

DIARY OF HELEN STEWART

1853

April the 1

we took pasage in the steamer arctic at pittsburg for oregon and started for oregon and started the 2 I enjoyed myself as well as could be expected the people were all very agreeable indeed I was sorrow when I had to leave some of them I never went out to see eny of the places that we stoped at but there is some splended scenry along the banks of the river the Missouri looks very strange beside the clear waters of the Ohio

there was no moonlight while we was coming up to st. louis which I was very sorrow for, as the arctic was not going eny farther we have to go on the honduras to st. Joseph it was not neer so pleasant as the arctic it was very nice comeing up the Missouri there was such romantic looking rock towering away up it brought me in mind of some old runned castle I have read about and the shot tower look so strang siting away up on the top of thoes high rocks

one eavening we past where there was a fire kindled in the woods and it was winding and spreading along the side of the hills it indeed looked beautiful and oh you could see it so far it was so beautiful on the water then the moon was shineing bright, it aded more beauty to the romantic sceniry round there was some terable storms, we got to St. Joseph on wed the 20 in the night and we staid on board all night but with all the moonshine and stormes we arive all well and we was glad to see each other again after the short seperation we are camping about two miles out from town by black snake creek

Aprile 29

nothing particular has happened today just the old round of hunting

cattle and trailing about I have been trying to fish but cannot catch any
only little ones

Aprile 30

part of our company has started and we are to meet them at the ferry
the whippoorwills are chirping and they bring me in mind of our old farm in
pensillvania the home of my childhood where I have spent the happiest days
I will ever see again

May 1

this is sabeth it has been very stormy but it has past over and all
nature seems revived everybody is rapted in there own immagination some
is writing some reading and some is stroleing about I feel rather lonesome
today oh solitude solitude how I love it if I had about a dosen of my ac-
quaintances to enjoy it with me

May 2

another of my dear sisters has left the pleasent hearth of her father to
enjoy another it apears she has joined heat and hand with Fredrick Warner
on the eave of our leaving St. Joseph on (1853) our long tiresome journey

May 3

I think we will get started today I will not say much about the road
we came any more than we had a great deal of trouble we was within three miles
of the ferry when the ferry boat sunk and dround three men one of them was
an imigrant his widow and family is in our companey now we will have to
go to Iowa point

May 4

we are getin along pretty well stiking in mud holes and dubling teames
all the time we pass two little towns they ware very nice little places

oregon and savanna oregon has a very nice courthouse in it the houses in them is nearly all one story and a half high

this is sabeth day we are going to cross the nodaway river today it is a beautiful small stream clear water then there is a long hill to go up then the road winds along the top of the hill it is a good road all the way there is some good looking farmes as far as you can see

we come now to the Missouri and cross we travel a peace when Stewart broke his wagon he will have to wait and get it mended we are going and is to wait at the big blue for them there was a little boy died belonging to one of the company there is a good many laid by the rode side who no doubt had dear loving friends to mourn their loss

there is nothing for your eye to meet but far spreading prairie and now and then a few wagons and some droves there is one hill after another it looks beautiful to look around and see the groves of trees winding among the hills and the clear water murminding along in the fragrant shade indeed it looks so inviting one can not withstand the temptation of enjoying it a little while

This is 14

we have got to the minehaw creek it is bad crossine but midling good grass we camp here there is some of the streams bridge and we paid tole but ther was some that would not do it and the Indians followed them two days and we heard that there was some that had all there horses and cattle stolen I believe it was the same ones

May 15

nothing particular has happened today we are geting along very well so far when it is plesant wether I enjoy it very much but it is disagreeable in the wors degree when it is raining and no fire to dry ourselves at

May 17

it is fine this forenoon and Agnes and I have been walking and have passed the wagon and we are good peace before them so we have sat down at the side of a little run to waid untill they come up it has been rather stormy this afternoon they had just got the oxen waterd and well started again when there came up a hailstorm and some of the oxen was unhiched quicker then ever they ware but it has turned to rain and the sun is shineing out through the clouds and is seting lovely al the cattle are eating buisly there are very tired tonight we heard the wolves hollowing one night which makes me feel very eary it is lightning all round and the face of the moon is obscured under dark clouds and the wind is blowing and I am in the wagon trying to write a little the lantern is tied to the ridge pole every body is in bed but agnes and myself i believe and we would be there to but we have wait till the apples are stewed enough the watch are walking about to see if all is write

May 18

it is dreadful cold and the wind is blowing so hard and so cold that we cannot get any breckfast indeed I never got out of the wagon atall three wagons past us to that had the covers torn of them I fear they suffered from the hail and wind

we stopt at a place where there is a small creek and some wood and we breckfast and dinner all at one we camped by a small creek I do not know the name of it it is a beautiful night the moon is shineing very clear and I onely see one white cloud in the sky we hear the Indians are very troublesome before but we have not had any trouble with them yet there is 10 wagons in the company now and we are all well but Lizzy and she has the erisipelis and the children has the houghpin cough

May 19

we got to the big blue today there was a man dround just before we came
he was with a drove of sheep and there was sheep dround.

May 20

we have come about 13 miles today good grass and water it has been
very warm today we have past a large drove of sheep

May 21

oh it is warm it is lightening round and round as the appearance
of ___ at last the thunder begins to role the lightning flash and the
craftick black clouds moves in all there terifying grand ___ that I
think evry minit the covers will be torn of or the wagons upset I sit in
the wagon in despair and hold the door shut which was no easy job and indeed
it was laughable to look out and see the fellows that was sleeping in the tent
for it blew over and they crawled out under it they stood and tried to hold
it but they could not

May 22

it was a dredful storm last night it was not in our intentic to
travel on the Sabeth but we find that we do more harm by stoping then moving
we came to a very bad looking place there was the peaces of a wagon
that had been broken down but we got through and it was not near so bad as it
looked

May 23

we have had a long days travel today we past three graves near the
road two of them died the same day and both buried in one grave we have
crossed big sandy and little sandy creeks which were nothing but sand we
come to the little blue it is a beautiful clear water and not so good for
drinking being very warm we follow this water a long peace there is trees

and bushes growing on each side all cotton wood and willows

we camp very bad grass we passed many dead oxen and some living calves and sheep I have so little time to write that I have missed from 23 to 27 but it is no difference for we have not been traveling for two day it being raining the road is extremely slippy and there is very steep hills to go up and down and that it makes it very difficult and hard

there was near us a grave that had been dug open and a women head was layin and a come sticking in her hair it seems rather hard

May 26

it has been raining all forenoon but it has cleared of now the boys are playing ball and they have had a fire game at leap the frog a play which I have often heard of but I never saw it I really thought it be end. I never was so much diveited in my life

May 27

we have been traveling over a very hilly road the land is very broken and now some parts of the road is very sandy we camp on the banks of the blue no grass

28

looks very rainy this morning they had to take the cattle over the creek for to get any grass atall and they have had a har job geting them back a sad accident mother fell as she was geting in to the wagon and the front wheel ran over her she was bruised but none of her bones is broke as she might have been hurt a great deal worse then she was we ought to be very thankful indeed the place she fell was sandy we come to a dreadful bad place there is a creek to cross there is four crossing and not one to mend another there was one wagon in a hole and another had just got out and there was upset and broke we was directed to one place as being the best so we try

it but odear odear and wagon goes down to the hub and takes its stand the
 cattle gets discourag and tangled and one fell down so they unhiched and put
 in other ones so they got out with some trouble but I think they ought to
 double teams before ever they try such bad places it comences raining and
 we soon camp toleable good grass no wood plenty of water come about
 5 miles

sab 29

it commenced raining last eavening and it thundered the hole night and
 and forke lightning flew through heavens in a most terifick manner indeed a
 thunder storm on the prairie makes a person feel very lonesome I never felt
 so afraid of the Indians as I was before that night but I was not so afraid
 as to keep me from sleeping

we come to a creek but it was so swollown with the we cannot cross
 we have to camp come but about 8 miles not very good grass no wood we
 see no game except one hare wich was shot

I found a pocket book contain _ _ _ friundship cards and some poetry and
 some other things no doubt but the one that lost it would be very sorrow

May Mon 30

we started this morning when the sun was just riseing the creek has
 fallen so we can cross very easy it is a beautiful level road now we get
 to the platte at noon we have to travel along the botton it is a space of
 very flat land with a range of blufs on the left hand side the waters has
 run all over it at some time for there is little shells thick on it we
 find tolerable grass no wood come about 12 miles

tews 31

we started early this morning had to take milk instead of coffee for
 breakfast have come in site of fort carney there was a very hard rain this

morning which makes very hard pulling for the water all stands in it and the ground is sandy and the wheels cut down and it is very hard work

two droves of cattle passes us today we pass fort carney there was a soldier came and got the number of all of us and our cattle and he told us that there was a thirteen thousand head of people and ninty thousand head of stock the largest emigration has ever past yet we camp not very good grass no wood except a few willows it is comeing up another storm

weds June 1

we come on better roads then we had there is no wood on this side of the river we bought an adishnal yoke of oxen cost 80 dollars

we can see emigrants now as far as we can see for the winding of the road we have got in among the cactisus, we are going to take some of them with us if we can for they are so lovely

there was a man was going to cross the river with a drove of sheep and he put in thirty thousand and he got out five thousand the river was very high it is four miles wide sand bottom we camp neer it the men had to waid to one of the ilans to get wood very little grass it is comeing up a storm so we chain all the wagons together

June thirs 2

the storm past last night and was not much we start this morning at 9 oclock it is a fine day we see three antilopes to and some of the fellows followed them and fired at them but missed there was a wolf killed we see plenty of wolves we camp by a branch of the platte come about 17 miles

fry 3

we cross plum creek there is wagons standing in the place of a grog shop they have two sines up it is a bad crossing and Father was geting over the run and where he put his foot gave way and he fell into water on his back we we camp

we all went fishing this evening there was 11 in number of us I believe they all caught some thing me I got two little wee things that was not worth ceaping and threw them in to the water again

fry 17

we started this morning at the usual time we got to court house rock we eat dinner neerly opisite to it and in site of chimney rock

to day we hear great word of the indians they say that there is five hundred of them going to fight we hear that they have laid down blankets that is the sine for the emigrants not dare govern them we shall see when we come up to the place whether it is true or not and that they have sent over the river to gether up more

there was one old bachlier poor old fellow that was dreadful afraid he looked as if he wished his eyes might go ahead a peace to se if it was true or not I had to laugh at him while his legs were running backward for he said that if the emigrants was stopt untill more would come up he thought it would be best just to have enough men with the wagons to mind them and the rest to go and kill every one men weamon and children and he would kill little sucking baby so he would for if they could not fight not they would kill white peoples babys when they got big enough so they would by G swearing all the time at a great rate poor little soul he has a toleable big body but a very little soul but old bachaliars ought to be excused a little all ways for they are not always accountable

but the great army that frightened him so proved to be an Indian camp and in deed they were very friendly with us for they was one come first and shuck hands with us all showed us a peace of paper that had the name of evry thing he wanted such as tobacco flower coffe and whole lot of other things he told to that his was the best family among them and that he had ten children I saw some of the prittyist girls to and they ware drest so nice

after their own fashion of course though I do not know wether old John has got over his panic yet or not

sat 18

we have had good luck so far one of our oxen was sick last night but better this morning the indians followed us so far today oh it is beautiful there is such romantic scereneary we can see scots bluffs and a rang on the opste side that is far more beautiful o deare me it is so warm the dust is flying in a cloud

sabeth 19

it is a fine day extremely windy the dust is flying the poor oxen I do pity them so I wish they had goggles we come to an exslent spring of water but required some diging out it if runing out of a very mountain near this spring is the hill that if you go up on it you can larimie peak I went up but it was such a dull dusty day we could not see any distance

mon 20

it is warm the cattle is travling with there touns hanging out there are so warm and tiard there is a storm comeing up

tews 21

this morning is a beautiful after the rain the road is leavel and good we past three dead oxen no a great distance apart what death they died I know not poor things we are nearing for laramie it is about five miles to it yet there is so many that is there before us waiting to get across that there is no grass near it so we have to wait here awhile

wed 22

this is my birthday my eighteenth birthday I feel myself geting older but not any wiser

tews 5

some places of the rode is very good we have evry verity of road we pass the stony evinus and the willow springs we ascend a long hill and descend the same and go over very broken ground the place is very different from it was on the other side of the platte it is a great deal worse we camp no grass nor wood we have to use sage the cattle has to eat it to poor things it is very cool this night the wind blue very hard this afternoon

wed 6

we travil over dreadful sandy road hard pulling the poor beasts did not get one bite to eat this morning we come fourteen miles independence rock we went upon it but the wind blew so hard I could not go all over it there was a grate many names written on it the wind still continues to blow very hard makeing the sand and dust very disagreeable indeed there is two traiding posts here we cross sweet water and come along now in the valley between the ranges of rocky mountains shure enough they look so stang to see greate piles of stone piled up to such dregtful hight we pass the devils gate we camp neer it we have had another quarl it is the third one of any account there has been yet but there is no saying what there may be yet

thirs 7

its extremly heavy rodes had every way it is rugh some places the sand is broke out leaving big holes that lets down the wagon with a jurk today the wagon went down into one of these hols while Hiram McGraw was takeing of his boof at the hounds the toung went up and chrushed his ankle between it and the bed of the wagon it split an inch plank he fell back on the toung where if he had not caught hold of the front of the wagon he would have fell down and perhaps been killed by it going over him but there is

thurs 21

no better road but worse if worse can be traveled half the day and had to stop and Christie bomgardner had a daughter added to his familie

David Loves wagon was broke to day the hounds of it it was a very bad place

friday 22

we left the two ducth familie they could not travil without a great risk came to hams fork campt looks very stormy but it has all past over there is a great many dead cattle linging along side of the road we have not lost any of ours yet

sat 23

we are within eighteen miles of bear river vally where they say there are going to stop and rers the cattle but I hope they will not wait long for we have lost so much time of late

sabeth 24

we have got to the river and indeed there is splended grass we can fish to our satisfaction but I neather like to put the grass hopper on nor take the fish poor things I like the imployment very well but I do not fish today

mon 25

we have traveled a short distance today to better grass we was neer an Indian village and there were paying us almost a continual visit but I would have much rather they had stayed way for they are the durtyist creatures I ever saw they will pick the lice out there head and eat them and then the filth of there clothes these are much different from some we have past

tues 26

we have stayd here all day and washing traveling all forenoon we come to a bridge one not a vere large wich they charge 50 cents per wagon and some thing for the cattle we did not cross here but turned and went out of our way a little though we stopt the remainder of day not very good grass

there is one of freds oxin give out he dreadful sore feet and cannot travil he was offered 18 dollars for him but he did not take it there is one of the men very sick they hardly expect him to live

for a good while I have made some mistakes in the time I have

wed 27

past Dianah Stephenson grave had good road and camped on bear river yet

thirs 28

we have left bear river for awhile to pass over the bluffs had to cross over some dreadful hills and down to the bottom again where we a beautiful level road cross several streams we crossed the last one this eavening very bad crossing and camp in splended grass plenty of water but very bad wretched sage. I _ _ _ a little better tonight

fri 29

there has nothing happened nor nothing of any consequence seen

sat 30

I do not remember one thing about this days travil I believe I have all most put in the day in sleeping I am geting oh extremely tired of the Journey I know we have had very good road all this day

Sabeth 31

and now another week is gone another one begun we have come to the soda