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THE IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY AND POLITICS
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XXXVII

JOURNAL OF CYRUS SANDERS

[Cyrus Sanders was born in Ohio on September 28, 1817, and came to Johnson County, Iowa Territory, in 1839. As his journal indicates he was interested in farming and surveying. He died in Johnson County on April 24, 1887. His journal is printed from a small notebook preserved among his papers for almost a century.—THE EDITOR.]

December 6th 1838

Launched my frail bark upon the tempestuous ocean of this wide world, with a firm resolution to sink or swim,—with just \$100 in my pocket, I started in the Mail Stage for Cinⁱ. arrived there safe in the evening — Left there on the afternoon of the 7th, on board the Steam Boat Othello, bound for the mouth of the Ohio, run 19 miles stuck fast on a sand-bar was detained all night, got off next morning, run 50 or 60 miles stuck on Warsaw bar detained all night and next day untill 4 O clock P. M. then run 7 miles and laid up for the night started next morning and run down to Madison found the river frozen over Laid up one mile above town where we are lying at this time December 11th without any prospect of getting away by water.

Decem. 12th Left Madison for Louisville, stuck fast on a bar 15 miles above Louisville detained all night run down to Louisville next day, lay there all night.— Dec. 14th Find Louisville to be not quite so fine a city as I expected, although it is quite a business place, saw more omnibusses and hacks there than I ever saw anywhere else, saw the Louisville R. R. the first I ever saw, it is a much more contemptible looking piece of work than I expected to find it. We found it impossible to get down the Ohio river any further in consequence of the low stage of water. Took passage in the stage for Vincennes passed through New

Albany which is a beautiful town thence, with a new turnpike, up a hill of stupendous height — the road in many places appears to be cut 30 or 40 feet through solid rock and in other places there are fills of 40 to 50 feet all of fragments of rock blown or quarried from the side of the hill at an immense expence of labour —

From the top of this hill we had the most beautiful and extended view my eyes ever beheld, at the distance of 7 miles was the City of Louisville with the smoke curling up gracefully from its thousand chimnies — and on the opposite side of the Ohio we could see Jeffersonville — then within three miles of us we had a distinct view of the beautiful City of New Albany together with many miles of the surrounding country.

We took supper that night within a few miles of Paoli our Landlords name was Chambers,— when we went into supper (which by the by was an excellent one) I soon found out our Landlady was a Friend (Quaker) and after some conversation, to our mutual satisfaction, I found out we were almost akin to each other she being the step-daughter of Aunt Martha Lindley. She knew a great many of my relations and made a great deal of inquiry about them, and invited me very kindly to stay with them a while and visit aunt Martha Lindley who lived in two miles of them.

Passed Paoli in the night rode all night.

December 15th.

Being tolerable cold weather we kept the Coach shut up consequently had no chance to see the country, Breakfasted on venison crossed White river (western branch) in the afternoon and passed through some of the best looking bottom land I ever saw I supposed the bottom to be 2 miles wide — arrived at Vincennes about 7 O clock P. M.

had no opportunity to see the Town as we took Stage at ten O clock P. M. for Salem Illinois rode all night again.

December 16th. Took Breakfast at a very dirty place had nothing but venison and Corn Bread, Our Landlord told many tough hunting stories among which he said he believed he had killed between 3 and 4 thousand deer in his life—began to pass through prairie saw the first Prairie Chicken I ever saw—Passed through one Prairie 12 miles across also several little Villages and arrived at Salem after dark—Concluded to rest awhile, as we had rode two nights without sleeping any, stayed all night—

December 17th.

Stayed all day at Salem and done nothing—

December 18th.

Concluded to take it afoot to Vandalia a distance of 27 miles, as the stage to Jacksonville will not start untill the 21st which is to bring on our baggage. Walked 13 miles. Stayed all night at a house kept by a man of the name of Foster who is a member of the Legislature. I think my descriptive faculties are adequate to the task of describing this house and its accommodations, but I dare not do it, lest it be thought exageration—

December 19th.

Walked 3 miles took breakfast at a house which I could describe if I had described the house we stayed at last night, by saying it was more so. Froze one of my ears crossing Prairies this morning—arrived at Vandalia in the afternoon, found it just about such a town as New Lexington H. Co. Ohio.

Went up into the Senate and House of Representatives, where all the combined talent of the Sucker State is collected. Found them both very august bodies in appearance,

but as there was nothing of importance transacting did not stay long, put up at the Vandalia Inn kept by a Buckeye

December 20th.

Early in the morning I walked down to the Mansion House and just as I walked in saw a man step out who looked very much like J. [illegible] Corbett formerly of Hillsboro.

Made inquiry and found out he was clerk in the largest store in town,

Paid him a visit, had some confidential talk with him. He bore no marks of a drinking man, told me he had not tasted a drop of Spirits since he came to the place, which was in last June. He was dressed neatly and is considered here a respectable man. He asked me, not to tell his character in the place. I promised him I would not, as I felt very sorry for the fellow, and was very much pleased to see him doing so well.— Spent the principal part of the day in the Hall of the Legislature as there was a very important question up respecting the Election of State officers out of their own body.

Paid my stage fare to Jacksonville to start tomorrow at 12 O'clock —

December 21st.

Found a fellow who lives in London, Madison Co. O. who carried the flag staff for me on the Jefferson and Xenia Turnpike. He keeps a Roulett Table and Faro Bank by which he makes from 15 to 20 dollars per day

Started about 12 O'clock in the Stage for Jacksonville traveled 28 miles (most of the way through Prairie) to Hillsboro which is a beautiful little town, put up for the night

December 22d.

Got up at 1 O'clock in the morning and started after hav-

ing slept none during the night in consequence of being very sick. It is extremely cold this morning and we were put into an open Waggon. I got much worse soon after we started, never suffered more in my life than I did riding that rout of 18 miles which took us to Leesburg, found myself unable to go any further although I was at one of the dirtiest places I ever saw

I have one particular fault to find of the cooking of this country that is they do not use water enough about it.— Parted from Ridgeway here, Went to bed without any breakfast slept a little. got up about noon felt much better but still felt very unwell, had no appetite to eat any thing but could not have eaten if I had; every thing about the house looked so nasty. Had a considerable touch of the blues for the first time since I left home —

If any thing will give a man the *Blues* it is to be sick 500 miles from home at such a place as I am at, where every body is strangers.

Took some pills, but did not feel much better untill Christmas morning when I walked up to a store close by, saw a dozen or two drunken men,— Passed a very disagreeable Christmas, and at night 23 hog drivers came in and crowded me out, had to go after night to another Tavern to get lodging which was not much better than the one I left.

December 29th.

Felt well enough to start again this morning the weather being severely cold I froze one side of my face and both my big-toes crossing the grand Prairie — arrived at Jacksonville a little before dark it is the most flourishing town I have seen in the State of Illinois it has about 2500 inhabitants — staid there all night —

December 30th

I ascertained this morning that the Beardstown Stage

would not leave untill to-morrow morning. Concluded to walk on, paid my trunk fare and started. Walked 16 miles to Munroe took up for the night — found a fellow here by the name of Brooks from Rattlesnake Prairie Ohio, who is keeping Grocery —

December 31st.

Got to ride in a waggon to Rushville, ferried the Illinois river at Beardstown which is a small unhealthy looking town, Arrived at Rushville a little before night — Rushville is a thrifty looking town with about 1200 inhabitants — Left it to the care of the Landlord at Beardstown to forward my trunk by tomorrow's Stage —

New Years' day

Paid my Stage fare to Macomb — and gave the driver 2 bits to wait untill the Beardstown Stage came with my trunk, And Lo! it came minus trunk have to wait 3 days on expense to get my trunk, and if I ever get it again I intend to stick by it — feel rather bad about my situation as my money is disappearing very fast, did not enjoy New year's day as well as I could wish

January 2d. 1838.—

Have nothing worth saying of the transactions of today. The weather geting quite mild and mud becoming plenty, which in this country is almost as black as Jet.

I have travelled 254 miles in the State of Illinois and have not seen any land that I like very well, and think still less of the people generally, they seem to have no consciences for when ever they can take advantage of a person to get his money they take it with a vengeance without any regard to his being a citizen or stranger —

Begin to think it a bad place to make a fortune, too many fortune seekers here already —

Done nothing but look about to day, feel restless in con-

sequence of having nothing to do, penned the foregoing just to be doing something and can think of nothing more to say,—dnt see how authors can write a whole volume on the transactions of a single evening and make it all interesting too, when I cannot write three pages interesting matter in four weeks traveling through the most picturesque and romantic scenery in the world

However if I improve everyday as I have done to day there is no cause for discouragement —

Just as I finished writing the above, two waggoners called to stay all night and after eating their suppers they came into the Bar-room where I was busily engaged in conversation with a boarder and I heard one of them say he would speak to that man from Ohio as soon as he got through with his story which caused me to look round immediately and there sat Joel Terrell and James Woodmansee, who were then on their way from St. Louis to Burlington with salt —

January 3d

Was very much pleased by receiving my trunk in this morning's Stage together with a very polite note from G. Van-ness, Landlord at Beardstown, apologising for his neglect.

January 4th.

Left Rushville for Macomb in the Stage arrived at M a little before night, found that the stage running from Macomb to Burlington had stopped running.

January 5th

Heard that J Terrell and J. W. staid all night within 9 miles of Macomb so I hired a boy to take me to overtake them which we done about 12 miles from Macomb travelled on with them staid all night at an excellent house 10 miles from Burlington

Jan 6th.

Arrived at Burlington in the afternoon when I came in sight of the town and the majestic Mississippi, being alone (I having walked on ahead of the waggons) I drew of my hat and waved it joyfully in the air — crossed the river on the ice, put up at the Burlington House where I found Governor Lucas Jesse Williams and most of the members of the Legislature boarding

Remained at Burlington 8 days, wrote a letter home and one to A. S. Ridgway one to J. M. Sanders, also wrote to the Surveyor General of Wisconsin and Iowa Ter. (and accompanied my letter by recommendations from Gov. Lucas and J. Williams) for the place of deputy.

Visited the Legislature and council several times during its sittings

January 14th.

Inquired what my bill was "Twelve dollars sir" was the answer, thought to myself I had better been off sooner. Started on foot on an excursion through the interior with \$20.00 in my pocket

Got lost in the Prairie and wandered about the principal part of the day but arrived at night at the house of — Avery County Surveyor of Des Moines applied to him for the place of deputy, could not employ me as he had just employed one —

One circumstance which took place whilst I was in Burlington I forgot to mention in the proper place — I was seized one morning soon after breakfast with a violent toothache which I bore not very patiently about 15 minutes then with some trepidation, fearing the awful consequences of having a tooth extracted I walked down to a Dentists, who gave it as his grave opinion that it must be *pulled*.

My fear not being sufficient to stop the pain I just took a seat and he drew one of the largest teeth I had, which

brought a large piece of the jaw-bone with it — The operation in comparison, was not more than a pin scratch, to what I expected —

The next thing I done was just to fork over one dollar and walk off.

January 15th

Started on for the Quaker settlement in Salem Township after walking about 10 miles felt quite hungry so stopped at a cabin and got a piece of cold corn bread for which I had nothing to pay which was the first mouthful I have eat since I left Cincinnati without paying for it generally at a pretty dear rate — walked 16 miles to day stayed all night at the house of a Scotchman, at meal time the old Father of the family said the most devout grace I ever heard although in such broad scotch I could understand but very little of it. Almost every circumstance whilst there reminded me of Burns description of the "Cotters Saturday night."

January 16th.

Again started on my tramp by way of West Point when there I was told I would have to pass through 15 miles of Prairie before reaching the next house. Took a dinner of Corn bread and Buttermilk and started across the Prairie about noon; arrived at Salem about dark, nearly worn out and exhausted Could not help thinking over the pleasures of home In fact I believe I felt a little home-sick, but where I put up, there was a number of young people collected for the purpose of a spelling match, so I joined in with them and soon forgot my cares.— walked 20 miles to day — The soil from Burlington to Salem is of the best quality but good timber in some places is rather unhandy. Skunk river which I crossed is an excellent mill stream and in most places stone of a superior quality is to be found in

abundance. The Prairie is rolling interspersed with streams of clear pure water.

January 21st

Came to the conclusion to remain in the vicinity of Salem so commenced boarding at Dr. Fraziers

Went to Burlington and got my trunk, the weather being severely cold I remained here 3 weeks and done nothing.

February 7th.

Done some surveying the first I have done in the Territory of Iowa from that time untill the present March 5th I have been busily employed and have had the good luck to please my employers well — The 20th. of February was employed by a man to run off a part of the boundary line of the late purchase, started on our novel excursion with a waggon laden with provisions bedding and so forth

Feb 21st Commenced operations run 9 miles across the most beautiful prairie I ever saw —

Feb 22. continued our running the principal part of the day through the thickest woods I ever saw during which time the rain fell in torrents in the afternoon, although nearly worn out with fatigue, I started on foot for home with my saddle bags of instruments on my shoulder the rain still continued and night overtook me in the prairie walked on untill 10 O clock at night before I arrived at a house to stay all night, got something to eat went to bed. The bedsteads were made of forks drove in the ground and poles laid on them. And as there was some 2 or 3 children packed up spoon fashion with me our rickety bedsteads were well loaded. but notwithstanding that I slept soundly untill near day when I made an attempt to turn over and down went the bedsteads with a tremendous crash to the ground (for there was no floor in the house) and tumbled me on the children who raised a great crying and

I raised a great laughing however with the assistance of my landlord I soon got things adjusted and took another nap, before morning when I arose and paid my bill, which amounted to the incredible sum of one "bit" i.e. 12½ cents —

Feb 23d.

Walked home, a distance of 25 miles the greatest days walk I ever done which made me extremely tired in consequence of the roads being very muddy.—

March 6th.

Visited an old Gentleman who was one of the pioneers of the County was very agreeably entertained with his stories of frontier adventures and his observations on men and manners — And when about to leave he very feelingly remarked that he had sought this opportunity to inform me that he wished me at all times to consider his house as a retreat and home, especially in any case of necessity or if I should be so unfortunate as to be sick, and says he do not feel the least reserve in accepting my invitation for I feel it my duty to act so towards those who are strangers in a strange land, for none of us know how soon we may have sons placed in the same situation who may need the assistance of others —

I must acknowledge that no circumstance ever made me feel more gratitude, than I did at this time towards this old man whose friendship seemed so disinterested.— did not do much untill — March 11th. Started to Burlington on foot walked 30 miles staid all night —

March 12 Went to Burlington received 2 letters from my father which is the first time I have heard from home since I left — They gave me extreme pleasure as I never before was so long without hearing from home.— Gov. Lucas and

J. Williams having just returned from Johnson County give the country there a good name formed a resolution to go there and make a claim.— had a severe storm of thunder and rain.

March 13th. Walked home a distance of 35 miles.

All fool's day. April 1st. 1839. I have not done much since writing the last page in consequence of the weather being very rainy and disagreeable — in observing the weather and climate here minutely I cannot perceive any material difference from what it is in Highland Co. Ohio.

I intend leaving here for the northern part of the Territory on to morrow. though it is with great regret that I leave the neighbourhood having become very much attached to the citizens and I have reason to believe that I have become a favorite to them. The friendship and favours bestowed upon me since being here I shall ever remember with pleasure and gratitude. I have here found what I once thought could not be found that is people of intelligence with open hearts whose every intention and feeling were not concealed and hid from others by a mist of deception and hypocrisy — but I will not branch out in a digression upon human nature unless I was more capable of managing the subject, but had I the powers of a Wirt¹ to wield the pen or could put down my ideas and thoughts so that others could feel them as I do I am sure I could be as interesting and as eloquent as a Wirt or a Henry for I have such fit subjects. But Alas! I never felt my inability and deficiency in expressing myself, so forcibly as at the present time

April 2d.

Bid farewell to the people of Salem settlement, and to the family where I boarded, which seemed like leaving an-

¹ Probably William Wirt, an American lawyer who died in 1834.

other home, and started about 11 O clock on foot with heavy loaded saddle-bags for Johnson County; walked about twenty miles, feel very tired, took up at the house of Esqr. Coop² who is a member of the Legislature

April 3d.

Walked 5 miles to breakfast, continued my pilgrimage passed through the pleasant Prairie the Rich woods and Yankey Prairie, crossed Skunk river at Pickerel's mill saw the remains of an Indian Village also saw several Indians and had a talk with them or rather tried to have a talk with them.— Walked 20 miles to day took up for the night at the house of — Moreland was very kindly entertained and in the morning he refused to take any pay for my accommodation, made his wife a present of half a dollar and started on my journey April 4th.

Was directed to travel N. E. untill I came to an indian trail which I was to follow across a Prairie about 7 miles wide, to a settlement soon after I started it commenced raining, could find nothing of my Indian trail but soon acertaind that I was lost, took out my compass and set it and steered my course accordingly after travelling this course about ten miles I came to a house on Crooked creek where I was informed that I was one mile and a half from the Indian trail and that I would have to travel to the mouth of English river a distance of 16 miles across prairie before I could reach a house. It was now noon but I resolved to try crossing the prairie at all hazzards so fell into the Indian trail and struck up a lively gait which I kept up untill nearly night when weary and exhausted I saw the sun fast sinking below the western horizon and no better prospect than to lie in the open air and fast; whilst indulging myself in a train of unpleasant reflections I saw far to my right hand something which appeared to be a cabin, so

² William G. Coop.

I steered my course for it not knowing whether it was the habitation of whites or Indians, on arriving there I found it was where a Doctor Teeple lived I called for something to eat and there was soon a sumptuous repast prepared which I dispatched with a voracious appetite, every thing about the cabin looked neat and clean and from appearances the family had been accustomed to high life — I had traveled 25 miles this day and the rest which I now took was the most exquisite enjoyment I ever experienced, I thought to myself who would regret such toils and hardships when they make the enjoyment which follow so exquisite —

April 5th.

Started on to Napoleon arrived there a little while before night found it a place beautifully situated on the Iowa river with one miserable hut in it took up quarters there

April 6th

Went down the river $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles to a trading house kept by the American fur company saw a great many Indians —

April 7th.

Started out a claim hunting with a fellow by the name of McBaker went to a claim which he had made on the 6th of March and found that a man by the name of Starr had jumped it and got it recorded. Could find no other claims to suit us returned to Napoleon after having walked 25 miles.—

April 8th. I bought one half of McBakers old claim of him. Came to the conclusion that we would go out and Survey it off and that I should go to work on my half of it, and defend it from Starr. Started out but the day being very rainy got nothing done to day stayed all night at Jones'.

April 9th.

Surveyed out our claim and got it recorded and returned to Napoleon

April 10th

Went down to the trading house found several hundred Indians camped near it visited several lodges and among the rest that of one of their chiefs and took a smoke with him he appeared very friendly and would often repeat Nish-a-shin Moco-man (i e good White man). bought a buckskin to face my pantaloons and a pair of shoes

April 11th.

Worked all day facing my pantaloons

April 12th.

Finished my pantaloons about noon when the Sheriff came along and invited me to go with him to summons the first Jurors that were ever summoned in Johnson County it being a good chance to see the country and get acquainted with the people I of course went along, it took us two days to complete our circuit —

April 14th.

Went and engaged boarding with a couple of bachelors within 2 miles of my claim

April 15th.

Commenced work on my claim — this is the first labour I have done in Iowa blistered my hands but persevered.— Worked on my claim all this week with the exception of one day I spent making me a claim of 320 acres of Prairie and 80 acres of timber, found an Indian axe

April 21st.

Went a Bee-hunting but found no Bees.—

April 22d. Went out and marked out my claims more

distinctly and went to the Recorder's.³ April 23d. Got my claim recorded and returned home —

April 24th.

Worked on a mill-dam. Worked the rest of the week on my claim got 6 acres cleared off ready for ploughing and some rail timber cut

I feel quite lonesome as I have no books or papers to read, Yet there is a charm or novelty, in wandering thro' woods where the foot of a white man has never trod, which has something pleasing connected with it.

Where you can see the deer and Turkies fleeing before you and occasionally a sneaking wolf cross your path,—

As I have nothing else to do I will give a description of the manner in which I am living here, which is a pretty fair sample of the manner in which the majority of the people of this county live — I am boarding with two Bachelors who live in a little log hut, for beds we have 3 or 4 blankets one to lie on and the rest to cover with, for furniture 3 stools to sit on and a domestick table, for cupboard ware and cooking utensils 4 plates, 3 knives and forks, one iron spoon, one saucer, 4 tin cups, and a Bucket, skillet oven & coffee-pot; for eatables plenty of cornbread and meat, honey coffe and sometimes beans and as for washing we carry our clothes from 3 to 7 miles, or wash them ourselves as many of the Bachelors do.

³ The claim was recorded with the Johnson County Claim Association of which Sanders was a member. His description of the claim reads as follows: "The following is a description of a claim which I have made in Johnson County Iowa Territory beginning at a Stake in the Prairie about one half mile N E of a grove claimed by E Hurley and L Douglass thence North One mile to a Stake thence East one half mile to a Stake thence south one mile to a Stake near the N. E. extremity of a small grove thence west ½ mile to the beginning Also Eighty acres of Timber lying ½ mile west of aforsaid claim & bounded by E Hurleys claim on the south said claim is distinctly marked out and the initials of my name marked on Oak Trees at each Corner April 22d 1839".—Shambaugh's *Constitution and Records of the Claim Association of Johnson County*, p. 46.

April 28th. 1839.

* * * * *

May 24th

Nothing of importance has occurred since writing the above —

I have done some more work on my claim but have been at work the principal part of the time for the Bachelors with whom I am boarding —

The commissioners appointed for that purpose by our Legislature have located the Seat of Government⁴ within 5 miles of my claim —

The weather has been remarkably fine this spring, for all kinds of vegetation — The soil in this part of the Territory is of the best quality and plenty of springs of good pure water, Yet there is one great objection to the country which at present appears to be an insurmountable obstacle to its becoming densely settled that is the Prairies are too large or in other words the timber is not well distributed But emigrants are pouring in great numbers —

May 25th.

Went up the Iowa about 8 miles on an excursion to see the country when I returned I learned that J Williams had called to see me and had some letters for me —

May 26th

Started to Chase's 7 miles down the river to see J. W., met him & Van Antwerp. They immediately dismounted delivered me a package of six letters and drew forth a bottle of Brandy and we drank a toast to Johnson County I believe I was never better pleased to see an old acquaintance, not having seen the face of an acquaintance for nearly three months — We came to the conclusion to take a trip up the Iowa river returned home took dinner and started, — went 8 miles and took up for the night —

⁴ See Shambaugh's *Iowa City: A Contribution to the Early History of Iowa.*

May 27th.

Started on and after traveling 3 or 4 miles Col. Williams' horse fell down with him in a creek and gave him a complete ducking, got to a house about 10 O clk it being the frontier house we called for dinner after which we traveled on to the Indian village where we arrived about the middle of the afternoon completely drenched as it had rained all day We visited most of the Indian Wic-i-ups [?] amongst the rest that of Pow-a-shaik the chief and White-hawk. they treated us very friendly gave us sugar to eat in abundance, and their pipes and tobacco to smoke

I was invited by Whitehawk to take a game of chequers with him accepted the invitation and beat him he then offered to play for money which I refused to do, so J Williams sat down and played several games with him at 12½ cents a game but lost every game —

May 28th.

Crossed the Iowa river, and returned on the other side down to Napoleon

I have been tortured with the tooth-ache for several days but on this evening it became so severe that I could scarcely bear it — In the language of Burns it seemed as if it was

“Tearing my nerves wi bitter pang
Like racking engines”

I slept none all night and do not know that I ever remember suffering as much

May 29th.

Started early in the morning down to English river to the nearest doctor (nearly 20 miles) to get my tooth drawn. arrived there about noon had my tooth extracted which gave me relief greater than I have powers to describe returned to Judge Harris' six miles and staid all night —

May 30th.

Returned home

* * * * *

June 23d

Nothing of importance has happened since writing the foregoing Got 2 acres of ground broke on my claim and planted it with potatoes, corn, beans and watermelons, finished planting the 13th. of June —

* * * * *

July 4th. 1839.

Attended a celebration held on the ground where the capitol of Iowa is to stand —

There was a very appropriate oration delivered by Gen. John Frierson and a dinner of which about one hundred persons partook; the festivities of the day were enjoyed with the greatest hilarity and good feeling by all that were present and nothing occurred throughout the day to mar their enjoyment

How pleasant to stand and in imagination take a peep into futurity Here where I am standing in a little while will the Capitol of a mighty state rear its sculptured columns; whose walls will reverbrate with the eloquence of some future Henry which will hold entranced his admiring thousands. Yes here! where there is nothing now to be seen but the towering oak and beautiful undulating Prairie will perhaps in some future day rise a majestic City —

July 5th.

Worked all day cutting saw logs — July 6th

Sick all day —

July 7 Still very unwell

“ 8 Felt considerable better concluded to walk down to the seat of Government Elected county Sur-

veyor got 45 votes 51 votes polled⁵ got employment in assisting to lay off the town — continued at that about 2 weeks when I was employed by Gen. John Frierson to assist him in Surveying a contract of 2 townships of government surveying — Continued with him untill the 24th. of August when I was taken with a very severe attack of the billious fever and for about a week my life was almost despaired of during this time I knew what it was to suffer from inconvenience and neglect, as I had to lie in a house without any doors or windows. the gable-ends and cracks between the logs were all open — here I lay without any attendance and would probably have died had not a kind neighbour have taken me to his house where I soon commenced mending And I now find myself just able to walk about although very weak September 17th.

September 24th.

Started on foot for Henry County, walked 9 miles to Judge Harris' and staid all night

Sep. 25 Walked 16 miles to Basey's felt very tired staid all night

“ 26 Travelled 20 miles. Ten of which were across prairie without any road — Stopped at the house of a man of the name of Farris

“ 27 Walked 10 miles to Travis Emery's, staid in Salem settlement and shook with the Ague evry two or three days untill the 20th. of October when I went with W^m. C. Johnson and Abner Johnson to Burlington

Oct. 22 Took passage on a Steam Boat for Bloomington, arrived there about dark —

⁵ In the original manuscript notebook this statement is written along the margin.

Oct. 23 Walked to Iowa City A distance of 32 miles —

Oct. 24 Went up to my old place of boarding, had a considerable touch of the *horrors* for which I had good reason as I have been sick two months and during that time have spent all my earnings amounting to seventy dollars — but I console myself by concluding that misfortunes are unavoidable and perhaps it is all for the best — therefore I will make the best of it come what may and if I do not succeed it shall not be my fault —

Oct 25 Dug potatoes

“ 26 Quite rainy; penned the two foregoing pages —

Nov 1st. Commenced work for S. B. Mulholland, cutting rail timber at 40 cents per hundred —

Nov 4th. Set in cold weather the first snow fell — this day our Legislature meets — I set up all night with Samuel Bumgardner, Nov 5 S. B. died this morning —

Nov 6th Cut rail timber

Nov 7th Helped pull down a mans house who had jumped a claim⁶

Nov 8 Tended saw-mill

“ 9th. Surveyed for C Jones

“ 11 Surveyed for W. Jones

“ 12 Surveyed for Hill & Mathews

13th Tended saw-mill all this week

Nov 18th. Commenced cutting rail timber again —

Dec 3d. Cut and split 100 rails

4th. Ditto

⁶This was a house built by a man named Crawford who had “jumped” a claim entered by William Sturgis. For an account of the incident see Shambaugh's *Constitution and Records of the Claim Association of Johnson County*, pp. xv, xvi.

5th Ditto It has just been one year to day since I left home — made a calculation of what funds I have and find I have just \$7.50 So from this it appears that I have not made much clear money this year as I started from home with \$100.00 but as I enjoy good health at this time hope keeps my spirits buoyant as air — think I will make more money the coming year if I can have my health —

Dec. 9th Bought a lot and house in Iowa City

December 30th.

Nothing of importance has occurred since writing the foregoing. as I have spent most of the time splitting rails — Started in a sleigh for Burlington found it the coldest day I ever traveled, staid all night at Blakes in the fork of Iowa and Cedar rivers —

Dec. 31st Weather more moderate stayed all night at Morrisons in 15 miles of Burlington

January 1st. 1840 —

Arrived at Burlington about 1 O'clock P. M.

Jan 2d Left Burlington for home again stayed all night at [illegible].

Jan 3d Traveled 27 miles stayed all night at Dollarhides

Jan 4 Arrived at home

Jan 6th. Bought a claim of A. D. Stephen for which I paid him \$800.00 —

It has been just one year to day since I entered this Territory at Burlington

Jan 7th

Spent the day appraising the property belonging to the estate of S. Bumgardner —

Jan. 8th. Commenced making rails on my new claim

* * * * *

Feb 25. Continued making rails the principal part of the time since writing the above — heard the news of our land coming into market in May next resolved to go to Ohio —

March 7th Started to Ohio went to Bloomington —

March 9 Waiting at Bloomington for a Steamboat—1 O'clock P. M. the Steam Boat Des Moine arrived took passage in her for St Louis run down to Burlington and lay there all night —

March 10. Stopped very often to take in freight and passengers

March 11th Arrived at St Louis soon after dark. found no Steam Boat bound for Cincinnati until the day after tomorrow —

March 12. Engaged passage on the Boat Tribune Starts tomorrow at 10 O'clock A M — Spent the day in looking round the City of St. Louis which is beautifully situated and I think it destined to become the Greatest City of the west — In the afternoon attended a whig meeting held in the court house There was several good speeches delivered, one by a gentleman from Illinois, introduced by the name of Ned Baker, was the best speech I ever heard of the kind

March 13th. Got started for Cincinnati about 11 O'clock A M and we are now running at the rate of 15 miles per hour

March 14th. Entered the Mouth of the Ohio river about 7 [?] O'clock in the morning — had good luck and continued running until —

March 16. Arrived at Louisville about 1 O'clock A M. and left there about 9 A. M.

March 17. Arrived at Cincinnati the pride of my native

state about 1. O'clock A. M. Left the Boat early in the morning and once more with pride and pleasure traversed the familiar walks of the "Queen of the West." Accidentally met with my father there —

March 18th Started home visited several of my friends and relations on the way and arrived at home on the —

20th. of March after an absence of more than fifteen months —

April 8th. I have spent the time since writing the above, at home and visiting my friends and relations who all appeared rejoiced to see me.— In fact I do not recollect ever spending 19 days more happily, but such happiness is transient — So now the 8th. of April has arrived and I am compelled again to bid all my friends farewell — Started with Father for Cincinnati, felt very unwell in the afternoon stayed all night at C. Hiatt's

April 9. Felt better went to G. Butterworth's —

April 10th Had a shake of the ague continued unwell for several days remained here untill

April 20th. Before I felt well enough to leave during which time I had the greatest kindness shown me — Walked 16 miles to Batavia —

April 21 Rode down to Cincinnati in the Stage

April 22d. Got my freight ready and took passage on the S. B. Fort-Pitt for Bloomington My feelings on leaving Cincinnati can be better imagined than described I always feel on leaving the landing there as though I was then leaving my native country — or launching upon the world among strangers — However we are puffing away down the river at a merry rate so I will try to dissipate the gloom that is coming over my feelings

April 23d. Arrived at Louisville early in the morning — the Fort Pitt got dissappointed in getting a load of Freight and so concluded to return to Pittsburg — had to reship on Board the Tiber bound for St. Louis tomorrow —

April 24th. Left Louisville about 1 O'clock P. M. stopped at Shippingsport to take in some passengers, whilst there the Kentucky Giant (Porter) came on board the boat, I consider him one of the greatest curiosities I ever beheld —

Whilst I was at Cincinnati I was honoured with an introduction to Gen. Harrison but I would rather have seen Porter, than had half a dozen such Introductions

April 25th. Nothing of importance occurred during the day — formed some acquaintance with a very interesting girl from Maryland, and having taken a seat beside her on the guards I managed to spend the evening very agreeably —

April 26th. Passed Smithland at the Mouth of Cumberland river early this morning. Spent another hour or two, very agreeably, chatting with my little Maryland girl — Entered the Mississippi about noon

April 27th — To day being a beautiful day I spent the principal part of the day, in sitting out on the guards viewing the beautiful scenery of the west bank of the river and conversing with Henrietta Malotte

April 28th. Arrived at St. Louis a little before day — I here parted from my sociable fair one with much regret on my part

After some search found Milt Sanders here went with him to the theatre in the evening and saw Eaton in Richard. 3d.

April 29. Some fellow stole my Ague medicine — wish he may shake with the Ague untill he needs it.

Took passage on the S. B. Volant for Bloomington

April 30th. puff! puff!!

May 1st. Got to the rapids, had to walk round them, and as there was about 200 of us we had a jolly time of it—

May 2 Got to Burlington and heard the news of the land sales being postponed remained in Burlington several hours then left for Bloomington⁷ —

May 3 Arrived at Bloomington before daylight the rain pouring down in torrents put up at Parvin's rained all day

May 4. Took the Stage for Iowa City arrived there about 3. P. M. found all my associates and acquaintances glad to see me — visited around untill —

May 9. Took the Ague and had it evry day for a week then went to putting up fence as soon as I was able

June. 1st. Started out on a surveying expedition was gone one week —

June 10. Had a slight chill of the Ague —

June 11.— Done a very hard days work surveying had my trunks moved to Morse's about 6 miles from Iowa City and comenced keeping Bachelors hall in partnership with E. K. Morse and intend improveing my claim

June 12. Had the severest shake of the Ague I ever had was unable to sit up any during the day —

June 13. In bed all day taking medicine —

June 14. Intolerable hard Ague

“ 15. Taking medicine

“ 16 Had a shake I shall not soon forget —

⁷ Later Muscatine.

June 17. Feel much better I am now taking quinine and flatter myself I shall have no more ague untill next time —

June 18th. Health improving.

June 19th Started out on a visit, ate a great many strawberries which are just in their prime, took tea at G. [?] Hills stayed all night at Felkner's & Myeres' —

June 20th. Went down to Iowa City received \$100.00 of W^m Jayne for a claim which I paid over to A. D. Stephen; had a fine shower of rain the first since planting.

June 21. Returned home.

June 22. Took my ease.

June 23d. Started on horseback on an expedition through Linn County, forded Cedar river and stayed all night at Esquire Abbey's —

June 24. Find a part of Linn County as handsome country as I have seen in the Territory, returned through a part of Cedar County, recrossed Cedar river and returned home —

June 25 Had high fever all day

June 26th and 27th. Had fever followed by Ague sweats

June 28th. Health some better though almost discouraged feel some hope that I may regain good health again.—

July 3d. Done nothing the past week except go to town once. I am regaining my health rapidly —

July 4th.— Attended the celebration of American Independence at Iowa City, and also the laying of the corner stone of the State House of Iowa —

We had a fine Oration and an excellent dinner of which about 300 persons partook.

July 21 I have done nothing of importance since writing the foregoing, except taking good care of my health — Walked down to the City to day and done some surveying for John Abel —

July 22d. Hoed potatoes —

“ 23d. Commenced the survey of a county road from Iowa City up Clear Creek —

July 24 Finished survey of said road —

July 25 Walked back to Iowa City — and rode in a waggon from there home and got soaked with rain

July 26. Rested from the labours of the week —

July 27. Alone all day, done some writing and mowed some hay, I feel as if I had regained good health

July 28 and 29 Done nothing of any consequence —

July 30 Started to Dubuque to the Land-sales,^s in company with four waggon loads of merry fellows drove 25 miles and camped out.

July 31st Drove to the falls of Moquoqueta river stayed all night with M Lupton —

August. 1st. Arrived at Dubuque about noon.

August 2. Went to church heard a chipeway Indian Preach —

August 3 bought half section of Land —

August 4th Visited the Lead mines and Furnaces

August 5th. Started home.

^s On July 10, 1840, Cyrus Sanders had been appointed assistant bidder for the claims in Township 79 N. Range 6 west, entered with the Claim Association of Johnson County.

“ 7th. Arrived at Iowa City August 10 Commenced subdividing the out lots of Iowa City.

August 11 Had a shake of the Ague which lasted more than three hours.

August 12th. Shook.

August 13, 14, 15 and 16th.

Loafed ! ! !

August 24. Since writing the above I finished the subdivision of the Out Lots done some other surveying, and assisted C Swan in appraising the Lots of Iowa City —

Started early this morning for Burlington after the remainder of the appropriation for building the State house, run a very narrow risk in crossing Long Creek had to swim horses and waggon across in the night — Stayed all night at Isetts

Aug 25. Arrived at Burlington

“ 26. Made arrangment for drawing \$3360.00 of the appropriation —

Aug 27 Got the money and started home. Stayed all night at Wappelo

“ 28. Arrived at Iowa City about dark —

Sept 3d. I have not enjoyed very good health, since writing the above — Heard two excellent stump speeches by our candidates for congress Doge⁹ (Dem) & Rich¹⁰ (whig)

Sep 12 Commenced living with H Felkner —

“ 15 & 16 Surveyed for S. C. Hastings worked with H Felkner untill

⁹ Augustus Caesar Dodge.

¹⁰ Alfred Rich.

Sep. 28th Had a shake of the Ague to celebrate my 23d
birth day

“ 29. Worked all day —

“ 30. Had a severe shake of the Ague and out of my
senses most of the afternoon —

Oct 1st. Feel much better this morning

“ 2d. Ague again

“ 3d Commenced boarding in Iowa City at J. D. Wolf

“ 4th Had a very high fever all day Called a doctor
in this Afternoon, continued sick about two weeks

Oct. 25th. Felt able to work and commenced laying off the
town of Solon —

Oct. 27. Finished laying off Solon —

“ 28th. Commenced boarding at Kidder's —

“ 29. Had a shake of the Ague

“ 30. Felt tolerable well —

Nov 1st. Not so well Father and Mother arrived to day
from Ohio —

“ 2d. Rode out down the river

“ 3. Rode out up the river — concluded to return to
Ohio to spend the winter —

Nov 4th. Spent the day settling up my buisness —

“ 5th. Started to Ohio by way of Salem — stayed all
night at Columbus City —

“ 6th. Got lost in the prairie and went to New London
instead of Mount Pleasant

“ 7 Arrived at Salem —

- “ 8th Attended meeting —
- “ 9th. Started on to Ohio, crossed the Mississippi stayed all night at Lamb’s one and a half miles from the river
- “ 10th. Traveled 48 miles to *Sellers’*
- “ 11th Traveled 34 miles staid all night at Virginia —
- Nov. 12. Passed through Springfield took a peep at the new State house which is a splendid building — staid all night at Millers’
- “ 13 Stayed all night at Wilson’s
- “ 14 Traveled 50 miles and stayed all night at Wallace’s —
- “ 15 Got to Shinns.— very unwell all day —
- “ 16. Stayed all night at Morrow’s —
- “ 17 Got to W^m Sanders’ near Indianapolis
- “ 18 Stayed all night at Williams’ tavern
- “ 19 Stayed all night at James Griffins —
- Nov 20. Stayed all night at E. Hiatts —
- “ 21. Stayed all night in Richmond at Jacob Sanders’ —
- “ 22 Very unwell Traveled to Gunberry’ [or Sunberry’] and staid all night —
- “ 23 Traveled to Harvey’s burg stayed at Z. Johnson’s
- “ 24th. Arrived at home after being 16 days on the road from Salem

March 1st. 1841.

About three months have elapsed since (through neglect)

I have written in my Journal but I will try to supply the deficiency by giving a general description of the events as they occurred in the interim

Well in the first place I was confined by ill health, at home for about two weeks I then commenced a regular routine of visiting relations, and attending feasts of Turkeys *Chicken fixins* & C.

On christmas-day had a feast and all my relations invited New Years day attended a feast and nearly froze coming home next day — I have also been to Cincinnati Chillecothe & C.—

March 20th. I have set the time for starting to Iowa on the 24th—inst.

All my enjoyments of associating with relations and friends, feasting, visiting the Girls & C. & C which I have now enjoyed for nearly four months must then be exchanged for exile, care, and trouble, but this is the rambler's fortune, therefore I will not complain, be it ever so discordant to my feelings as this is what gives zest to pleasure

March 24th. 1841 —

Left home in a waggon for Cincinnati and bid good bye to Old Highland again — Stayed all night at E Stevens

March 25th Traveled 30 miles Stayed all night at G. B. Ballard's —

March 26. Arrived at Cinⁱ. found B. H. Johnson waiting for me. Stayed all night at C. Williams —

March 27th. Took passage on Bord the Cicero for Bloomington — but few passengers on board — left the wharf at 11 O'clock A. M. run down to Madison and laid by all night

March 28th. We are now under headway for Louisville The Cicero is a small new Boat and runs very slow, poor

fare and few Ladies on board consequently we have dull times, the weather warm and rainy spend most of my time sleeping and smoking my pipe, In good health and spirits *ditto* — find B. H. Johnson good company Arrived at Louisville about 9 O'clock A. M. remained there all day went to Church in the evening

March 29th. Left Louisville about 10 O'clock A. M. passed over the falls, broke one of our wheels among the drift wood and stopped at the mouth of Salt river to mend it, run all night

March 30th. Run on lively all day I have felt uncommonly melancholy since leaving Cincinnati, I believe I never took less pleasure in traveling — but I will go to bed and try to dissipate the gloom that is hovering over my spirits

March 31st. Passed the mouth of the Ohio river — very pleasant weather —

April 1st. 1841 —

Passed the Grand Tower rock, Devils Bakeoven &c.

April 2d. Broke our wheel twice detained nearly all day mending it — Stopped at St. Genevieve while mending it the second time, and some of the passengers went out and got two fiddlers and a Clarionet player to come on board and play for us about an hour —

April 3d.

Arrived at St. Louis about 4 O'clock P. M. Went to the Museum at night and saw Miss Hayden perform many wonders of magic also a painting of Jarusalum &c.

April 4th. Looked round the city, went to Catholic Church & C. Met with W^m C. Johnson who arrived here on the Oceana about 2 O'clock P. M.

April 5th.

Walked around the city April 6 Started from St. Louis about 2 O'clock P. M.

April 7. Pleasant weather spent my time very agreeably in company with the Ladies on board —

April 8. Arrived at the foot of the rapids after dark and lay there all night —

April 9. Passed Ft. Madison and Burlington —

April 10 Arrived at Bloomington early in the morning — chartered a hack and went out to Iowa City found things a great deal changed since I left found most of my old cronys well and glad to see me — Note! Elected county surveyor on 1st. Monday in August by a majority of 21 votes over my competitor David Switzer —

September 28th 1841.

I have not written in my journal since my arrival from Ohio. This day I am twenty four years old — I have spent most of the past summer in Iowa City — I have enjoyed myself very well most of the time — Boarded at three different places — Sold my claim this summer for \$300. and bought another one the other day — I had a slight attack of Inflammation on the lungs was taken sick on the 10th. day of August had a doctor bill of \$23. to pay —

I intend to work on the road to day rather a dry way to celebrate my birth day — Nothing more at present — Started out on a hunt.

Oct. 6th. In company with Richard B. Sanders, E. K. Morse, Cuyler Brown, David Pratt, Seth Hines, Ranseler Willie [Willey] and Horace Smith and was absent 37 days A Journal of my adventures will be found amongst my miscellaneous papers. After my return visited Henry

County and Keokuk with my Brother Rich^d. During the Winter kept Bachelors Hall in company with M. M. Montgomery one of the best fellows in Iowa Territory — During this winter the Legislature held its first Session in Iowa City, Lewis¹¹; Speaker of the house and Parker¹², of the Council

March 2d. 1842 After spending one of the happiest winters I have spent in the Tery. I left Bachelors hall and commenced Boarding at P Clark's, worked hard during the summer, fenced about 70 Acres of ground.— Nothing remarkable ocured worthy of notice during this summer still continued boarding at the same old place — October. Visited Henry County and spent three weeks there —

Nov. 16th. Winter set in, the Iowa river froze up in about 12 hours and continued closed untill about the 12th. of April, this was by far the severest winter I ever experienced Sleighing was good about four months I had a great deal of pleasure sleigh riding, but paid dear for it by getting my nose ears and foot froze —

Made up my mind to visit my friends and relations in Ohio this spring

Got my business arranged and started to Ohio on the 15th of May 1843, in Company with Dr. Ballard. Took passage at Bloomington on the S. Boat Iowa and at St Louis changed on to the S. B. Massachusetts—had a pleasant trip round and landed safe and sound at my old home on the 25th. of May after my absence of two years and two months. The pleasure which I experienced in again meeting with my friends and relations fully recompensed for my long absence — Those only who have ex-

¹¹ Warner Lewis.

¹² J. W. Parker.

"Journal of Cyrus Sanders." *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics* 37 (January 1939): 52-88.
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