Finding Aid of the Prime, Edward M Diary C058734

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Note
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Abstract: A diary a prospector's overland journey in 1850 to California, his experience mining in the Northern Sierras for 4 years and his return to the East Coast by steamer across Panama. On his way to California he travelled via Council Bluffs, Fort Laramie, and the Great Salt Lake. His largely unsuccessful mining and prospecting was in Nevada City, Rock Creek, American River, Downeyville, Oak Valley, North Yuba over a 4 year period from 1850 to 1854. His return to the East Coast was by steamer in 1854 via the Panama Canal. Last entries cover a mining expedition to Pikes Peak in 1859. The diary is in the authors hand and appears to have been transcribed from an original journal that he kept in his travels. The handwriting is very legible and the entries provide almost a daily insight into experiences. The end of the Preface says "Which proved in the end and to me as in the case of many others rather the nature of a wild goose chase." A photo of Edward Prime is inside the front cover.

Scope and Contents
This diary, which appears to have been transcribed by the author from personal journals and notes, provides a detail log of the authors travels and activities from March 18, 1850 to November 14, 1854. The final section of the diary covers an expedition to Pikes Peak from April 27 to June 24 of 1850.

The overland journey from Wisconsin to California via Council Bluffs, Fort Laramie and the Great Salt Lake took from March 18, 1850 to October 12 arriving in Nevada City and is described in detail in daily journal entries. Prime had extensive prospecting and mining efforts in the northern portions of the state. Areas where he prospected included the American River, Rock Creek, Deer Creek, Downeyville, Spencers Bar, North Yuba River, Oak Valley and Minissata. Again the journal provides detail of the daily effort and struggle of mining including entries of the daily and Weekly "take". He finally decide to return to the East Coast and home, with nothing to show, on September 30 1854. He went by steamer via the Isthmus of Panama, arriving back in Wisconsin in November of that year.

The diary commences again in April of 1859 with a daily description of a "Pikes Peak Expedition", an unsuccessful prospecting trip which lasted until June of that same year.

Prime summarizes his journeys to California and Pikes Peak in a Preface to the diary "which proved in the event to be a wild goose chase"

Biographical / Historical
Prime eventually settled in Greenvill, Plumas County, California

Existence and Location of Originals

Immediate Source of Acquisition
Gift of Miss Ethel Harlan, 1962

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Subjects and Indexing Terms
Salt Lake City (Utah)
Panama, Isthmus of (Panama) -- Description and travel.
Voyages and travels -- 19th century
Gold mines and mining -- California -- History.
Overland journeys to the Pacific
Copeland, H
Wood, A
Prime, Edward M
Helm, H