

## ACCOUNT OF SAGE: 1842.

"A ride of three hours took us past the heads of Bijou\* and Kuyawa, (Kiowa)

\*The trail goes not quite back any of the sources of Bijou creek, though some of these are not far away to the eastward, but it passes Running creek, a source of Box Elder creek, which is the stream probably meant here, as it ~~minimally~~ is crossed just before the head of ~~the~~ Kiowa, in following the trail southward. — F. W. C.

whose clear and swift currents, confined to narrow beds, here presented a striking contrast to those remarked at their confluence with the Platte.

"Continuing on a few miles, we reached Black Squirrel creek, an affluent of the Arkansas; and from thence, after a brisk trot for some fourteen miles over a nearly level prairie, we came to our present camp."

A description, which Sage gives at this point, of Daugherty's creek which is ~~now~~ now known as Jimmy Camp creek, — both names being originally derived from the name Jimmy Daugherty, — will be found N.B. ~~in our chapter on "Jimmy Camp".~~ Sage then continues:

"Sept. 19th. Leaving Daugherty's creek we resumed our course, and reached the Arkansas the next day, about noon. Here we encamped in a small grove of cottonwood upon the right bank, a few miles above the mouth of Fontaine qui Bouit.

"In gaining this point we travelled some forty-five miles, mostly over a sandy prairie, slightly undulating to the leftward, but, to the right describing the waves of a tempest-tossed ocean.

"Its general character is sterility; the grass growing thinly and being of a coarse kind, with the exception of that of the creek bottoms, which affords several varieties of a lusty size, mingled with occasional spreads of préle\* — a choice article for the subsistence of

\**Equisetum*: known by the English names, Scouring rush, Hasteail, and Shave-grass. — F. W. C.

horses and mules.

In passing along, I observed a new species of the cacti family, that grew in a shrub-like form to a height of five or six feet. Its stalk was round and fully an inch in diameter. \* *The Cane Cactus, Opuntia arborens*, Eng. — F. W. C.

"This made the fourth variety of cactus noticed during the past few days. Of these, two resemble the common "prickly pear" in their appearance. Another species, however, was egg-shaped, bearing a fruit much like the cranberry in color and form. At the ~~minimally~~ proper season, it also produces a beautiful red flower, that emits a most agreeable perfume, in some measure atoning for its dreadful intrusion upon the path of the wayfarer".

Sage concludes this part of his itinary with a description (which we present elsewhere) of the springs at the present Manitou which he says the Arapaho call "the Medicin Fountain" and of the red rocks to-day called "the Garden of the Gods".

The following itinerary of the Divide trail is part of an official one of an expedition made by Col. G. C. Loring with a military force from New Mexico, cooperating with one led by Capt. Marcy and describes points on the trail in northward order, or in the opposite direction from that travelled by Sage.

"April 26, 1858.- Arkansas River\*.-- Road and camp good; crossed the San Carlos nine miles; rocky and difficult descent on both sides... 21 miles

"April 27, 1858.--Fountain que Bouille Creek\*\*--The grass dry not as much advanced as heretofore, otherwise a good camp; being in the vicinity of Capt. Marcy who is at the head of this stream, (A little below the soda springs, FWC) some twelve miles out of our way; sent an order to him assuming command and requesting him to join us as early as practicable; soon after leaving the Arkansas, about four or five miles, crossed the stream and followed it up all day..... 25 miles.

"April 28, 1858.- Jimmy's Springs.- Good camp; rolling but good road; left the Fountain que Bouille about eight miles; the emigrant trail\*\* comes into our road before leaving the creek.. 20 miles.

"April 29, 1858.- Point of Rocks--Crossed Squirrel Creek thirteen miles and six or eight miles of camp of to-day; this camp is on the dividing ridge between the Arkansas and the South Fork of the Platte river; A snow storm commenced to-day at 5 P.M.. and continued unremittingly until the 2d of May, when its violence somewhat abated; the cold and violence of the wind was so great that human life was in constant peril; a citizen teamster\*\* in the quartermaster's employ was frozen to death and several hundred sheep perished in the storm, a large number of horses and cattle belonging to citizens travelling with the command also perished; a number of mules broke through control and fled before the storm, many as far as sixty miles; the entire number with but few exceptions were recovered.

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\*That is the Arkansas River (at Ft. El Pueblo) was the camp reached at the end of this day's travel, 21 miles from the camp of the night before. St Charles Creek (in the southern part of the present Pueblo County) was crossed at nine miles from the camp of the night before, which was at Muddy Creek, FWC.

\*\*Fontaine qui Bouille. FWC.

\*\*This "Chico Cutoff", which was the route by which emigrants coming west by the Arkansas River route reached the Old Divide Trail. It left the Arkansas river near the mouth of Chico Creek and reached Fountain Creek 20 miles above the mouth of the latter, FWC.

\*\*James Fagin. FWC.

"Captain Marcy whose herds were seven miles back (on Black Squirrel Creek), used every exertion to save them; in the fury of the storm some three hundred of his mules fled in the same manner as in our camp; they also with a few exceptions were finally recovered, and I believe only those in both instances which perished in the storm were lost; one of his herders in his effort to recover them was frozen to death; in both camps a large number were badly frost bitten and otherwise injured; the snow on the level was two and a half to three feet deep, and when drifted fifteen or twenty feet; the antelope of the prairie were frozen to death, number of them in our immediate vicinity, mixing among our sheep for protection and perishing with them; 30th of April 1st 2d and 3d of May remained in camp to recover our animals and in consequence of bad roads occasioned by the recent storm..20 miles.

"May 4, 1858.- Black Foot. - Still on the dividing ridge; grass good, water three fourths of a mile to the left; in consequence of the snow the roads are very bad, almost impassable..12 mi.

"May 5th 1858.- Head of Cherry Creek. -Fine camp; roads still bad; Captain Bowman commanding company "A" 3rd Infantry and Captain Marcy's detachment, 5th and 10th Infantry over took the command here to-day; Captain Bowman had marched from Ft. Massachusetts by way of Toas, about 160 miles to Rayado, and the same distance from there as the others; the herds also came up with us; another snow storm which lasted until the morning of the 8th; on the 7th Captain Marcy came into camp and also Lieutenant J.V. DuBois with his detachment of rifles; the detachment had marched from Ft. Union with Captain Marcy; immediately on his joining, duty and inclination required me to confer with Captain Marcy, as to the best road, the most expeditious and the one which could afford the best grass for his animals and those of the command; the road he selected leading in the direction of Bridger's Pass was continued but in consequence of the guide, who knew the route, having left the command, a large portion being without a road, it was thought safest to take the route known as 'Evan's Trail'; this with several cut-offs proved the best and nearest for the season we were marching..... 6 miles.

"May 8 1858.-Cherry Creek-Miry roads; fine camp; snow in the morning..... 7 miles

" May 9, 1858.-Cherry Creek. - Miry roads; fine camp....12 miles

"May 10, 1858.South Fork of the Platte River. - Good road and fine camp; deep rapid and difficult stream to cross; built a flat and completed the crossing by morning of the 14th. Our course since leaving Ft. Union has varied but little from N.... 17 1/2 Mi.

Colonel Loring's itinerary is given in the Secretary of war's report for 1858 the above extract being from pages 183-184 of same,

*Sec. of War Report 1858 in Senate Doc. 2 Sept. 3-18 Congress  
Vol 2, 8-8-1859. Serial No. 975 U. S. Wash; William A. Harris 1859)*

The following is a portion( Bent's Fort to the mouth of Cherry Creek) relating to the Old Divide Trail of the Westport to Pike's Peak itinerary published in 1859 by Captain Marcy in his "The Prairie Traveller". pp.299-301.

Miles;

24. Arkansas River.-Pass Bent's Fort. The grass is excellent in the vicinity of the fort, but after this it is not so good. The road runs over a high and considerable broken country. Good Camp.

II. Arkansas River.- Opposite the mouth of Apishpa Creek; good camp. The Huerfano Mountains in the Spanish Peaks are in sight

from camp. The 'Cherokee Trail' comes in from Arkansas near Ben't Fort and leads to the gold diggings at Cherry Creek Miles.

9     Arkansas River.-Opposite the mouth of Huerfano Creek. good camp and a ford opposite Charles Audebee's house.

12.    Arkansas River.- At this point (near the mouth of Chico Creek) the Cherokee trail bears to the right and leaves the river. The left hand or river road, runs up to the old pueblo at the mouth of the Fountaine qui Bouille Creek. The right hand road leads to the gold diggings.

15 $\frac{1}{2}$    Fountaine qui Bouille.- The road strikes in a northwest course over a rolling country, and comes upon the creek at a most beautiful camp, where there is a great abundance of good wood, water and grass. The wood, water and grass are good on all points of the Fountaine qui Bouille, and travellers can camp anywhere upon this stream.

17 I/2   Fountaine qui Bouille.-Here (at the present town of Fountain) the road fork, one running up the river and the other striking directly across the divide of the Arkansas and Platte. I prefer the left hand road as it has more water and better grass upon it.

6 I/2.   Forks of the Fountaine qui Bouille.- The road to Cherry Creek here leaves the Fountaine qui Bouille and bears to the right. There is a large Indian trail which crosses the main creek and takes a northwest course toward Pike's Peak. By going up this trail about two miles a mineral spring will be found which gives the stream its name, "The Fountain that Boils". This spring or rather these springs as there are two both of which boil up out of solid rock are among the greatest natural curiosities that I have ever seen. The water is strongly impregnated with salts but is delightful to the taste and somewhat similar to the Congress-water. It will compensate anyone for the trouble of visiting it.

17 I/2   Black Squirrel Creek.- This creek is near the crest of the high divide between the Arkansas and Platte Rivers, it is a small running branch but always affords good water. There is pine timber here and the grass is good on the prairies to the east. This is a locality which is very subject to severe storms and it was here that I encountered the most severe snow storm that I have ever known, on the first day of May 1858. I would advise travellers to hasten past this spot as rapidly as possible during the winter and spring months, as a storm might prove serious here.

14.    Near the head of Cherry Creek.- The road crosses one small branch at four miles from Black Squirrel Creek; it then takes up to an elevated plateau which in a rainy season is very muddy. The camp (Blackfoot) is at the first timber that is found, near the road to the left. There is plenty of wood water and grass here. There is also a good camping place at the small branch (Point of Rocks at the source of West Kiowa Creek) that is mentioned.

Miles;

10. On Cherry Creek. - There is good grass wood and water throughout the valley of Cherry Creek. The mountains are from five to ten miles distant, on the left or west of the road and when I passed there was a great abundance of elk, deer, antelope, bear, and turkeys throughout this section.

7. On Cherry Creek. Good camp.

II. On Cherry Creek. Good Camp.

17. Mouth of Cherry Creek at the South Platte. - Good camp and a town built up since I passed, called "Denver City".

Total distance from Westport to the gold diggings,  
685 1/4 miles. \*

D.P.S.C

P. St. George Cooke passing over this Old Divide Trail in 1845 has left a description in "Scenes and Adventures in the Army" Philadelphia. 1859. pp 407, 408, 412, 414.

P. 407 July 23 (1845); "Yesterday we left the Platte and encamped on Cherry Creek---. Pike's Peak as it is called raises its lofty dome of granite as we advance; it is bisected far down by vertical white strips---.

To-day we still followed up Cherry Creek on its dry sands; but toward noon it came running to meet us and there were the patronymic cherries; or rather the bushes and of the sort called choke cherries. We are again encamped on it; but the highland is before us and adorned as the nearer hills with pines and with grass too; and the prospect is more homelike than any other since we left the Little Blue near the Missouri line.

July 24, We marched early, still up Cherry Creek. From Mount Pike a spur of the mountains runs out to the east in a vast table, - the highlands between two great rivers, the Arkansas and the Platte. This stream (Cherry Creek) has its spring where the table land breaks off into promontories and these are crowned with lofty pines and rare and welcome oaks.

Following it up at last we were rewarded by discovering the long valley's highest secret chamber, its court of fountains, these gave an emerald verdure to its gentle grassy slopes; and shrubbery and rose bushes were in bloom, majestic firs and oaks gave arches which excluded the sun's heat and glare, all was fresh and pure, man had made no mark and doves alone were there.

P. 412 July 25, For about three miles we passed an open pine forest on the top of the highlands between the Platte and Arkansas and seven miles from camp we drank at a small stream flowing toward the latter. When we emerged from the woods a very extensive view opened to the west and south; no more forest was to be seen; the prairies had an shade of green which was a pleasing novelty; but this great slope has a southern exposure and is high enough to share the mountain showers. Be this as it may be this is the most promising country we have seen since we first came to the Platte near its mouth.

P. 414 Our camp is on the Fountain qui Bouille. We should have much liked to visit the spring which was but fifteen miles from our course

Account of P. St. George Cooke, continued; With Col. Kearney and Dragoons.  
But March'. March', and 31 miles we have marched to-day.

July 26th; We followed the Fountain qui Bouille 17 miles and then left it for a more direct course over the hills to the Arkansas. We found it a weary sixteen miles without water; broken and barren and not at all green, was all the prospect there cactus and spanish bayonet have claimed it for their own, but there was animal life, creatures which must be assimilated to these desolation loving vegetables. There were very extensive villages of these queer "prairie dogs".

Kingsbury's ;Journal of the Dodge Expedition to the Rocky Mountains  
1835. p. 20. *Worm Lake & Mountain come by Divide trail but by Platte*

In this account we find mention of a crossing by the Old Divide Trail in 1835 as follows; "22d (July 1835), marched twenty miles in a direction about S.15-degrees E. The country as we approached the mountains begins to assume a more rough and broken appearance; timber more abundant; saw several sorts of wild fruit, such as plums, cherries, gooseberries etc. Passed several creeks that were dry, some of them skirted with timber. One of them (Cherry Creek) the traders usually ascended in passing from the Platte to the Arkansas. The distance from the Platte to the Arkansas is about ninety or one hundred miles, and this is considered the nearest and most accessible ( point) between them".

We shall now relate the two tales of the Old Divide Trail mentioned before in this account; first the story of the Chase Family and then that of Dick Wootton.

CHASE;

In the spring of 1847 the Old Divide Trail was travelled by a community of Mormon families bound to Salt Lake from the temporary village of log cabins in which they had spent the previous winter, at what is now Pueblo, Colorado.

On this trail a ~~time~~ ~~train~~ a bit earlier, namely in April of the same year, there had taken place a fight between the Abner Chase family and four others in their train and a band of Arapahoe Indians. An account of this affair of mingled tragedy and romance was related with some literary licence by a participant, the English traveller Frederic Ruxton in his "Life in the Far West".

We should point out here that the wildness of some of the adventures related in Ruxton's "Life in the Far West", made some question their truthfulness. We find in the book many minor confusions of persons, places and times. In a letter which Ruxton wrote to the editors of Blackwoods Magazine where his account first appeared, Ruxton assured them as follows; "With regard to the incidents of Indian attacks, starvation, cannibalism, etc., I have invented not one out of my own head. They are

\* In the second edition of "Life in the Far West" the true name Chase is changed to Brant in deference to those of the Chase family who might object to this tale of their family.

CHASE

all matters of history in the mountains; but I have no doubt jumbled the dramatis personae one with another, and may have committed anachronisms in the order of their occurrence." He also wrote; "The scene where La Bonte joins the Chase family is so far true that he did make a sudden appearance; but in reality a day before the Indian attack. The Chases (and I wish that I had not given the proper name)\* did start for the Platte alone and were stampeded on the waters of the Platte". Again Ruxton wrote; "I think it would be as well to correct a misapprehension as to the truth and fiction of the paper. It is no fiction. There is no incident which has not actually occurred".

From these strong affirmations there can be no doubt that the Chase party was attacked by the Arapahoes on the Old Divide Trail, on or near the crest of the divide; though Ruxton who seems to have been a witness of the affair, has taken liberties with some of the details to make his story a little more romantic. The only question which concerns us here especially, is to the exact place; or in other words, as to the identity of Ruxton's "Black Horse Creek". There neither is nor was, so far as the present writer can learn, any creek on that name between the Arkansas and Platte rivers; and by "Black Horse", Ruxton must have meant either Black Foot (the then current name of a well-known camping place on the Old Divide Trail near the head of what is now called Running Creek, and apparently also for the latter creek itself) or Black Squirrel.\*\* Ruxton's letter to the editors of Blackwoods Magazine said that the Chase's were "stampeded upon the waters of the Platte". This statement favors Black Foot as the locality and the supposition that they arrived there on the evening of the third day's travel north from the present Fountain; but Ruxton's wording of the narrative is so indefinite on this point as to make it just possible that the evening was the third out from Fountain and the locality Black Squirrel, and that Ruxton supposed the latter stream (which, at Old Divide Trail crossing, flows easterly) to be a tributary of the Platte. All available data, however seems best satisfied by the supposition that La Bonte, Ruxton and "Killbuck" overtook the Chases between Black Squirrel Creek and Black Foot during the Chase's third day travel from Fountain April 23rd and camped with them at Black Foot that evening, the attack occurring on the morning of the 24th.

\*See page 16, footnote.

\*\* He makes a similar substitution in the first chapter of the book, (page 9, second edition) where he calls the same locality "Black Tail". Confusions in fact, abound, apparently to a needless extent in Ruxton's writings. To cite another example from among many, both in "Life in the Far West" and in his "Adventures in Mexico and the Rocky Mountains", (the latter a record of his travels) he makes it William Bent that was killed in Toas massacre Jan. 19 1847, whereas it was Williams older brother Charles (first U.S. Governor of New Mexico) who was so killed. William the long time and noted trader of Bent's Fort did not die until 1869. Such an error as the latter seems almost inexcusable in view of Ruxton's actual visit to Toas, Bent's Fort, etc. But we are more than willing to condone the mistakes of so interesting a writer and it may be said that his observations at any one place were usually brief and his writing hastily composed under difficulties and printed without due opportunity for revision.