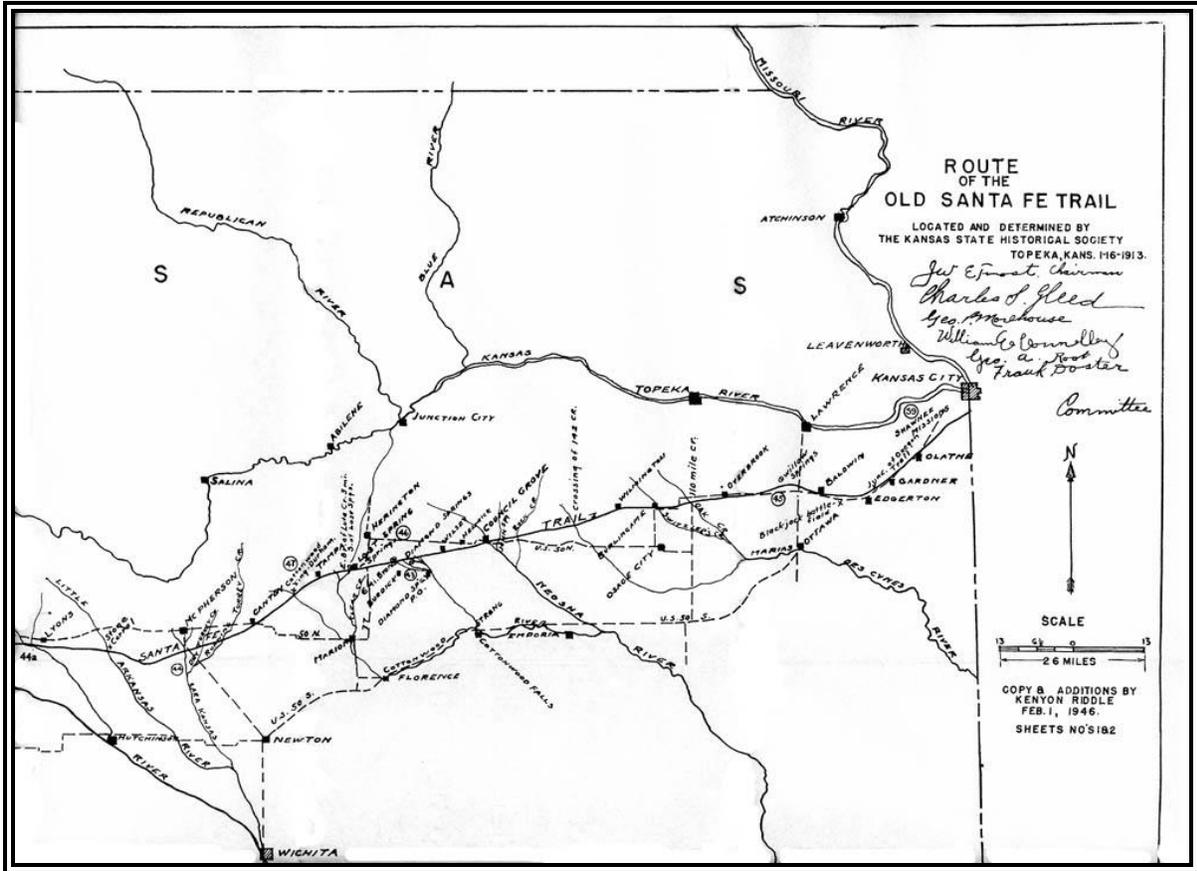


**Diary, Santa Fe Trail Drive  
from Fort Leavenworth, KS to Fort Union, NM**

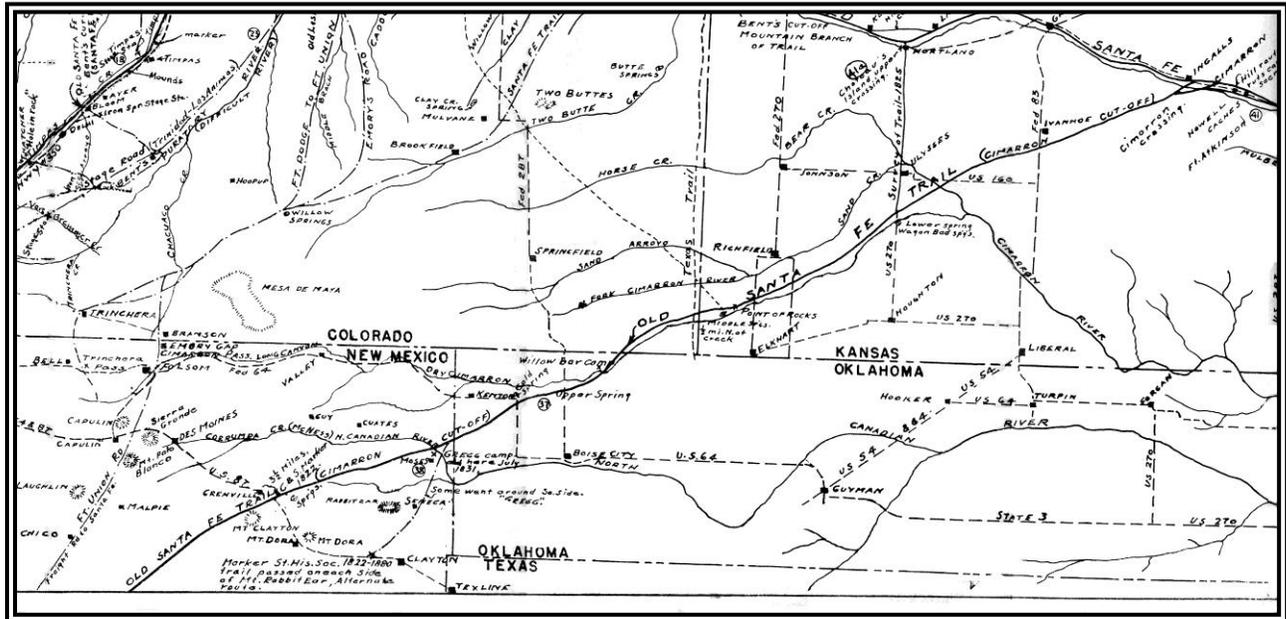
**1865**

**by Frank (Francis) M. Stahl**

**Transcribed and indexed by  
John Meredith  
Sept. 2020**



Eastern portion of the Santa Fe Trail



Cimarron cutoff section of the Santa Fe Trail

### **Introductory remarks by the transcriber**

What follows is Frank's account of his second trip over the Santa Fe Trail. His first was in the spring of 1862. A more complete record of that trip (and this one) as well as other key events in his life can be found in his autobiography, *One-Way Ticket to Kansas*, originally published by the University of Kansas press. A web version of that book is available at [www.frankstahlbio.net](http://www.frankstahlbio.net).

I have tried to strike a balance between keeping some of the look and feel of the original diary and making sure that the narrative is readable. Frank seldom used punctuation, and his capitalization was inconsistent, making it difficult at times to know where one thought ends and another begins. Where individual words are unreadable I have indicated that by dashes. Words that have been added by me are in brackets, but I have resisted the temptation to overindulge and have left most of Frank's grammatical mistakes and oddities unchanged.

Enjoy the ride.

John Meredith  
September, 2020

### **Aug. 4, 1865 – Friday**

Left Leavenworth City today en route for Ft. Union<sup>1</sup> in the employ of James M. Kerr<sup>2</sup> of Leav. My business is to take charge of a herd of cattle. Took 110 head from corall at Leav City. Got 32 head at Smith's pasture, making 142 in all. We had a hard time with the wagons. Roads very bad. Got stuck several times. Had to take the wagons apart. Had to stop and grease the wagons on the road after mishaps. Arrived at the Eight Mile house<sup>3</sup> just at dark. Put the cattle in a corall and the oxen in a pasture.

Day's drive – 8 miles.

### **Aug. 5, 1865 – Saturday**

Got off by daylight. It rained the livelong night. I never got a wink of sleep through the night. Started the wagons on ahead. Took the cattle out about two miles and let them graze for a couple of hours. Kept raining all day. Arrived at Chadwick's<sup>4</sup> about one o'clock and got 345 head of cattle, which enlarged the herd to 487 head. Went on to Winchester and got 49 head from Armstead<sup>5</sup> which increases our herd to 536 head. A darkey claimed two three-year old steers. Traded him two cows for them. Gave him a bill of sale for the cows. A man took two two-year olds out of the herd which leaves us with only 341 from Chadwick's, 532 in all. Camped one mile south of Winchester. Herded the cattle. Could not get a corall to suit me. Greased the wagons this evening. Sun set clear. Think we will have a fair day tomorrow.

Day's drive – 15 miles.

### **Aug. 6, 1865 – Sunday**

Started off in good time. I stood guard the first part of the night and Walt<sup>6</sup> the after part. A man claimed two three-year olds out of the herd, which leaves us 339 head from Chadwick's, 530 head in all. The roads very bad. Got stuck several times. Had to take the wagons apart. The cattle gave us considerable trouble crossing the timber near Oskaloosa. After considerable trouble got to Bucks Creek. The wagons got stuck in the mud. It was near night in the timber. Had to take the cattle out on the prairie some two miles to grass. One cow got fast in the mud. Came back to help her out and she was gone. Took five of the boys and kept the cattle. Put about 450 of them in a corall and herded the rest alongside. Stood guard the first part of the night. A heavy succession [?] of rain fell in the after part. Hired a man and two yoke of cattle to go back in the morning to help us through to Lawrence.

Days drive – 16 miles.

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<sup>1</sup> Fort Union, located just north of Las Vegas, New Mexico, was a major provisioning center for the surrounding area.

<sup>2</sup> James M. Kerr is listed on the 1865 Kansas state census as a contractor, about 50, born in Ohio.

<sup>3</sup> The Eight Mile House was a tavern and inn located (as the name suggests) about 8 miles west of Fort Leavenworth.

<sup>4</sup> Possibly Porter Buel Chadwick, listed in the 1865 state census as a 36 year-old farmer in Jefferson county.

<sup>5</sup> Probably William Armstead, a 56 year-old farmer born in England, according to the 1865 state census.

<sup>6</sup> Walter Aitchison, 27 years old and born in Scotland. He was living in Osage county in 1865.

### **Aug. 7, - Monday**

Got a late start this morning. Two yoke of oxen missing. Left three men back to hunt them up. \_\_\_\_ped the wagons and got two yoke of cattle out of the herd. The boys got up about noon with the missing oxen. Had 7 yoke of cattle in the wagons. Roads very bad. Got fast several times. Had to take the wagons apart after all. After several mishaps of various kinds we finally got to the Kansas river bottom four miles north of Lawrence. Will Kerr<sup>7</sup> and myself went into Lawrence this evening to see about crossing the bridge. Got back to camp after dark hungry and tired. Cattle quite troublesome. Stood guard till two o'clock in the morning.

Day's drive – 10 miles.

### **Aug. 8, 1865 – Tuesday**

Got the wagons and started with them across the Bottom. Roads very bad. Got through much better than I expected. Took them to the top of the hill above Lawrence and started them on the Big Spring road. Went back to get the cattle. Got them to the bridge with very little trouble. Had considerable trouble to get the cattle on the bridge. Got them over at last. Drove them to Wakefield's<sup>8</sup> where I expected to find the team but nary team, and after asking several persons on the road I came to the conclusion that our wagon had not come the Big Spring road. The question naturally arose, where was it? I started back on Balaam (my mule). Met Walt and George<sup>9</sup> four miles from Lawrence. Took George's pony and kept going and finally found the wagon one mile south of Blanton's Bridge<sup>10</sup>, 14 miles from where the cattle were. I wanted to swear at someone but kept my tongue. To make a long story short, after taking the wagons apart and getting fast several times, we got to the herd at 11 o'clock at night. Went to bed without supper.

Day's drive – 12 miles.

### **Aug. 9, Wednesday. 1865**

Owing to getting into camp so late last night, we got a late start. The cattle drove very well. Took them a mile and a half off the road to water at Oliver's Springs. Went six miles west of Big Springs and camped for the night. Herded the cattle on the prairie. Gave us very little trouble through the night. Kept sprinkling rain all day.

Day's drive – 12 miles.

### **Aug. 10 – Thursday. 1865**

Off in good time. Sold a lame cow that had calf last night for \$20.00. Weather very warm. The cattle drove bad. Sunshine and rain by turns all day. Got to Auburn about two o'clock P.M.

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<sup>7</sup> This is William, the 16 year-old son of Frank's employer, James Kerr.

<sup>8</sup> John Wakefield. He was a well-known anti-slavery man whose farm had been burned by Missouri border gangs in 1855..

<sup>9</sup> George Woods. Like Frank he was Civil War veteran but had served in a different unit.

<sup>10</sup> A toll bridge over the Wakarusa River, south of Lawrence, built by Napoleon Blanton in 1854.

Put our cattle in corall at Brown's<sup>11</sup>, the other herd at Johnson's<sup>12</sup>. Put a guard over both coralls. Camped the wagons at Brown's.

Day's drive – 16 miles.

### **Aug. 11 – Friday. 1865**

Rained all night. Counted the cattle out of the corall this morning. I had two head extra in my drove. i.e., I had 532, and 530 fills the bill. There was just 593 head in the other drove. George and myself counted the cattle so there is no mistake. The 5 yoke of cattle in the team increases the whole herd to 1133 head the sum total. Had the boys out hunting lost cattle today. Went out myself. Went home this evening. Stayed at Auburn all day.

Frank

### **Aug. 12 – Saturday. 1865**

Rained all night. Cattle broke the corall last night at Johnson's. Counted cattle out this morning. Had 1126 head this morning. 7 head missing. Left three men back to hunt for them. The river was rising and I was anxious to get over. Left one stag at Bush's<sup>13</sup>. Left 1 white steer, lame, at Brown's. Traded a lame cow to Johnson's for a steer in the herd. Had two drowned at North Branch Wakarusa, which leaves us 12 head short. One gray pony left at Brown's. Rather a bad beginning. Camped on Soldier Creek, 10 miles.

Auburn to Soldier, 10 miles.

No. – 1121.

### **Aug. 13 – Sunday. 1865**

Went on herd the first part of the night myself. Three head of cattle gone certain, and it may be more took the back track last night. Sent Walt and two men to hunt for them. They tracked them to the creek but they could not get across, which leaves us 15 head short the first two days. Camped on Chicken Creek.

Soldier to Dragoon – 3. To Logchain – 4. To Chicken Creek – 2.

Day's drive – 9 miles.

No. of cattle – 1118.

### **Aug. 14, – Monday. 1865**

Cattle very troublesome. Was up the most of the night. Gave Jerome<sup>14</sup> charge of the night herd. Found one man asleep and sent him to camp. Traded Sy a lame pony and a lame steer for a good pony. Leaves us 16 head short. Roads bad. Oxen gave out. Left two on the road. George took my horse and went on ahead to Council Grove. Camped at Rock Creek.

Chicken to Elm – 3. One hundred & forty two – 3. Bluff – 8. Rock Creek – 5.

Day's drive – 19 miles.

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<sup>11</sup> Probably John W. Brown, living in Auburn in 1865.

<sup>12</sup> Probably William Johnson, living in Auburn in 1865.

<sup>13</sup> Most likely H.E. Bush, a farmer in Auburn in 1865.

<sup>14</sup> Jerome was Frank's younger brother by about four years. He and his family lived close to Frank.

No. of cattle – 1117.

**Aug. 15, – Tuesday. 1865**

Went back before breakfast this morning to get the two oxen we left. Drove them to Rock Creek where one of them laid down, and nothing could induce him to get up. I had \_\_\_\_ him with my black snake for some time but he failed to see it so I went off and left him. 17 head short. Got to the Neosho River at Council Grove about 10 o'clock A.M. and found the river too high to ford. Got a letter from my employer today. Camped on east side of river.

Rock Creek to Council Grove – 8 miles.

No. of cattle – 1116.

**Aug. 16 – Wednesday. 1865**

Last night was one of the nights you of [sic] read about but seldom see. The wind rose very high about 1 o'clock accompanied by hail and very heavy rain. The cattle commenced moving. I got the boys out soon as possible and by daylight we had all the cattle together in good shape, i.e. all we could find. I kept the boys out hunting all day. Found none. River rose twenty five feet last night. Got to lay here several days. Grazed the cattle down on the bottom. Splendid grass.

Frank Stahl

**Aug. 17 – Thursday. 1865**

River falling slowly. Be able to [cross] by tomorrow evening I think, i.e. if it does not rain any more. Yoked a lot of wild cattle today. Had \_\_\_\_\_ time. Sent two of the boys back to Rock Creek to see about the steer we left. They could not find him. They think he sauntered [?] down the sli\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_ yokes and chain and had a new tongue put in the \_\_\_\_ wagon. Going to put three yoke of cattle in one wagon and four in the other. Kept the cattle in good grass.

Frank Stahl

**Aug. 18 – Friday. 1865**

River still falling but very slow. Looked so much like rain that we made up our minds to cross. Raised the wagon beds and got them over with very little trouble. Had a great deal of trouble crossing the cattle. Drowned one steer, which leaves us 18 head short. Camped on the west side of Council Grove.

No. of cattle - 1115

**Aug. 19 – Saturday. 1865**

Traded five lame cattle and one lame pony for 4 sound cattle and a good pony with Mr. Stewart<sup>15</sup>, which makes us 19 head short. Wrote to my employer today. Counted the cattle. Had 1106 head. Wise<sup>16</sup> of Council Grove claimed a stag out of herd, which leaves us 1105, 28 head short, 19 of which I can account for, leaving 9 that I cannot account for. Camped at Elm Creek.

Council Grove to Elm Creek – 8 miles.

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<sup>15</sup> A.C. Stewart, a farmer living in Council Grove.

<sup>16</sup> Possibly John Wise, a butcher born in Kentucky and living in Council Grove in 1865.

No. of cattle – 1105

**Aug. 20 – Sunday. 1865**

Got off in good time. Cattle quiet last night. The wagons go much better since they were taken apart. Drove 8 miles to Diamond Springs<sup>17</sup> and watered the cattle. Oxen and cattle travelled well today. Camped for the night on Eight Mile Creek.

Elm Creek to Diamond Springs – 8 miles. To Eight Mile Creek - 16 miles.

No. of cattle – 1105.

**Aug. 21 – Monday. 1865**

Got off in good time. Drove 10 miles to Lost Spring<sup>18</sup> and watered the cattle. They drove very well. Weather very warm. Drove on to Mud Creek and camped for the night. Dis \_\_\_\_ Wm. \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ nothing of any importance \_\_\_\_ Everything went off in good shape.

Eight Mile Creek to Lost Spring – 10 miles, to Mud Creek – 17 miles.

No. of cattle – 1105

**Aug. 22 – Tuesday. 1865**

Cattle very uneasy last night. Kept up with till two o'clock in the morning. The mosquitoes troubled them. Drove to Cottonwood and watered the cattle. Let the Comis. Dept have 4 head of cattle that was lame and not able to travel. Got receipts of the A.A.C.S.<sup>19</sup> for the gross wgt. Got an escort of 24 men and a commissioned captain to accompany us to Running Turkey. 11<sup>th</sup> Indiana. Camped at Cottonwood Holes.

Mud Creek to Cottonwood – 7, to Cottonwood Holes - 8 miles.

No. of cattle – 1101.

**Aug. 23 – Wednesday. 1865**

The mosquitoes kept the cattle moving til about 10 o'clock when they quieted down and I went to bed. Drove 12 miles to Running Turkey and we camped for the night. The cattle drove very well through the day.

Cottonwood Holes to Running Turkey – 12 miles.

No. of cattle – 1101

**Aug. 24 – Thursday. 1865**

Mosquitoes bad as ever last night. 10 o'clock before the cattle quieted down. It takes six men every night to keep them from running off. Arranged an escort at at Running Turkey. Got 24 and a sergt. from the 11<sup>th</sup> Ind Cavly. Drove eight miles to Big Turkey and let the cattle loose to water. Traded two lame cattle off at this place for sound ones. Drove on to Turkey Holes and camped.

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<sup>17</sup> Diamond Springs had been known since 1825 as a major stopping point and oasis on the Santa Fe Trail.

<sup>18</sup> Lost Spring had a well and a mail station and was a stopping point for stagecoaches until the route was discontinued in 1866.

<sup>19</sup> A.C.S. usually means Acting Commissary of Subistence. The extra "A" here may mean "assistant" but that is simply a guess. Thanks to Harry Myers for helping to decipher this abbreviation.

Running Turkey to Big Turkey – 8 miles. To Turkey Holes – 15 miles.  
No. of cattle – 1101

**Aug. 25 – Friday. 1865**

The mosquitoes getting no better very fast. The cattle came near stampeding two different times. Was up very late last night. Got off in good time. Cattle drove very bad. Camped on the west side of the Little Arkansas river. Good grass and water.

Turkey Holes to Mud Creek – 10 miles. To Little Arkansas - 13 miles.  
No. of cattle – 1101

**Aug. 26 – Saturday. 1865**

Same thing over only a little more so. Cattle very uneasy til the mosquitoes went to bed, then I retired to my virtuous couch to while away the dark and dreary hours in sleep. Got off very early and off in good time. Let the cattle drink at Jarvis Creek – 10 miles. Changed our escort at Little Cow. Got 19 men and a sergt. from the 11<sup>th</sup> Ind cavly. Traded two lame cattle for two sound ones. Killed a buffalo today.

Little Arks to Jarvis Creek – 10. To Owl Creek – 15. To Little Cow – 17. To Big Cow – 20 miles.

No. of cattle – 1101.

**Aug. 27 – Sunday. 1865**

Made a big drive yesterday. Good grass and water so I concluded to lay up today. The boys killed several buffalo today. Cattle very unruly last night. Was up very late. Mosquitoes and Buffalo gnats very bad. The weather warm and still. Stayed in camp all day.

Frank Stahl

**Aug. 28 – Monday. 1865**

Got off in good shape this morning accompanied by an escort of a sergt and fourteen men from the 11<sup>th</sup> Ind cavly. Better last night than common. Met the return outfit of the first herd at Plum Buttes. George Edgar<sup>20</sup> went back with them. Camped one mile west of the Plum Buttes. While in camp Jerome and Rogers<sup>21</sup> went to turn some buffalo that was coming towards the herd. My horse fell with Jerome and killed himself and hurt Jerome badly.

Day's drive – 13. Cow Creek to Plum Buttes – 12 miles.

No. of cattle – 1101

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<sup>20</sup> George Edgar was a 33 year-old trader living in Leavenworth in 1865.

<sup>21</sup> Lewis Rogers, like several members of the trail crew, had been in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Kansas Cavalry along with Frank.

### **Aug. 29 – Tuesday. 1865**

Weather nice and cool last night. The cattle very quiet all night. No mosquitoes to trouble them. Cattle hard to drive today. Left the herd at the Big Bend and went on to Ft. Zarah<sup>22</sup> to see in regard to getting an escort. Took dinner with Dr. Sabin<sup>23</sup>. Wrote two letters today. Sent one home and the other to my employer at Leav. City. Camped on Walnut Creek, 1 mile west of Fort Zarah.

Day's drive – 15 miles.

Plum Buttes to Big Bend Arks River – 8. To Fort Zarah – 15 miles.

No. of cattle – 1101

### **Aug. 30 – Wednesday. 1865**

Cattle quiet last night. Got off in good time. Took the road by Pawnee Rock<sup>24</sup>. Had an escort of a sergt. and fifteen men from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Colorado cavly. Large herds of buffalo in sight all day. The 2<sup>nd</sup> boys killed three. Camped one mile east of Pawnee Rock at the Holes. No water from Zarah to the Holes.

Fort Zarah to Pawnee Rock – 18 miles.

No. of cattle – 1101

### **Aug. 31 – Thursday. 1865**

The cattle no trouble. Cool nights, no mosquitoes to bother them. Got off in good shape. Took the middle road at Ash Creek. Camped two miles east of Fort Larned<sup>25</sup>. Went to the fort to see about an escort. Saw Col. Cloud<sup>26</sup> who told me I would have to lay over tomorrow.

Pawnee Rock to Ash Creek – 7. To Pawnee Fork – 15. To Fort Larned – 17 miles.

No. of cattle - 1101

### **Sept. 1 – Friday. 1865**

Off, betimes. That is, I was off to the fort on business while the outfit lay in camp. Saw the col. who told me that he had received an order from Gen. Sanborn<sup>27</sup> dispensing with all escorts for everything. It was late in the day so I concluded to lay over where I was. One cow took a fool notion and died last night.

No. of cattle – 1100

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<sup>22</sup> Fort Zarah, located near the present town of Great Bend, operated from about 1864 to 1869.

<sup>23</sup> Jeremiah Sabin was the acting surgeon at Fort Zarah.

<sup>24</sup> Pawnee Rock was a prominent feature along the trail and marked the halfway point between Missouri and Santa Fe, New Mexico.

<sup>25</sup> Fort Larned was established for the purpose of protecting travelers on the Santa Fe Trail from Indian attacks. It operated from 1859 to 1878.

<sup>26</sup> William F. Cloud had been Frank's commanding officer in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Kansas Cavalry during the Civil War, the two serving together in Arkansas. Cloud county, Kansas is named after him.

<sup>27</sup> Probably John B. Sanborn, commander of the District of the Upper Arkansas at that time.

### **Sept. 2 – Saturday. 1865**

The road. Got on the road very early this morning. Cattle quiet last night. Weather cool and windy. Cattle took a stampede today. Got mixed with Miller's and Reed's herds. Took us several hours to get them apart. Got them all out at last. Camped at a ravine 12 miles west of Fort Larned on the Cut Off<sup>28</sup>.

Day's drive – 12 miles.

No. of cattle – 1100

### **Sept. 3 – Sunday. 1865**

Got off in good time. Cattle quiet last night. Drove twelve miles to water. Very little water. Drove eight miles farther and camped without water. Buffalo in sight on the right nearly all day. The cattle dry and no water.

Day's drive – 20 miles.

### **Sept. 4 – Monday. 1865**

The cattle very uneasy last night. Kept me up all night. About two o'clock it commenced blowing and raining. The cattle came near stampeding. Took all hands to keep them together. Started them off just as it commenced to get light. Drove twelve miles to breakfast. Left one cow, hip out of joint. Lay there the rest of the day. Cattle very bad to herd today.

Day's drive – 12 miles.

### **Sept. 5 - Tuesday. 1865**

Got off in good time. Cattle quiet last night. They had plenty of good grass and water. Weather very warm this morning. Saw Indians for the first time this morning. Some three or four of them kept off on a ridge to the right of the road, from half a mile to a mile from the road. We drove down to the Rio Blanco to water the cattle when some 15 or 20 of them started towards us on the run. They came within a quarter of a mile of us and came to the conclusion that we were too well prepared for them. They took up a ravine to the right of the road and that was the last we saw of them. We drove to river and camped two miles east of Fort Dodge<sup>29</sup>, so here we are on the Arks river once more.

Day's drive – 12 miles.

Fort Larned to Cow Creek – 22. To the Rio Blanco – 43. To Fort Dodge on the Arks river – 55 miles.

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<sup>28</sup> This reference to the Cut Off indicates that they were going to follow what was known as the "Dry Route" from Fort Larned to Fort Dodge. This route ran slightly west of the Arkansas River and rejoined the river at Fort Dodge.

<sup>29</sup> Fort Dodge had been established in April, 1865 to protect wagon trains on the Santa Fe Trail.

### **Sept. 6 – Wednesday. 1865**

Cattle very quiet last night. They had plenty of good grass and water. Got off in good time. Cattle troublesome to drive. Passed Fort Dodge early this morning. Drove 14 miles and camped for the night. Nothing of any importance to record.

Day's drive – 14 miles

### **Sept. 7 – Thursday. 1865**

Up late last night. Cattle did not get quiet till two o'clock. Some rain fell. Quite windy for a spell. The wind came quite cold from the S.W. It changed to the N.E. in a very few minutes. As it went around it kept growing warmer until it was almost as hot as summer. The cattle turned with the wind facing from it all the time. Camped on the river. Plenty of good grass and water.

Day's drive – 12 miles.

### **Sept. 8 – Friday. 1865**

Cattle very quiet last night. Got up at one o'clock. Went out to the herd and found Wood and Dickson<sup>30</sup> asleep. Waked them up. Went back to bed. Got up at three o'clock and found them asleep together with Brownlee<sup>31</sup>. Waked them up and told them what they might expect the next time they went asleep on herd. Crossed the wagons at the Lower Crossing and the cattle a mile below. Got across with very little trouble. Camped for the night at the foot of the Horn Alley<sup>32</sup>, 5 miles above the crossing on the river.

Day's drive – 8 miles. Fort Dodge to Lower Crossing – 27 miles.

### **Sept. 9 – Saturday. 1865**

Started in the Horn Alley this morning bright and early. Passed four long trains in the sand. Went twelve miles. Found plenty of good water off to the left of the road. Went three miles farther to good water and got supper. Went five miles farther to the Battle Ground to water and camped for the night.

Day's drive – 20 miles.

### **Sept. 10 – Sunday. 1865**

Got off in good time. Had a very heavy wind storm last night. Cattle hard to keep. The trains we left at the sand hills passed us at daylight this morning. We passed them about 9 o'clock this

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<sup>30</sup> James Dickson was a neighbor of Frank's in Auburn, a former Civil war companion in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Kansas Cavalry, and his future brother-in-law. Frank married James's sister Jennie in 1869.

<sup>31</sup> Addison Brownley, another of Frank's companions in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Kansas Cavalry.

<sup>32</sup> "Horn Alley" is a corruption of the original Spanish phrase *jornada del muerto* (Dead Man's Journey) used to describe this stretch of the trail. (It is the same phrase often used to refer to the trail north from El Paso to Albuquerque.) My thanks to Leo Oliva for help in clarifying this entry.

morning. Went to the Boneyard<sup>33</sup> and got supper, i.e. we made coffee and eat H.B., there being no water to bake bread. Started at five o'clock and drove till dark. No water, and we have come 28 miles. Laid off til 12 o'clock night and started the cattle. Walked very fast. Found no water at Sand Creek and came onto the Cimarron and got there just before daybreak, finding plenty of water, making 12 miles of a night drive. the \_\_\_ of the trip so far, making 40 miles that we have drove in the last 24 hours, making it in three drives without a drop of water for the cattle on the road, and we was hunting all along the road for water, from the time we started till we got to the Cimarron. One of our steers lay down in the road and died last night.

Day's drive – 40 miles.

Lower Crossing Arks to the Horn Alley – 5. To the Battle Ground – 25. To the Boneyard – 45. To Sand Creek – 59. To the Cimarron – 65 miles.

### **Sept. 11 – Monday. 1865.**

Laid by today. Grass good and water aplenty. Two steers and two cows lay down last night and never got up, i.e., they died, and quite a number were *hors du combat*, i.e., that is, too lame for good travelling. Yesterday's drive hurt the cattle worse than all the rest of the trip from Leavenworth City.

Day's drive – 0000 miles

### **Sept. 12 – Tuesday. 1865**

Got off in reasonably good time. Followed the Cimarron for five miles. Water all the way, i.e. for the five miles. The road leaves the river and takes over a ridge for 14 miles before it strikes the river again. The road runs parallel, with the river from one to five miles off. I took up the river expecting to find water, but not a drop till the road struck the river, and then not more than half enough to satisfy the cattle, and very poor water at that, standing along in holes. Three steers and two cows died last, and one steer lay on the and died today, making six less in the last twenty four hours. Heavy drives and no water is, I suppose, the main cause of their dying, and prospects look bad ahead, but we must keep moving till we get water. Better lose a few of the weaker ones than the whole herd. Some sand in places today.

Day's drive – 19 miles.

### **Sept. 13 – Wednesday. 1865**

Made another night drive. Got underway at two o'clock and thirty minutes. The cattle drove very well. I started on ahead and took one of the boys with me (Snodgrass) to hunt for water. We took up the valley of the Cimarron but did not find enough water to do the cattle any good short of 16 miles on from where we camped the night before, i.e., 16 miles by the ridge road, the way of the cattle. It is much further by the river. We found water in holes along the bed of the river in several places but it was not in sufficient quantities to do the cattle any good and it was strongly impregnated with alkali to boot. However we got the cattle in camp once more with water enough and splendid grass. Three cattle died last night . The old plainsmen say it is is the bloody

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<sup>33</sup> According to notes by Frank, the Boneyard was about 30 feet high and 40 feet across, composed of bones added by wagon drivers on the trail. After 1868, when buffalo bones became commercially valuable, the Boneyard disappeared.

mucousis [?] and they are losing a good many cattle by it. Killed an antelope on the road today. The boys caught a fine mess of fish for supper out of the water holes with their hands..

Day's drive – 16 miles. Sandy

### **Sept. 14 – Thursday. 1865**

Cattle tired. Did not start till ten o'clock. Drove them up the river without paying any attention to the road at all, determining to stop at the first water I came to. Got the herd fairly started and I struck up the river. Went about eight miles and found plenty of grass and, what is better still, plenty of good clear water, the first we have had for some time. Two head died last night. Camped two miles east of Middle Springs.

Day's drive – 8 miles. Heavy sand.

### **Sept. 15 – Friday. 1865**

In no hurry this morning. Want to let the trains get ahead. Drove two miles and crossed the Middle Springs<sup>34</sup>. Here we struck an old wagon road that follows up the river. We took it. Drove 8 miles farther and camped near some large bluffs. Plenty of good grass and water. Heavy sand the most of the way. Left one steer on the road and one died last night.

Day's drive – 10 miles.

### **Sept. 16 – Saturday. 1865**

Got off late. In no hurry. Want to let the cattle rest all they can. Our road lay up the river. Drove eight miles through heavy sand and camped. Good grass and water. Caught a fine lot of fish today. Lost one steer last night.

Day's drive – 8 miles.

### **Sept. 17 – Sunday. 1865**

To make a long story short, we drove eight miles through very heavy sand and camped on the Cimarron where it was running nicely. Plenty of good grass. The three trains are camped at the crossing two miles west of us. They start this evening. Two head of cattle played out on the road and one died last night.

Day's drive – 8 miles.

### **Sept. 18 – Monday. 1865**

Laid by till evening to let the trains get a good start ahead. Drove up to the crossing and camped. Heavy sand, but we are through it for the present. Lost nothing on the road today.

Day's drive – 2 miles.

### **Sept. 19 – Tuesday. 1865**

Started about two o'clock. Drove 8 miles and camped one mile west of the water holes. The road broken but solid. The boys killed three antelope this morning. Left one steer today.

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<sup>34</sup> This was an important watering stop along the Cimarron River route.

Day's drive – 8 miles.

**Sept. 20 – Wednesday. 1865**

Off before sunrise. Drove eight miles to Cold Springs for breakfast and found those everlasting trains encamped there. Our road today was solid but very broken. Large rocky hills to our right with cedar trees on them. There is water 7 miles from the Cimarron on the right of the road, enough for a train. There is water 5 miles further on both sides of the road, very little. Plenty of water at Cold Springs.

Crossing Cimarron to Cold Springs – 16 miles.

Day's drive – 8 miles.

**Sept. 21 – Thursday. 1865**

Laid by till two o'clock. Drove six miles and camped for the night. Plenty of good grass, no water. Left two dead steers on the road.

Day's drive – 6 miles.

**Sept. 22 – Friday. 1865**

Let the cattle graze till eight o'clock. Got to Camp Nichols<sup>35</sup> at Cedar Springs about 12 o'clock (noon). There is no water from Cold Springs to Cedar Springs. Cedar Springs is on the right of the road. Table mountains to the right with cedar trees among them. Left an old cow at Cedar Springs.

Cold Springs to Cedar Springs – 16 miles.

**Sept. 23 – Saturday. 1865**

Did not leave Cedar Springs until one o'clock on account of the soldiers leaving the fort for Ft. Union not being \_\_\_\_\_ i.e., I did not care to travel with them. Drove 10 miles and camped without water. Good grass.

Day's drive - 10 miles.

**Sept. 24 - Sunday. 1865**

[14 lines illegible]

\_\_\_\_\_ at the Cottonwood Holes.

Day's drive - 14 miles.

**Sept. 25 - Monday. 1865**

Let the cattle graze a couple of hours before starting. Drove past the Rabbit Ear<sup>36</sup> to the crossing, eight miles, and crossed over. Plenty of good grass and water. Left one steer played out

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<sup>35</sup> Camp Nichols was a short-lived fort designed to protect travelers. It was established in May, 1865 and would be abandoned shortly after Frank's visit, in September, 1865.

<sup>36</sup> The Rabbit Ears are two peaks, near Clayton, New Mexico that were well-known landmarks on the trail.

at our last camp before \_\_\_ \_\_\_ three o'clock. Drove four miles and let the cattle graze till dark, then drove six miles farther and camped.

Day's drive - 18 miles.

### **Sept., 26 - Tuesday. 1865**

Started before sunrise \_\_\_ \_\_\_ first tinge of light. Drove five miles to breakfast. Found plenty of water \_\_\_ \_\_\_ the right of the road north of the \_\_\_ drove four miles \_\_\_ \_\_\_ Drove five miles and camped for the night.

Day's drive - 14 miles.

### **Sept. 27 - Wednesday.**

Off a hair before sunrise. Three miles to the Whetstone. Three farther and got breakfast at a large lake to the left of the road. Grass very poor. Drove two miles farther and met Neil [?] and parties on their way to meet us. Let the cattle drink. Drove six miles to Willow Spring creek. Four farther to the Palos Blanco and camped for the night. Left two steers and a pony played out today.

Day's drive - 18 miles.

### **Sept. 28 - Thursday. 1865**

Got off \_\_\_\_\_. Drove six miles to breakfast. Plenty of water. \_\_\_ Drove eight miles farther and got supper. No water. Grass poor. \_\_\_\_ Drove two miles and let the cattle drink. Two miles farther and camped for the night.

Day's drive - 18 miles.

### **Sept. 29 - Friday. 1865**

On the road before sunrise. Drove five miles to Red River for breakfast. Grass \_\_\_\_ Eight farther to the Rio Ocate and got supper. Started at sundown. Drove six miles and camped for the night.

Day's drive - 19 miles.

### **Sept. 30 - Saturday. 1865**

[Eight lines illegible]

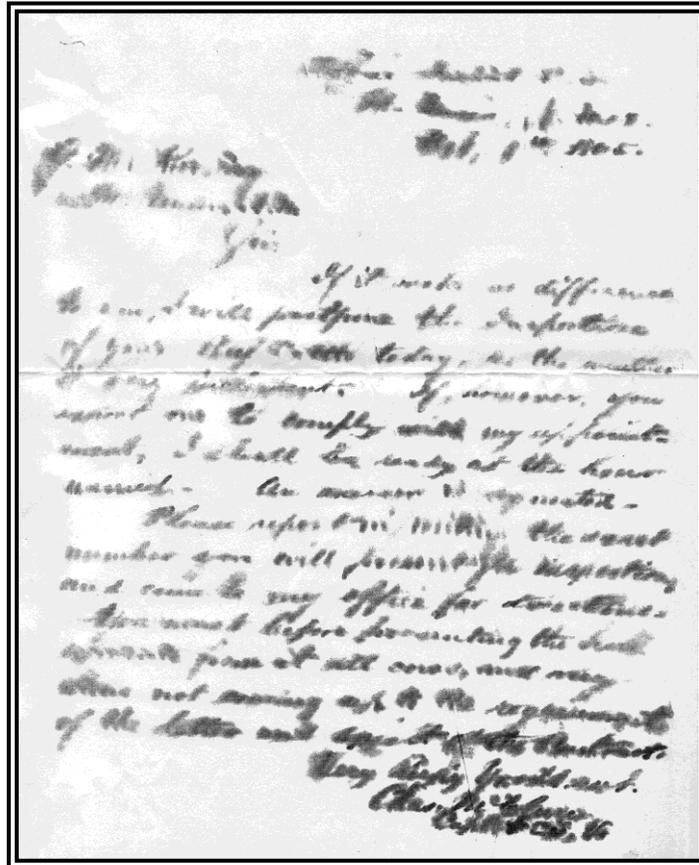
Left one cow on the road \_\_\_\_\_

Day's drive - 15 [?] miles

### **Oct. 1 - Sunday. 1865**

On the road by sunrise \_\_\_ \_\_\_ eleven miles and camped within three miles of Fort Union \_\_\_ \_\_\_ last night.

Day's drive - 11 miles.



Copy of note housed in the National Archives, dated Oct. 1, 1865, from Capt. Charles McClure at Fort Union, acknowledging the arrival of the herd and requesting that a final count be delayed a day due to inclement weather.

**Oct. 2 - Monday. 1865**

Graded [?] the herd this morning, i.e., took the cows out of the herd and put them in a herd by themselves. VanDerlip<sup>37</sup> done the same and then we put the \_\_\_\_\_.

**Oct. 3 - Tuesday. 1865**

[dated but no entry]

**[Oct. 4 - 5 not entered]**

**Oct. 6 - Friday**

[dated but no entry]

**Oct. 7 - Saturday**

[dated but no entry]

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<sup>37</sup> William Vanderlip, a neighbor of Frank's in Burlingame, Kansas.

**Oct. 8 - Sunday. 1865**

[dated but no entry]

**Oct. 9 - Monday. 1865**

[dated but no entry]

**Oct. 10 - Tuesday. 1865**

[dated but no entry]

**Oct. 11 - Wednesday. 1865**

[dated but no entry]

**Oct. 12 - Thursday. 1865**

Left Fort Union this morning at nine o'clock en route for Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Drove to the Grains [?] Springs<sup>38</sup> and camped for the night. Started with green cattle. Took the yokes off first night out.

Day's drive - 10 miles.

**Oct. 13 - Friday. 1865**

Started before daylight. Drove eight miles to breakfast. Took the yokes off the cattle. Let them graze three hours and drove to the Rio Ocate. Got supper and camped for the night. Plenty of water and grass.

Day's drive - 17 miles.

**Oct. 14 - Saturday. 1865**

Got under way before sunrise. Drove eight miles to Red River for breakfast. Plenty of water and tolerably good grass. Drove seven miles farther and got supper. Very good grass. Met the Rudolph family on their way to the Rancho Tocalota [?]<sup>39</sup>. Walt and myself went back with them a short distance and took supper with them. Van took the teams on eight miles farther and camped for the night. Walt and myself got into camp about 12 o'clock at night.

Day's drive - 28 miles.

**Oct. 15 - Sunday. 1865**

On the road quite early. Drove eight miles to breakfast one mile east of the Palos Blanco. Plenty of good grass. Drove six miles and camped for the night. Rained nearly all day. Our camp was on Willow Springs creek.

Day's drive - 14 miles.

**Oct. 16 - Monday. 1865**

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<sup>38</sup> This may be a reference to Gallinas Springs, about a day's drive north of Fort Union.

<sup>39</sup> Probably a reference to Tecolote, located a few miles south of Las Vegas, New Mexico.

Rained all the forenoon. Clouds broke \_\_\_\_ . Got under way about two o'clock. Drove eight miles and camped near some large lakes.

Weather very disagreeable. Rained nearly all day.

Day's drive - 8 miles.

### **Oct. 17 - Tuesday. 1865**

Quite stormy last night. Walt and myself stood guard last night. Got very cold near morning. Drove four miles to the Whetstone for breakfast. Twenty two miles farther and camped two miles west of the Rabbit Ear crossing. Plenty of good grass. Very little water.

Weather clear but cold.

Day's drive - 26 miles.

### **Oct. 18 - Wednesday. 1865**

Had breakfast before leaving camp. Drove two miles and crossed the Rabbit Ears. Eight miles farther and got supper. Very good grass. No water. Drove four miles to the Cottonwood holes. Five miles farther and camped for the night. Good grass and water.

Weather nice and warm.

Day's drive - 19 miles.

### **Oct. 19 - Thursday. 1865**

On the road by the first tinge of daylight. Drove fifteen miles to Cedar Springs for breakfast. Good water, grass tolerable. Drove eight miles farther and camped on the high prairie. Good grass. No water.

Weather clear & warm. An eclipse of the sun took place this morning.

Day's drive - 23 miles.

### **Oct. 20 - Friday. 1865**

On the road bright and early. Drove eight miles to Cold Springs for breakfast. Plenty of good grass and water. Drove ten miles farther and camped on the Cimarron. Plenty of good grass and water.

We are on the Aubrey route. It leaves the Cimarron route four miles east of Cold Springs.

Weather clear and warm.

Day's drive - 18 miles.

### **Oct. 21 - Saturday. 1865**

Laid by till one o'clock to let the oxen rest, preparatory to starting in on the thirty five mile drive to Bear Creek without water. Drove out twelve miles and camped. Some sand as you leave the Cimarron. Ten miles from the Cimarron you strike a patch of heavy sand some two miles in width.

Weather clear and quite warm.

Day's drive - 12 miles.

### **Oct. 22 - Sunday. 1865**

Got on the road about two hours before daylight. Drove eight miles to breakfast. Left camp at half past eleven o'clock and drove on to Bear Creek fifteen miles where we found plenty of water. Grass just tolerable. Several patches of sand on the road today, quite heavy in several places.

Weather quite warm. Considerable timber. Cottonwood & willow.

Day's drive - 23 miles.

#### **Oct. 23 - Monday. 1865**

Got breakfast before we started. On the road by sunrise. Drove ten miles to supper. Eight farther and camped for the night. Rained nearly all day. Our road lay along Bear Creek all the way. Water and wood all the way along. Camped quite close to two trains. Grass tolerably good.

Day's drive - 18 miles.

#### **Oct. 24 - Tuesday. 1865**

Our cattle and the trains' cattle got mixed up with ours. Our intention was to get started by three o'clock but it rained all night and raised the devil with our calculations. However, we got on the road about sunrise. Drove ten miles to breakfast. Ten farther and got supper & camped for the night. Plenty of good grass. Roads heavy. Rained all day. Road nearly level.

Day's drive - 20 miles.

#### **Oct. 25 - Wednesday. 1865**

On the road by four o'clock. Drove fifteen miles to the Arks river for breakfast. Rain fell all the forenoon. Crossed the river without doubling. Drove four miles down the river and camped for the night.

Weather quite cold.

Day's drive - 19 miles.

#### **Oct. 26 - Thursday. 1865**

Our intention was to have got started by three o'clock but the cattle got away and we did not start til after breakfast. Drove ten miles and got dinner. Owing to a very heavy snow storm we did not go any farther but made ourselves as comfortable as we could for a party out of grub.

Day's drive - 10 miles.

#### **Oct. 27 - Friday. 1865**

Weather very cold last night, the river full of ice. Got breakfast before starting. Drove ten miles to dinner. Ten farther, got supper and camped for the night. Saw buffalo on the road today.

Weather clear and cold.

Day's drive - 20 miles.

**Oct. 28 - Saturday. 1865**

Got on the road quite early. Drove eight miles to grub. Seven farther to where we got supper. Walt and myself killed a buffalo within a hundred yards of camp. Drove eight miles farther and made a camp for the night.

Weather clear and cold.

Day's drive - 23 miles.

**Oct. 29 - Sunday. 1865**

Got on the road in good time. Got our breakfast before starting. It commenced at dark and continued to snow all night. Snow four inches deep by sunrise. Drove ten miles for dinner. Ten farther for supper and camped for the night.

Weather very cold.

Day's drive -20 miles.

**Oct. 30 - Monday. 1865**

Got our breakfast before starting. Roads very heavy. Drove eight miles and got dinner. Seven farther and camped near Fort Dodge. Went down to the fort and got some grub. Weather cloudy and cold.

Day's drive -15 miles.

**Oct. 31 - Tuesday. 1865**

Drove one mile east of Fort Dodge for breakfast. Bought wood at the fort to cook it with. Drove six miles to supper. Five farther and camped for the night on the Rio Blanco, twelve miles from Dodge on the cut off. The rest of the trip went off today rather pleasant. Cloudy, warm and cold.

Day's drive - 14 miles.

**Nov. 1 - Wednesday. 1865**

Off at the first tinge of dawn. Drove three miles to breakfast. Eight farther to supper. Ten farther to camp on Coon Creek. Plenty of good grass and water. Buffalo on the road by thousands. Killed several today.

Weather clear, cloudy, warm & cold.

Day's drive - 21 miles.

**Nov. 2 - Thursday. 1865**

On the road very early. Drove ten miles to grub. Good grass. Twelve farther to Fort Larned where we, i.e., Vanderlip and myself, bought grub to last us to Council Grove. Drove one mile east of the fort and camped for the night.

Weather clear and pleasant.

Day's drive - 23 miles.

**Nov. 3 - Friday. 1865**

Got off very early.. Drove seven miles to Ash Creek for grub. Grass very good. Eight miles farther to supper one mile east of Pawnee Rock. Plenty of good grass. Eight miles farther to camp. Good grass. Roads very heavy today in places.

Day's drive - 23 miles.

**Nov. 4 - Saturday. 1865**

Off in good shape. Drove eight miles to breakfast on Walnut Creek, one mile west of Fort Zarah. Eight miles farther to Big Bend Arks river for supper. Drove ten miles farther and camped for the night one mile east of the Plum Buttes.

Weather quite cool. Clear.

Day's drive - 26 miles.

**Nov. 5 - Sunday. 1865**

Off betimes. Drove to Cow Creek for breakfast, eight miles. Drove six farther for supper, and eight miles farther for camp.

Weather clear and cold.

Day's drive - 22 miles.

**Nov. 6 - Monday. 1865**

On the road early. Drove seven miles to the Little Arkansas river for breakfast. Eleven farther to Turkey Holes for supper. Seven farther to Big Turkey for camp.

Weather clear and cold.

Day's drive - 25 miles.

**Nov. 7 - Tuesay. 1865**

Got on the road by daylight. Drove eight miles to Running Turkey for breakfast. Seven farther to supper. Good grass and water. Seven farther and camped two miles east of Cottonwood Holes.

Weather clear and cool.

Day's drive - 22 miles.

**Nov. 8 - Wednesday. 1865**

Early as usual. Drove six miles to the Cottonwood river for breakfast. Seven farther to Mud Creek for supper. Plenty of good grass and water.

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[End of daily entries. The following are accounting entries and notes at the end of the diary.]

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John T. Plummer

July 26 - Lawrence to Leav. - \$2.00  
“ “ - due on expense money - \$1.40

Lewis Rogers

July 26 - Lawrence to Leav. - \$3.00

Charles Carter

July 26 - Lawrence to Leav. - \$3.00

Wm. Middlebush<sup>40</sup>

July 26 - Lawrence to Leav. - \$2.00  
Oct. 28 - gun [gum?] coat - \$5.00

Robt. Beatty

July 26 - Lawrence to Leav. - \$2.00

Clinton Snodgrass

Aug. 23 - to cash - \$1.50

George Smith (settled)

Sept. 1 - saddle and bridle - \$20.00

VanDerlip - \$16.00

Aitchison - \$10.00

Jerome - \$5.00

George Brown

Sept. 1 - to cash - \$1.00

Robt. Beatty

No. 12 St. Mary's St., Dayton, Ohio

James Dickson

Sept. 2 - 1 pr. boots - \$8.00. Settled

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<sup>40</sup> The 1865 Kansas census lists a William Middlebush, 21 years old, living in Coffey county, Kansas.

Aitchinson - Sharpes  
Rogers - Sharpes  
Brownlee - Sharpes  
Beatty - “

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Middlebusher - S&W  
Woods - Sharpes  
Carter - Sharpes  
Dickson - S&W

Cedar Springs  
Cedar Spring Holes - 3  
Good Spring - 8  
Water - 5  
Cottonwood Holes - 6  
Rabbit Ear - 12  
Water - 6  
Water - 15  
“ - 7  
Whetstone - 3  
Water - 2  
Willow Spring Creek - 8  
Water - 7  
“ - 5  
“ - 7  
Red River - 6  
Yacate River - 6  
Water Apache Hill - 9  
“ “ - 8  
Water - 8  
Water - 8  
Fort Union - 3

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Rations for Council Grove  
156 rations  
Flour - 175  
Coffee - 20  
Sugar - 25  
Bacon - 120

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Flour - 8.40 [?]  
Bacon - 3.00  
Coffee - 35  
Sugar - 72  
Salt -  
Beans - 3350 / 2 = 1675  
Pepper -

Meat - 8.25

21.25 Sugar, coffee, and flour

2.00 Ham

2.00 Wood

25.25

8.25

33.50

1825

1675

150

..... **Index** .....

11<sup>th</sup> Indiana Cavalry, 8  
2nd Colorado Cavalry, 10  
A.A.C.S, 8  
Aitchison, Walter, 4, 5, 6, 18, 19, 21, 23  
Antelope, 14, 15  
Apache Hill, 24  
Arkansas River, 11  
Armstead, William, 4  
Ash Creek, Kansas, 10, 22  
Aubrey route, 19  
Auburn, Kansas, 5,6

Battle Ground, 12, 13  
Bear Creek, 19-20  
Beatty, Robert, 23-24  
Big Bend, Arkansas River, 10, 22  
Big Cow Creek, Kansas, 9  
Big Spring road, 5  
Big Springs, Kansas, 5  
Big Turkey, Kansas, 8-9, 22  
Blanton's Bridge, 5  
Bloody mucousis, 13  
Bluff Creek, Kansas, 6  
Boneyard, 13  
Brown, George, 23  
Brown, John W., 6  
Brownlee, Addison, 12, 24  
Bucks Creek, Kansas, 4  
Buffalo on the trail, 9-11, 13, 20-21  
Bush, H.E., 6

Camp Nichols, 15  
Carter, Charles, 23-24  
Cedar Spring Holes, 24  
Cedar Springs, Oklahoma, 15, 24  
Chadwick, Porter Buel., 4  
Chicken Creek, Kansas, 6  
Cimarron River, 13-15, 19  
Cloud, William F. (Colonel), 10  
Cold Springs, 15, 19  
Coon Creek, Kansas, 21  
Cottonwood Holes, 8, 15, 19, 22  
Council Grove, Kansas, 6, 7, 21, 24

Cow Creek, Kansas, 9, 11, 22

Diamond Springs, Kansas, 7

Dickson, James, 10, 21

Dragoon, Kansas, 6

Edgar, George, 9

Eight Mile Creek, Kansas, 8

Eight Mile House, 4

Elm Creek, Kansas, 6-8

Fort Dodge, 11-12, 21

Fort Larned, 10-11, 21

Fort Union, 4, 15-18, 24

Fort Zarah, 10, 22

Gallinas Springs, 18

Holes, the, 10

Horn Alley, 12

Indians, encounter with, 11

Jarvis Creek, Kansas, 9

Johnson, William, 6

Kansas River, 5

Kerr

James. M., 4

William, 5

Lawrence, Kansas, 5

Leavenworth, Kansas, 4, 13, 18

Little Arkansas River, 9, 22

Little Cow Creek, Kansas, 9

Logchain, Kansas, 6

Lost Spring, Kansas, 8

Lower Crossing, 12-13

Middle Springs, 14

Middlebusher, William, 23

Military escorts, 8-10

Miller (no first name), 11

Mud Creek, Kansas, 8-9, 22

Neosho River, Kansas, 7

Ocate River, 16, 18, 24

Oliver's Springs, Kansas, 5  
One Hundred & Forty Two Creek, Kansas, 6  
Oskaloosa, Kansas, 4  
Owl Creek, 9

Palos Blanco River, New Mexico, 16, 18  
Pawnee Fork, Kansas, 10  
Pawnee Rock, Kansas, 10, 22  
Plum Buttes, Kansas, 9-10, 22  
Plummer, John T., 23

Rabbit Ears, New Mexico, 15, 19, 24  
Rancho Tecolote, 18  
Red River, 16, 18, 24  
Reed (no first name), 11  
Rio Blanco, 11, 21  
Rio Ocate, New Mexico, 16, 18  
Rock Creek, Kansas, 6-7  
Rogers, Lewis, 9, 23-24  
Rudolph family, 18  
Running Turkey, Kansas, 8-9, 22

Sabin, Dr. Jeremiah, 10  
Sanborn, John (General), 10  
Sand Creek, 13  
Smith, George, 23  
Smith's pasture, 4  
Snodgrass, Clinton, 13, 23  
Soldier Creek, Kansas, 6  
Stahl, Jerome, 6, 9, 23  
Stewart, A.C., 7

Turkey Holes, Kansas, 8-9, 22

Vanderlip, William, 17, 21, 23

Wagon trains on the trail, 12, 14-15, 20  
Wakarusa River (North Branch), 6  
Wakefield, John, 5  
Walnut Creek, Kansas, 10, 22  
Whetstone River, 16, 19, 24  
Willow Spring Creek, 16, 18, 24  
Winchester, Kansas, 4  
Wise, John, 7  
Woods, George, 12, 24