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7-1834

Diary No. 8 from May 5, 1827 to July 21, 1834

George Champlin Sibley

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Expedition to New Mexico
May 5, 1827- July 21, 1834.
Vol. VIII
Sibley Diaries
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G. C. Sibley
Expedition (illegible)

REPORT
of the Commissioners.

Journal of Proceedings, G. C. Sibley, while engaged
Marking the Road to New Mexico &c. 1827.

Saturday May 12th.

To day the men engaged, assembled at my house and Signed
an Articles drawn up by myself, containing every necessary
Stipulation- which see on file- The men thus engaged are

1. Jn^s. Walker
2. Jacob Gregg
3. And^w. Carson
4. W^m. Baxter
5. David R. Cameron
6. Jonⁿ. Cameron (?)
7. Bryan Ba^xter
8. Ja^s. Baxter
9. Joseph Hardin
10. C. B. Richardson
11. R. D. Collins
12. W^m. M. Owen

The Mules were collected, & each Man (except Collins who is
the Waggoner) took one in charge- These men are now on Wages at
\$20 p Month, and were directed to prepare themselves for Service
against Monday- There is a Small Company of Traders assembling
10 Miles below this on their way to New Mex^o. and will probably
get on the Road about the time I shall- But I am inclined to avoid
this, and every other Party if I can; because it will be inconven-
ient for too many to travel together on Acc^t. of the Scarc^ty of
Game.

Two of the Mules Sent up by Col: Reeves are unfit for Service;
and I have Substituted two of my own (better ones for them; as it
is impossible to get on without them- A Small Brown Mule (unfit

for the Waggon) I exchanged for a Horse, even Swap, to go in the Waggon as a leader before-

Thursday May 17.

To day had the Waggon loaded as follows-

2 Bags of Rice- 76 ^{lbs} lbs.-----	152 ^{lbs} lbs.
5 " " Flour- in all-----	614 lbs.
2 " " Corn Meal-----	300 lbs.
1 " " Salt-----	60 lbs.
1 Keg Whiskey	
1 Keg Sund ^s .-----	104 lbs.
1 Box Candles	
1 Trunk Medicine & Powder-----	55 lbs.
4 falling Axes	
2 Spades	
1 Draw Knife	
Compass & Chain &c.-----	40 lbs.
1 Box Bacon-----	400 lbs.
3 Tents - Baggage &c.-----	275 lbs.
	<hr/>
	2000 lbs.

Friday May 18th.

At abt. 12 O'Clk: to day I Started my Party 12 Men, 14 Mules, 1 Horse & 1 Waggon, in the charge of A. Carson, who has directions to go on to the Upper Settlement on the Big Blue, and there wait for me.

I cannot leave home before Sunday, having much writing & other business to do first-

Tuesday 22^d.

The arrival of Mr: Baillio from N: Mex^o. on Saturday evening prevented my Starting on Sunday, to day I Set off from home at 9 O'Clk: overtook the Party at R. Fristos's & camped with bad head ache

B. Major joined as a hand yesterday morning as agreed on, with his two cows.

Wednesday 23^d.

Fine M^E. head ache bad- engaged Jo: Walker as a hand, to join day after tomorrow- Majors agrees to let me have the use of his two cows on the trip for \$5- if Returned to him at Big Blue- if killed or lost on the trip I am to pay him \$9 a piece for them.

Broke up Camp and Started on at 10 O'Clk: ; had not got 2 Miles before the Waggon broke down in crossing a Branch near Fristoe's; to Repair this detained 'till after Noon, when we again got under way, & Reached Big Blue at Night & camped. 26 M. 41 Ch^S: from Ft. Osage- So far I believe the Road is located on the best ground

It Sh^d. pass thro' the C^{TY}. East of Jackson & then go by Mr. Cook's to the Prairies then bear Southward & get on the Survey'd line, Saving perhaps $\frac{1}{2}$ Mile.

Thursday 24th. May

Fine M^E.- My head ache Still plagues me; One of the Mules Ran off, and detained 'till late- Mkd: the distance on a Tree, a Large Sycamore- had Some Posts made to Set up to day on the Prairies. Did not Start 'till after Noon- It is 5 Miles from Big Blue to Hycory Grove, or perhaps more properly Fish Cr:- The Grove is off to the left of the Road nearly a Mile- We got there before Night & camped, having Some Posts to put up near this place-

Friday 25th. May

Fine M^E. All the Mules Ran back to the Blue last night tho' hobbled- Did not get to work 'till late- Put up Six Posts to day, one of which is on the State line & Mkd- "31 M- State Line"- all the Posts have Large Mounds Round them

The Hycory Grove at our camp last Night, is a Mile, a little South of West from the Post on the State Line- In the evening, of a very hot day, halted in a Pretty grove on a Small Branch nearly a Mile to the Right of the Road: after which, went out

and put up Some Mounds- The Prairie & whole country here is beautiful- the Land Rich, Timber good & Plenty & Water good, Prairie excellent-

The Road passes on a high Ridge about equidistant from two considerable Groves of timber, which are in Sight for Several Miles- From the State Line to this Grove at our Camp, the distance is 6 Miles by the Road- The Road So far is on the best ground, I am Satisfied-

Saturday 26th. May-

Very fine Morning- Started early- Put up two Mounds & Posts, and then 3 very Large Mounds of Sod & then near our camp for the day, a M^d. & Post or Bush, the Mk^s: to day ^Pnt. out the most direct Route & conduct the traveler over very good ground- There are Several P^{ts}. of timber on either Side of the Road- At the one we Stopped at to day, is good Water & a pretty place, and near the M^d. on the hill a little Northward of Camp, is ^a fine Large Spring- the Road Run^d to day on the Dividing Ridge between Kansas & Big Blue Camp is at the upper P^t. of timber of Blue on the Road- *A Colonel and Genl Walker, overtook us last night -*
A. Carson went back from Fristoe's on 23^d., for Some Powder- Joel Walker has come to join us as a hand in place of his Brother Jo:- his time commences on the 25th. & he is in other Respects on Same footing as the others-

Sunday 27 May

Another fine Morning- Started after early ^{B.H.T.} breakfast: our course is direct to the Round Grove- at about 2 Miles from which, and about $\frac{1}{2}$ Mile North^d. from the fork of the Road, put up a Large Mound & a Post upon which Mk^d: "To Big Blue 18 M^s., after which went to the Round Grove, & halted about an Hour to Water- then went down the Cr: nearly a Mile, & found a good Crossing place, then out from Cr: $\frac{1}{2}$ Mile or So in line with Said crossing and last No^d. put up another M^d., then Southward y to a high Ridge near

which old Road Runs upon which I intended to have Raised another M^d. in line with the 2 last so as to cut off a Mile or So- found that a much greater Saving of distance may be effected by turning off more Northwestward from the M^d. near our Camp of last Night leaving the Round Grove about 2 or 3 Miles to the left- this I deemed it fit to effect, and turned off to a Small P^t. of timber on a Br: of Osage 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ M: from the Old Road & camped- day very hot- I propose to go back tomorrow about 7 Miles and mark the cut off noticed above-

Monday May 28-

The M^s. cloudy, foggy & quite cool- Started the Waggon on with 3 Men to find a Camping place on the old Road; and with the Rest Set off to Mark the Cut off- Went back & took down the Round near our Camp of 26th. and the next one back ~~of~~ from it- then Mk^d: the Road to Run from the next M^d: ab^t. S. S. W., crossing the old Road, to 2 large M^{ds}. put up to day, thence ab^t. S: W. 'till it falls into the old Road on the high Ridge, crossing the Cr: at a very good ford ab^t. 3 Miles below the Round Grove- this alteration throws the Road more Northward, & probably Saves 4 Miles, and is over good ground- where it Crosses the Creek is a handsome grove & a very good place for camping, having plenty of Wood Water & Pasture- I Sh^d. say that this crossing is about 19 Miles from the ford of Big Blue by the Road- Altogether this is an advantageous alteration in every point of view-

Finding that large M^{ds}. of Sod make excellent Mk^s: & that a good many will be necessary; Snet two Men back to F^t. Osage for two more Spades- Having finished the Mk^s: which employed us busily nearly all day, Rode on briskly & overtook the camp, on a Small branch ~~of the~~ off to the left of the Road- the day cool & cloudy & pleasant. The Prairies are generally extremely Rich & beautiful ~~to see.~~ So far.

Tuesday May 29th. 1827

A cool & cloudy Morning- Started pretty early, and Soon Reached the "Narrow divide" a high Ridge ~~So~~ called between the Waters of Osage & Kansas Rivers, upon which the Road has heretofore passed, & in thus passing, is necessarily extremely crooked-

By taking a course more Northward, it is Supposed quite as good a Road may be had, and about two Miles Saved out of five; to effect this however, the Road must pass two or three Creeks, & thro' Several Small Groves of timber, & will Require Some Labour perhaps- I Spent this day making the necessary examinations, which Result in the determination to Mark out the Road So as to effect the cut off.-

Wednesday 30 May 1827

Fine day- Employed the whole of it, Marking the Cut off, and bridging the Small Creeks and did not complete the whole- In the meantime my Camp Remains at a P^t. of timber near the Prairie about $\frac{1}{2}$ of a Mile S^O:E from the termination of the Cut off- tomorrow I Shall finish this work and proceed on the Way.-

Thursday 31st. May-

Fine M^g. - Went to work pretty early- and finished the Cut off by 10 O'Clk: Vizt Turn off at a Large M^d. near the left hand Side of the Road- pass 3 Smaller M^{ds}. which lead to Blazed Oak, follow Blazes to Bridge over Hungry Creek- then follow 4 Mounds & See blazes on the 4 Oaks at Crossing of Dove Creek- then follow 4 Mounds to Gooseberry Creek- then follow 3 M^{ds}. to the edge of the timber- then thro' the open woods by the blazes to Grindstone Creek- then follow blazes to a high point of Prairie- then fall into the Road again at a Mound- this alteration is advantageous in this- it Shortens the distance nearly 3 Miles (& the Road is good) and affords Several excellent camping places Right on the Road- Just as we were Ready to Start, Carson & Kit joined us

again with the Spades &c. they went for on Monday.

We Set off, and traveled Round the Circuitous Ridge to a P^t. of Timber a little off the Road and halted for the Night again, ~~then-being-ne-e---~~ there being no other timber farther on that we can Reach- I think the Road must always pass Round on this Ridge, the ground across which a more direct Route would pass, is low & flat, and is crossed by Several Luddy gullies- The view from this Ridge is truly beautiful, & amply compensates for the loss of half a Mile or So of distance, especially as the Road is excellent all the Way-

Friday 1^t. June 1827

A Rainy cool Morning- it Rained a good deal Since Midnight- The high narrow Ridge along which we traveled last evening (& which is in fact part of the Narrow divide) affords Some of the finest views I ever beheld, on the Right is Seen a very extensive Valley of Prairies & forests intersected by a Number of Streams which flow into the Kansas River, which terminates the view Northward- on the left at a greater distance, are seen, the fringes of Woods that Mark Several branches of the Marais Du Cygne- My Hunters who passed thro' the country of the Valley on the Right, Report it to be extremely fertile & beautiful, & I Shd. judge from all that I can See & learn of it, that it would afford Room for Several Hund^d. families of thrifty farmers &c. it is finely watered, with Springs & has abundance of Lime Stone, good timber, and the adjoining Prairie is very fertile & pretty-

The Rain detained us 'till after Noon, when we broke Camp & traveled on ab^t. 5 Miles & again Camped at Some timber $\frac{1}{2}$ Mile from the Road on the Right.

The Road bears much more South^d. and for the first 3 Miles or So, Runs unne^cessarily crooked; at the termination of this crook, I Set up a Mound to Shew that a Straighter way may be traveled-

We are Still on our dividing Ridge, the timber of the Kansas Waters on the Right, that of the M. D. Cygne on the left- Prairie ~~is~~ Still fertile and beautiful.

One of the Hunters killed a Deer to day & another bro^t. in 2 or 3 Gal^s. of Honey.

Saturday 2^d. June 1827

A violent thunder Storm at day light and Rain 'till nine O'Clk: After drying our baggage, Set out again- traveled about 9 Miles & halted on a Small Creek of Kansas; erected two M^{ds}. to day, to Shew the proper direction from P^t. to P^t. at a very crooked place- generally the traveled Road Runs very well, & cannot be bettered-

The Prairie Still continues very fertile & pretty- our Camp to Night is 94 Miles from P^t. Osage by the Survey.

Saw a Number of Prairie Flies to day- & Some Musquitoes were felt last Night-

Sunday 3^d. June 1827

A pleasant Morning- fair weather- Started early- traveled over a very pretty country to day, Prairie Rich, Sufficiently Watered, and points of timber appearing frequently on either Side- Made Several corrections of the Road, So as to Straighten it probably 2 Miles in all Reached a Br: of M. D. Cygne before Night & camped, having traveled to day about 15 Miles. This Cr: is Mkd: by Mr. D. 111 M. from P^t. Osage; It may now be reduced to 100 Miles as the Road is Marked, and called 100 M. Cre k. it affords Some pretty groves of timber & good Land- A Kansas Indⁿ. came to our Camp; he Says 5 families are Hunting on the Creek about Six Miles off- day very hot- Some flies-

Monday June 4th 1827

M^s. cool & pleasant- a thunder Storm about Sunrise which de-

tained us- A Small party of Kansas met us on the Road this M^o.
for the purpose of begory.

To Bridge Cr: the Road Runs very well in general, & over a
pretty country, only two Mounds necessary- From Bridge Cr: to
Muscle Cr: at a Rocky ford, the Waggon Road is extremely crooked-
I marked a Straigher Road, which Saves about 2 Miles out of 7, but
fr m the broken Nature of the country, I doubt if Waggon will
take it, tho' the old Road is also over very bad ground- The
country is much more broken now as we advance- Prairie very Rich
tho' Stony & comparatively poor in Spots- Muscle Cr: is 124
M. from Ft. G- it is a pretty Cr: & affords good Land & consider-
able timber & fish- We Camped at a Spring-

Tuesday June 5. 1827

M^o. Fair and Somewhat Sultry- the Night was very Warm & close-
Musquitos troublesome- Started pretty early- the day excessively
hot. We got to Elk Cr: and halted for the day, having traveled
18 Miles- The traveled Road Runs well enough to day except at
two places which I Straightened & marked- the Prairie is Rather
more broken than yesterday, and the Soil not So good on the high
Ridges, Some of which are Stony Still the land is good, & in the
low level places very good- between Muscle Cr: & Elk Cr: ~~is the~~
the Road crosses 4 other Small Creeks all of which have small
patches of timber- Elk Cr: is the largest & has most timber; It is
the most Western Branch of M.D. Cygne of any Note- ~~is~~ ^{game} ~~is~~? is
very Scarce thus far-

Wednesday June 6, 1827

M^o. clear and Sultry- Started pretty early- From Elk Cr: to
Hycory Cr: is 6 Miles, the Road is as well Mkd; by the old track
as it can be, except in one place, which I Mkd; by Mounds- From
Hycory Cr: to Rock Cr: 7 Miles, the Road is very Crooked, but
cannot be altered for the better- the Prairie is very much broken

for the whole distance, & the Road Runs on the high Ridges- between Elk Cr: & Hycory Cr: we cross the high dividing Ridge which divides the Waters of the N. E. Cygne from those of Neesho- Hycory Cr: has but little timber- Rock Cr: has more- this a beautiful Cr: & might afford Room for a Number of families near the ~~Ree~~ Road- Land on the Ridges poor- in the bottoms good, it is Stoney on the Ridges generally-

Thursday June 7, 1827

A cool pleasant M^o: A thunder Shower Soon after we halted yesterday evening- We got under way pretty early this Morning- 7 Miles to Council Grove- here we halted for th. day, there being Some corrections to be make near- The Prairic is more & more bro on and the Road necessarily crooked- the day Warm- Rain at Night-

Friday 8th. June

It Rained all the day, & frequently after Night- Staid in Cam- The distance from ~~t. O~~ to C. Grove by the Survey is 162 Miles- I believe that the corrections I have made & Mkd: will Reduce the distance 13 Miles at the least, and I have accordingly Markedit on a Tree ~~162~~ 149 Miles- I was indisposed to day, & have been for three days past.-

Saturday June 9th. 1827.

It Rained this Morning; but cleared of partially about 9 O'Clk: So that we could dry our Baggage &c.- The Range is uncommonly good here at present- Game is extremely Scarce- Musquetoes troublesome- No Prairic flies- I feel badly this M^o. Set off at Noon, & went on to the next Creek on the Road & camped for the day- The Road thus far from C. Grove is on the best ground & Runs very well. I only had to Straighten it on the eastern Side of the Creek a Short distance- Land very good in the bottoms- Poor & Stony in the Hills generally- I am unwell all day.

Sunday 10. June 1827

M^g. fair and pleasant- feel better- Started early.- Went about 20 Miles to the Spring and halted for the day- Mkd: the Road to go close by this ~~Remarkable~~--- Remarkably fine Spring, which is on Otter Creek- 165 Miles from F^t. Osage, the Creek affords Sufficient Wood for fuel- At the Spring is good camping ground & good pasture.- This Spring is very large, Runs off boldly among rocks, is perfectly ^{accessible} acceptable and furnishes the greatest abundance of most excellent, clear, cold Sweet water It may be appropriately called "The Diamond of the Plains" and So I had it Marked on an Elm which grows near & overhangs it-

Monday 11th. June 1827-

A Wet Rainey Morning- Staid all day in Camp- Urged by various considerations, I determined to Return home from this Point, and will Start back tomorrow Morning- I Shall make the necessary Surveys as I Return, & connect my late alterations of the Road with the old Survey-

I do not think there can be any alterations made farther West, of Suff^t. importance to justify the expense- the Road as traveled is already well enough Marked by the Waggon, any Mounds put up would be Soon thrown down by the Buffalo and Indians, & I fear if I go any farther I Shall be obliged to go to ^WD. Creek before I can find Meat for Subsistence-

Tuesday 12th. June 1827

Morning cloudy, Windy and cool- After ~~Brk~~ we Set out homeward.- the day very Windy & unpleasant- Reached the Council Grove afternoon and halted for the day- I feel unwell.

Wednesday 13th.

It Rained this Morning, & was cloudy 'till Noon & threatening a Storm- Set out however after late Brkft: Coursed and chained the Cut off from C. Grove to Gravel Creek- distance by the New Mkd:

Route, which is the best; 586 Poles, or 1 Mile 3 quarters and 26 Poles- Here halted for the day, to make Some further examinations- Found an excellent Spring near Camp- which has Mkd: "Big John's Spring" as it was first discov^d. by John Walker.- It Rained frequently to day-

Thursday 14th June 1827

Morning fair and pleasant- it Rained last Night- After doing Some work here (which the Rain prevented yesterday,) Set forward again- Halted at Rock Cr: for the day- day excessively Hot, and traveling in the Prairies very oppressive- With the Symptoms of illness that I feel, do not choose to expose myself more than I can help just now- Heavy thunder Storm with Rain & Wind this evening-

Friday 15. June 1827

Heavy Storm of Wind & Rain this Morn^g. Showery all the day- yet we got on 7 Miles to Locust Creek, and Marked a Cut off there, & cleared out a fording place-

Saturday 16th.

A great deal of Rain fell last Night, & this M^g. So that we could not get out of Camp 'till late- then I Surveyed & Measrd. the Cut off- and after dinner Went on to Elm Cr: Measuring & Marking the best Route- The day was quite cool. So that my Capot agreeable-

Some Indians Seen to day at a distance Southward- At Night th the Mules took fright but were Soon headed & Stopped.- this Cr: is 3 Miles Last^d. of Elk Creek.

Sunday 17th June 1827

A very fine Morning- very heavy dew- Started on pretty early- Got to Muscle Cr: in good time and camped about $\frac{1}{2}$ Mile above the old ford- Marked & Coursed & Chained two Crooked Places So as to Straighten the Road materially-

Monday 18th.

Rain last Night & this Morning- Spent this day examining a near way from Pat's Cr: to Bridge Cr:, and find that the Road can be very much Straightened by Crossing Muscle Creek about $1\frac{1}{2}$ Miles lower down- Tomorrow intend to Mark this Cut off, and Survey it so as to connect it with old Survey at Bridge Cr:- day vefy hot- Flies are getting pretty bad.-

Tuesday 19th, June 1827

Morning fair and Windy- Set to work after Bkft:- Marked, ^{Chained} & ~~co~~rsed, the cut off from Pat's Creek to Bridge Cr: and h lted at the Bridge for the day- this new Route, is generally over good ground, the ford of Muscle Creek is good, and t there is no place that can be called bad- the distance across is not half as great as it is by the Road as now traveled- the day very oppressively hot tho' Windy- the flies getting more & more troublesome as we go Eastward.-

Majors- Cameron & Joel Walker left me this evening, by ~~pres-~~ ~~umpcionn~~, for home- by Walker I wrote a few lines to Mrs. S: Showery in the evening-

Wednesday June 20. 1827

It Rained nearly all Night and 'till half past 11 this Morn- ing, So that we could not make fires 'till about 10 O'Clk: the Creek Rising fast this Morning. We Started on after Noon and got across 100 Mile Creek (6 Miles) and again camped- from here homew^d. I propose to make Some very material alterations of the Road and Survey; if the flies do not prevent- those pests are very troublesome to day altho' it was mostly cloudy & all the Prairie completely drenched with Rain.

Thursday 21 June 1827

A fine fair pleasant Morning- Set off after Breakfast-

Chained from the ford of 100 Mile Creek, from Mound to Mound as Marked on the way out, and Set up Several New Mounds- finished 11 Miles, and then turned off nearly 3 Miles to Some timber Southward, on a Small Creek of M. D. Cygne- Sh^d. have turned off Sooner (if any timber had Sooner appeared in Reach) to get Shelter from the flies, which are to day extremely troublesome- Game is Still very Scarce, so that we get but little, and that Little Rather indifferent- The Hunters must exert themselves more hereafter, as we are nearly out of Meat Some Honey got on this Cr.

Friday June 22^d. 1827.

Morning fair and very cool- Started on after pretty early Breakfast- The flies were So very Severe that we could only chain 3 Miles, & make Some examinations, before it was necessary to hasten to a Small patch of ~~timber~~ tim^r. off South^d. of the Road on a Small Creek of Osage- I fear the flies will So anno, us as to prevent our getting on but very Slowly with the Work.- It was quite cool and pleasant all day.

Saturday June 25th. 1827.

M^S. fair & quite cool- very heavy gold dews- every Night- Roused the Camp early, got Bkft: & Set to work a little after Sunrise- Went back 6 Miles with a Working Party, & Sent the Waggon on with two Men, to a Cr: 3 Miles off, where a ford is to be found and cut out- I completed nearly 9 Miles of Surveying & Mounding, and then halted for the day in a pleasant Grove of Trees at the ford of the Creek- found the flies excessively bad to day; So that I was obliged to defer Some work 'till tomorrow Morning on the New Route just Mkd: and Surveyed- Sent all the Hunters out this evening- Rather a pleasant day.-

Sunday June 24th. 1827.

A fine pleasant Morning- The Flies became So bad, after I had completed what was left behind unfinished yesterday- that I did not

again leave Camp- The Hunters are all unsuccessful, ^{they} that have failed to kill any game except an old Turkey, for Several days. Game is Scarce, but Still I think Some might be killed with proper industry on the part of the Hunters.- No Meat in camp this Morning or all day-

~~Monday 25th June~~

Monday 25th. June 1827-

Rainy Morning- did not get off till late-, Tho' the flies were very bad, I made out to complete Six Miles, and finish the Cut off, which brought us to the Narrow divide not far from our camp of 30th. & 31^t. May- This was effected by 2 O'Clk: when Sent out all the Men, but two, to hunt, there being no Meat at all in camp-

But the Hunters were again unsuccessful- They got a little Honey, which, like children then eat up all at once.-

The day quite pleasant, tho' cloudy for the most part

Tuesday 26th. June 1827.

A fine cool pleasant morning- Set off after Breakfast, Surveyed the cut off as Marked on the 31^t. May, and camped for the day on Hungry Creek- Had Some of the brush bridges to Repair The day very ^WWarm, and flies bad. The Mules and Horses are already the worse of there torments, and will I fear be greatly Reduced before I get through with my Work- which may yet employ me ten or twelve days probably, as I propose to Survey the Route, round by the Blue Spring and Shall have to, Resurvey the Road as far back as the State line. I am most heartily tired, and wish myself at home an hundred times a day.

Wednesday June 27th. 1827.

Morning cool and cloudy- Started a little after Sunrise, and completed ¹³12 Miles of the Road to Caravan Grove- Altho' cloudy & cool when we Started, it Soon became clear and almost unsupportably hot, and the Green flies Swarmed around us like bees. I never Saw the flies half as bad as to day, they Stuck to the Mules 'till

near Night- After Nighfall, we had a thunder Shower which cooled the air a little and made the Night passably pleasant-

Thursday June 28th. 1827.

Morning clear and coolish - Had Bkft: early and Set forward to work- finished 9 Miles, and halted for the day on Flat Rock Creek in a Grove of Saplongs, which afforded excellent Shelter from the flies and heat The day was extremely warm- but flies not very bad to day Killed a very large Rattlesnake of the Black kind, at the mouth of my Tent this evening- the first Rattlesnake I have Seen or heard Since I left home- This Cr. Runs into Big Blue and affords Some good Land and Timber.

Friday June 29th. 1827

The Morning fair and cool and pleasant- Started after Breakfast, and went on 4 Miles to a point of Woods, (where we ^{Staid} ~~Staid~~ on the Night of the 25th. May on a Small branch o Kansas, which affords very cool water - the Grove is a pretty one and the Spot good camping ground- [✓] Having to turn back from here, to Survey the Road by the Blue Spring; and to Send to the nearest Settlement (ab^t. 8 Miles off.) for Some Bacon- halted 'till I get Ready to proceed- I here discharged four of my Men having more than I want, and they wishing to Return- Ja^s. Baxter, W^m. M. Owens- D. Cameron, & G. Richardson went in- I Sent by them 2 Horses and 5 Mules, which I directed Richardson to take care of at my House 'till I get home- I wrote by Kitt to my Wife, to Say that I Shall not be at home before the 10th. of July- The day very very warm- Met 5 Kansas Ind^{ns}. Returning from a Hunt.

Saturday June 30. 1827-

Fine Morning- Rain last Night- The Men did not come with Bacon 'till after Noon (having to go nearly down to the County Town for it), So that I did not get out to work to day.

I felt quite unwell, and Should have kept my Tent at any Rate. The day was warm & close.

Sunday July 1^t. 1827-

Spent this day Marking & Surveying the Road to the State Line, and in making Some necessary observations to ascertain whether a better Route may not be had more North^d. passing by Patterson's & crossing Big Blue Some 3 or 4 Miles lower down than the old Ford- This kept me busy nearly all the day- The day was Rather a Pleasant one- I feel better to day than yesterday, tho' Still unwell.-

Monday July 2^d. 1827.

Morning cloudy and Warm- Set out pretty early and went back 12 Miles to Caravan Grove: ^{Repairing} ~~Repairing~~ and building Some Mounds- The day was Warm and the flies excessively Severe on the Mules.-

Tuesday 3^d. July.

Morning cool and cloudy- Set out early, but were caught in a pretty heavy Shower of Rain which obliged us to halt at the Round Grove early in the day- Got completely wet- I completed Survey of the old Road about 6 Miles however, and finished Mound Making- I am now thus far on the Road Round by the Blue Spring- and ^{hope} ~~see~~ to get on pretty briskly-

Wednesday July 4th. 1828.

Fine Morning- Started early chained and coursed the Road to the ford of Big Blue, which find to be 13 Ms: & 22 chs: from the Round Grove- the Road passes over Some Rough ground & Some Rather bad places- The ford of the Blue is a very excellent one, the bed of the Creek being on Smooth flat Rock, & the banks good- there is considerable timber along here in Strips; Some very pretty groves, & excellent land.- Camped at the ford.

Thursday July 5- 1827.

Sultry Morning- Started pretty early- ^h ~~When~~ we had proceeded about 3 Miles it began to Rain, and continued pretty Steadily to Rain nearly all day- and Sometimes very hard- I had to get off my Horse so often take the courses that I got wet through all my clothes-

I continued however to Survey the Road about $4\frac{1}{2}$ Miles farther, and Stopped for the day just after we had crossed a fork of Little Blue and got out of the bottom upon the high Prairie- I had my tent pitched, changed my Clothes, eat a Biscuit, drank a Mint Sling, and took a nap, after which I felt pretty well again, and Spent the rest of the day Reading Stern.

Friday July 6th. 1827.

It commenced raining hard before day light, and continued with Some Short intervals 'till night- So that we were confined to our Tents.- The country here is very high, and a good deal broken affording however on the Streams, Some very beautiful Situations- Groves of open Woods, fine Springs and Rich Land-

Thus far this Route is decidedly worse than the other however- the country is more broken, camping grounds not so good or convenient, and the Road necessarily more circuitous.-

At about 5 P:M: during a thunder Storm, a flash of Lightning Struck our Camp- the facts of this incident are as I Should conceive Singular. The Camp Stands on a high point in the open Prairie, no trees near except a Small Clump of Small Oaks on the descent of the Hill about 50 yds: from my Tent, the tips of these Trees probably 10 or 15 feet higher than any object in camp- The camp is arranged nearly thus.



1 My Tent- 2 Waggon 10 feet from 1- 3 a Tent close to the Waggon. The flash Struck my

Tent on one corner, Splintered the upright, passed thro' a leather, Iron framed Trunk, which it tore considerably, melted the case of a Pocket Compass in the Trunk (Missing Some Powder) Scorched Some woolen Socks^o it Split the other upright- I was lying asleep on my Pallet on one Side of the Tent, my feet near the Trunk & my Head near the Pole least damaged- the Shock worke

awoke me, to the most painful & alarming Sensations, for my Right Side which I lay on, was for a Minute bereft of feeling nearly, My foot Seemed Reduced to jelly, having no feeling,- a whirring noise passed thro' my ears continually, & the Tent was filled with Smoke & Strewed with Splinters- In the other Tent were Six persons; one of whom was Standing against the front Post, He was Struck down, & was Senseless for Some time, the top of the Pole Split- one of the other^s was Severely Shocked the Rest but Slightly- My own escape was wonderful indeed- Recovered the circulation in my foot & leg in about an hour; but am a little deaf, ' Still have a Singing & whirring in my ear.-

Saturday 7 July- 1827

Morning damp and cloudy, an immense quantity of Rain has fallen, and all the Creeks are Swimming- I Slept pretty well last Night, and ~~feel~~ feel this Morning about as well as usual except, that I Still feel a kind of confusion in my head, with Sometimes a Whizing Noise, much Such as I have felt when I had a bad cold- Collins & Carson, the two men who were the Most Shocked, Say they feel pretty well tho' they were quite unwell all Night- Collins asked his discharge this Morning, and Set out for Home by way of the Lower Settlements of Blue. On examining my Compass, I find that it Received material injury from the Shock yesterday, and is Rendered entirely useless- So that I am obliged to Stop the Survey here- We packed up, and Set out about 10 O'Clk:-

About $4\frac{1}{2}$ Miles crossed another fork of L. Blue, the way Rough, crooked, & Southwardly- Then it is about 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ Miles tby th the Waggon Road, to the Blue Spring- where we arrived just at Sun Set; the Road is extremely crooked and the country very much broken good camping places not frequent or convenient- Camped at the Blue Spring- the Spring is a pretty good one, tho' nothing extraordinary. -

Sunday 8th July 1827

fine Morning- After early Bkft: Set out- I traveled ahead of the Waggon & got home at 12 O'Clk: the distance about 14 Miles.

The Waggon & Men all arrived in the evening all Safe- And thus ends a most disagreeable trip; in which I have effected every object I had in view, & in less time than I expected to have done it.

Friday July 27- 1827

Wrote to Col: Mather- to Say that I am Ret^d: have finished the Road- have asc^d. (?) there is a deficiency of funds of ab^t. \$670 to pay up to this time- estimating the property in hands, including mules in Col: R's hands, at \$700- that there is due me for Services & advances \$1370.91 $\frac{1}{2}$ - Asked him for Some explanation of 2 entires in Hoods Acc^t. and to State how many Mules, & what prices, he & Col: R: bot: at Walnut Cr: and what am^t. Goods they Sold there.-

Also wrote to Col: Reeves to the Same purport, nearly, at Elkton, K^t. Wrote also to Mr. Hood & ~~Samuel~~- Mr. Samuel of Franklin on business.

Saturday 18 Aug^t. 1827

To day had all the Mules Horses Waggon and all other Public Property in my hands Sold at Auction agreeably to advertisements. There was a considerable collection of People, & the Property went off Rather better than I had anticipated. The whole produced the Net Sum of \$686.91 Cash- and this finally closes my care of Public Property- it is now all Sold- The particulars are Stated at Large & in detail in another book.

Thursday 20th. Sept: 1827.

This day wrote to Mr. Brown very fully in Relation to his Report of the Survey- I enclosed him in 6 Bundles all the Papers in my

possession that can be of use to him- Mr. Brown's Report is to consist of his field Book, and Maps drawn therefrom on a Large Scale- I have given him very particular instructions on this Subject, & urged him to have all Ready by 20th. October.

Also wrote to Messrs Reeves & Mather to Say that I Shall not be able to meet them in time at St. Louis on Acc^t. of Sickness in my family &c. But will endeavor to be at Fayette on the 8th. Oct^o. when I Shall expect to meet them & complete everything.

Mond: 8th. October 1827.

Arrived at Fayette agreeably to App^t. but do not find Col. Mather- went to Col: Reeves' where I Staid 'till the

Sat: 13th.

when I Set out for St. Charles, where I expect to Meet Col^o. Mather and where it is agreed between Col: R. & myself that I Shall prepare the Report ef- & Accounts as soon as practicable; and with Colonel Mather Sign & forward them to Washington; Col: Reeves being unable to go from home.-

Whilst at Col. R's and at the time of my departure for St. Charles I was quite unwell

Tuesday 17th.

Reached St. Ch^s. and find myself Seriously unwell from a very uglybruise under the left knee &. which occasions Some considerable fever & pain-

Wed: 18th. Oct^o.

Having provided a Room & the necessary materials, I Set to work on the Report, Acc^{ts}. &c.- wrote to Col^o. Mather to meet me here as Soon as he can, as I am unable to travel to him- also wrote to Mr. Brown to hurry his Report, & to have Ready all the Maps &c. ordered on the 20th. Ult^o. and to bring them here when Ready-

Sat. 21^t.

My knee has been So painful(& is Still growing worse) as to make

it impossible for me to make much Progress in writing the Report-
I have completed a Rough Sketch however, which will be corrected and
written out fair as Soon as I am able to do it- Col^O. Mather will b
be here on Friday next-

Friday 27th. Oct^O. 1827.

The Report has been Ready for Signature Since Wednesday- Today Col^O
Mather arrived at St. Charles, and having examined & approved what I
had prepared by way of Report, he & I Signed the Same & agreeably to
the Request of Col. Reeves (he having Seen the Rough Draft) we also
affixed his name to it; and the Report was then forwarded to Washing
ton City per Mail-

The Acc^{ts}. not being yet in Readiness, Col. Mather & I agreed
to meet at St. Louis early in Dec^r. next, to complete & forward
that Report.-

The General Report, this day forwarded, is copied accurately
on the following pages

Vizt.

To the Honorable James Barbour

Secy. of the Dep^t. of War, Washington City.

Sir,

The undersigned Commissioners appointed by the President to carry into effect the Act of Congress passed on the 3^d. day of March 1825 "to authorize The President of the United States to cause a Road to be Marked out from the western frontier of Missouri to the confines of New Mexico" have, after Some unavoidable delays, fully completed the duties assigned them, and now do themselves the honour to lay before you, for the information of the Government, the following Report-

Anxious to execute the intentions of Congress promptly, the Commissioners did not lose a moment, after the Receipt of your communication dated the 16th. of March 1825 (announcing their appointment, and conveying to them instructions) in making Suitable preparations for the work before them; aware that the Season would be far advanced before they could collect their Men and the necessary equipment on the frontier, and that they would probably be obliged to encounter the extreme heat of Summer, and the Still greater inconvenience of the Prairie flies- These apprehensions were fully Realized; for it was not 'till the 17th. of July that the enterprise could Set forward from Ft. Osage, the point fixed on for the commencement of the proposed Road; and the journey for the first 160 Miles, was attended throughout, with difficulty and embarrassment, arising chiefly from the annoyance of the green flies of the Prairies, which obliged the Party to travel much in the Night, frequently leaving the direct route in order to find Shelter from the flies during the day, in the Small roves that are Seen here and there Scattered like little green Islands, over the plains. This irregular way of traveling not only harrassed the horses and Mules excessively, but Rendered a Satisfactory view and Survey of the country

impracticable at the time, and a Subsequent examination necessary-

The only intervening Tribes of Indians whose consent it was deemed incumbent upon the Commissioners to obtain by Treaty, to the Marking out, and free use of the Road, were the Great and Little Osages, and the Kansas; and as it was known to be most agreeable to the wishes of the Chiefs and head Men of those Tribes (who were consulted by Mr. Sibley on the Subject at St. Louis in June) to meet the Commissioners at some convenient places on their Route from Ft. Osage to the Arkansas River; it was believed to be unnecessary to postpone the Survey and examination of the Route through the Territory claimed by those Tribes, these being at most preliminary operations, necessary to the ultimate location and marking out of the Road.-

On the 10th. and 16th days of August, the Commissioners met successively by appointment, full deputations of the Chiefs and head Men of the Osages and Kansas, and after carefully explaining the object and wishes of the Government, so as to be perfectly well understood by them concluded and Signed the Treaties that have been already Reported to, and duly Ratified by the competent authorities-

Having thus concluded their negotiations with the "intervening Tribes of Indians" within the limits of The United States, The Commissioners proceeded with their Survey and examination, without any further interruption, to the Boundary line between The United States and Mexico, at the point (or nearly as they had the means to ascertain it) where the 100th. degree of Longitude West from London, intersects the Arkansas River; which point, is in North Latitude ~~32~~ 37°- 47'-37", is distant from Ft. Osage by the Survey 386 43¹/₂/80 Miles: & which they reached on the 11th. of September-

When the Commissioners set out from Ft. Osage, they entertained the expectations of being able to carry their Surveys and examinations quite through to the frontier Settlements of New Mexico before the Winter set in, so as to enable them to locate and mark out the Road as

they Returned home early the next ensuing Summer; and to this end, were all their preparatory arrangements made, and all their exertions pointed- and they were fully justified in indulging this expectation, by the assurance of your letter, that measures had been taken to obtain the co-operation or consent of the Mexican Government, which it was hoped would be effected in time to prevent any delay at the boundary line; and by the well founded belief that the Gov^t. of Mexico would promptly accede to a measure, which was obviously quite as much, if not more, to her advantage, than to that of the United States-

Great was the disappointment of the Commissioners, therefore, when on their arrival at the Line, they were obliged to Suspend their operations for want of the expected authority to proceed through the Mexican Territory- They waited until the 20th. of September, in the daily hope that they might Receive the permission to go on with their Survey, but in vain: and the Season being now So far advanced, it was believed, that go which way they might, there was but barely time left to Reach the Settlements before the Setting ⁱⁿ of the Winter, especially with reduced Horses & Mules- It was obviously necessary therefore to determine immediately what to do, and promptly to Set about it- After much deliberation, the Commissioners at length concurred unanimously, in adopting the ~~the~~ following plan of procedure That one of them, accompanied by the Surveyor and a Small party of the Hired men; should proceed to New Mexico as expeditiously as possible, to find winter quarters, at or near the City of S^{ta}. Fee- The other two Commissioners, with all the Remainder of the Men and equipment, should Return to Missouri as Speedily as they could- That if the Government should So direct, the two Commissioners Returning, should join the other in New Mexico as early as practicable the ensuing Summer, while the one in New Mexico should possess himself of Such information within his Reach, as might be desirable, to enable the Board properly to locate the Road, or in any event, that portion of

it within the limit of The United States, it being considered indis-
pensibly necessary for the Commissioners to possess Some previous
knowledge of the Country and the Route between the Arkansas and the
frontier Settlements of New Mexico, to enable them even to make a ~~defi~~
~~initien~~ definitive location of the Eastern section of the proposed
Road- This arrangement was ^{considered} considered at the time it was adopted, de-
cidedly the best one that could be made; and Subsequent events have
proven that it was the only one that could have been carried into ef-
fect, by which The Commissioners could possibly have completed the
Road, even as Soon as they have done it- It has also been the means
of Reducing the expense Somewhat, that was necessarily attendant on the
unlooked for delay of the Mexican Government.-

To Mr. Commissioner Sibley was assigned the duty of proceeding
to S^{ta}. Fee it being understood that he was to Remain in New Mexico
no longer than 'till the 1^t. of July, unless he Should have Substant-
ial Reasons to justify a longer Stay.-

On the 2^d. September, the two parties took leave of each other,
and proceeded on their Respective Journeys- The Returning party com-
pleted theirs early in November- the other arrived Safely at San
Fernando, in the Valley of Taus, on the 3^d. day of October.-

Very Soon after his arrival, Mr. Sibley inquired of the Gov^r. of
the Territory at Santa Fee (Resident
the Territory at Santa Fee) if the Gov^t. of Mexico had taken any
order in Relation to the Road; and was answered, that none had been
communicated to him- Mr. Sibley immediately addressed a Note to Mr.
Poinsett, informing him of the progress already made by the Commiss^{rs}.
Stating the Serious inconvenience and expense of delay; and ~~urging-him~~
urging him to obtain the necessary order, if possible, in time to
enable The Commiss^{rs}. to complete the Road early the next Summer- Thi
This note was dispatched to Mexico in a few days, under the Gov^{rs}.
envelope, by the Monthly courier, was duly Received by Mr. Poinsett,
who answered by Return of the courier, that he had not been able to

effect any arrangement with the Gov^t. at Mexico for the continuance of the Road through the Territory of that Government, but entertained hopes that he Should Soon obtain one-

Mr. Sibley also addressed Gov^r. Narbona on the Subject verbally and by note; who professed himself to be most favorably inclined towards the establishment of the projected Road, and promised to Represent to his Government his views of its importance which he Said he could Strikingly Set forth in the fact, that the Trade from Missouri already yielded an annual Revenue of Twenty thousand Dollars, besides many other great advantages-

Notwithstanding these flattering hopes and promises, no order was Received from Mexico on the Subject of the Road, until the 16th. June 1826, when Mr. Sibley Received a Note from Mr. Poinsett, informing him that on the 13th. of May he had obtained from The President of The Mexican States an Order to The Gov^r. of The Territory of New Mexico "to permit Mr. Sibley Commissioner of the United States, to make an examination of the western part of the Road to S^{ta}. Fee from Missouri, without marking or cutting it out, or establishing any works of any class"- and on the Same day Mr. Sibley Received an official notification to the Same effect, from Governor Narbona-

Altho' this permission fell very far Short of what might have been Reasonably expected, and could not indeed have been deemed Sufficient to warrant The Commi^{rs}. in accepting it, without further instructions, if it had been communicated and Received otherwise than it was; yet from the knowledge Mr. Sibley possessed of the country through which "the western part of the Road" must pass, he did not entertain a moment's doubt as to the propriety of its being accepted & acted on the Commiss^{rs}., all the circumstances being duly considered.-

The following ^{following} extract of a Letter from Mr. Sibley to Mr. Poinsett dated "Valley of Taus in New Mexico June 19-1826" will Sufficiently illustrate his views, (and those of all The Commissioners) on this

Subject.-

"This very Restricted permission would avail the Comm^{rs}. but little indeed, if it were not for the fact, that there is no "marking" or "cutting out" or any "works necessary, or indeed practicable to be done on any part of the Road within the Mexican Territory- From the crossing of the Arkansas to this Valley and to Santa Fe', the Road will not pass over timbered land exceeding one mile in the whole, and that is so scattered and open, that it can be passed without the least difficulty with carriages, with no other labor than removing a few logs, poles &c. and as it will be labour and time lost to attempt to "mark out" the Road by any artificial means that The Comm^{rs}, can devise and effect, we shall probably no otherwise mark it, that by furnishing a chart of the Route, founded upon an accurate examination & Survey, upon which will be noted, with great care, all the prominent land marks already set up by the hand of nature, which are numerous, and now serve as admirable guides to the traveler.

Any artificial hillocks or mounds thrown up, unless of much greater magnitude than our limited means will justify, would be destroyed in a very short time, by the immense herds of buffaloes that are continually passing to and fro over the plains; and what they might be unable to destroy, would assuredly be levelled by the roving bands of Indians, who are always sufficiently inclined to commit wanton mischief- I have no objection then, myself, and I presume the other Comm^{rs}. will have none, to proceed with the "examination" as permitted; inasmuch as we can effect every thing under that permission, that we could do, if it were as ample as our Gov^t. wished or expected- It is certain, that if The Comm^{rs}, shall determine to proceed as above suggested, their Report of the Road will be such as to make it entirely unnecessary for the Government of The United States ever to take any further order or interest in the matter-. I have deemed it proper for me to communicate to you these facts for your information".

Meanwhile, the Commissioners who had Returned to Missouri, were officially advised that no arrangement was likely Soon to be made between the two Gov^{ts}. for the continuation of the Road through the Mexican Territory; and they consequently determined not to join Mr. Sibley i in New Mexico, but wrote him by the Spring Caravan on the 19th. of May 1826 to advise (?) his immediate Return home- This communication was Received by Mr. ~~St~~* S. on the 1^t. day of August, who immediately made Such preparations as were necessary for his Return, determining to make a complete Survey & examination of the Route from San Fernando, in Taus, to the boundary line, and connect it with the Survey Recently made from F^t. Osage to the Same point-

Mr. Sibley adopted this course without the least hesitation; because it was authorized by the Mexican Govern^t. would be attended with little or no additional expense, and would in effect enable The Commiss^{rs} ioners to complete the whole Road from Missouri to Taus, as perfectly as as it could be done under any arrangement, however formed, that the two Governments might ever enter into on the Subject - He accordingly commenced a Survey at San Fernando on the 24th. of August, Ran it through the Mexican Territory, and on the 18th. of September, connected it with the former Survey at the line, on the Arkansas River- On the journey from the boundary line to F^t. Osage, Mr. Sibley made Some necessary corrections of the first Survey, but had not time, or indeed the means, to "mark out the Road" or in fact, to complete all the necessary alterations in the Survey of the first 160 Miles from F^t. Osage, which, as has been already Stated, was passed over at first, under circumstances that made a Satisfactory Survey of it impossible-

Mr. Sibley went out in May last, with a Small party, to make the last mentioned corrections of the Survey, and to "mark out" by Suitable mounds, So much of the Road as extends from the western boundary of Missouri to the Buffalo Range; beyond which, it was entirely useless to incur any expense in Setting up marks-

This last ^{object} was effected in a very Satisfactory manner (not withstanding the journey was extremely unpleasant) and was completely finished early in July.

The Commissioners had the honor, on the 10th. of January last, to Submit to The President the opinion (which they Still entertain and ^{beg} leave here to Repeat) that it is unnecessary for The Gov^t. of The United States to do any thing further in Relation to that Section of the Road that has been Surveyed thro' the Mexican Territory- Even if it were practicable to "mark out" that portion of the Road by permanent artificial Works", they would deem it a very useless expense of Money & labor, for the Reason already given in another part of this Report.

In the belief therefore, that they have effected all the objects proposed by the Act of Congress, under the authority of which they were appointed, The Commis^{rs}. Report

That they have Surveyed, located and Marked out, a Road from the Western frontier of Missouri, to the confines of New Mexico, and from thence to the frontier Settlements of New Mexico- That they have located the Road upon the best practicable Route that exists; and that the whole is Sufficiently marked out by natural & artificial conspicuous objects, and by the tracks of the numerous caravans that have passed on it, to prevent in future, any the least difficulty in the commercial intercourse between the western parts of the United States and New Mexico, Sonora, and Chihuahua; in So fas as a direct and most excellent Road from Missouri and the Mexican Settlements is considered useful in promoting that object.-

From Ft. Osage on the Missouri River (In latitude $39^{\circ} 10' 19''$ North, and Longitude $93^{\circ} 24' 51''$ ^{05'} west from London) to the Village of San Fernando, in the valley of Taus, in New Mexico, a few miles eastward of The Rio Grande del norte, and about 65 Miles North 25° . east from the City of Santa Fe (in Latitude $36^{\circ} 24'$ North and

Longitude 105^o. 31'. West from London) the whole distance, ascertained by actual measurement, upon the courses of the Road, as located and established is 746 $15\frac{3}{4}$ /80 Miles- 425 $78\frac{2}{4}$ /80 Miles of this distance, by way of the Road, lies within the limits of the United States; and 320 $17/30$ Miles within the Mexican Territory.-

The Road, in nearly its whole extent passes over open, grassy prairie, the forest or timber land, over which it runs does not exceed altogether, twenty Miles- Water, fuel, and pastureage, are sufficiently plentiful, and, with but few exceptions are good.- Caravans may obtain their chief Supplies for Subsistence, without difficulty or delay, from the numerous herds of Buffaloes that are almost continually passing and repassing over the plain, crossing the Route every where along, the greater part of the way; and many years must elapse *before* this great Resource will fail, or materially diminish.-

Between Ft. Osage & San Fernando, there does not exist a Single Serious difficulty or obstacle to the passage of carriages of any description- Even the Mountains near Taus (where Scarcely any effort has ~~been~~ ever yet been made to form a Road) are crossed without any great difficulty; and whenever the authorities there Shall think fit to order it, an excellent Road may be made at a very trifling expense- Caravans, with ^{or} without carriages may either go direct to the City of Santa Fe, without crossing the Mountains at Taus, or they may go down through the Settlements from San Fernando- Both Routes are, or may very easily be made, perfectly Safe and good; and from Santa Fe to the City of Mexico the Road is Said to be "nearly equal to turnpike"-

In Short, it may Safely be assumed that there are fewer natural obstructions to the passage of loaded carriages (as Respects the Road merely) between Ft. Osage and the City of Mexico, a distance not much Short of 2500 Miles, than there are on the established Road from Ft. Osage to St. Louis, which is probably not inferior to any (except

turnpikes) in the Union, of the Same extent, about 260 Miles.-

Upon the whole, The Commissioners may con ratulate themselves and all concerned, that they have Succeeded in locating and marking out a very direct and permanent highway across the immense desert plain that intervenes between the Settlements of the Missouri River and those of the Rio Grande del Norte, which, until Recently Subdued by the enterprising Spirit of our Western Citizens, has been considered an impassable barrier to any direct or profitable commerce-

That barrier is now Removed; the way is open, plain and direct; and a Stream of Commerce is already flowing upon it, which it is believed will grow into Some considerable importance, and is certainly entitled to the favourable consideration of the two Governments whose citizens are mutually benefited by it-

Altho' this is a Subject that does not Strictly come within the official duty of the undersigned to mention in this place, they cannot Suffer the present occasion to pass without expressing their opinion of its importance- They could not mechanically locate and Mark out a Road of Such extent, through Such a country, and for Such an object, without feeling Some interest in, and forming Some estimate of its probable future usefulness- not can they now omit to Suggest what, from the view they have been able to take of the whole ground, they consider necessary yet to be done, in order to Render this Highway between Nations, what it evidently Should be, not only open, plain and direct; but free in its whole extent from every obstruction,-

It has been already Stated, that no natural obstructions, worth notice, exist on the Road- The only danger to which it is now liable, is from the Roving bands of Indians that Sometimes beset Small parties of our Traders, and either Steal or forcibly take away their Horses, Mules, and other property- Such outrages most frequently occur on the journey homeward from New Mexico, and most generally on

the Mexican Side of the Arkansas; though Some of the depredators are known to have their Villages within the Territory of the United State and Receive presents & other favors from the Government-

The Indians who are most commonly engaged in these Lawless practices belong to the Nations or Tribes called Pawnees, Arapahoes, Kiaways, Comanches, Appaches and Yutahs; the first, & probably the second named; are within the agencies of The United States; the others Reside within the Jurisdiction of the Mexican Government- It is not Supposed that the irregularities of Mere Savages can be Sud. only Suppressed; but it is ^{very} confidently believed they may be materially checked, and ultimately entirely prevented by a Seasonable interference of the two Governments; while it may well be apprehended, that unless this is done, Some of those Tribes may be tempted to form combinations, and estab^lish Something like a System of highway Robbery, that may be extremely difficult to Suppress, if too long neglected.

Individual losses have already been Sustained on this Road from Indian Robberies to a large amount, to Say nothing of the personal Suffering consequent upon them- As there is no position on the whole Route except near the Mountains, about 36 miles from the Settlements of Taus, Suitable for a Military post, having for its object the protection of the Road; no other fit means of protection can be Suggest ed, than occasional escorts of Troops from the nearest Military posts, and proper admonition to the Indians.

With the exception of the Pawnees, the Tribes that have been mentioned, have but little knowledge of our Government and People; and none of them have any Respect for the Mexcian authorites- It is presumed how^ever, that a very Salutory change might easily be effected in the disposition and conduct of those Indians, if the two Governments were to act in concert; and announce in a Suitable manner their determination to protect their commerce on this Road; and oc-

asionally detach light parties of Regular Soldiers to Scour the country, and detect, & arrest for punishment all those who should presume to infringe the Rights of the highway-

A very brief notice of the country examined by the Commissioners, will here suffice - The field notes and maps presented by Mr. Erwon, the Surveyor of the Road, which accompany and belong to this Report; furnish in detail, whatever it is supposed may be at all useful or interesting in Relation to the Survey and location of the Road, and of the Streams, Ridges, hills, Mountains &c. that it crosses-

A Rapid glance, confined as much as possible to the Scope taken in the Surveys and examinations, will be given in the belief that it may supply some facts not heretofore very generally known.-

It has been already observed, that the Space between the Missouri River and the Rio Grande del Norte is occupied by an almost unbroken plain or prairie- Taken as one great whole, this vast expanse of open naked wilderness, presents but little more variety of Surface, than the ^{face} fact of the Atlantic Ocean- Its features are generally proportioned to its great magnitude, except as to its Streams- numerous Rivulets, Creeks & Small Rivers flow through it, the most of which are marked in their courses by narrow fringes of forest Trees, & thickets of underbrush- Prominent Ridges frequently occur, which give direction to the flow of the Streams, and serve to relieve in some degree, the dull monotony of the Scene- These elevations are usually poor in point of Soil, compared with the interjacent level vallies & bottoms, which are in general tolerably fertile- The Herbage of this Plain is, in general Rich & luxuriant, consisting chiefly of Strong and Succulent Grasses, of ^{many varieties;} ~~many varieties;~~ Some of which would doubtless prove valuable additions to the cultivated grasses of the United States- In the Season of flowers, a very large portion of this great plain, presents one continual carpet

of Soft verdure, enriched by flowers of every tint- these beauties afford pleasure for a time; but the traveller is apt Soon to lose the Relish for them, as he pursues his tedious way, under a cloudless Sky, and exposed to the unbroken Rays of the burning Sun, which, but for the brisk flow of air that usually prevails, would be Scarcely Supportable.-

Except the Arkansas, the Road does not cross a Single Stream that is an hundred feet wide (at or near the crossing) very few of them are half that idth, and none of them are deep, or difficult to cross; one only it has been found necessary to bridge, with poles and brushwood.-

The Arkansas flows over its Sandy bed, through a very broad, level, naked Valley; the Soil of which, is generally extremely fertile, having a Slight Saline impreghation, which Renders the pasturage peculiarly nutritious and inviting to the Buffaloes, of which great numbers Successively occupy it in their migratory passage to and from the upper Regions of the Missouri- The qualities of this pasturage are found also to agree well with the Horses, Mules & other animals used on the Road, Restoring them to health and vigor with Surprising Rapidity-

The Road Strikes the Arkansas (going westward) ten Miles below the extreme of the North bend, at the Mouth of Walnut Creek, in Lat: $38^{\circ} . 21' 10''$ North; and by the Survey, $271 \frac{1}{2} / 80$ Miles from Ft. Osage, and then pursues the course of the River, and never far from it, ~~having crossed about Twenty Miles below~~ about 170 Miles, to a large Island (in Lat: $37^{\circ} . 35' 18''$, where it finally leaves it, having crossed about Twenty Miles below.- In that distance, and for full 50 Miles below the North bend, the character of this River varies but very little indeed- It bears a uniform width of from 400 to 500 yards, a depth of from 18 Inches to 4 feet- a velocity of current $2 \frac{1}{4}$ Miles an hour- its bed Sand- banks

turbid, Sometimes filthy- channel crowded with Sand banks and Islets- forest growth very little, and that little chiefly on the Islets and is principally of the Species of poplar called Cotton Wood.-

Its annual floods occur in June, and ~~few--~~ frequently inundate much of the adjacent flat land- In its ordinary Stages, it may be crossed by carriages without the least difficulty, or a moment's delay-

At the mouth of the Walnut Creek, the Arkansas approaches within 20 Miles of the "Smoky Hill Fork" of the Kansas River, and if there is any point upon the Road within the Territory of the Union where a Small Military establishment might for a Short time be maintained at a great expense and for Some useful purpose in protecting the Trade, it is here- But the Commissioners cannot Recommend it-

Whether the "Smoky hill Fork" of the Kansas River is navigable- and to what extent, or how far it is capable of being made So, could not be ascertained- Except during its floods, the Arkansas has no navigation within 200 Miles of the North bend, or Walnut Creek.-

After leaving the Arkansas, there is a Striking difference in the general aspect of the Country- It is more broken, Sterile, Sandy and dry- Its features are more bold and various, especially after arriving within an Hundred Miles of the Mountains, when they become more and more grand and interesting-

The distance across the mountains is 34 64/ 80 Miles- of this about 10 Miles is Somewhat Rough & precipitous, the Rest is level enough; in fact, the greater portion of it is open and Rich Prairie- The forest growth on the Mountain Sides is chiefly Pine of various kinds, but thinly Scattered, and of very inferior Size and quality.-

On the whole distance, from the Western boundary of Missouri to the Village of San Fernando in New Mexico, the Road does not pass over any body of Woodland exceeding one Mile in depth; there is but one that exceeds 500 yards, and the whole united, (in a distance of

715 Miles) would not make a forest of three Miles in depth- Yet, good camping places are to be had, at convenient intervals, the whole way; with Water, fuel & pasturage, generally good and Sufficient-

From the Missouri to the Arkansas, with one or two exceptions only, Wood for fuel is abundant at the usual camping places; and the annual deposits of drift wood, furnish ample Supplies during the journey up the Arkansas- After leaving that river, there is, in some places, a deficiency of wood; but wherever this occurs, upon the whole journey, the Ordure of the Buffalo is found in great abundance which is a very excellent Substitute for wood, as fuel-

While in New Mexico, Mr. Sibley was able to ascertain, Satisfactorily Some facts, which, as they concern the utility of this Road, may be mentioned here without impropriety First- the Stream that issues from the Mountains North of Santa Fe, commonly called there "Rio Colorado", and which has been heretofore laid down on the Maps as a principal head branch of the Red River of Natchitoches, is now well ascertained to be the Main branch of Canadian that Runs into the Arkansas about forty Miles below Fort Gibson- The Canadian is navigable only a Short distance above its mouth; the whole River being frequently lost for miles together in the deep Sands-

Second- The Red River of Natchitoches has none of its Sources in the great Range of the Shining Mountains, as has been Supposed, nor is there any branch of that River that is navigable, even for canoes, within 300 Miles of Santa Fe or any of the Settlements of New Mexico-

Third- The Rio Grande del Norte does not, and will not probably for ages to come, afford any Safe or certain navigation, exceeding two hundred miles at most, upward from its mouth- In its whole course, from the mountains near Taos, to its entrance into the Gulf of Mexico, its channel is more or less choked with Rocks, Ripples, Sand banks &c.- Its tributaries are few and insignificant-

and this "great River of the North" as it is called, even if cleared of the innumerable obstructions in its channels, would only rank among the third or fourth class of Rivers in the United States.-

In fine, it may be safely asserted, that the nearest approaches that can be made to Santa Fe or the other Settlements of New Mexico, by Water, for the purposes of Commerce, are by the Missouri and Kansas Rivers, and the Gulf of California at Guaymas-

When the highway, now opened from Missouri to Santa Fe shall be cleared of the Pirates of the Plains, there is good reason to believe that the Trade between the two countries in that direction, will assume a character, & employ an amount of Capital, not only greatly advantageous to those immediately engaged in it, but beneficial in no trifling degree to some of the manufacturing interests of the United States.

With great Respect

we have the honor

to be Sir Yr. ⁺Cbt. Svts:

B. H. Reeves

G. C. Sibley

Thom. Mather

St. Charles, Missouri

October 27th. 1827.

It may be proper to State, that the Longitudes given in the preceding Report have been from necessity, deduced from the Results of the Survey westward from Ft. Osage, which place is assumed to be in $93^{\circ} 57' 58''$ upon the presumption that the Ranges of the Public Lands are correctly Surveyed between that point and the mouth of the Ohio River, where it is believed Mr. Ellicott fixed the Longitude accurately- This method of ^{ascertaining} Longitude, must obviously be attended with some uncertainty as to the Result- Great pains were taken however, to test the accuracy of the Survey and measurement by

observations- but, as these were taken by one observer only, with a Single Sextant, and by ^e common time, there is no Reason to Suppose that the Longitude has been accurately found in a Single instance, though it is probable they are all nearly correct-

As to the Latitudes, of which a great many parallels were taken at Remarkable points along the Survey & elsewhere, they are all believed to ^{be} critically true, and may be Relied on, having been taken with very great care, in the best manner and with the best Instruments.

The following Table exhibits Some of the Latitudes and Longitudes ascertained at Remarkable points on the Road from the Missouri to Sta. Fe in New Mexico.

Names of places	Latitude	Longitude	Miles	
Fort Osage, on the Missouri River	39°-10'-19''	95°-51-05		
West boundary of Missouri	38-54-28	94-17-22	31	31
Council Grove, Neosho	38-40-00	96-12-22	109	140
Diamond of the Plains, a Fount ⁿ .			17	157
Walnut Creek, N ^o . bend Ark: R.	38-21-10		114	271
Mulberry Cr: S ^o . Vend Ark: R.	37-38-52	99-about	83	354
U. S. & Mex ⁿ . boundary line	37-47-37	100-00-00	32	386
Chouteau's Island, Ark: River	37-53-18		59	445
Lower Semaron Spring	37-24-00		32	477
Upper Semaron Spring	36-51-40		73	550
Rabbit Ears (a detached Mtn.	36-33-00		45	595
Point of Rocks	36-25-42		47	642
Foot of great Mountain Range	36-10-20		69	711
San Fernando Village, in Taus	36-24-00	105-51-00	35	746
Santa Fee City	35-41-00	106-10-00	65	812

December 7th. 1827. St. Louis

Having completed the Acct^s. of disbursements and prepared duplicate Statements thereof (one for the Engineer & one for the Indian office) which Acct^s. Col^o. Reeves & I Signed on the 20th. Nov^r. (the date of the Acct^s.) Col. Mather this day met me at St. Louis and having also Signed the Acct^s. we put them up Securely and forwarded them by Mail to the Respective offices- At the Same time we forwarded two packages of Maps, Field Books, &c. &c. relating to the Survey-

The Acct^s, Show

Amt. Disbursed-----	\$34996.24
Amt. Refunded by Property Resold-----	3491.70
Net Amt expended-----	<u>31504.54</u>
Amt. expended over & above the appropriation, and now due to the Commissioners-----	<u>1504.54</u>
Appropriation-----	30000.00

Linden Wood January 2^d. 1832

This day I completed another Statement of the Comm^{rs}. Acct^s. Substantially the Same as those Rendered in Dec. 1827) accompanied by 124 Vouchers, which completely cover the whole Amt. of disbursements &c. charged to the Acct^t.- The Vouchers have been principally collected since June last, at considerable labour and expense- For the want of complete Vouchers, the Acct^s. of the Comm^{rs}, have never yet been Settled by the Gov^t:-

As Soon as I can travel it is my intention to go to Washington, for the purpose of adjusting & Settling those Accounts- This Step is Rendered necessary by the long delay that has taken place & the difficulties that have arisen in the matter- difficulties that can be very easily Removed by verbal explanations in my power to give, but which a volume of Letters might not effect- The journey is undertaken by the desire of Col^o. Reeves & Mather, who have agreed to pay each their pro

portion of the expense.- On this Acc^t. I have Received from Col^o. Reev
Reeves the Sum of \$98- (he Sent me a Virginia Note for \$100, which I
was obliged to allow 2 p Ct. disc^t on at St. Louis).-

G. C. S.

Lindenwe- Wood Feb^y. 18-1834.

Notwithstanding the effort personally made by me in June & July
1832 to Settle the Acc^{ts}. of the late Comm^{rs}. those Acc^{ts}. are not yet
Settled.

There Seems to be a determination on the part of the 3^d. Auditor t
to bring us into debt, when in fact there is a considerable Balance due
to us- The Papers on File on this Subject will Shew the Nature of our
claim and the grounds of Refusal to allow & pay it- I have this day
completed another Set of Documents, in Relation to those Acc^{ts}. and
enclosed them to Gen. W^m. H. Ashley with the Request to make another
attempt to effect a Settlement (See File N^o. 10) In the Papers now for
warded, I have been very careful to expose the " Whole Subject" and am
in great hopes, I Shall be Successful this time-

Apr: 2^d.

Rec^d. a Letter from Gen. Ashley dated 18th. May acknowledging
mine of 18 Feb^y, with Papers &c., and expressing a belief that a Set-
tlement will Soon be made of the Acc^{ts}.

April 30th.

Rec^d. a L^r, from Gen. Ashley dated 13th. Inst: enclosing copy of
a Note to him from the Sec. of War, Saying he had ordered the Pay^t. of
the Acc^t- Am^t, claimed by the late Comm^{rs}.

May 4th. 1834

Rec^d Letter from Peter Hagner 3^d. Aud. Saying that "the Treas^r.
of the U. S. will Remit me the Sum of \$1497.54, be ing the Am^t. due
the Commiss^{rs}. &c. and at Same time Received Com^t. from John Campbell
Treas^r. U. S. enclosing Treasury Warrant for the Sum above mentioned-

May 7th.

Presented the Treas. Warrant at the U. S. Br. Bank St. Louis & was told it could not be paid without the Receipts of Messrs. Reeves & Mather as well as my own- Thus this payment is again put off for a Month or So; for it will probably take that time to procure the Signatures of Reeves & Mat.

-101 June 13th. 1834

Having now obtained the Signatures of Messrs B. H. Reeves & Thos. Mather to the Rec^t. or Order on the Treas. Warrant Referred to above, together with my own Signature, the Warrant was this day presented at the Bank at S^t. Louis for paym^t. by Mr. Edw^d. Tracy (to whom it was made payable) and payment made thereon, to Am^t \$1497.54- being the full Am^t. claimed by the late Comm^{rs}. from The U. S. in Settlement of their Acct^s.- The Whole of which Sum being due to G. C. Sibley individually, as appears by the Statement of his Settled Acct on File N^o. 9.

So that the whole of this Business of the Road to New Mexico is at length Finally and fully Settled.

G. C. Sibley

July 20th.

Wrote to Pter Wagner 3^d. Aud. acknowledging Rec^t. of the Bal^e \$1497.54- See Copy of my Letter among the Papers.

G. C. Sibley.