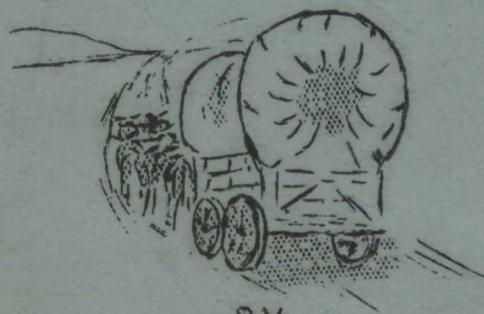


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ROMANCE  
OF EMIGRANT NAMES  
AT EL MORRO



BY  
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DEPARTMENT-OF-THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL-PARK  
SERVICE

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# ROMANCE OF EMIGRANT NAMES — AT EL MORRO —

By Robert R. Budlong.

Among the hundreds of inscriptions to be found carved on El Morro Rock, are those of a number of emigrants to California who passed that way in 1858. One member of the particular party about which this is written left the following inscription: \*

John Udell Age 63

July 8, 1858. First Emigrant.

(\*See article on the founding of Fort Mohave by Art. Woodward in the "Pony Express and Courier", May, 1937, Volume 3, Number 12.--Ed.)

Another inscription reads:

Isaac T. Holland

July 8, 1858. From Mo.

First Emgt. Train.

Other names of members of this party are to be found, among them the following:

L. J. Rose. Iowa

July 7, 1858

Extracts from the Journal of John Udell, published in 1859 at Jefferson, Ohio, were sent Mr. E. Z. Vogt, Jr., by Mr. Charles Kelly of Salt Lake City in September, 1936, and these brief extracts are now in the official files at this monument.

During the past winter I was most fortunate in entering into correspondence with Mr. Leon John Rose of San Diego, California, whose father carved his name on the Rock July 7, 1858, as indicated above. To Mr. Rose I am deeply indebted for the following article, written by his father October 28, 1858, and describing what occurred to this party of emigrants on the banks of the Colorado River in that year. Mr. Rose expects shortly to publish a book entitled "Gringo Grandees" descriptive of his father's life, and we are looking forward with much interest to reading it.

This article makes a very valuable addition to the material being compiled on the names to be found upon El Morro Rock, and I know it will be found of absorbing interest to all who read it. Mr. Rose has very kindly given me permission to publish this document in the Southwestern Monuments Monthly Report. The article follows, exactly as sent to me:

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ROMANCE OF EMIGRANT NAMES AT EL MORRO (CONT.)

AN ACCOUNT WRITTEN BY L. J. ROSE WHICH WAS SENT BACK TO THE NEWSPAPER IN KEOSAUQUA, IOWA, UPON HIS RETURN TO ALBUQUERQUE IN OCTOBER, 1858, AFTER HIS HARROWING EXPERIENCE WITH THE MOJAVES ON THE BANK OF THE COLORADO RIVER IN AUGUST OF THE SAME YEAR.

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You may have heard of several parties of immigrants who started on Beale's route for California last spring, and possibly of their return from the Colorado on account of Indian troubles. I was in all of those troubles, and a plain statement of facts connected therewith may possibly be not uninteresting to yourself and readers.

The first company consisted of two parties: Joel Hedgpath, Thos. Hedgpath, G. Baily, Wright Baily, J. Holland Daily, John Udell, their families, and probably 18 hands, forming one party, who had with them 125 head of oxen and cows; 12 wagons, and 15 horses -- Messrs. Bentner, Alpha Brown, S. M. Jones, myself, and families, and 17 hands, the other party, with 247 head of cattle, and 21 horses and mules. We kept our stock separate until our troubles with the Indians began, although we traveled together and camped near each other.

We left Westport, Missouri, the first of May, and Albuquerque, New Mexico, the 30th of June, with E. M. Savedra, as a guide, who had been guide for Whipple and Beale. We got along reasonably well until we arrived at what, I think, Beale names Hemp-hill Spring (our guide calls it Peach Tree Spring) where we saw the first Indians on the route and they, by way of introduction, stole one mare and one mule. Three of the men went in pursuit, tracking them nearly for a day, and while going through a deep canyon were shot at with arrows by the Indians, but without being hurt. Night coming on, and their animals being tired out, they gave up the pursuit and got back to camp in the night, very hungry, thirsty, and tired. This according to Lieutenant Beale's report, is 112 miles this side of the Colorado. The next evening, near dusk, while under way, Savedra espied some Indians on the side of a mountain. After much coaxing by sign and speech he succeeded in prevailing on them to come down to us. They, finding that no harm was meant them, followed us to camp. While coming down, they kept up a continual rapid jabbering, and when near us would pat their breasts, saying "hanna," "hanna," "hanna," repeatedly. They also used the word "Mojaves." Savedra, who understands their language to some extent, said that they said they (the Cosninos) had our horses, and had taken them from the Mojaves, who had stolen them from us, and that they would bring them to us the next day. That they were good, or "hanna, hanna", and that the Mojaves were bad. We treated them kindly, gave them as much to eat as they wanted, wishing to have no trouble with them, and thinking that possibly they might return the horses, although we rather inclined to the belief that they themselves had stolen the horses, Savedra saying that the Mojaves never came out so far from their own country.

Next morning, about ten o'clock, word came up, sure enough, the Indians

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were bringing the horses. Of course, everybody was surprised and in good humor. About eleven o'clock a.m., we got into Indian Springs, 91 miles this side of the Colorado, when about 25 Indians came up with the horses and gave them up to us. It was soon evident that they anticipated very extravagant rewards, all expecting shoes, clothing, and trinkets, besides some cattle. I gave each of the two a blanket, shirt, pants, knife, tobacco and some Indian trinkets, and the balance tobacco and some trinkets, also preparing an ample dinner for them, and again a supper. I also gave the two who had returned the horses a certificate that they had voluntarily returned them, and that I believed they had also stolen them. Many remained in camp with us that night, doubtless for the purpose of stealing, but the guard kept so sharp a lookout that they found no opportunity.

Next morning a new supply came in, numbering probably near 50, also claiming some reward, commencing with their jabbering as soon as in sight and keeping it up as long as breath would hold out, pointing out at the same time which way the horses had been taken when stolen, how they re-took them, how they fought -- wore out their moccasins running after them -- wanting shoes, etc., and, to our great relief, about eleven o'clock a. m. they all left. They were becoming very annoying, assigning as a reason that the Mojaves were pursuing them. I felt some little apprehension for the safety of the cattle, but as we expected to move camp about a mile as soon as we could eat dinner, no extra precaution was taken, and it would have been useless then. When we were hitching up we found some of our oxen missing and, on counting, found six of our cattle gone. Some of the men went in pursuit, and found four of them killed. From two the meat had all been cut, nothing but the carcass remaining; the other two the Indians had had only time to kill, and being apprised by their watchers of our men coming, had left them. It being near sun-down and the canyon becoming very narrow and rocky, the men thought it prudent to return, seeing nothing could be gained by pursuing, and not even seeing one Indian, but probably passing in thirty yards of many secreted among the rocks. From there to the Colorado we were continually harassed and shot at by them. Many of our horses and cattle were wounded, also one man whom I sent back from Savedras Spring, to let Mr. Brown know that there was but little water. He was shot with three arrows, and only after an illness of two months was able to walk or ride. But it would be tedious to narrate all the annoyances and, compared with what followed, petty troubles.

The 27th of August, about sunset, we reached the top of the last mountain between us and the Colorado. We had toiled two nights and days incessantly. Our animals without water, footsore and worn out; the weather had been hot. The men, too, were all worn out with incessant toil and nothing but the verdant valley with the Colorado meandering through it, looking in the distance like a brook, and the evening mountain breeze kept them in spirits and willing to encounter another night's toil. We halted and had supper, the first meal for the day, discussed the merits of green beans and corn, which we expected to eat when we got there; how long it would take to cross the river, and then, Oh then, only

ten days to St. Bernardino, California, and civilization. We gave one general hurrah and again rolled on expecting to reach the Colorado before daybreak. Some of the Mojave Indians here met us bringing a melon and a little corn which were greedily purchased. They asked us how many of us there were, and whether we expected to settle on the Colorado. (Rather an unusual question, I thought at the time.) We told our number, saying more were coming, and that we were going to California. They appeared very friendly all the way, showing the road and performing other service unasked during the night. Instead of getting there before morning, it was after 11 o'clock when we got to the edge of the woods, yet a mile from the river, and our oxen being completely exhausted, we had to unyoke and drive them to the water.

On nearing the river many Indians came out, and as the number increased, their manner changed to insolence and impudence. My wife and I were walking along the teams being unable to carry us. An Indian stepped between us asking many impertinent questions in bad English and Mexican, and laid his hand on her bosom and shoulder. I pushed him away and shook my head, assuming as pleasant a look as possible, which must have been a ghost of a smile, for my blood fairly boiled and nothing but the life of my wife and little ones prevented me giving him what he deserved. He merely laughed a big "ha, ha!"

By this time we had reached the wagons. Mr. Brown's wagon was probably a hundred yards from the others. Mr. Brown himself had gone to see to the watering of the animals and to bring water to the camp. The day was very hot -- the hottest I have experienced, and Mrs. Brown and children were very much in want of some to drink. I found them all in tears and begging the Indians to bring them some, at which they only laughed and told her if she would pull off her dress and give them that, they would give her some. She offered them various articles of more worth than it, but nothing else would answer. They also would take hold of her little boy saying that they were going to take him, and stood around laughing and talking in a very impudent manner, judging from their manners and actions and the little English they spoke.

I had the wagon hauled near the others, and Mr. Brown returning with water, they troubled her no more. Had they attacked us then, we would have been their easy victims, for there were not five persons awake in camp. The men were so exhausted that as soon as they reached camp they lay down under the trees and fell into a heavy sleep, and amidst gnashing teeth and distorted faces around them were still, in their dreams, driving oxen.

The Indians killed and drove off our cattle without much opposition, and when caught in the act would laugh and treat the matter as a very good, rich joke. They troubled themselves but little about us, and would cut up animals and cook them in sight of camp. But evening came at length, and the Indians started for their homes, leaving us in the enjoyment of

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quiet and needful sleep.

Next morning, after a hearty breakfast, we moved camp to the river bank and all hands feeling refreshed got things in regular working order again. Some started in search of a place to cross the river, whilst others for better grass, in the finding of which they succeeded as well as could be wished and better than we had expected. A strict watch was kept over the animals and we lost nothing that day.

About noon one of the chiefs came to camp to pay us a visit. He had a number of his men with him. When told about his men stealing some of our cattle, he spoke to some of them, but evidently not very earnestly, and gave us but little satisfaction, only saying they would do so no more. He said but little, but was very attentive to all that was said or done and there was a cunning twinkle in his eye which I did not half like. He asked whether we were going to settle there and when told that we were going to California, he gave us a very searching look, as if not half believing it. I gave him presents which I had brought along for that purpose consisting of blankets, shirts, pants, knives, tobacco, beads, rings, bells, and looking-glasses, which he distributed among his warriors, and said we could now stay and cross the river when we pleased and none of his men would trouble or molest us. He was a stout, tall Indian, with a great deal of bluster and fuss about him. He was gaily rigged out in paint, feathers, bells, and gowgaws. I made him like presents, and he made like promises, harangued his warriors, all of whom, except a few, left.

About four o'clock p. m., we moved our camp down the river about a mile, where we expected to cross it, and found excellent grass, also plenty of cottonwood for constructing a camp.

Our new camp was a very pleasant one. Although the sun was very hot during the day, so much so that the horses were as wet with perspiration as if they had been in the river, yet we had a pleasant breeze from the river; the water was good and cool, and the animals were fairly "rolling in clover." The evening and night was cool and refreshing, and the next morning we felt as fresh and buoyant with hope as if we had never lost sleep nor had any trouble. But in the calm the storm was brewing. Only two Indians made their appearance; they looked around awhile and then left. About 10 o'clock a. m., we saw many Indians crossing the River, and we counted over 250 of them. Savedra said that the Indians acted suspiciously and I sent word to Mr. Brown to have the cattle herded near camp. Yet we had but little fear of an attack. I felt some little uneasiness on account of Mr. Bentner who was to come that morning from the mountains.

I will here explain how he came there. The first party, with Mr. Bentner of my party, had left their wagons in the mountains together with their families and most of their men, fearing that the animals

could not stand it to the Colorado and draw a load, and had driven their animals loose, while I had all my wagons, animals, and things at the river. They expected to recruit for a few days and then return with them for their wagons. Mr. Bentner having mules did not need so long a time for recruiting, and as we would cross the river before they could and would get some little start, and being of our company anyway, he felt anxious to be with us. I expected him early in the morning and his not coming, as I said before, made me uneasy, and I thought I would send back to the camp we had left and possibly we might find him and family there. Dinner being nearly ready, I postponed it until after the meal. While eating dinner, one Indian made his appearance. He looked around a little while and then left. One of our boys came in and said he had seen a good many Indians in the vicinity, and they had told him that a steamboat was coming up and pointed where the sun would be when the boat would land. There was quite an excitement in camp for a while, but we concluded that it was too good to be true. After dinner, two of my men left for the camp we had left the day previous to see if they could find Bentner.

About half an hour after the men had left, the Indians came running from every quarter, out of the brush, completely surrounding the camp, and attacked us. They came within 15 feet of our wagons and they evidently expected to find it easier work than they did, for I have no doubt they expected to massacre us. But we were well armed and the men that were in camp ready to receive them. A short time afterward, all of the men came in except two, whom I had sent to see if they could find Mr. Bentner and family; and some of the enemy being killed, they retired to a safe distance. They kept up a continued shooting of arrows for nearly two hours, and part of them having driven off all the stock except a few near the wagons, they all left. During this time, the two men had returned and reported of having found Miss Bentner killed, her clothes torn off and her face disfigured. They knew that it was unsafe for them to make any further search, and made for the camp. From this and the fact of an Indian from the other side of the river shaking some scalps at us, which he had fastened on a pole, we supposed that they had all been killed. Mr. Brown was also killed, dying in camp without a struggle. We buried him in the Colorado, and its waters will never close over a nobler or better man, for to know him was but to like him. Eleven more were wounded, who have all since recovered, or nearly so. There were about 25 men in the fight.

We held a consultation, and concluded, after discussing various plans, to return the way we had come. There were cattle enough left to pull one wagon, and two mules for the carriage. We loaded these with as much provision and clothing as the oxen and mules were able to pull, leaving the loads of five wagons, undisturbed, behind. We scarcely expected to make our retreat, yet every man felt disposed to sell his life as dearly as possible. We also feared that the families with the few men left in the mountains were all killed; but we made our way back undisturbed, and found them all safe. Out of nearly 400 head of cattle,

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we saved 17 head, and out of 37 horses, probably ten. The cattle that were mine have all died on the road from the fact of their feet giving out in again having to go over the rocky road which had previously made their feet tender; but they were in good condition otherwise, and with a few day's rest at the Colorado, and no rock on the other side (Savendra says there is none) would have been able to have gone on without difficulty.

We found, too, at the Colorado mountains, another party of immigrants from Iowa, and from the same county from whence I had come; in fact, old acquaintances to me consisting of Messrs. Caves, Jordan, Perkins and Davis with their families and about thirty men. They had been much troubled by the Cosninos Indians and in consequence had lost much stock. The joy in finding them was indescribable, for without their assistance I could not have gone ten miles further. They fortunately, too, had a large share of provisions which they very generously divided with us, but even with the assistance that they could render, it was a never-to-be-forgotten march back. Many wagons had to be left and in order to haul all the provisions, all the women and children, as well as the men, had to walk. On account of the heat of the day and the slowness of the cattle, and having to make certain distances to reach water, we had to travel mostly at night and at times night and day. A distance that we made in coming in a day now took us two and at times more. This was on account of the cattle's feet being sore and worn through by walking so long on rough rock. The Cosninos Indians troubled us all the way back, and a party of 15 men who had been sent ahead with the loose stock to Indian Spring, were there attacked, and had to fight half a day until we all came up to their relief. When some five miles yet from the spring a man came back who had gone ahead, but not with the first party, and reported that the first party had all been killed, that the Indians had their guns and were wearing their clothing, that they were herding the cattle around the spring and were evidently expecting to keep us away from the spring.

I shall never forget the consternation this created, but as we had to have water, there was no other alternative, and get it we must or die. When we got near enough we found the report a mistake, and a very joyous one it was, many shedding tears of joy in finding a son who they had supposed dead. They, too, were as glad as we for their situation was anything but pleasant. One of them was badly wounded with a ball, (the Indians having one rifle among them) and one with an arrow. Both have since recovered. To give some idea how fast we traveled, making every exertion, for the provisions of many were all gone and had to live on beef alone, and that, too, feverish and worn out so that it made everyone sick who ate it, it took me and others 18 days to make 91 miles. I could yet write by the day of new troubles and hardships we experienced, but this account is already getting too long.

At Indian Spring we found E. O. and T. O. Smith and train, both

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gentlemen with warm hearts and, too, willing and determined ones to help. We are all indebted to them for many favors and acts of kindness. They divided their provisions to the last mouthful, and when that gave out, killed their cattle, hauled all the women and children, and lent their stock as long as there was any to lend. Part of us, with mule teams, have now reached Albuquerque where are as warm and kind hearts as beat in the world. The Americans and the officers of the army station here have done everything in their power to help us. They have even sent a load of supplies to meet us, and have sent two more loads to those back with Smith's train who are now expected in daily. May they never need assistance.

The lot of many is a very hard one. Some are old, who, with large families, unable to work, were going to California to a fortunate son; some honest, industrious farmers, who had what was to them an independency; some delicate in health expecting to improve it by the climate of California, but with a sufficiency, and all have lost their all, and are now living beggars, or on the bounty of kind people, in a strange land and among strangers.

You can publish this as it is, if you think it would be of any interest to your readers -- or parts, or none of it, as you may think best -- but if you do not publish it as it is, then be kind enough to send it to Hon. H. K. S. O'Melveny, Central City, Illinois. I have no time to revise it, and many corrections will have to be made, which I would do, were it not for my anxiety to get it off by this mail, which closes soon.

\*\*\*\*\*SWM\*\*\*\*\*

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