

## APPENDIX 1: STEPHEN POWERS, AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH\*

Was born in Washington County, Ohio, in 1840, the son of a farmer. Graduated at Michigan University in 1863. Soon after graduation entered the service of the Cincinnati Commercial as an army correspondent. Continued in that service until the close of the war, during which I witnessed (at a safe distance) the battle of Kennesaw Mountain, the three battles about Atlanta, and the battle of Nashville. Afterward traveled extensively through the Southern States, reporting the first series of Reconstruction Conventions; and subsequently testified before the Senate Reconstruction Committee on that section of it presided over by Senator Williams of Oregon.

Went to Europe in 1866, as a correspondent of various papers, principally of the New York Times. Made a pedestrian tour through Prussia and was arrested at Naumberg as an Austrian spy, but released the same day. Arrived on the battlefield of Custozza just after the battle was concluded, but in time to report the same. Remained in Europe, principally in Germany, fifteen months.

Started from Raleigh, N. C., January 1, 1868, and walked to Charleston, S. C., thence to Savannah, Georgia. Here taking leave of the Atlantic Ocean, I walked across the continent and arrived upon the shore of the Pacific at San Buenaventura, October 14; thence to San Francisco, arriving November 3. This journey of about 3,600 miles was accomplished wholly on foot, and occupied a little over ten months. It was not a remarkable feat in any respect, as the only qualities required were health and persistence; at no time did I accomplish over forty miles a day, generally only twenty or twenty-five. I subsequently wrote and published a book containing an account of this journey, entitled "Afoot and Alone;" but it had a very limited sale, and I have long ago consigned it to oblivion without regret.

As a mode of travel I cannot recommend such an extended pedestrian tour, except in one particular. As a means of stamping, and as it were, burning the geography of a region upon the tablets of the memory so that it will never perish, there is nothing equal to the process of toiling wearily over it, day after day, month after month, on foot. There is a line crossing the Southern United States and territories, from sea to sea, with all the rivers, forests, hills, mountains, valleys, deserts, springs, bowlders which it intersects, so graven upon my memory as with a pen of iron, that the picture of them will survive among the latest recollections of my life. It was the one capital fault of my book that it was written too soon after the termination of the journey, while the impression of all these wearisome minutiae was yet so vivid that it obscured the general view, the general results, and made the book a tedious record of the mere surface of the various regions transversed, as if it had been a transcript from some odometer, daily wound up and set a-going. If I had waited six or eight years, until the memory of the journey had become hazed over by long recedence

\* From a manuscript in the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.  
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into the past, and all the multitude of special views had softened and blended into a single picture, so that I might have generalized upon it, the book might possibly have possessed some value.

And yet, strange as it may appear, when I arrived in San Francisco, so buoyant were my spirits, so penetrated was I with the almost passionate joy of seeing constantly new men and new lands, that I seriously contemplated walking across Asia and Europe, so passing on foot around the globe. And indeed there never was a period of equal length in my life that passed so happily away as the ten months of that grand lonely walk from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The savage, sullen deserts, and the vast plains of Arizona, the trackless prairies of Texas, the many-colored mountains of California -- all these have for me an inexpressible fascination, and I sometimes long with a great and almost homesick longing to go back and wander again, free and glad, as then. Nothing so quickens the senses, so intensifies the enjoyment of the wonderful color-glory of California and the gorgeous celestial phenomena of Arizona, as to stroll on foot among them. I can truly say, with Wordsworth:

"The tall rock,  
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,  
Their colors and their forms, were then to me  
An appetite; a feeling and a love  
That had no need of a remoter charm."

Since my arrival in California I have traveled some thousands of miles, in the summers of 1871 and 1872, partly on foot and partly on horseback, collecting material for a book on the California Indians. That book is now in manuscript form, nearly ready for publication. A large portion of it was published in the Overland Monthly, and one chapter in the Atlantic Monthly.

On October, 1873, was elected a corresponding member of the California Academy of Sciences.

Am at present the owner of a small ranch near Sheridan, Placer County, engaged in rearing Angora goats.

Have done or attempted many things in my life. Have published books, and herded sheep in San Luis Obispo; have managed a large farm in Ohio, and put my luck to the touch at mining in Placer; have been a private tutor in Greek, reported battles in Georgia and Italy, plowed with oxen in Texas, and camped with Indians in Sis-Kiyou. I seem to myself to have done nothing well, unless it is that I have demonstrated well the folly of aimless and purposeless vagabondizing. If any young man in quest of a vocation should chance upon this sketch, I would most earnestly impress upon him the following piece of advice:

Find out early in life what you can do well, then do that with your might, and do that while life endures. It is better, far better, to do something well than to make many experiments in seeking to discover what you can do best.