



powered by



A Freely Accessible Repository
of Digitized California
Newspapers from 1846 to the
Present

Daily Alta California, Volume 1, Number 86, 9 April 1850 — Untitled [ARTICLE]

Trinity—A Journey Overland.

We have been furnished by our friend and Sonoma correspondent, *Veritas*, with an account of the journeyings of a party of men who started last fall from the Sacramento to explore the country watered by Trinity river, and possess themselves of information relative to the richness of its gold washings. One of the number, now at Sonoma, communicated the facts to our informant who places unlimited confidence in the entire history which this gentleman relates of his travels. He says, after a fatiguing journey, abounding with incident, the party struck the head waters of Trinity, and travelled down the stream. Finding gold in return for a few moments of scratching in the soil on its bank, they halted for a few days at a spot where the country was more rugged than that left behind, and here seven of the party made upwards of two hundred dollars per day, during the time consumed in searching for gold. The narrator of this adventure became unwell, as the party prepared to resume its journey, and he was advised to repair to the sea coast, which route diverged from that taken by the company, and which plan was believed both feasible and promising beneficial results to the sick man. Accompanied by two of the party, he commenced to cross the country lying between Trinity and the sea shore, while the remainder of his company followed the course of the stream downward, with the fear of hostile Indians constantly before their eyes. The three adventurers endured many fatiguing marches, scaling mountains and descending abrupt canon sides.

mountains and descending abrupt canon sides.

Their route lay over a broken and wild country, interrupted by heavy rains, and rendered difficult on account of pine tree wind falls, occurring every few steps as they advanced. Added to this, the ammunition of the wanderers began to fail, as game grew scarce and wild, and the terrors of a lonely wilderness were deepened by a dread of starvation. They had been in the mountains nearly two months, and nature was fast becoming exhausted. One morning, while searching for acorns or ground nuts, they observed a herd of grizzly bears, intent upon making a similar morning meal. The sight of fresh animal food tempted the poor travellers to expend a portion of their scant ammunition in an endeavor to bring down one of these formidable beasts, and they discharged their pieces, without counting upon the result in the event of wounding one of them. One shot inflicted a mortal wound, while a wounded bruin and its full grown cub made directly at one of the men. Our informant had thrown down his rifle, and was in the act of climbing a sapling, when the bears turned from his comrade upon him. He was too weak to escape them, and the foremost dragged him to the earth. His hip joint was dislocated by the fall, and he was otherwise severely injured. He remained with his face downward, while the bears lacerated his flesh, and stripped his clothing from him, after which they left him, and he was found by his companions in a dreadful state of suffering. His wounds were dressed, and after a short time he was enabled to proceed slowly on the journey. The second day after, they reached the sea coast, at a point which they judged to be above the bay of Trinidad. They killed an eagle and devoured its flesh, and also sustained life by feeding on dead fish which were found upon the shore. Up to this time they had seen but a few Indians, but now they were visited by numbers who kindly supplied them with fish.

After travelling some thirty miles along the coast, they found Trinity river—this they felt confident was no other stream, and they immediately retraced their steps coastwise, and in a couple of days they arrived at Trinidad Bay.

After a short rest, they travelled around the bay, which they represent to be about fifteen miles in length, and eight in width at the broadest place. The country was the most delightful he had ever witnessed. On the sea shore sand hills stretch north and south, but the bay is bounded to the north by excellent pasturage land, hilly, though the soil is none of the best. Eastward the land is low, in places marshy; two small streams flow from that direction into the bay. South the country is a broad, rich, well wooded table-land.

From the bay they proceeded southward, inclining inland, and soon came upon a beautiful stream, along which great numbers of Indians lived, who took fish from its waters in astonishing abundance. They named this stream Eel river. Their course now lay up this river, and finding this country penetrable they travelled in the direction indicated by its banks nearly two hundred miles. This brought them into the heart of the coast range. They were frequently obliged to dodge parties of Indians, who showed signs of hostility, and after suffering severely from hunger, they struck the "home trail," and the three companions in this arduous journey separated.

The country over which they travelled had been wild, mountainous and uncheery, except when sublime and picturesque scenery afforded delightful views. For several leagues before reaching the broken country, the land appeared of the finest kind, capable of supporting a large agricultural population, and possessing acre after acre of desirable woodland.

"My informant," continues our correspondent, "after leaving his comrades, came on to the rancho of widow West, and shortly after"

'rancho of widow West,' and shortly after arrived in Sonoma. His health is *quite restored*, although weak from the trials of the journey. He informs me that to attempt to travel from the coast or bay of Trinidad to the mines on Trinity river, would be a serious undertaking, unless the same route which he pursued is followed, and this would be fraught with every hardship. The Indians on the lower waters of Trinity he represents as exceedingly intractable."

About forty explorers, some of them the 'Indian hunters,' left the head of Napa last week

for Trinidad Bay, and another company is about being formed. Should they be so fortunate as to find a wagon road, Sonoma is destined to progress."

The following additional extract from one correspondent's letter is of interest:

P. S. I cannot give you certain accounts of our election, but M. Green and a young man a stranger here, named Cook, seem to have a close race for the County Judgeship. M'Murpin will be District Attorney. Shannon got 68 votes for Clerk of Supreme Court.