

1864

A JOURNAL

—OF A TRIP FROM—

CLEAR FORK IN STEPHENS COUNTY

TO THE

San Saba River.

On the 1st of February, 1864, we, seven in number, left B. W. Reynolds' Ranch on Clear Fork of Brazos, about 5 o'clock P. M. The weather is warm and clear. We have two pack horses, packed with over two hundred pounds of flour, and some bacon, salt, etc.; we ate supper at the mouth of Snakeden on the Clear Fork, and struck camp No. 1 about two miles from the River, where we hopped our horses and built a good fire. No camp yarns spun of much interest, as the boys have not gotten very well acquainted yet.

MUSTER ROLL OF THE PARTY,

GEO. T. REYNOLDS
HOLL CLARK.
WILLIAM HERALL.
SAM NEWCOMB.
LEVI SHAW.
TOM SMITH.
TOM FITCH.

Feb. 2nd. This morning we were aroused from our slumbers by Sharp Pistol Tom (Fitch) at the break of day. As there was no water near we saddled, and packed up, and rode for Hubbard Creek for our breakfast; we struck the creek in the Negro Valley and there we ate our breakfast and dinner in the same meal. Here Sharp Pistol Tom concluded it was not worth while to wash, but the boys said so much about it that he changed his mind and washed for FEAR, as he said, that some of them would get mad about it. After resting ourselves about two hours, we took up our line of march and about 4 o'clock P. M., we came to the Snalum Ranch, where we met with some of our neighbors from the Clear Fork hunting beef. After a great deal of contrariness and disputing we camped with the beef hunters on Hubbard about a half mile from the Ranch. This was camp No. 2. The subject of organizing the county into a company and forting up, was well debated upon. We also got a full description of the MUSK HOG from Mr. Irwin.

Feb. 3rd. We awoke rather early this morning and commenced cooking breakfast as our cooked supplies had given out. William and Sharp Pistol Tom took some flour to the Ranch to get it cooked, while the rest of the boys caught up the horses and came on. Our horses having been on better grass than usual, girted a little more. We struck that prong of Hubbard called Deep Creek three miles from where we camped and ate dinner, and we would not get any more water until night. We traveled up the divide of Hubbard and Deep creeks, seeing but little game, a few deer and antelope. About noon we grazed our horses on good grass. After resting two or three hours we took up our line of march, and soon crossed an old government road running from Camp Cooper. Just as the sun was setting we camped on Deep Creek about ten miles below Bob Sloan's Ranch No. 3.

Feb. 4th. When we awoke this morning the sun had driven away the darkness of night and was not long in making its appearance. We had some trouble in finding our horses this morning; they had strolled a long way from

camp. We kept up the creek passing Sloan's Ranch where we borrowed a cup from Mrs. Breuer, as we had only one canteen to carry water in. About three miles up the creek we passed another Ranch where we got directions to the Colorado River, and also heard that an indian had come in and given himself up to a ranch in that neighborhood a few days before. We struck camp No. 4 at the last water on the right hand prong of the creek about 12 o'clock, where we stayed till the next day. Having no meat but bacon, we killed an unmarked yearling for fresh eating. Weather still pleasant.

Feb. 5th. This morning we took our course about due South and passed over the ridge between Deep Creek and Pecan Bayou; we saw a few antelope to-day; Sam shot at one; Tom S. broke one's hind leg, and Levi broke one's fore legs and caught it by hard running. We nooned on the main prong of P. B. and struck camp No. 5 on the main prong about 4 o'clock. We were troubled to find water that we could drink, as there was but little, and it full of dead fish. There are plenty of pecans on the creek.

Feb. 6th. This morning the wind was blowing rather cold from the North. We took our course for the Post Oak Mountains. There is a great deal of timber on these mountains, and plenty of deer. George succeeded in killing one. Just South of these mountains we took the old Fort Chadburn and Camp Colorado road which is very dim. We ate dinner at a small mudhole where the boys discovered a buffalo about a half mile off, and Levi, Holl and Tom S. started to give him battle. They took a branch on him and Tom S. gave him a deadly shot. From there we went to what we supposed to be Jim Ned, and struck camp No. 6. Here we started another buffalo and set our dog Ceaser on it. He caught and stopped it so the boys could kill it. We have seen several prairie dog towns to-day. They were new and not very large.

Feb. 7th. This being Sunday and our horses poor we stayed at camp No. 6. There was some ice this morning, but it proved to be a warm and pleasant day. Nothing of interest took place to-day, except a few bluffs at wrestling

and a few foot races were run.

Feb. 8th. Monday. This morning early we were on our way, but Sharp Pistol Tom missed his powder horn which hindered us some. Deer and antelope were plentiful to-day but none killed. Our party got separated to-day through sap-headed contrariness and the result was a serious fight came very near taking place. We traveled hard all day without water for ourselves or our horses. About sundown we crossed a road that had the appearance of being traveled considerable; soon after we came to a small creek running a little west of south where we found a hole of green water, full of dead turtles, very large ones; our horses drank heartily but we could not taste it, dry as we were. We followed the creek down until very late in the night, when we at last found a very nice pool of good water. After cooking and eating our supper we retired to our camp pallets No. 7.

Feb. 9th. Weather fine and game plenty. Sam and Sharp Pistol Tom killed an antelope apiece, Tom Smith killed a deer. We passed through a great many prairie dog towns and Levi succeeded in killing one, Bill killed a yearling, so we have plenty of beef as long as it will last. About 12 o'clock we struck the Colorado River; after tracing it down a few miles we struck camp No. 8. Weather fair.

Feb. 10th. This mornig we started for the mouth of Concho, down the Colorado. On our way we met up with six men from Palo Pinto County, hunting stock ranches. We ate dinner with Mressers McCane and Hunter, who have settled on the Concho about two miles from the mouth. The Concho is a beautiful stream of water but has very little timber on it, and the grass is not of the best quality. Prairie dog towns very plentiful. We struck camp No. 9 about 10 miles above the mouth of Concho. Pecans appear to have been quite plentiful.

Feb. 11th. The weather this morning is warm and has the appearance of rain, we traveled up the Concho, and soon after starting jumped an old buffalo cow, which was killed by Sam. We struck camp No. 10 on Concho, about

3 miles above the mouth of Kickapoe creek. To-day we saw a few swan and one was killed by Sam. After striking camp, Tom S. and Sam went out to look for game, but got nothing but a wetting, for it commenced raining soon after dark but did not rain much.

Feb. 12th. This morning we took our course about South for the Kickapoe Springs about 12 o'clock we came in sight of seven indians, driving ninety head of horses. We unloaded our pack horses and gave them a chase. They caught fresh horses out of the herd and tried hard to out run us but they had too large a drove. They gave them up without a word and rode off. Besides the horses we picked up one good saddle, one well dressed buffalo skin, two canteens, three pairs of moccasins and some other small tricks. We drove the horses back the trail until dark and then kept the course as well as we could until about ten o'clock, when we stopped and guarded them with our horses saddled all night. This camp No. 11; we camped without fire or water. Weather cool.

Feb. 13th. At the break of day we started our captured horses for the settlements to find their owners. 10 o'clock a. m. we came to water and cooked the first meal for the last thirty hours. It rained on us a little in the evening. We stopped after dark on a branch and struck camp No. 12, under projecting cliff of rocks, a very good retreat from the rain. The latter part of the night was very dark, so dark we could not see to guard our horses.

Feb. 14th. In the morning we found our stock very badly scattered, but think we got them all. We kept down the creek until we came to the San Saba River where we soon found settlements. We have stopped for the present at Mr. Jackson's. This evening some of the boys caught an unbroke horse to ride. We struck camp No. 13 in Mr. Jackson's blacksmith shop.

Feb. 15th. Learning that we had a mare belonging to Mr. Fields, who lives about twelve miles up the River, Sam and Tom S. accompanied by old man Tucker, went to see him about it. They returned at sundown with Mr. Fields. This morning Mrs. Tucker took our dirty clothes to the

wash and she not only washed but mended them nicely. Still camped in the old shop—weather fair.

Feb. 16th. This morning Mr. Fields took his mare off of our hands, after paying us \$30 for her (Confederate money.) We bought 18 pounds of bacon of Mr. Jackson and moved our horses four miles down the River to Mr. Casey's. We left two wounded horses with Mr. J. and a colt with Mrs. Tucker. We struck camp No. 14 in Mr. Casey's pens with our horses. Tom S. swapped horses to-day with Mr. Fields and thinks he made a good trade.

Feb. 17th. The weather is still fine. We heard where some of our horses belonged to-day. Levi and Fitch worked at some larrietts to-day while the rest of the boys herded horses. We are treated very friendly by Mr. Casey and family, and many other.

Feb. 18th. This morning the wind was blowing very cold and fresh from the north; so cold that we did not take our horses out until about noon. We have partly broken four or five young horses which we intend to keep. At the setting of the sun the wind lay, and the night was more pleasant than the day had been.

Feb. 19th. After breakfast Bill and Sam started down the country to find the owners of our captured property. When within 15 miles of Fort Mason they met two gentlemen coming up to look at the horses. They learned from them that there was good grass in about six miles from Mason, so they sent the boys word to bring the horses down. They camped at a spring on Honey creek. Grass very good.

Feb. 20th. As soon as it was light, Sam and Bill saddled their stock and rode over to Mr. Lindsey's on Comanche creek and ate breakfast with his STEP-SON-IN-LAW, where they had oldfashioned coffee. After breakfast they went to Mason with Mr. L. and his step-son-in-law. There were a few people in town, mostly dutch. It was tax paying day, and Mr. Todd was trying to organize a company but it appeared to be a dull business. Fort Mason is situated on a very high, dry and rocky hill; on the north side of the hill and about five hundred yards from the Post, is a bold and

beautiful spring the only water near the place. The country around for a few miles looks dry and there is no grass nor water for stock. Bill and Sam went back to Honey Spring and camped at the same place they did the night before. Weather still pleasant.

Feb. 21st. This morning Bill and Sam started back to the horses having heard that the boys were not coming down with them. A few men have called to look at them, one, L. Taylor, had a horse lariatied to see if it was his, and broke its neck. The boys often get out of soap, and as they sit around the camp-fire, Bill sometimes revives their dull spirits by imitating some ladies and gents as they dance at parties in Stephens county. To-night Bill talked dutch for the boys as he had paid particular attention to some dutch talking in Fort Mason. He gave us a lengthy description of the dutch, and a little smattering of their language.

Feb. 22nd. We drove the horses to Honey creek and struck camp No. 15 at the Spring on the head of the creek. Here we have good grass but not much water for horses. We will herd to-night, as they have not grazed much to-day. Weather fair and warm.

Feb. 23rd. We think of stopping where we are, as we have good grass and can get more water with a little labor; two horses were taken off our hands to-day, Mr. Merrell took his after a great deal of growling about our charges and expressed his satisfaction that we did not have the other one as he would not be able to pay for her. Such being the case, we were as glad as he was. A little gambling was carried on by visitors by way of horse racing and pulling straws. We drove our horses to Mr. Lindsey's pen last night and struck camp No. 16. Still very dry.

Feb. 24th. We drove back to Honey creek this morning and concluded to herd them there day and night. Levi and Tom S. went to the San Saba Ranger camp to see if they could get any gun caps, tobacco, etc. They got a little tobacco but no caps. The Captain sent us word to bring the horses in to their camp and offered assistance in taking care of them, but we concluded not to go. About sundown it

looked like rain but it failed to come. We struck camp No. 17 near Honey Springs.

Feb. 25th. We butchered a beef to-day as we were entirely out of meat. Weather begins to have the appearance of Spring but is very dry.

Feb. 26th. This morning two of the boys went to Fort Mason to buy bread stuff, the rest were busily engaged in herding and making larrietts; while thus engaged we were taken by surprise by Lieutenant McDowell with 20 men from camp San Saba. He had strict orders from Captain O'Brine to arrest and bring us and our horses to camp without fail. We were out numbered, so we were compelled to obey the foolish order, caused by some scandalous and malicious falsehoods told by envious scamps, without principle or honor. We got to camp about sundown and were received very friendly by Captain O'Brine; we were shown an old cabin that we might occupy; here we struck camp No. 18.

Feb. 27th. This morning Sam had an interview with the Capt. concerning our arrest. His excuse was, that on the day we proposed to sell the horses, the Rangers could not be at the sale, as on that day (March 1st,) they were to be transferred to the Confederate service. Grass around camp very short. Camp San Saba has a pretty situation on the San Saba River near the mouth of Tecumseh creek; there are in the camp about 15 families,

Feb. 28th. This is Sunday and a very cold norther blowing, made worse by a cold rain, but the rain is very much needed. We did not help herd to-day as we were considered prisoners.

Feb. 29th. Very cold, hail and sleet.

Mar. 1st. Very cold, ground covered with snow but very pleasant over head. Before night the snow had disappeared, and nothing was left to show that we had had a cold snow storm.

Mar, 2nd. This morning we were expecting to start back to the Kickapoo Springs, but the officers were opposed to us taking a horse apiece. We agreed to leave it to two or three disinterested citizens, but could not find any that would agree to arbitrate the question for us.

Mar. 3rd. Finding it useless to try to get anything for our trouble, out of the horses, we saddled our own broken-down ones, some of which had to be helped up when they were down, and started back home. We traveled very slow as we had to walk part of the time, and some of us all the time. We ate supper at a spring between San Saba and Mr. Lindsey's. After dark we rode about a mile west to find grass where we stopped for camp No. 19. While we were at camp San Saba we were treated very friendly by some and by others the reverse. Capt. Cooch, Steve Caveness, Dick Nelson, Jem Tannee and a few others treated us like men, but — Clark, Tink Mabery, — Middleton and others, acted a conspicuous part in trying to do us all the harm in their power.

Mar. 4th. This morning we found a cold damp norther blowing from the cold yankee regions. As we had no water near we took up our line of march for the Honey Springs for breakfast, Sam went by Mr. Lindsey's to look for his pocket compass which he had lost a week before. About 12 o'clock he met the boys at the spring. He found his compass and also a box of matches which he lost at the same time. Here we grazed our horses until dark. Just after dark we saddled and rode a mile to good grass and rolled in for camp No. 20.

Mar. 5th. We struck the Mason and Fort McKavett road soon after we started, and left it within two or three miles of Pegleg, there we turned down a branch and soon after found water, where we ate supper and struck camp No. 21. Our horses being so poor we concluded to stay here a few days, as we have very good water, grass, plenty of wood and a good shelter if it should storm. Most of our party are anxious to get home, but all deny being homesick,

Mar. 6th. Levi is a little unwell to-day but do not think him dangerous. This is Sunday, but the boys amused themselves by pitching dollars. In the evening Sharp Pistol Tom complained of something like an ague. After talking of home, our wives and sweet-hearts, our courtships, etc., we retired to our camp pallets, and dreamed of all the love, sweetness and pleasures of home, in blissful visions.

No rain yet,

Mar. 7th. This day makes five weeks since we left home, or have slept in a bed. We are looked for every day by this time, and here we are yet, two hundred miles from home. Wives and sweet-hearts will look with tearfully anxious eyes, for several long days before we return. Weather still pleasant and dry. The boys pass the time in telling stories and making fun in various ways.

Mar. 8th. At day break the sky was cloudy, but it soon cleared off pleasant. We took our march up the Fort Mason and McKavett road, passing Pegleg and Mr. Casey's Ranch at noon; we came to Mr. Jackson's and settled a bacon debt with him, and took dinner with the friendly Mrs. Tucker; we struck camp No. 22 on the south bank of San Saba River one mile below the old Spanish Fort. At this place some of the boys caught a few nice fish. After dark there came up a thunder shower but it did not give us much of a washing, nothing like what we needed.

Mar. 9th. After breakfast Sharp Pistol Tom, Levi and Tom S. took the pack horses and kept up the road while the rest of us crossed over to the north side of the river to look at the old Spanish Fort. This Fort is on the north bank of the San Saba River about 20 miles below McKavett. We were not able to learn much of its history, but it has the appearance of being built a great many years ago. It is more than a hundred yards square, built of large rock; the walls must have been 20 feet high or more, and are double, standing 6 or 8 feet apart, making a space of this width between the walls, all the way around the Fort. This wall is divided into rooms by rock partitions and have the appearance of having been covered with flat dirt roofs. In the northwest corner are the largest buildings, all of rock which may have been the commissary or the quarters of the principal officers. Also in the southwest and southeast corners there have been large rock buildings, but not so large and strong as the others. In these buildings remain some of the fireplaces and doorways leading from room to room, and large vaults left in the wall, which puzzled the mind to imagine for what use they were put to. Near the largest build-

ings on the west is the only gateway leading into the Fort. On the righthand side of the gate going in is written ARCOS PADILLA 1810, and other Spanish and English dates and names so old that we could not make them out. Just outside the enclosure, on the northwest corner, is a mound which has the appearance of having been a magazine under ground. In the Fort are three or four holes that look like wells, almost filled up, and large mesquite and hackberry that have grown up and died in the buildings, since the Fort was evacuated. About 500 yards below is the Sallugg, a beautiful clear running stream. All traces of a road have been washed away and grown over. On the opposite side of the river are ditches where they irrigated a large valley. The only story we can learn is a winding up sketch of its history which is about as follows. The Mexicans or Spaniards held it in possession and were working silver mines in the neighborhood around it; they sent a hundred men after provisions and they never returned. They then sent out two hundred men and they shared the same fate. The Fort was then besieged by Indians, and starved out. And when they were past making any resistance the indians scaled the walls and not a man escaped, except one who was out horse hunting and a woman who was down on the river. These only were saved to tell the tale. Whether this is true or not we cannot say. We traveled up San Saba river and ate dinner on Clear Creek. Here we met a man by the name of Wills making improvements. We struck camp No. 23 on the San Saba about a mile above the mouth of Clear Creek. Sharp Pistol Tom and Tom S. went up to the settlement on the head of the creek, which is only two miles from its mouth. At bedtime they came back with Mr. Johnson from McKane's Ranch. They also had some bacon and a turkey, which the kind people had given them.

Mar. 10. Weather cool After breakfast we went to the settlement and concluded to stay a day or two to let our horses recruit a little. We struck camp No. 24 at the fountain head of a creek which is a large spring, it is about forty steps long and runs with a rushing noise. The peo-

ple have a large dam built across the stream about 400 yards below the spring which will irrigate a great deal of land. The people here appear very kind-hearted and treat us very friendly.

Mar. 11th. To-day we borrowed a washing outfit and gave our clothes a scrubbing. As most of us did not have but one suit we had to wash part at a time, some were in their drawers without pants and some in pants without drawers, some in their coats without shirts, some one way and some another, some dressed and some not at all. Some of the boys complain of severe colds that almost run to the ague; weather pleasant.

Mar. 12th. The people are very kind to us for strangers. They gave us provisions and we could not persuade them to take pay. After breakfast we bade them farewell and took up our line of march up the San Saba River to Fort McKavett, which is near the head of this stream. The country affords good range, but good timber is very scarce, Live Oak and Mesquite are the principal growth on the up lands. We struck camp No. 25 on the north bank of the river, opposite the Fort. The citizens are trying to irrigate two or three tracts of land with wheels. There are seven or eight families in and around the Fort. We met with a Mr. Kemp an acquaintance of Mr. Johnson the new member of our party. Mr. Kemp tried to get up a dance in the Fort but it was an entire failure except a little stag dance. Young ladies were not plentiful enough and married ones did not like to dance. They have a nice place to dance in the Colonel's quarters which is a very large and fine house. Tom S. was very sick to-night with fever and ague.

Mar. 13th. This is Sunday and a cold norther blowing. As Tom is not well we will remain in camp. This evening it looked so much like rain that all the party except George and Sharp Pistol Tom went up into the Fort and slept in the Colonel's quarters.

Mar. 14th. Instead of rain the weather is still colder, Tom S. is no better, not able to ride. Three of our party, George, Levi and Sharp Pistol Tom, not willing to wait, started for the Kickapoo this morning. We doctored Tom

S. pretty freely with button willow tea for chills. He laid on his pallet and made a pretty good horse trade to-day, the second since he left home. Our new friend Jonhson got a bucket full of nicely cooked biscuits of Mrs. Champee to eat while on our way to the springs.

Mar. 15th. This morning was still very cold but Tom being better we started for the springs. There is an old government road leading from McKavett past the springs and on to Fort Chadburn. The country between San Saba and Kickapoo is uneven but not rough. The range is very good mesquite; the principal timber is live oak with some mesquite. We arrived at the springs a little before sundown and found six men already building at our selected place; we also found our party that preceeded us, camped at the spring, No. 26. This spring is a very pretty, bold running fountain head. It is not as large as Clear Springs but situated in a prettier place. All the news of interest the boys had to tell us was of a notorious MUSK HOG FIGHT. The contending armies were George and Levi and our dog Sceasar on one side and about ten musk hogs on the other. Both armies would rallie, charge and then retreat, first one and then the other. I believe the musk hog army got the worst of the battle; their loss was one killed and three wounded. The other army came out a little better only one wounded, unless it was making retreats in disorder. The weather is very cold, had a little snow to-day.

Mar. 16th Weather pleasant to-day but nights are very cool. The boys scattered out to-day to look at the country and find locations for stock ranches. The range is very good; the general appearance of the country is uneven but not very rough, with a few scattering mesquite and live oak; the creek runs nicely a few miles then sinks and stands in holes for a few miles; there is some very good burr oak timber in the bottoms and some other kinds; there is some land along the creek that could be irrigated by dams and elevators. A few musk hog fights came off to-day but they are too common to raise much of an excitement now that we have all seen them.

Mar. 17th. There are some deer in the country, Sharp

Pistol Tom killed a fine buck to-day. Sam has selected a location and commenced getting out board timber; Tom S. laid a claim at the Springs which consists of a fish and two poles. There is a great deal of beaver sign along the creek, some very large dams. Bob and Sam made a special trade to-day in boots and shoes.

Mar. 18th. Bill, Bob, Holl, and Sharp Pistol Tom started down the creek in search of a beef and expected to be gone two days. About bed time we were surprised by the hunters driving up a drove of cattle and commenced shooting, after shooting six times they succeeded in bringing one to the ground, which was doing very well considering it was dark. They butchered and hung it up which took 'till midnight; weather fair; Holl was quite unwell to-day; Tom S., George and Bill are all on the sick list. Some of the boys have rigged their saddles in a hostile manner with musk hog skins.

Mar. 19th. To-day Sam planted a little garden of pepper, gourds, tobacco onions, etc., which was probably the first work in the agricultural line that was ever done on Kickapoo creek. Two of our boys Bill and Sharp Pistol Tom and three of the other party who are improving at the Springs, started for the Lapan Spring about noon to-day. The horses belonging to George and Tom are missing to-day. Weather fine.

Mar. 20th. This morning George and Holl went back towards McKavett in search of the missing horses. Soon after 12 o'clock the party that went to Lapan returned to camp; they say it is a pretty country with live oak ridges; range thick and good; the creek a running stream not as large as Kickapoo; building timber very scarce. We have barbacued some of our beef and will dry the balance; sky cloudy.

Mar. 21st. This morning before day it commenced to rain, thundered and lightened like it was going to give us a good shower. We took up our pallets and went over to our neighbors and got under their house that they had got covered, but it failed to rain much. Soon after sunrise it cleared up and we went to our work. About one o'clock

p. m. the hunters returned with their runaway horses, alright. In the evening it looked so much like rain that we camped with our neighbors.

Mar. 22nd. Our neighbors finished their work to-day, and took a farewell musk hog hunt. This evening we borrowed a wagon and hauled some logs and poles. Tom S. has succeeded in sowing his tobacco seed, which required more industry than common people are endowed with, we all know.

Mar. 23rd. Our neighbors left for home to-day, and we took possession of their house which was covered but not walled. Sam added corn, peas, radishes and melons to his garden. Holl laid the foundation of a cabin about the size of a hen house to hold his claim for a stock ranch. About dark it began to rain and continued till midnight.

Mar. 24th. We were aroused before day from our peaceful slumbers by Tom S. attempting to bake his first loaf of bread. The loaf must have been unmanagable, by the cursing it got, but when it was done it would have made the Queen's cook grin to have seen it. We will make no attempt to describe it, as it is entirely out of our descriptive powers. Bill remarked that, the builder of that loaf of bread ought to cook one more and then start for the country where brimstone is so plentiful and water so scarce. Tom S. replied, yes, and take you along with him. South wind all day; some of the boys went hunting but brought nothing in.

Mar. 25th. Weather pleasant again. The boys brought in seven musk hog hides to-day. Levi and Bob traded pantaloons to-day. Levi gave his buckskins for Bob's jeans and some boot. Levi and George have some pet squirrels which they think a great deal of, and intend taking them home.

Mar. 26th. Some of the boys killed a musk hog to-day, and Sam finished fencing his land. Bill and Sam made a spur trade, and Bob sold Tom S his buckskin pants which came a little below Tom's knees just far enough to leave a broad strip of naked skin between his pants and socks. Weather pleasant.

Mar. 27th. Sunday, and the wind blowing hard from the west. The day was put in making rawhide quirts and larrietts. We expect to start home in the morning and are anxiously waiting for the morning to come. The Col. has stayed about as long as he wished to, altogether he did not expect when he left home to get to stay as long as he would like. Holl goes by the name of colonel since he got a new old hat at McKavett, and the boys burned his old one up.

Mar. 28th. This morning bright and early we started for that sweet place to the traveler called home. Our horses have improved some since we have been at the Springs. Bill and Bob are going to stay; they rode with us a few miles, and then we bid our old friend Bill geod bye, until we meet again, if ever. We took the old McKavett and Chadburn road which leads down Kickapoo, across Concho and Colorado. In the evening we found sign where the indians had taken out a large drove of horses. About four o'clock p. m. we struck camp No. 27 on Concho at the Paint Bluff. There are a great many indian paintings on this bluff, of more shapes imaginable, and names of many visitors. Our supplies consits of three quarts of corn meal, so we killed a beef; after eating an indian bate of beef we rolled into our pallets.

Mar. 29th. Soon after sunrise we were on our way bound for home via old Fort Chadburn. The country between Concho and Colorado is level and covered with dog towns. We saw a few wild horses and some buffalo to-day; camp No. 29 on Colorado. Some of the boys went hunting and Levi and Tom S. attacked two or three old buffalo and got the worst of the fight, as they were badly scared and run like good fellows. Weather very fine.

Mar. 30th This morning we took the old road again for Chadburn, but after traveling it for ten miles we lost it. so concluded to take our course straight for home. We have seen plenty of buffalo to-day. Sharp Pistol Tom killed one. About 3 o'clock we stopped and ate dinner. Buffalo are plentiful here, George and Sceazer nailed a yearling, Sceazer held it while George shot it. They have eaten the grass off very short so we concluded to travel on till we found

better grass, but soon found burnt prairie where there was none at all. We rode on till 9 o'clock where we found a little, we hopped our horses and lay down in the open prairie for camp No. 29; weather pleasant.

Mar. 31st. We found a cold norther blowing this morning. We saddled and started without any breakfast, expecting to find water in Jim Ned but we crossed the head of it at noon and didn't get a drop. We then came to a range of mountains, and after traveling till three o'clock p. m. we concluded to scot and broil some beef without water. After eating a hasty meal we started on and in a few moment, came to plenty of good water. Here we struck camp No. 30, and ate another hearty meal without bread. Sharp Pistol Tom went hunting and found a ranch. He came back to camp and took Sam to visit the ranch. They found the door open but no one there. Pillows and clothes were scatted around the house, as though the indians had robbed the house. They found some flour, meat, tallow and coffee, and took a little of each, Then we ate still heartier of bread, meat and coffee, and went to bed; we think we are on Pecan Bayou,

April 1st. To-day makes two months since we left home, expecting to be back in one. They may be uneasy about us at home but we are alright side up with care yet. After eating an oldfashioned breakfast, that is, both meat and bread, we took a northeast course for home. We soon got off the mountains and crossed the Bayou. Then we got into a black jack thicket, and saw a few deer, Sam was lucky enough to break one's thigh and our dog caught it. After getting through the thicket we came to the head of Deep Creek, and rode down a few miles where we found some small pools of rain water, and ate dinner. We made our fire in the bed of the creek which was a solid rock. After we had got to cooking nicely we were surprised by a noise like the blasting of rock, and fire and ashes flew in all directions. The Col. was badly scared and said he believed some one shot at him. But it was only the rock beneath the fire that burst. We continued to cook on the fire, but soon there came another blast louder, clearer, deadlier than

before, like the bursting of a volcano. It covered our victuals in ashes, scattered fire and hot rocks over our saddles, blankets, and clothes for several feet around. That satisfied us, we moved our cooking up on the bank and finished eating in peace. After resting awhile we started on and rode till dark and found no water. Some of the boys thought we were close to Uncle George Greer's Ranch on Hubbard Creek, and we soon heard the barking of dogs, but it was Bob Sloans Ranch on Deep Creek. We rode up to the house and borrowed some bacon from Mr. Brewer and got directions to a camping place not far off, where we struck camp No. 31. Mr. B. went to camp with us and stayed till bed time and talked about all things in general and nothing in particular.

April 2nd. This morning Sam offered Mrs. Brewer an old tin cup to pay for the one she loaned us, which had got broken but she did not accept. She told us some surprising news, to-wit; The marriage of Mrs. Sloan, and Miss Catherine Greer. George and Tom S. got separated from us to-day and did not get with us any more. A little below the forks of Hubbard we met Joe Matthews and Gen Miller and ate dinner with them. They told us news both good and bad. We were glad to hear of several newcomers into the world in our neighborhood and astonished to hear of so many marriages, but were sorry to hear of the death of Mr. McKelvey and Miss Schoolcraft. After dark we rode out in the hills and laid down in camp No. 32. We miss Bill's long yarns very much as they were interesting and sometimes quite diverting.

April 3rd. About sunrise we were on our horses aiming to get home to-day. There was a very hard sand storm blowing from the Plains so thick we could not see much over a hundred yards around. We stopped at Hoover's Ranch and got breakfast, and then rolled on. We bid Sharp Pistol Tom adieu; he went down Hubbard, and we turned across the ridge to Clear Fork. About noon we found ourselves right-side-up at home, and in about two hours the other boys came in, they stayed at Lynch's last night.

Thus ends a journey in which we have all suffered fatigue and hunger alike, and gone through wet and dry, cold and hot together. In all probability the same party will never be out together again, so uncertain are the events of life.

SAM. P. NEWCOMB.

