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JOURNAL OF THE ROUTE TO OREGON

Kept by: A.A. Denny

See Plateau Rim Road Narratives  
Entry # 1056

Original written in 1851

Copied in 1940

For Dr. Hollaud  
from Sophie Irene Bass  
granddaughter of  
Arthur Armstrong Denny

(Metter Collection)

Journal of the route to Oregon kept by A.A. Denny

April 10th, 1851. Left home at 3 o'clock P.M. and proceeded to Kanessville by the way of Burlington, New London, Mt. Pleasant, Fairfield, Agency, Ottumwa, and Eddyville on the Des Moines River and arrived at Kanessville on the 31st day of April.

May 5th. Left Kanessville and proceeded to the River. Camped on the bank.

Tuesday 6th. Crossed the river and traveled 22 miles to Pappes Creek. Wood and water plenty.

Wednesday 7th. 9 miles to Elkhorn and 3 miles to camp. Water supplied by Lake or pond and wood by willows. This evening we had the first stampede caused by horses taking fright at Indians while feeding. First rain since we crossed the Misfsouri, two showers. This evening we organized by electing. John Denny, Captain and Hadley, Lieutenant. Indians camped in two hundred yds.

Thursday 8th. Traveled up the Platt bottom. Road level and 22 dry. Camped opposite to an Island covered with a heavy growth of cotton wood.

Friday 9th. Encountered a heavy shower of rain which lasted an 21 hour and fell in torrents.

Saturday 10th. Had the most disagreeable night I ever 20 experienced it being my turn to stand guard and it rained heavily with a strong gale of wind. Today we have been disappointed in crossing the Loup Ford. The water is up

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and injured the ferry so as to prevent crossing. We are now on our way up the River to the old ford. Camped on L. Glafs creek. Distance

9

Sunday 11th. Water bound.

Monday 12th. Returned to ferry determined to wait and crofs.

Tuesday 13th. Still not able to crofs the ferry.

Wednesday 14th. Commenced crofsing. Crofsed about half of the wagons and 6 horses. This divides the camp set up on the bank of the River.

Thursday 15th. Traveled. Got the last over about 3 o'clock. Camped on the bank of River.

9

Friday 16th. Traveled over sand hills a considerable portion of the day particularly in the afternoon. Camped on the prairie without wood or water.

22

The above, Saturday 17th.

Sunday 18th. Started at 5 o'clock. Traveled 15 miles to wood creek which we reached at noon. Rain and thunder today for which this Platt country is remarkable. It has rained every day or night since the 12th. Timber (cotton wood) is plenty on this stream. Laid by in the afternoon.

15

Monday 19th. Camped at noon for the purpose of drying our loading which had become very wet. Road good - disagreeable wind from the west. Camped opposite Grand Island.

14

Tuesday 20th. Clear and warm - road good. Began to see

21

traces of alkali. Pafsed numerous dog towns and saw plenty of antelope. Camped apposite the Island.

Wednesday 21st. Light shower before day and heavy thunder showers during the day. This Platt country is the most remarkable country for sudden storms that I ever knew. Camped on Elm creek, a small stream with deep banks; here we had to take off our horses and draw our wagons over by hand. 16

Thursday 22nd. Rained heavily last night. Very windy today and roads bad. Camped on the main Platt opposite an Island. Waded for wood of an inferior quality. 18

Friday 23rd. Road good except in low places and weather pleasant. Turned off of the road 1 mile for grafs which we found in abundance. This evening the boys brought in a fine young deer. 25

Saturday 24th. Today we made a cut off of 7 or 8 miles by crofsing onto an Island on which we traveled about 6 miles. Just where we crofsed to the Island we found the grave of Ezekill Clifton who died May 19th, 1851, of consumption. On pafsing off of the island the team of one of the company ran off: pafsed my light wagon and ran into my large one lacking the four wheels without injory to mine but it crushed the other and injured it in other respects. 20

Sunday 25th. This morning we repaired the broken wagon and started about 10 o'clock. Camped at the last timber for 200 miles. 18

Monday 26th. Rain last night. Some of our Gompany brought in a supply of buffalo beef this morning, the first we have 9

had. Today we only moved up 9 miles to a willow island in order to bake bread and prepare for our journey over the plains. We got wood (willows) by wading mid thigh.

Tuesday 27th. Traveled over swampy land and sloughs mostly until we crossed the N.B. fork or distance of 10 miles. We then had sand bluffs the greater portion of the distance up to camp which is on a small creek immediately after striking the bottom. 22

Wednesday, 28th. Last night we had a heavy storm of wind and some rain. It blew alarmingly for about an hour but did no damage except to blow down several tents - ours among the rest. Traveled 20 miles over sand and swamps. Camped opposite to cedar bluffs on Battle Snake Creek. 20½

Thursday 29th. This morning we found 3 yoke of cattle at our camp which it is generally believed came up from behind notwithstanding one of the company is driving them forward contrary to the wish of the company. Rain this morning, road sandy and heavy. The emigrants begin to think of leaving all but necessaries. Camped on Woody Creek at the foot of sandy bluffs which we have to cross. 17

Friday 30th. This morning we met 9 men on hunt of the cattle in our train. Road tolerable good. Camped on a slough which afforded a sufficiency of water and saw 10 or 15 Sioux Indians who appeared to be decidedly friendly and well disposed. Very different from the Pawnees. 21

Saturday 31st. Road good, weather pleasant. Camped at a small lake on S. side of road. Grass moderate. 30

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Sunday June 1st. Road tolerable good. Pafsed N. Johnson 19  
today waiting for his cattle from behind which he lost.  
Camped on the river in sight of chimney rock.

Monday 2nd. Road good and weather pleasant. Camped opposite 23  
to chimney rock, which has not that majestic appearance near  
by that it has at a distance.

Tuesday 3rd. Our road today has been very good. We have 22  
pafsed Scott's Bluffs and camped nearly opposite to them on  
Spring Creek. They are a more interesting sight than chimney  
rock, though I have not had an opportunity of examining either  
closely as they are on the S. side of the river.

Wednesday 4th. Road good and weather fine until about 3 o'clock 17  
when we had a hail storm which lasted but for a few minutes  
during which time there was the greatest confusion and everyone  
had enough to do to look to his own team and little time to  
look at others. At one time I had almost given up my 2 horse  
team containing the family and nearly all the other valuables  
I possefs. Camped on the river.

Thursday 5th. Encountered another hail storm - the most 18  
terrific I ever saw. We turned our wagons and loosed the horses  
and barely prevented their running by holding by the bit. Camp-  
ed 6 miles below Larimie. 530 miles to fort.

Friday 6th. Traveled up the bottom about 4 miles above Larimie 20  
and then took to the bluffs. Road rough - camped at a fine  
spring.

Saturday 7th. Laid by.

Sunday 8th. Fough and stony but little water. Camped at a 20

spring, good water.

Monday 9th. Road good for bluff but water scarce. Camped on 24  
the river nearly opposite to Laramie peak.

Tuesday 10th. Road pretty good. Turned off 1 mile and camped 21  
on the river, grafs tolerably good.

Wednesday 11th. Traveled over what we suppose to be a point 25  
of the black hills this morning about 5 miles across strong  
marks of volcanic action. Camped on the river by turning off  
about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

Thursday 12th. Road sandy and heavy most of the time. Camped 20  
on the river. Grafs pretty good.

Friday 13th. Road sandy. Camped on the river perhaps for the 18  
last time.

Saturday 14th. Traveled today from about 10 o'clock without 26  
water for our horses and but little grafs. Camped at willow  
spring. Good water, grass scarce.

Sunday 15th. 732 miles to Independence Rock which is some- 21 $\frac{1}{2}$   
what interesting but not so much so as I expected to see.  
Camped on the banks of the Sweet Water.

Monday 16th. Laid by in the forenoon. Camped on the river. 11

Tuesday 17th. Road pretty good. Camped on Cottonwood Creek. 17

Wednesday 18th. Road pretty good but we found no water for 32 $\frac{1}{2}$   
the last  $16\frac{1}{2}$  miles. Camped on the river.

Thursday 19th. Laid by in the afternoon. Camped near a good 8  
spring which is about 15 rods N. of the road.

Friday 20th. First part of the road, say 3 miles, very rocky and rough last part very good for this country. Found snow in abundance on lower ground than where we were traveling. Camped on Sweet Water. 22 1/4

Saturday 21st. Passed over the summit or South pass to Pacific Spring thence within 1 1/2 miles of the Junction of the California and Oregon road to camp without water and little grafs.

Sunday 22nd. To Big Sandy and laid by to recruit for the desert. 38 days - 760 miles. 12

Monday 23rd. Set out on the desert at 1 o'clock. After we raised the bluff we found the grave of Dr. W.I. Taylor of Akron, Ohio, who had been disinterred by the wolves - the hair and bones are yet to be seen. Traveled until 2 hours by sun and stopped to graze. Little grafs. Thence over some heavy hills until 2 o'clock in the morning. Stopped to rest until day. Thence to green river. At the ferry, which we reached about 10 o'clock, paid \$10 a wagon and \$1 a head for horses. Passed safely on the 24th making 53 miles to a creek 8 miles out. Grafs good. 53

Wednesday 25th. Traveled in the afternoon to a small creek. Plenty of spruce. 12

Thursday 26th. Road today mountaineous but otherwise good. Camped on the Mountain side near a spring surrounded by quaking ash trees and on the left of the road water seldom equaled. 16

Friday 27th. Rough road. Camped on Bear River bottom. 17

Saturday 28th. Road good up River bottom. Camped on Thomas' fork at the toll bridge. 20

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Sunday 29th. Over mountains in the forenoon to Bear River: 18  
thence up said river and camped on a beautiful small creek.  
Water fall at the foot of the mountain about 40 rods above us.

Monday 30th. Road good, water and grafs plenty. Camped on 23  
the River.

Tuesday July 1st. Passed the Soda Springs and find the water 21  
not very pleasant. Camped at the last spring.

Wednesday 2nd. Road good. Were just back of a hail storm and 20  
escaped it. Camped on a small creek.

Thursday 3rd. Crofsing of creek very bad nearly opposite to 20  
camp. Road rough for five miles. Camped on creek. 49 days -  
1,104 miles to Fort.

Friday 4th. Road very sandy in forenoon to creek and fine 17  
spring. Thence 5 miles to Fort Hall which is not occupied by  
troups at this time. Thence 2½ miles to camp on Snake River.

Saturday 5th. Road tolerably good except some bad streams to 18  
crofs though small. Camped on River.

Sunday 6th. Today we were fired on by a party of Indians about 20  
15 in number but received no injury. Camped on small creek.

Monday 7th. Road rough by means of volcanic rock. Camped on 25  
creek.

Tuesday 8th. To creek. 15

Wednesday 9th. Camped on dry fork. 24

Thursday 10th. To Back Creek. 23

Friday 11th.	To river at Fish falls. This distance we made	25
	without water or grafs.	
Saturday 12th.	Traveled 2 miles to small River and good grafs.	2
	Laid by.	
Sunday 13th.	Had neither water no grafs but water may be had	37
	at 20 miles. Camped on River.	
Monday 14th.	To river again. Laid by.	4
Tuesday 15th.	Over stone and sand.	20
Wednesday 16th.	To salt Grafs creek. Laid by. Grafs good.	8
Thursday 17th.	Camped on River.	24
Friday 18th.	Traveled after night in consequence of heat.	28
	Very little grafs. Camped on River.	
Saturday 19th.	To creek. Grafs good.	8
Sunday 20th.	To camp on River.	12
Monday 21st.	Camped on Owyhe River. The road today very	30
	sandy and heavy. F. Boise at 4 miles.	
Tuesday 22nd.	To Malheur River.	20
Wednesday 23rd.	With sulfur water half way between and no	20
	grafs. Camped on small creek.	
Thursday 24th.	Camped on Burnt River.	16
Friday 25th.	Camped at small spring near summit of Mountain.	15
Saturday 26th.	Road tolerably good but mountainous. Camped	22
	on small spring branch in the mountains between Burnt and Powder	

Rivers.

Sunday 17th. Ramped on slough. Grafs good. 25

Monday 28th. At 10 miles Powder River. Fine soil on the bottom and timber on the mountain. Camped on slough. 20

Tuesday 29th. Crofsed Grand Round and camped on small stream at W. side. Timber soil and water first rate. 18

Wednesday 30th. Over mountains and through a heavy pine forest which is delightful after traveling so long over barren deserts. Camped on small creek. 17

Thursday 31st. Camped on small creek. Road rough. 16

August 1st. Friday. Camped on the Umatilla bottom about 5 miles after striking it. 20

Saturday 2nd. To tolerable grafs. Laid by in the afternoon. 8

Sunday 3rd. Down the river to camp. 23

Monday 4th. Last 10 miles very sandy. To Columbia River. 20

Tuesday 5th. 1st part sandy to camp on river. 18

Wednesday 6th. Camped on River and moved on Willow Creek. 20

Thursday 7th. To camp on River at the point where the road leaves for Day's River. 15

Friday 8th. To Day's River. The ford is the worst I ever saw. 5

Saturday 9th. To Columbia again - without water. 18

Sunday 10th. 5 miles to Fall river which we ferried. Thence 5 miles to spring and good grafs. 10

Monday 11th. To Dalles of the Columbia and prepared for the 8  
water route. Started just at dark. At about 4 miles we had to  
land and lie on the shore till morning in consequence of the  
boat leaking.

Tuesday 12th. Stopped the leak and set sail and had to turn  
in at the mouth of a creek in about half and hour in consequence  
of wind. Laid up until sunset. Started and ran until 12 o'clock.

Wednesday 13th. Ran down to the narrows at Wind mountain and  
stopped for wind to lay.

Thursday 14th. Started at daylight. Ran 2 or 3 miles and  
stopped in consequence of wind. Started again about 3 o'clock.  
Stopped at 4 miles.

Friday 15th. Laid up the principal part of the day.

Saturday 16th. Started in the night and ran down to the head  
of the rapids and stopped until daylight, when we passed down  
to the landing and took the hand car on the portage. 2 miles  
to the next point for shipping.

Sunday 17th. We are now waiting the sailing of the Brigg Henry  
on which we are to go to Portland.

Monday 18th. This morning we traveled 4 miles on foot in order  
to get around the rapids. About 4 o'clock we got on board and  
moved slowly down the river.

Tuesday 19th. Wind unfavorable but made some progress.

Wednesday 20th. Reached Fort Vancouver and lay aground all

day. Cleared and anchored in the mouth of the Willamette.

Rain at night.

Thursday 21st. Lay aground 3 miles below Portland. Left the Brigg and lodged at M. Guiles.

Friday. 22nd. Footed it up to Portland.

The distance from the Mifsouri River to the Dalles according to the foregoing journal is 1,765 miles. The time occupied is 80 and one half days.

#### Extra Notations

From Little Sandy to B. Sandy no water from this to Green River a distance of 45 miles.	8 m.
From Green River, creek, good grass & willows	12
Thence over high hills, brooks snow banks, good grass in many places. B.B. & G.R. Mount	16
To top of R. Mountain many small brooks, good grass	