



Perry Burgess Diary – Volume 1
May 26, 1880 – August 26, 1880

The following is an account of each day's travel and work from the time we left Boulder until we started for Georgetown after supplies.

May 26, 1880. Started from Boulder at 9 AM. Our force is composed of seven men viz Jas H Crawford, A. Shippy, Jas. F. Burgess = Mrs. C. B. and Bruce are to accompany us as far as Georgetown = Camp for night on South Boulder in a furious snow storm.

May 27 – nooned at Central City. Camp for night at Lawson in Clear Creek Canon – day cold with snow and rain =

May 28 = reached Georgetown at 8 AM = bought supplies

May 29 = Our wives start back to Boulder on cars = We load up our supplies and roll out = Camp for night five miles above Empire – a courier comes along about 11 PM with reports of indian depredations and Massacres in North park. He is going by order of the Governer to warn settles and find out the true stat of affairs = He askes for company as far as Hot Sulphur Springs and Starke goes with him.

Sunday May 30 = Ate an early breakfast and pull out at 6 AM. Cross the main divide at 10 AM – had hard work shoveling through snow and holding wagon from turning over road very bad Noon at an old cabin down on the west side of range = and camp for night at head of Middle park 12 miles below the summit of the pass began snowing hard at dark = all hands very tired=

May 31st Snow is about five inches deep is cold and gloomy Our stock ran off found them at 10 AM. = Moved to Chamberlain's ranch 16 miles and camp = Roads muddy and bad = Crawford and Brooks each killed a grouse today =

June 1st Broke camp at 8 AM. Moved to Hot Sulphur Springs Halted to hear, rest and write letters, then moved on to mouth of Corral Creek and camp = I killed three grouse and a jack rabbit today –

June 2nd Travelled 20 miles Camp on the Muddy

June 3rd Continuing to hear bad reports concerning Indians, and Mr. Crawfords brother who should have been in from cattle camp a week ago not having come. Crawford and I conclude to leave the outfit and ride into the country ahead of us = Starke and Shippy accompany = rode 20 miles and lunched, then rode two miles further. Met Crawfords brother who reported all things quiet = Had seen no Indians = Rode back to our camp on Muddy = Crawford killed a deer today we saw a great many of them = are terrible tired =

Friday June 4th Got a late start – camp for night at foot of Gore range on eat side = Starke killed a deer this morning and Crawford killed a beaver near camp at dark =

June 5 = Snowed last night all hands prospected today = Commence the mens wages

Sunday June 6th Got an early start, packed our saddle horses Crossed Gore range = Nooned on Rock Creek in Hills park = I struck out prospecting at noon and after a hard march found the boys in camp at head of Egeria park = I staked two claims today and brought in samples of one =

June 7th Garbarino and I remain in camp make a small coal pit = balance of force go prospecting = The boys report some finds and bring in samples of ore = Crawford brought in samples of ore.

Wednesday June 9th Work at assaying = balance go prospecting = I killed a fine buck near camp before breakfast. Crawford brought in some fine looking ore =

June 10th Starke and I go prospecting = the balance of force move camp 20 miles to Roaring fork of Bear River = The formation at this camp is eruptive =

June 11th Brooks goes to Crawfords cow camp after some horses and camp articles = Crawford and I follow up the stream to base of flat top mountains and prospect for placer diggings – Shippy and Starke prospect in a westerly course. Bradley goes to sinking on a bar in a big gulch near camp – find nothing

June 12th Prospect and hunt find no mines = a colt gets drowned

Sunday June 13th Moved camp to Oak Creek and camp

June 14th Moved camp to Bear river. Had a hard days work in fixing roads = digging and prying out of mud holes and finally had to unload our wagon and pack through mud and water on our backs = Crawford killed an antelope before breakfast and Starke a deer on the road =

June 15th Had to make a road at one point on the river, got stuck in the mud several times = Only made four miles. Camp at ford Prospect in the afternoon but find nothing = Got mail today

June 16th Made a raft and crossed all our effects on it. Swam the stock = Had a terrible hard days work and went to be tired wet and cold =

June 17th Moved camp to an island ½ mile below the springs (Steamboat) and lay over the balance of the day to rest and dry our bedding and effects = I have a terrible headache=

June 18th Moved camp to Elk River and go to prospecting for placer gold = results encouraging

June 19th Moved camp to fine spring built a coal pit and got it burning = Part of the force went to prospect in the mountains brought in samples of good looking ore at night = River high and raising = Have several samples of ore ready for assay

Sunday June 20 = Rain nearly all day = watch coal pit hunt some and write letters

June 21st – Prospecting continued by balance of force = Garbarino and I set up furnace = Work at assaying

June 22 = Work at assaying = Boys prospect for lodes

June 23rd = Prospect our placers = Make a raft but fail to cross the river on it, current too swift

June 24th Leave Garbarino and Brooks in camp to look after things and start up the river on horseback with pack animal camp 15 miles above, near Reeds ranch. The formation from Steamboat Springs to this place on east side of river is metamorphic and looks very fine with patches of float quartz in places

June 25th All hands strike out prospecting = killed a deer = Crawford and Starke start in evening for the Hahns peak mines and to get mail found good looking float

June 26th = Crawford and Starke return = Send Bradley back to camp at wagon after more provisions = The balance of us prospect

Sunday June 27th = Moved camp 4 miles in a S.E. course = Prospect and stake two good looking lodes. Eat a late dinner = move five miles = Crawford killed a big elk and we camped =

June 28th = Move camp two miles to Big Creek and all hands prospect = find nothing

June 29th Shippy and Starke take some grub and start east toward snowy range = Crawford Bradley and I prospect back toward Elk river = Found and staked two lodes = ate a late dinner and returned to camp at wagon

June 30th Prospect on river = Work at assaying Crawford and I ride to Springs to stay all night =

July 1st Cross the river and prospect North side for placer gold in forenoon, in afternoon go down the river on North side and prospect = Starke and Garbarino kill a deer

July 2nd Build another coal pit, work on claim near camp Shippy starts to Troublesome after mail = Mr. Hunt a Boulder county smelter is here prospecting and visits our camp

July 3rd Work on placer claim in forenoon = In the afternoon we ride over to the Springs to bathe, catch some fish and stay until the 4th

July 4th Sunday = fished, ate trout, venison, and bear steaks. Had some real milk and butter = Had a pleasant time and rode back to camp in the evening

July 5th Commenced locating a 160 acre placer claim = Two gentlemen from Hahns peak visit us to stay all night = Shippy returned bringing mail nearly a month old

July 6th Finished staking the claim. Made a plat of same rain in afternoon

July 7th Assay = Work on claim = Hunt and Henry Crawford visit.

July 8th and 9th Work at developing claim

July 10th. Complete the work on placer claim necessary to hold for one year

Sunday July 11th Gathered up our effects = Move to Steamboat Springs

July 12th Built a forge = Sharpened and repaired our tools and shod our horses. Got pack saddles in order = put up a supply of provisions

July 13th = Started for Browns park = at noon camp Crawford found a lode camp for the night at Marshalls ranch 22 miles down the river Out force consists of Crawford and self, Bradley, Shippy, and Brooks and Farnsworth with Mr. Hunt and man who are prospecting in their own interests = Starke is at Hot Sulphur awaiting his brothers arrival =

July 14th Move 25 miles = Camp on Fortification creek = prospected the gravel and found small quantities of gold

July 15th Moved 30 miles = Camp in Big Gulch = country, sand with thin stratas of gravel showing a very little gold = Water very bad. We had to dig for it. Flies, gnats and musquitoses thick and troublesome

July 16th Moved 25 miles over a very hard trail Camp on Snake river = country nearly all sand with patches of limestone = We are at Cross mountain with the Silurian formation in sight

July 17th = Crawford went a way up the mountain while the rest of us getting breakfast and found some fine cropping of carbonates = Moved to Douglass wells and all hands prospect in the afternoon made two good looking discoveries that we think lead to good mines

July 18 Sunday Moved 18 miles to Green river just above Lodore Canon, camp = Country sandy = weather very hot and no water between camps = Musquitoses so thick we can hardly breathe

July 19th Conclud we can expedite the work and get over more ground to divide our forces = we divide provision Crawford takes Shippy and Farnsworth and starts for Bullion camp about 65 M. farther westward I take Brooks and Bradley and move back to Douglas wells = Got there at 1 P.M. ate a hasty dinner and all went up into the hills to work = got back to camp late and went to bed very tired

July 20th Prospected hard all day found fine float but did not locate any lode or carbonate deposit

July 21st Traced up a beautiful flow of float to where it cropped out of the mountain = Staked the claim and named it the Copper King = Prospected in the afternoon

July 22nd As we were preparing to move camp one of our horses ran off and it took all day to find it

July 23rd Moved to Cross mountain = prospect in the afternoon found and staked two splendid looking claims with ore in place think these must certainly prove rich = Bradley found a fine deposit of ore =

Sunday July 24th Prospected in the forenoon, found and staked two more claims = Had a heavy thunder storm last night as we lay in the sand, our horses stampeded and we had to go after them in the rain and darkness = Soon found them by the flash of lightning, caught and repicketed and lay down again in our wet blankets to rest and get what sleep we could = Are about out of grub and no game in the country are entirely out of meat Moved in afternoon to Baggs cow ranch on Bear river = shot a sage hen as we were going into camp which was quite a God send

July 25th Moved across the country to Yampa peak = Prospect in the afternoon = found nothing move camp 3 miles to get grass for the horses Killed a fawn today

July 26th = Moved 30 miles back to Fortification creek = caught a mess of fish

July 27 = Prospect up the creek for placer diggings. Caught some more fish = Rain hard in evening

July 28 Ride 25 miles camp at Marshalls ranch rain some during the day. Raining hard tonight but we have a cabin to sleep in

July 29 Ride 22 miles to Steamboat Springs = arrived in time to take a bath and change clothes = Bradley killed a deer

July 30 Build a coal pit = Get it fired = Set up furnace, catch a mess of trout = Crush and prepare samples of ore

July 31st Work at assaying = Crawford, Hunt and party arrive except Shippy who was paid off at Douglas wells on the return from Utah = Write some letters

Sunday Aug 1st Rested, wrote letters and fished

Aug 2nd Worked at assaying = Crawford and Brooks go west to Ladds Creek to prospect for placers and lodes = Bradley goes east to prospect = Brings in part of a deer

Aug 3rd Finished assaying = sharpened the tools = Bradley goes prospecting = Crawford and Brooks return having followed the creek up into the Indian reservation

Aug 4th Crawford goes with Bradley and Garbarino to show them a lode that Crawford and I found four years ago to have them do some digging on while we are gone to Georgetown and to point out a filed for them to prospect in after they get sufficient samples of ore for assay = Brooks get up the teams while I put up some grub and things to use on our way out after a load of supplies = Start for Georgetown

Aug 8th Having concluded that, as Crawford and I want to go to boulder we can save time to go from Hot Sulphur on stage and cars, and on our return, load here we leave Brooks with teams to let them rest and recruit = Start for Georgetown on stage As most of the heavy articles needed will have to be freighted in during our absence by the merchants here, had rather pay than haul ourselves

Aug 19 & 20 = Have returned to Hot Sulphur = Met our man Bradley who left the work we had assigned to him = and our employ = He says that he was induced to take this step after reading a letter that Starke had written about us = That Starke had told him that he was going to stop payments of money due us and to break up the company = That Starke was going to buy up a herd of ponies to take back to Missouri and wanted him (Bradley) to help him drive them back = This intelligence is hard to believe although we have always found Bradley to be truthful. We think if it is true that Starke must certainly be crazy = Have always treated him like a brother = load our wagon =

Aug 21st Having come 25 miles today and had time to reflect I write a hasty letter to Tygard (approx.) in regard to Starkes course as far as we have heard

Aug 25th Reach Steamboat Springs in forenoon = See Starke and call him in a room = Mr. Crawford “goes for him” and demands to know why he had wrote back to the company such a string of lies stating what we had heard he had written = Starke denies most of the charges = Admits that he wrote a letter, that he thought as two of our men had left it would be impossible for us to fulfill our part of the contract this season, that he had so written, thought he had done his duty. I had a talk with him afterward in a friendly way He seemed to feel badly = said he had been missinformed in regard to our intentions +c (approx.) = He declines to eat dinner and leave in company of Shippy who had got with him and is here = Put in afternoon and evening writing letters, write a long letter to Tygard =

Aug 26th Crawford, Brooks, Garbarino and myself start on a prospecting expedition south = take three weeks supplies with us

State of Colorado)
) SS
County of Routt)

Personally appeared before the undersigned County and Probate Judge of Routt County, Colorado P. A. Burgess and Jas H. Crawford, who being by me duly sworn, stat that the foregoing record and account of each days travel and work of the expedition of which they are the managers and have charge is true and correct to the best of their knowledge and belief

Sworn before me this
2nd day of October A.D. 1880

Henry A Crawford
County Judge (SEAL)
Routt County, Colo.