the hind quarters. While they were doing that nine big ones passed within half a mile, and in the distance we saw a great herd cross the divide, graze on this side, then cross back.

We drove back to Sandy creek and camped for the night, as it was well toward evening. The boys spread the waggon cover on the grass - then cut the meat in pieces to cool, and put it in the cover, while cousin Tom and I got supper.

We had brought wood for fire, and cooking water along. Besides bacon - we had buffalo steak, bread and coffee, which we ate from and drank from tin cups. How all enjoyed that supper. How they joked and laughed, for every one was satisfied with the days spent.

My eyes hurt from looking so much, and the hot sun. Brother H - put a robe under the waggon, and Plaid down - using a comfort for cover, as it grew cool when the sun went down. I kept on my sun bonnet - to keep insects out of ears and hair. I did not sleep much, the boys



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60 were so noisy, A skunk chased J. R. and he could not come back to camp, until one of the boys went out and shot it. Then when all would get quiet, I suppose someone would say something funny, and another laugh would follow. The first thing we heard Tuesday early, was Brother H - crowing with all his might. Some salted and packed the meat in the barrel, others got breakfast, and still others fed the mules.

That over we started back, with all the mules hitched to the waggon. I drove some miles "four in hand," and felt great.

Sometimes I drove through a buffalo wallow, where they had lately rolled in the dust, and we would all get a jolt. Brother H - and cousin Tom, were pleased with the hunt, so was I. After we have been having the agree so much, I had not expected I would have a chance to go.

I reached home before noon. Mr. Rose came and got some meat for himself and Dignier. I did not want much. I set sponge at once to bake, as the boys leave tomorrow and I want bread for their lunch.

I peeped the sponge, and baked after after the others had gone out to sleep.

Brother H - wanted me to go with him, but I said no, I will stay the six months - and I wont leave now. Up early next morning, I wanted to go along as far as Lane. A heavy dew, and the boys thought I had better stay home, but I wanted to go so badly.

They went ahead, I followed holding up my clothes the best I could. My shoes, stockings, and even garters got wet. When we reached North's house they were hitching the team. When we got to Lane I got out, and they drove on. It hurt to see them go.

Mr. & Mrs. L - and her brother were all ailing.

I tidied the house, and worked all a.m. to give her