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The BUTTERFIELD OVERLAND MAIL

By
WATERMAN L. ORMSBY

*Only Through Passenger on
the First Westbound Stage*



Edited By
LYLE H. WRIGHT AND JOSEPHINE M. BYNUM

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that I had the pleasure of seeing, though terrible tales are told of their deeds of blood in this section of the country, in the way of stealing stock and taking the scalps of straggling travellers. Some of the settlers, here, say that these acts of depredation are often committed by the Comanches on the reservation, with arms furnished by our Indian agents—while the northern Comanches get the credit of it.

The Clear Fork of the Brazos was not very clear, but even its muddy waters were a grateful boon for a bath while our horses were being changed at the station on the banks.⁶⁶ Here were in progress of erection a log hut for the station keeper and help, and a corral, or yard, in which to herd the mules and catch them for harnessing. Dr. Birch, the mail agent, had everything in readiness, so that I had to finish dressing in the wagon—so short was the delay. They changed wagons, however, and took a heavier loaded one—which I thought was bad policy.

Our next stopping place was at Smith's station, twenty-three miles from Clear Fork, on the banks of a small creek. No house had been built yet, those at the station living in tents. They had nearly finished a fine corral for the stock, making it of brush (as no timber could be had) and filling in the chinks with mud. Our supper consisted of cake cooked in the coals, clear coffee, and some dried beef cooked in Mrs. Smith's best style. We changed horses or mules and swallowed supper in double quick time and were soon on our way again.

Our road from Clear Fork lay for a time through a little valley, and wound among the hills almost on a level.

⁶⁶ Clear Fork station. Bailey records a Franz's station located between Fort Belknap and Clear Fork.