

# Correspondence.

## The San Juan Country.

LOWER SAN JUAN VALLEY,  
La Plata Co., Colorado,  
March 16th, 1880.

Editors Deseret News:

I take this opportunity of writing you a few lines, to let you know something concerning the road from Escalante to the San Juan Valley, and of the climate and surroundings. The climate of the San Juan Valley is mild, not very cold in winter nor very warm in summer. The land is very rich, and will produce all kinds of grain and vegetables, and it is thought that grapes and all kinds of fruit that can be grown in Southern Utah, can also be raised in the lower part of this valley.

On the 24th of February, 1880, I left my home at Escalante, to return to Arizona to fulfill a mission to which I was called at the last October conference. On the 29th, I arrived at Hall's Ferry on the Colorado River, 65 miles from Escalante, and crossed the river the same day. Bro. Hall has built a good ferry boat at this place, and two wagons can cross on it at one time. Twenty-five wagons of Bro. Smith's company crossed in one day. On the 1st of March, I overtook Bro. Silas Smith's company at the lakes, 30 miles from Hall's Ferry, and found the brethren in good spirits, feeling well in the principles of the Gospel. The company have done a vast amount of labor during the past winter, as the making of this road was a greater task than was anticipated.

There are about 70 families in this company, most of whom intend to settle in the San Juan Valley. I traveled with this company till they arrived at the Clay Hill, 20 miles from the Lakes. There was about eight days' work to be done on this hill before the company could move forward. After this there is no great obstacle in their way except to cut down cedars and make a few short dugways. This company will probably arrive in the lower San Juan Valley about the 10th of April. This road will be the most direct road to Southern Colorado and the northern part of New Mexico. There is plenty of feed, that is, grass of different kinds on this road. There is also plenty of water at this season of the year in tanks in the rocks. After the country has been thoroughly explored I think that a great many more springs and watering places will be found.

The distance from Escalante to Brother James Davis' ranch, on the lower San Juan Valley, is about 215 miles. I left the camp and Brother Smith's company at the Clay Hill on the 5th of March, on horseback, with one pack animal, and arrived at Brother Davis' ranch on the San Juan on the 15th, having been delayed some days on account of high water in the San Juan. I will start south on my mission in a few days. I remain your brother in the gospel,

LLWELLYN HARRIS.

RICHFIELD, Sevier County,  
March 31st, 1880.

Editors Deseret News:

Although we occasionally hear of surprise parties, in your columns, from the capital of the Saints, yet it is but seldom such things are recorded from our little country settlements. Yesterday, however, I had the pleasure of attending one that I consider worthy a notice more public. It was occasioned by Bro. Jas. I. Jensen, from Elsinore, being called to go on a mission to Scandinavia. Bishop Sylvester, together with the Relief Society and the Saints in general, united, and in the meeting-house of that place served up a dinner well worthy a king's table, to which the whole town was invited, together with your humble servant from Richfield, without, however, Bro. Jensen having the least suspicion of any such thing going on, before being called to the place. When all were comfortably seated and prayer offered by the Bishop, a well-filled purse was presented to Bro. Jensen, made up from donations. An essay was then read by Mrs. Sylvester, expressing the great respect and esteem in which Bro. Jensen was held by the Saints of Elsinore, as also the great satisfaction his labors had given them while he had been counselor to the Bishop, superintendent of Sunday School and acted in several other offices of trust, in that place.

After a hearty dinner was partaken of, a photograph was taken of the party, and from that time till early this morning, a most pleasant and joyful time was spent in dancing, singing, remarks of congratulation, etc., the whole being such an enjoyable time, that its memory will never be forgotten by those attending, nor by the children, who, today, are to be treated in a like manner.

Our farmers are now busy putting in grain, after having had, for this country, very severe winter.

Respectfully yours,  
CHR. I. KEMPE.

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