

WASHINGTON CITY, *January 23, 1852.*

This will certify that I, John Walker, of the city of Washington, born and raised in the city, and engaged all my life in the cattle and butchering business, and now carrying on the same in this city, and also having carried on the same business in San Francisco, in California, during part of the year 1850 and 1851, as partner with Mr. Steinberger, and therefore well acquainted with the prices of beef cattle in California during that time; and in the summer of 1851 knew, by report, of the contract made by Colonel Frémont to furnish beef cattle to the Indians at the San Joaquin, at the price of fifteen cents a pound, and I consider the price to be low, and such a one as I would not have taken the contract for. It was below the current ready money prices of the country, and less than I was getting cash down from individuals, companies and United States ships at the same time. We sold, at San Francisco, common beef to individuals at about eighteen to twenty-five cents per pound, and choice at twenty-five cents per pound; to Howland & Aspinwall's steamers at fifteen cents per pound, and usually to the amount of \$3,500 per steamer, and always paid down; the beef in all cases taken from us without the expense or loss of deliveries, which was a heavy item of expense to the contractors; to Howard & Son's steamers at the same price, and upon the same terms as to Howland & Aspinwall. I also furnished the city prison with beef for the prisoners, on a contract with the agent, at eighteen cents per pound. This beef consisted of *neck* pieces principally. None but *vaqueros* could drive the California cattle, and we have given three hundred dollars a month to some that we have employed. The loss and expense must have been great to Colonel Frémont on driving cattle to the frontiers on the San Joaquin, and I would not take his contract even if the fifteen cents was to be paid down at the time of delivery.

I make this general statement and am willing to answer any questions before a committee.

JNO. WALKER.

P. S. On looking over my books, now in this city, I see that we furnished the United States frigate "Savannah" with beef in the year 1850-'51; also the United States revenue bark Polk; also the United States brig Lawrence; also the United States brig Dolphin; also the United States revenue schooner Argus; also the United States steamer Massachusetts, at the rates mentioned, and all for ready money.

JNO. WALKER.

WASHINGTON CITY,
January 24, 1852.

DEAR SIR: In answer to your enquiries as to the price of beef in California, I have to reply, that during the summer and fall of last year, the market price was *twenty-five cents per pound* in the valley of the

Sacramento. In the mining region the price varied according to the distance from the valley, ranging from thirty to fifty cents per pound.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOS. W. McCORKLE.

HON. THOMAS H. BENTON,
Washington City.

This will certify that I, Henry B. Edwards, of Chester, Delaware county, Pennsylvania, went to California in May 1850, and returned from there in October 1851, and the principal part of that time was on the Mariposas doing business on my account, part of the time, and assisting Col. Frémont in his delivery of cattle under the contract with Mr. Barbour, the Indian commissioner. That I bought much beef for myself and also bought parcels for Col. Frémont, and never paid less than 25 cents a pound ready money for the beef all around, and more if choice parts only were taken. That I was in charge of Col. Frémont's rancho when he went to the south to buy the cattle; and hearing that the Indians were troublesome on his route, I and Lieut. Beale, of the navy, with six others, went down to meet him, and did meet him high up on the San Joaquin; and as Mr. Savage, who was in the employment of Mr. Barbour, was there, and urged Col. Frémont to hasten on cattle to satisfy the Indians on the Fresno and King's river, on the San Joaquin above the big bend, I took charge of the drove, being 2,000 head, and hastened them on and made the deliveries. They were delivered at different points as we came to the Indians, or rather as they came and met us. They were all bought in the old settlements in the south, and was consider the fairest drove of cattle ever brought up. At the delivery the commissioner himself was present, also Mr. Johnson, an Indian agent, also two gentlemen of the army, (medical men,) besides Col. Frémont, Lieut. Beale, Alexander Godey. They were averaged at 500 pounds apiece, the average being taken by an estimate on a view of the whole in *rodear*—that is to say, by forming them in a circle and making the whole walk round, which is the Spanish mode of counting and inspecting, and to which the cattle are trained, and will begin to form as soon as the *vaquero* calls out *rodear*. I assisted to deliver nineteen hundred to the agent or to the Indians with him, also 551 before that to Indians at the Tahon pass on the Coahilla, on King's river, on the Tulare, on the Fresno, on the San Joaquin. Before the arrival of the cattle at the place of delivery, the Indians being impatient, Col. Frémont had between 70 and 80 head purchased from the American settlements, at the high rate of \$50 a head, which had to be driven about 60 or 70 miles in the wild country, and suffered a loss of about ten head, (five in one night.) The loss on driving the whole band from the south was about four hundred head, and the expenses enormous, some of the *vaqueros* having ten dollars a day, and about ninety horses, being about one half of them destroyed, and nearly all the rest worn down and useless. This great loss and expense was owing to the urgent demand of the agent to get the cattle brought on to keep the Indians quiet, and the extreme