

Half a League farther we had on our left the Palo Alto (Tall Tree), which according to the general belief is the half-way point of this desert, but certainly is not. We followed our course with a thousand useless windings which lengthened the road more than a third without any reason, and arrived at 12:30 at a place called Las Encinal, end of our day's journey, having traveled 6 leagues northeast. Land is color de canela, sandy, etc. Much game on the Nueces and Encinas. The place we halted is admirable because of two lagoons which preserve water all the year, although the wild horses keep it muddy most of the time. This was an aguaje.

On the 29 we set out at 8:45, traveling very fast, and at three and one-half leagues arrived at the beginning of the woods of the Rio Frio, over hills of rolling country very similar to the preceding. The wood is about a quarter of league wide, and adorns both sides of the Rio Frio. At the end of the wood we came out on some hills (lomerias) even more bare than previous ones. Two leagues on we arrived at the water hole of Las Esperanzas so called because here the escort from Texas waits for that from Coahuila. It is a pool of good size with water all the year, but muddy and ill tasting, surrounded with oaks (encinos). We arrived here at 1:30, dined and in half an hour continued over the lomerias. At three and one-half leagues we arrived at a place called San Miguelito, where there is a tank (estague) some 400 steps (pazos) long and twelve wide, rather deep and full of crystalline water, as the water bottom is of stone. We did not stop, but went on another two leagues and halted at Las Lagunillas. Eleven L. E. N. E. Camp was pitched at a swamp (cienga) at the edge of the wood; the ground was covered with grass, necessary to burn it for fear of snakes. I went to look at the lakes (lagunas) which are of bad water and full of mud, surrounded by oaks, etc. One of them was dry. I crossed it carefully and beneath the mud I saw remains of a crawfish, etc.

On the 30th we set out at 8:15 over lomerias of ⁿpopal, mesquite, etc.