

Region of Snow June 20. 1853

Dear Wife

We are now 25 miles east of the
'South Pass' of the Rocky Mountains. Contrary
to the accounts we recd. from the upper crossing
of the Platt, which was the last point I addressed
you, the grass has been poor very poor, and in most
places none at all. A portion of the road has been
very sandy, some of it extremely hilly and rocky
these circumstances together with the great scarcity
of grass, has reduced our stock very materially.
For three days passed we had passed many dead
animals. I had the impression of many a fine day
we had about the camp fire, some expressing their fears
that we would be compelled to load the wagons and
stock and take our packs on our backs. Yesterday
morning I argued the necessity of leaving the road
some distance and hunt till we could find grass.
Milner & I started early on horseback leaving the team
to advance slowly on the road. Fortunately after
traveling some few hours over steep bluffs, deep ravines
and along high precipices, we found fine grass
with plenty of good wood and excellent water.
It is indeed one of the finest springs I ever saw
cold, clear and as cold as ice itself. The great
joy was not only manifested in ~~the company~~ each
individual of the company but the horses & mules
looked and moved with new spirit and animation.
We had to leave the road for two or three miles. We
shall remain here until Tuesday the 25 to recover
our stock and pack on horses and mules a portion
of our company as it is much too large being
70 horses & mules. Frequently we come to small grazing
spots that would serve us well if our stock was small

Two of my men will pack white & and Mr. Johnson, (a man whom we are carrying through) shall stay with the waggon. Melner will throw three of his waggons away, & pack the mules. He will have three left which will go in company with me. He will also go with the waggons after starting with the pack a few days. There will also be two other waggons in company, making in all six, while five will be left in the mountains. We shall separate in mutual good feeling, having got along with almost perfect unanimity and good feeling, but find it necessary to accept this plan for our convenience and safety. I have been on some distance ahead of the road, and find the grass improving. This with the rain we had last night, is truly encouraging. But what is to become of the stock of the thousands behind I cannot tell. It would have been much better for us if we had not delayed at St. J. but had had a few extra waggons to take grain and thrown them away when the grain was gone. This was my advice & I now urge Melner to this measure. He now very much regrets he did not adopt the plan. If so done we could have been ahead of most the entire migration and now find grass & plenty. But the plan we had almost been forced to will hasten our progress very much and I think there is no doubt, indeed I have no fears but we shall go through in safety and probably arrive there about the first of Aug. the company thus packed sooner. The principal stream of the Rocky Mountains has been a plain view for several days, entirely covered with snow. N. Smith is well and will go with the pack train.

He said he should write to Mill to-day
35th Tuesday Night. About twelve o'clock we
left camp. Such a time as we had had
making packs & saddling. Sentries, bridles, packing
mules and getting ready to start. 32 of the
company packed while 32 remain with
the carriages. I shall resign the office of
responsibility imposed upon me to-morrow
night, as there is no reason in my sacrificing
what little ease and comfort I might have
entirely for others who are most equal and
some more interested than I. Grass is rather
poor and will be so until we reach Texas
River, 150 miles from this place. We are now 10
miles from the Pass. I think I shall feel
like I am on my way homeward when I get
rive at that noted point. Oh how I long to hear
the merry, happy laugh of our dear little Alton
and that Babe! - I am so much disturbed
I cannot write. -

June 30 We have passed the apex of the cul-
minating point of the great "Southern Pass"
And I have just taken a cool draught
from the bubbling fount, called the "Pacific Spring"
from its being the first water on this route that
makes its way and reaches that mighty ocean.
The idea of cooling the parched tongue and
quaffing freely from its tributary at such a point
is indeed pleasing. One would naturally
suppose the ascent would be steep and
rugged. Not so. The road is equal to any
in the States, and the rise gradual. On
the right and left for many miles before
reaching the principal elevation of the Mountain

It is an open prairie of table lands covered
with grass without the first tree or shrub.
The mountains have but little covering
but snow being mostly entirely destitute of
timber. You will be surprised to learn that
(which is a fact I have not thought to
mention before) that the entire country through
which we have passed from St. Peter is
destitute of timber except a scanty supply
on most of the water courses. On some
streams there ^{are groups} of good timber averaging fifty
feet on each side, on others it is confined
to a few feet being nothing more than bushes
while others have none at all. Frequently these
streams are a great distance apart. But I have
not time to particularise as to description.

All well but Allen and he is improving. I
took charge of the case. Butts Company
mostly from Griffin are behind and will have
their teams broken down so they will not
be able to go through. But this I do not
believe; for if they are broken down they can
stop to recruit them. There is no passenger
train ahead of us, and from what I can
learn we have got along much better
than any one else. Our intelligence as to back
trains we get from packers. Our teams are
up and I must close. Farewell my dear
precious Family! O! that I was when I could relieve
the heart by tears. but there is a multitude
about me. Father of Heaven let thy protecting
arm be over them in love & mercy.

Mrs E. A. Angier
Allen
Kirkman

Your own good tried & loving husband
St. L. Angier