

through loose yielding sand, devoid of vegetation. Here, as well as at all points where the bluffs come near the river, the emigrants used to suffer severely, at times, from the attacks of the Indians. Opposite, and extending above this point, is a large island in the river, once a noted camping ground of the Indians. O'Fallon's Bluffs are the first of a series of sand hills, which extend north and south for several hundred miles. At this point, the valley is much narrower than that through which we have passed. Here we first enter the "alkali belt," which extends from this point to Julesburg—about 70 miles. The soil and water are strongly impregnated with alkaline substances.

The country on both sides of the river is occupied exclusively for grazing purposes. At certain seasons of the year, passengers should keep their "eye peeled" for buffalo, as we are now getting into the buffalo range. During the winter of 1873-4 immense numbers roamed over this country, along the road for 100 miles westward, but few, if any, have been seen since that time.

Passing along up the narrow bottom, with the bluffs close on our right, 7 3-10 miles brings us to a side-track, called

**Dexter**—Trains seldom stop here, and 7 2-10 miles further we reach

**Alkali**—on an alkaline bottom. This station is directly opposite the old stage station of that name on the south side of the river. After leaving the station the road passes through the sand-bluffs, which here run close to the river's bank. A series of cuts and fills, extending for several miles, brings us to the bottom land again. From Alkali, it is 9 6-10 miles to

**Rosco**—another side-track station. Passing along over a narrow bottom, with sand bluff cuttings, at intervals, 9 6-10 miles, we come to

**Ugalalla**—the county seat of Keith county.

The settlers here are all more or less engaged in stock-raising. It is the river-crossing for large droves of cattle en route for the Indian reservation, Fort Laramie and the Black Hills country, to the northward. Near this station, several years ago, at a point where the road makes a short curve and crosses the mouth of a ravine,

On the plains, bacon is called "sow-belly," Indian tents, "wigwams," lodges, "tepees," "wick-eeups."

Teamsters on the plains call a meal a "grub-pile."

the Indians attempted to wreck a passenger train, by suddenly massing their ponies on the track ahead of the locomotive. The result was, some score or more of the ponies were killed, without damaging the train, while the men used their "navies" and guns pretty freely on the Indians, who were apparently greatly *surprised*, and who now call the locomotive "Smoke wagon—big chief! Ugh!! no good!"

Another 9 6-10 miles and we reach

**Brule**—It is near the old California Crossing, where the emigrants crossed when striking for the North Platte and Fort Laramie, to take the South Pass route.

On the south side of the river, opposite in plain view, is the old ranche and trading post of the noted Indian trader and Peace Commissioner—Beauve—now deserted.

Passing along over cuts and fills, 9 7-10 miles, we reach

**Big Springs**—The station derives its name from a large spring—the first found on the road—which makes out of the bluffs, opposite the station, on the right hand side of the road, and in plain view from the cars. The water is excellent, and will be found the best along this road.

It was at this station where the "Big Spring's robbery" took place, Sept. 18th 1877. A party of twelve masked men took possession of the station, bound and gagged the men, cut the telegraph wires, and when the western train arrived, took possession of it with guns and revolvers, in the name of "hands up." The robbers secured \$65,000 from the express car, \$1,300 and four gold watches from passengers, then mounted their horses, that had been hitched near by, and allowed the train to proceed. No person was killed or injured, but *all* experienced much difficulty for days, in getting their hair to *lay down*; and, it is said, among the railroad men, that even *now* a sudden shout "hands up," in the hearing of that express messenger, will send his hat up three feet from his head, and his face and head will resemble the "All Seeing Eye" in the Mormon sign of "Holiness to the Lord," on another page. Immediately after the robbery, a reward of

Ox drivers on the plains are called "bull-whackers;" mule drivers, "mule skimmers."

All persons, in the Territories, of mixed blood, are called "Greasers;" "Peons" are Mexican slaves.