
PANAMA STAR.

VOL. I.

"PRESS ONWARD."

NO. 1.

PANAMA, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1849.

THE STAR

Will be published Weekly, in the City of Panama, by

J. B. BIDDLEMAN & CO.,

at one real per copy.

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JOB WORK neatly executed at this Office on reasonable terms.

Printed by S. K. Henarie & J. F. Bachman.

To our American Friends in Panama.

In order to relieve the tedium of our, perhaps protracted stay in this, to us strange land, surrounded by the people, institutions and language so dissimilar to our own—a few Americans have undertaken this publication. Having embarked in a common object, the emigration to what seems to promise to be the El Dorado of the World, our interests are identical:—and we believe that whatever of news, information to future emigrants, or local matters we may find to place in our columns, must be alike interesting to those who are already here, to those who may hereafter arrive, and to those especially whom we have left behind, anxiously expecting news of our position, comfort and welfare.

We therefore embark in our agreeable undertaking, confident in your support, and desirous to afford to all, the means of temporary relief from the monotony of our situation—and for this purpose we shall be glad to receive any hints or information that may be considered of sufficient interest to either of the classes of persons named above, to warrant publication here.

We congratulate our American Fellow Citizens on their safe progress thus far on their way to the "promised land," and we trust that much of happiness and prosperity may be the lot of all, and as large a share of the good things of this world as may be desirable for them to possess consistently with a due sense of the value of wealth, as a means of good, rather than the mere gratification of the appetite or propensities of man.

With these remarks we present ourselves to our friends, asking only that a fair allowance be made for the peculiarity of our position here, an excuse for any omission that may occur in our first number.

The barque Philadelphia left on the 7th inst, with about one hundred and thirty passengers for San Francisco.

Many of the passengers by the steamer Isthmus were among the number.

We give below a translation of a Proclamation^a issued here by Gen. Smith, prior to his sailing for California. It created some considerable discussion at the time of its appearance, and public sentiment is still somewhat divided upon the subject.—We publish it without comment:

[Translated from the Panameño, Feb. 11.]

Wm. Nelson, Esq., Consul of the United States, at Panama, Sir:

The laws of the United States impose numerous and severe penalties upon those who unlawfully occupy the public lands. As nothing can be more unjust and unmeasurable than for persons not citizens of the United States to direct their companies in pursuit and to dig the gold found in California, or lands belonging to the American government, and as such conduct is in direct violation of the laws, it will be my duty immediately upon arrival here, to put these laws in force to prevent any infraction thereof, and in future to punish those who violate them with the full penalties prescribed therein.

As the existence of these laws is probably unknown to many who contemplate proceeding to California, I have deemed it proper to promulgate, a kindness thereof, and of my intention to enforce them against all those who do not hold citizenship in the United States.

Your position as Consul here, and communication with our Consuls on the Coasts of South America, render you the most suitable organ to disseminate this information, and I therefore request your services for the promotion of this object.

With sincere respect,

I am your obedient servant,

PERSIFER F. SMITH,

Major Gen. U. S. A., Comd'g
Pacific Military Division.

Arrivals.

Steamers Falcon and Crescent City with two Brigs and a Barque from New York, one Brig from Philadelphia, and two from New Orleans, with about one thousand passengers in all, have arrived at Chagres within the last few days. It is supposed there are about fifteen hundred persons now on the Isthmus waiting for vessels.

The California.—The Steamer California left here on the 31st of January, with about four hundred passengers for San Francisco.

Caution to Emigrants.—Most of the preserved meats bought by the emigrants in New York are entirely spoiled and unfit for use.

THE STAR.

Panama, N. G., Saturday, February 24, 1849.

J. B. BIDDLEMAN & CO., EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

Washington's Birth Day.



The assemblage of American citizens on the morning of the 22d, temporarily residing in this city, to celebrate the return of the birth day of Washington, the father of his country afforded a strong proof, that although far distant from their homes in a foreign land, the same spirit which animated their fathers in '76 have not degenerated in their off-spring, but burns with the same patriotic spirit which is the boon of all Americans. The procession numbering several hundred formed in front of the American Hotel, at 6 o'clock A. M., marched to the Governor's House, fired a salute, gave him three cheers, and then proceeded to the East Battery, fronting the harbor, raised the American Flag, fired a grand volley as it floated to the breeze—marched to the American Consul's House, gave him three cheers—passed the French Consul's House, and gave three cheers for the French Republic—marched to the American Hotel and dismissed.

To the Governor of Panama, the thanks of our countrymen are due for the promptitude with which he furnished us with a band and also for the use of the East Battery, for the display of our patriotism, and to the French Consul who so kindly exchanged congratulations with us.

The following toasts were delivered at the table:

1. *The Birthday of Washington.*—Not only a national, but a universal anniversary, welcomed with joy wherever civilization has extended her sway, or liberty erected an altar. The sons of Columbia here assembled are proud to acknowledge and celebrate it as the glory of their country.

2. *The California Emigrants.*—Their character, and general intelligence; their leaving their native homes from choice, and not from necessity, giving a faithful guarantee that their future course will present a brilliant page in their country's history.

3. *California.*—Ere long destined to be one of the greatest growing and most enterprising States of the American Union.

4.—The President of the United States.

5. The Governors of the several states.

6. *The Ladies of our Party.*—The indefatigable energy they have displayed during our trip from New York to this place, proves them to be brave, and fit to be the first pioneers of their sex to California. Their names will yet adorn the page of history to

shield them from insult or danger, our most pleasant duty.

7. *The Army and Navy of the United States.*—The reputation and glory of both are dear to every patriotic American. May they never be placed in the keeping of incompetent hands, and never want friends to sustain them.

8. *The Press.*—Wherever the energy and indomitable enterprise of the American printer find their way, darkness is soon dispelled by the beaming of a "Star."

9. *The Governor of Panama.*—Respected and esteemed by those who pass through his domain.

10. *The Star Spangled Banner:*

"Around the Globe, through every clime,
Where commerce wafts, or man hath trod,
It floats aloft, unstained by crime,
But hallowed by heroic blood."

11. *Our relations with Foreign Nations.*—Asking nothing that is not clearly right, and submitting to nothing that is wrong.

12. *Education.*—The only safeguard of our national institutions. The only sure foundation of our liberties.

13. *The Girls we left behind us.*—Their approving smiles our greatest reward.

The Americans in this city enjoyed a treat in the evening at a concert given by Mr. Jansen, the proprietor of the American Hotel, in honor of the birthday of Washington. The pieces embracing some of our National airs, were well performed, and awakened patriotic fires in the bosoms of all. Mr. Loomis, in his execution of "Sweet Home," touched the hearts of many who yearned after the joys and comforts of the domestic hearth.

A description of Panama prepared for our paper, we are compelled to defer publishing until our next number.

Vessels in the Harbour of Panama.—One Bremen barque with coal for the steamer; one small schooner of seventy tons, which is offered for sale in shares at \$300 per share, (twenty-eight shares, each share entitled to two passages;) one old coasting schooner of 50 tons, is also offered for sale, price \$6,000. She is worth about as much as a New York oyster boat.

The brig Belfast arrived here some days since, and was filled up immediately with passengers for San Francisco, at \$100 each. She is 190 tons burthen, and carries 76 passengers. She is now at an Island below, taking in water and provisions, and will sail in a few days.

Notice to Travellers.

Those who wish to secure the safe transmission of their baggage across the Isthmus, are advised to place the same in charge of an Alcalde and take his receipt for the number of packages thus deposited; then consign them to some individual in Panama, who should be authorised to pay for the transmission of the baggage when it arrives. By observing the above direction, much time will be saved, and baggage will not be lost.

Religious Notice.

There will be religious exercises (Protestant) in the spacious dining hall of the "Hotel Americano," on Sunday morning, commencing at 10 o'clock. The Rev. Mr. Williams will officiate.

(Communication.)

WHEREAS, The undersigned passengers in the Crescent City, from New York to Chagres have been subjected to great imposition, disappointment, delay and expense in their voyage from New York and transit across the Isthmus, and having also suffered from misrepresentation with regard to the facilities of proceeding from Panama to California, they feel that they can only accomplish a duty to their countrymen and effect justice toward themselves and the several agents of the above Steamer, by a true and thorough exposition of the facts.

First. The agents and owners in New York, represented that the Steamer "Orus" could proceed to Gorgona on the Chagres River, and that the whole expense of reaching Panama would not exceed \$20 to \$25.

In reply, we assert that the "Orus" could only proceed 18 miles, or one third the distance to Gorgona, and that the expense of reaching Panama for one person and 300 pounds of baggage is not less than \$45, and in some instances \$60—and of this expense \$1 each was exacted to land passengers by the officers of the Steamer at Chagres.

Second. The agents and owners represented that they had been informed that the British Steamers had placed their relay vessels on the route from Panama to San Francisco, and that their would be little or no difficulty in obtaining vessels at Panama. The voyage from Panama to San Francisco in sailing vessels was stated to occupy 25 to 30 days.

In reply we assert, That the British Steamers do not run to San Francisco and their Consul informs us that no orders have been received to place any of their vessels on the route. In regard to the voyage in sailing vessels, the agents of the American Steamers in Panama, now state that it occupies 50 to 70 days, and they in conjunction with the American Consul refuse to facilitate our voyage in any other vessels than their own steamers, and justifying the same on a plea of duty to the owners.

We desire also to make it known that there are now upwards of one thousand passengers upon the Isthmus in transit and awaiting passage from Panama, in the vessels which may chance to arrive at that port, that the number is increased by daily arrivals at Chagres, that only a small portion of the whole have tickets for the Steamers, and there is but one vessel (a brig) now at Panama which is full. The above statement is vouched for by the undersigned now congregated at this village, awaiting the arrival of part of their baggage and their transition to Panama; the state of affairs at the latter port having been ascertained by a committee sent forward by the passengers who have returned to this place and made their report.

GILBERT A. GRANT,
GEO. W. TAYLOR,
JAMES C. ZABRISKIE,
EDWARD WARREN,
GEORGE H. BUCKLY,

Committee of the Crescent City,

And two hundred passengers on board Crescent City.
Gorgona, Feb. 19, 1849.

To the Public.

We ask our patrons and the public to excuse the appearance of our first number. We have been compelled to publish, under circumstances of much difficulty, which we hope in some measure to obviate by the next publication day.

(Communication.)

Crossing the Isthmus.

Messrs. Editors:—You have asked me to detail my experience in crossing the Isthmus for the information of our friends at home, and I proceed to comply with your request.

I arrived at Chagres on Tuesday evening, 13th February on board the Steamer Falcon. The next morning the Orus came along side, and an arrangement being made to that effect a portion of the passengers with their baggage were transferred to her during the day, and on Thursday morning we set out up the Chagres River. Some delay at Chagres, detained us until about noon, when we proceeded on our way, and during the afternoon attained about 16 miles when we laid still for the night, and the next morning went six miles further, which proved to be the extent of Steamboat navigation for the present, the water being low. During the rainy season Captain Tucker thinks he can run to Gorgona, which I very much doubt. I may as well say here that the Orus speculation is considered here a failure. The boat is too large, draws too much water, and the cost of proceeding up the River is rather increased than diminished, and if there happens to be a press of passengers no time is saved. In our case there were the passengers of four vessels competing for canoes at Chagres, and the price of transportation from thence to Gorgona was increased to from 10 to 15 dollars a passenger, besides freight on extra luggage.

We had towed up the river 13 canoes, into which part of our passengers were transferred in parties of from two to six persons—to send off those who remained, we had to depend on those canoes which came down from Gorgona, and our progress was consequently slow enough. The result was that I remained on board three days, paying board at the rate two dollars per day, and then availed myself of the opportunity of coming on with the mail carrier, by which arrangement I came directly through to Panama, leaving some two hundred passengers at Gorgona awaiting for mules. At that place there are only about 150 available mules to transport the passengers, freight and luggage of about 800 passengers from the four vessels; and as only 50 or 75 can be forwarded daily your readers may judge with what facility they can be delivered here. The greatest portion of the baggage is however, sent forward on the backs of the natives. They can carry from 100 to 150 pounds each, and will go through from Gorgona to Panama in all about 29 hours resting one night on the way, but they are almost exhausted with the labor of transporting the great quantity of freight that has crossed the Isthmus, and this will render it the more difficult for those who are to follow us.

I am agreeably disappointed in the result of my experience in making this dreaded passage—perhaps because I had pictured to myself a much more terrible affair, but the weather was fine and the roads dry—but I experienced little or none of the hardship I was led to anticipate. The river Chagres is one of the finest I ever saw—the banks are high and covered with the most beautiful and greatest variety of tropical trees, and it needs nothing but the hand of man, to make proper clearings and cultivate them to render it wholly unapproachable in loveliness. It varies in width from 50 to 160 yards, and is a clear and beautiful water, unobstructed by branches of trees. The only obstructions are snags and bars which could be

removed at a small expense, and then there would be a clear stream from Chagres to Gorgona, and in the wet season from six to twenty feet deep.

After leaving the Steamboat, we began to experience the hardships of our passage: Our canoe was of medium size carrying three persons, and poled by three naked negroes—we were obliged to sit in one position on the bottom which made it very fatiguing. After going about 6 miles the canoe was run ashore, and the negroes made a fire and cooked their meal, while we partook of ours from the provision we had brought along; after which we laid down upon the sand beach wrapped in our blankets, with a log for a pillow. The surrounding woods were musical with the noise of the monkeys, the cries of parrots and other birds, which were continued all night. The next morning we sat out again and arrived at Gorgona on Sunday the 19th about 1 o'clock.

(To be Continued)

(Communication.)

Messrs. Editors: I understand there will be published in your paper a copy of the proclamation of Gen. Persifer F. Smith, declaring that none but American citizens can dig or work at our gold mines in California. Perhaps by some of our adopted citizens in the United States may not be approved of—but all our countrymen in California and those on the road bound to the Gold regions will, if true to themselves, support our government to the last extremity, in carrying out so just a law; for after the toil, expense and misery we pass through to get to the gold regions, we are not willing to be overrun by the outcasts of the world, who, if permitted, would select the best spots, and leave us the refuse. If foreigners come, let them till the soil, and make roads or do any other work that may suit them, and they may become prosperous; but the gold mines were preserved by nature for Americans only, who possess noble hearts and are willing to share with their fellow men more than any other race of men on earth! but still they do not wish to give all. I ask of them who have left their homes—their comforts, their wives and children and other dear relatives, if they would be willing to share all the hopes with the millions that might be shipped from the four quarters of the globe? I will answer for them, and say no. We will share our interest in the gold mines with none but American citizens.

J. A. K.

Arrivals at Panama on the 15th inst.

J. F. Little, Me.; G. Hubbard, N.H.; F. Billings, G. E. Brown, E. J. Harrison, T. Huling, A. H. Potter, B. B. Spencer, S. F. Parker, Vt.; John Caldwell, D. W. Nason, S. Snow, T. Mayer, G. W. Dickinson, E. Warne, J. Q. Robinson, T. P. Shaw, J. R. Bassett, D. W. Madison, D. E. Edwards, C. Nutting, T. D. Sargent, J. Miller, Mass.; G. Terrell, M. Sperry, L. C. Northrup, D. Wright, E. Hull, E. Thompson, G. F. Hotchkiss, Con; J. S. Silva, A. Ludlam, D. Van Pelt, J. Simonson; W. Burger, J. Wood, J. Z. Webb, J. A. Ston, C. Van Pelt, C. Silva, S. J. Reed, G. Brinby, W. Wittlesy, E. Hunan, J. A. Meldrum, J. Q. Packard, B. W. Bean, F. Shuland, G. P. Jenkins, W. A. Buffum, W. T. Flowers, R. Breiman, J. McManus, W. W. Bidley, W. M. Watson; A. J. Morrel, J. H. Pierson, R. J. Canfield, A. A. Heryell, T. P. Everett, W. K. Miller, R. Beinan, L. J. Miller, J. V. Dunham, R. G. Keefer, T. Emmitt, C. A. Gurley, J. D. North, J. L. Marion,

Dr. J. S. Cameron, J. A. C. Rice, W. C. Jewett, Lady and Servant, S. R. St. John, H. Randolph, G. P. Close, E. Laffan and Servant, J. W. Baldwin, H. Wheeler, W. A. Buffum, H. Leisewich, W. H. Gamble, W. Hedges, F. Coffin, W. De La P. Cagigao, F. De La Penay Cagigao, J. R. Jacobs, J. B. Tod, H. P. Randolph, G. P. Clore, J. St. John, W. H. Ziffan, F. James, P. P. Cowen, E. Fowler, P. Culhan, J. S. Cornwell, J. Bame, N. Porter, V. C. Snyder, J. Herring, A. B. Frazer, A. Briggs, A. Borgnet, W. Cobee, W. H. Culver, L. J. Milliman, C. Schermerhorn, D. J. Whiting, J. D. Goodfrey, J. Smith, T. Hutchinson, C. Hudson, W. H. Maxwell, S. K. Hurric, D. C. Smith, N. York; W. Prescott, Dr. Furman, A. Stoddard, E. H. Colby, G. A. Grant, Dr. W. F. Peabody, E. B. Vreeland, J. Lane, J. Cowell, Dr. L. Crane, W. J. Emerson, D. L. White, B. Simmons, lady and servant, Dr. M. B. Halsted, B. S. Gates, D. Logan, Dr. Diman, D. C. H. Cragin, D. C.; Dr. W. E. J. Sholington, N. C.; A. Powell, C. Miller, M. Freemont, T. P. Everitt, R. H. M. Kune, D. N. Crane, J. D. Southard, T. T. Johnson, C. W. Coote, J. Barry, W. Keating, W. B. Van Dyke, Mo.; J. R. Bulber, N. O.; R. Austin, Tenn.; J. J. Bird, W. P. Kelly, J. N. Silveira, F. J. Maguire, F. D. Almida, J. Brunner, W. W. Caldwell, N. Y.; Col. J. C. Zabiskie, Capt. G. Taylor, L. Taylor, Mr. Runk, N. J.; R. S. H. Lister, J. S. Bradford, C. C. Cook, R. S. Eaton, J. S. O. Mera, A. Q. Roberts, A. J. Averill, Ill.; B. D. Horn, Mo.; T. Hovey, Mr. Weed and son; W. W. Montgomery, N. O.; M. Grim, B. Eldridge, Md.; S. K. Nurse, O. Knowlton, P. Freer, M. Van Dresser, A. V. Burns, G. W. Jacobs, R. D. Hart, H. M. True, C. E. Hart, T. C. Childs, J. L. Hemstead, N. Y.; E. D. Keys, U. S. A.; L. Teese, sen.; L. Teese, jr.; J. F. Giffit, S. P. Ludlow, A. B. Ludlow, Col. J. W. Geary, lady and child, J. P. Haven, W. H. McKinley, A. McKinley, J. Mathiot, A. S. Hobbs, E. Moser, F. J. Shultz, A. Starr, E. Vosburg, Pa.; G. W. Platt, W. C. Saterford, J. S. Baley, W. T. Shamon, G. Holtzbecher, H. Hugg, A. C. Bradford, Del.; M. Bradford, Ill.; H. Cole, Ohio.

J. B. Burns, T. Grant, W. F. Cusham, H. Hagenboser, F. Rice, W. Lovering, G. H. Howard, W. H. Hickock, J. H. Cleaves, F. Bush, Jr.; L. E. Trusdell, J. Miller, L. Marble, J. Stedman, Mass.; J. C. Swan, W. F. De Jorgh, R. I.; F. F. Randolph, J. F. Bachman, W. Tindall, J. G. Kessler, A. Kessler, C. W. Kinsey, C. L. wall, S. Carey, Phoenix Mining Company of Easton, Pa. J. B. Bidleman, S. K. Henarie, W. O. Chapman, H. Hunt, I. Coryell.

All persons whose names are not published in this paper, will appear in our next number by leaving them at the California Restaurant.

The steamer Oregon arrived last evening.

Notice.

The undersigned proprietors of the California Restaurant offer their establishment to their friends here and to Americans passing through this city. The quality and style of their accommodations has never been equalled in this country, and they trust to continue to merit the patronage of the travelling public of both continents.

f24 tf.

MENDEZ & PAREDES.

French Hotel.

BY EUGENIO FRIQUE.

PANAMA.

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