Journal of the Oregon Trail
"Rebels Cove." Here he died February 6, 1887, leaving a devoted family consisting of a wife and seven children.

Henry Clay Dean, eminent divine, statesman, philosopher, and a leader of men, is dead. The highest meed of praise that could be tendered him is that "the world is better from his having lived in it."

Sedalia, Missouri.

JOURNAL OF THE OREGON TRAIL.

In the spring of 1852 there was organized among the citizens of Cedar township, Van Buren county, Iowa, an emigrant train of about twenty-five wagons. Each wagon was drawn by from three to five yoke of oxen. In the company were, Paul Brattain and family of seven adult persons; William Newman; Lafayette Spencer; Charles Spencer and wife and two children; Henry Newman; George Gimple; Michael Smith and his wife, two sons and a daughter; George Hammonds; Henry Hammonds; Jacob Whetstone and family; George Taylor and family; Robert Carter and family; Adam Barnes and family; Oliver Mitchell and family; John Hilary and family; Napoleon Baker; William Howard and family; Charles Adams and family; Thomas Clark and family; Thomas Whetstone and family; Nicholas Boley and family; John Boley and family; James Watson and family; Hill Watson and family; Irádel Anderson; Mathies Anderson; George, James and William Ebert; Henry and Sloan Keck.

Paul Brattain was best known to the Iowa public of any in this train. He had served in different official capacities, the most important being as Treasurer of the Des Moines River Improvement Board of Public Works.

To assist his brother, William, who expected to follow in 1853, Lafayette Spencer kept a diary of his trip to Oregon, which he transmitted with a letter after the journey ended. This letter and the diary in the quaint diction and orthography of the writer are herewith presented with no more than necessary alterations.

E. R. H.
Dear Brother:

I now embrace the present opportunity of writing a few lines to let you know that I am well at the present time, hoping that these few lines will find you all well. I have not much to write about at the present time. I have traveled a good deal in Oregon. We started from John Newman’s near Oregon City the eighth day of November for the Rogue River gold mines. We traveled some two hundred and fifty miles to south Umpequa river. It rained so much that the roads got so bad that we could not travel with our wagons. We stopped on Cow creek to wait for the waters to run down and prospect for gold, but could not make it pay very well. ** * * We lacked some seventy miles of getting to Rogue river but it commenced snowing and snowed for fifteen or sixteen days in succession. The snow is over two feet deep and still snowing. I do not know what will become of our stock for the people have no feed to give them. The pack mules are beginning to die now of hunger. ** * * I will stay here until the winter breaks up, then I will go to Rogue river. ** * * I have traveled all through the Willamette Valley. It is about 20 miles wide and is cut up with hills and mountains. All the land that is worth anything is cleaned up. The Umpequah Valley is not as good as the Willamette Valley, nor half as big. All of the best of the claims are taken up. I shall advise you to stay where you are, but if you want to come you must start by the first of April with six or seven yoke of oxen to the wagon and as much as one or two hundred dollars in cash. You will find it a long, tedious journey to travel. I send you my journal that I kept on the road through to Oregon. Mr. Newman is gone on to Rogue river. I am staying here in Umpequa with the team and provisions until I get word from him what to do. I live fat and saucy. Direct letters to Kanyanville, Douglass county, Oregon.

WILLIAM SPENCER.

LAFAYETTE SPENCE.

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LAFAYETTE SPENCER DAY BOOK.

May 11th, 1852. Started from home Pass through Birmingham and camp on the East fork of Lick Creek.

12th Pass through Libertyville and Ashland and camp at The Agency.

13th Pass through Autumwa. Cross the Des Moines River and camp 8 miles west of Autumwa.

14th Camp on Colt Creek 2 miles west of Albia the county seat of Monroe county.

15th Camp on the 14 miles Between Albia and Charidon Point in Lucas County.

16th Camp on Grave Creek 4 miles west of Charidon Point.

17th Camp on Camp Creek in Clark County.
18th Camp on seven mile Creek in Union County.
19th Camp on Twelve Mile Creek Cross Grand River at Pisga the old Mormon Town.
20th Camp on Nodawa Creek in Adair County.
21st Camp in a grove one mile west of the Road.
22nd Camp on a creek six miles East of Indians town.
23rd Camp near Neshyanabot- tany.
24th Camp on Silver Creek in Potawatimy County.
25th Camp at Council Bluffs 2 miles Below Kanesville on the Missouri.
26th Lay by.
27th Lay by.
28th Camp on Missouri River 10 miles above Kanesville at the upper ferry.
29th Lay by.
30th Cross the Missouri River in the night and Camp on the west Bank.
31st Travel 18 miles Camp on Pappea Creek Good grass.
June 1st Travel 10 miles Cross the Elk Horn River and Camp on Bridge Creek Good grass.
2nd Travel 15 miles Camp on a Lake to the Left of the Road Good grass.
3rd Travel 20 miles Camp on Shell Creek Good grass.
4th Travel 24 miles Camp on Loup Fork near the Ferry Good grass.
5th Lay by. Nancy Spencer taken Sick.
6th Travel 4 miles Cross the Loup Fork and camp on the Plaines
7th Travel 18 miles and Camp on Loup Fork Good grass.
8th Lay by for Mr. Smith to get up with us.
9th Travel 22 miles and Camp west of the Cold Spring Good grass.
10th Travel 16 miles and Camp near Prairie Creek Nancy Spencer died at 9 o’clock P. M. and Burried at 8 o’clock A. M. the next morning.
11th Travel 16 miles and Camp on Wood Creek.
12th Travel 15 miles and Camp on the Plat River Good grass.
13th Travel 24 miles Camp on Plat river opposite Fort Kenney.
14th Travel 16 miles Camp on Buffalo Creek Good grass.
15th Travel 15 miles Camp on Plat River near willow Lake Good grass.
16th Travel 15 miles Camp on Plat River Good grass.
17th Travel 15 miles Camp on the Plat River near Skunk Creek Good Grass.
18th Travel 7 miles Camp on a small Creek Robert Carter Died with colrhea.
19th Travel 18 miles Camp on Plat River no more Timber for two hundred miles.
20th Travel 15 miles Camp on Plat River Good grass.
21st Travel 20 miles Camp on Wolf Creek and Spring.
22nd Travel 10 miles Camp on Rattle Snake Creek.
23rd Travel 8 miles Camp on Plat River near Cedar Bluff Good grass.
24th Travel 22 miles Camp near Castle Creek Good grass their is a postoffice kept their I wrote back
25th Travel 20 miles Camp on Plat River Good grass
26th Travel 18 miles Camp near Ancient Bluff Good grass
27th Lay by on the account of sickness
28th Travel 16 miles Camp near Chimney Rock Good grass
29th Travel 18 miles Camp on Plat River near Scott Bluff Good grass
30th Travel 25 miles Camp at Blue Stone Cliff on Plat River
July 1st Travel 25 miles Camp on Plat River seven miles East of Fort Laramie
2nd Travel 15 miles Pass Ft Laramie and Camp on Plat River near the United States farm
3rd Lay by Grass scarce their I wrote Back again
4th Travel 16 miles through the Black Hill road very Rough Camp on Plat River Grass scarce
5th Travel 14 miles Camp on a small Creek in the Black hills
6th Travel 16 miles Camp on Plat River Grass scarce
7th Travel 10 miles Camp on Plat river grass scarce
8th Travel 15 miles Over very rough and hilly Camp on Plat River Grass scarce
9th Travel 12 miles Camp on Plat River one mile South of the road
10th Travel 12 miles Camp on Plat River grass scarce
11th Travel 10 miles Camp on Plat River near the uper ferry
12th Travel 15 miles Camp on Plat River grass scarce
13th Travel 10 miles Camp on Plat River for the Last time We have travel on it for seven Hundred miles
14th Lay By and Hunted Buffalo and killed four
15th Travel 18 miles Camp at the Willow Spring No grass
16th Travel 16 miles Camp near Alkali Lake grass scarce
17th Travel 18 miles Pass the Independence Rock a rock which raises right up out of the ground in a smooth Bottom of Sweet Water it is 125 rod long and 120 feet high We pass the Devil Gate through which Sweet water Passes It is 400 feet hie on Both sides of Perpendekler Camp on Sweet Water
18th Travel 16 miles Camp on Sweet Water near Bitter Cotton wood Creek
19th Travel 15 miles Camp on Sweet Water grass scarce
20th Travel 18 miles Camp on Sweet Water grass scarce
21st Travel 17 miles over Rough and Rockey Roads and Camp on a small Branch grass scarce no timber on Sweet Water
22nd Travel 12 miles and camp at the last crossing of Sweet Water grass scarce
23rd Travel 8 miles Camp three miles to the right of the Road on Sweet Water
24th Travel 30 miles Pass the South Pass of the Rocky Mountains and Persippee Spring Camp on Little Sandy three miles north of the road
25th: Lay by to rest our cattle
26th: Travel 10 miles. Camp on Big Sandy grass scarce.
27th: Travel 10 miles off the road to get grass to Cross the Desert forty-two miles across without water or grass.
28th: Started in the Desert travel.
29th: all night and next day till ten o'clock and cross Green river grass scarce.
30th: Travel 13 miles. Camp on a branch of Green river among the Snake Indians grass good.
31st: Travel 18 miles. Cross a very high and rough mountain and Camp in the valley grass scarce.

August 1st, 1852: Travel 12 miles. Cross a mountain and Camp on Ham Fork of Green river grass scarce.
2nd: Travel 24 miles over very high and rough mountain. Camp in Bear River Valley good grass.
3rd: Travel 4 miles and Camp on Bear River good grass.
5th: Travel 18 miles. Camp on Bear river grass scarce.
6th: Travel 6 miles. Camp on Bear River good grass.
7th: Travel 18 miles. Pass Beer and Soda and Steam Boat Springs. Camp at the Junction of the California and Oregon Road.
8th: Travel 15 miles. Camp on a small Creek good grass.
9th: Travel 17 miles. Camp on a small Branch of the Port Neuf River good grass.
10th: Travel 16 miles. Camp on Port Neuf Creek.

12th: Travel 12 miles. Camp on Snake river good grass.
13th: Travel 16 miles. Camp on Rock Creek grass scarce.
14th: Travel 15 miles. Camp on Raft River good grass.
15th: Lay by.
17th: Travel 16 miles. Camp on Goose Creek grass scarce.
18th: Travel 10 miles. Camp on Snake River. Swam our cattle across.
19th: Lay by. Could not get our cattle back.
20th: Lay by. Still could not get them over to the wagons.
21st: Lay by. The only way we could get our cattle back was to drive them three or four miles up the River to the falls where the water was so swift when you got them into it the water wash them down over the falls on the other side. The River was three quarters of a mile wide.
22nd: Travel 18 miles. Camp on dry Creek four miles off the road to water and grass.
23rd: Travel 25 miles. Camp on Rock Creek grass scarce.
24th: Travel 16 miles and camp near Snake River on the Plains without water or grass.
25th: Travel 17 miles. Camp on Bannac Creek. No grass. Our cattle nearly all give out for something to eat.
26th: Travel 5 miles. Crossed Snake River on wagon beds and swam our cattle over. Camp on the Bank good grass.
27th Travel 6 miles Camp on a small Creek good grass
28th Lay By to recruit our cattle
29th Travel 20 miles Camp on a small Creek grass scarce
30th Travel 20 miles Camp on a small Creek good grass
31st Lay By with Henry Newman who was very sick with Liver Complaint

September 1st 1852 Travel 15 miles Camp on Seven miles Creek
2nd Travel 15 miles Camp on Barren Creek use warm water good grass
3rd Travel 14 miles Camp on Charlotte Creek grass scarce
4th Travel 14 miles Camp on a dry branch good grass
5th Travel 10 miles Camp on white Horse Creek grass fair
6th Travel 10 miles Camp at a good spring grass fair
7th Travel 16 miles Camp on Boies River good grass
8th Travel 16 miles Camp on Boies River good grass
9th Travel 12 miles Camp on Boies River good grass
10th Lay by
11th Travel 15 miles Camp on Boies River good grass
12th Travel 10 miles Cross Snake River at Fort Boies and camp on Bank
13th Lay By for to hunt our cattle
14th Travel 16 miles Camp on Malaher River grass scarce
15th Lay By Michiel Smith very sick George Gimple was taken sick today grass scarce
16th Travel 25 miles Camp on Bench Creek grass scarce
17th Travel 9 miles Camp on Burnt River grass scarce
18th Travel 10 miles in the afternoon Michiel Smith Died in the forenoon Burried in one hour after death
19th Travel 16 miles Roads rough and Crooked Camp on a branch of Burnt river grass scarce
20th Travel 14 miles Camp on a branch of Burnt river grass scarce
21st Travel 10 miles Cross a mountain, and camp on a Spring branch grass scarce
22nd Travel 16 miles Camp on a slough of Powder River Cold windy weather grass fair
23rd Travel 10 miles Camp on Powder River grass scarce
24th Travel none but lay by
25th Travel 15 miles Cross three Powder river Camp at a Spring near the mountains
26th Travel 10 miles Cross over a mountain Camp in Grand Round Valley This valley is about 30 miles long and 20 miles wide good grass
27th Travel 8 miles Cross Grand round Camp on a small Branch at the foot of a verry his mountain
28th Lay By
29th Travel 14 miles Cross some verry his mountains and camp on the mountain
30th Travel 14 miles amongst the Blue Mountains over some verry his ones it rained and snowed which made the mountains verry bad to travel on. Verry heavy timber Camp on the mountain. Use snow for water grass scarce
October 1st. Travel 14 miles Cross over some very hie mountains which were very steep and rough Camp on the mountain

2nd. Travel 12 miles Pass over the Blue Mountains Camp on the Umatilla River amongst the Kionse Indians grass scarce

3rd. Travel 12 miles Roads good Camp on the Umatilla River grass scarce

4th. Travel 5 miles and Cross the river and camp on a hie Bluff grass scarce

5th. Travel 15 miles camp on the Umatilla River grass scarce

6th. Travel 8 miles Cross the Umatilla River at the Agency House and took water and wood and camp on the Bluff

7th. Travel 10 miles road sandy took water and wood and camp on the Plains 'grass fair

8th. Travel 14 miles Road sandy Camp on the Plains without water or wood

9th. Travel 10 miles Passed two Springs took water and camp on the Plains grass scarce

10th. Travel 9 miles road sandy Camp at Willow Creek grass scarce

11th. Travel 10 miles took water and camp on the Plains grass scarce

12th. Travel 15 miles road good Camp on a small creek grass scarce

13th. Travel 8 miles Cross John Day River ascended a very hie and rocky mountain Camp on the Plain grass fair

14th. Travel 15 miles Camp on the Plains Charles Spencer took the ague grass fair

15th. Travel 10 miles Camp on the Columbia river grass scarce

16th. Travel 3 miles Camp on the De Shuts River. grass scarce

17th. Travel 5 miles Camp on Only Creek Rough Roads grass scarce

18th. Travel 5 miles Camp on five miles Creek grass scarce

19th. Lay By to wash

20th. Travel 5 miles and came to the Dalls Sold our cattle

21st. Started Down the Columbia River in sciff. The wind blew at night and camp on the Bank

22d. Started in the sciff again and landed at the Cascades

23d. Lay at the Cascade

24th. Lay at the same Place

25th. Started Down to the Steamboat Landing we hired wagon and oxen to haul our Plunder down

26th. Got on a Steam Boat and Landed in Portland in the evening the whole distance from the Dalls to Portland is 160 miles

October the 27th, 1852 Charles remain very sick. Died at 9 o'clock in the morning Burried in the City of Portland the Same Day at five o'clock in the Evening

28th. Still remain in Portland

29th. Started for Oregon City at noon on a Steam Boat and Landed in the Evening

Thus end my Journal

Lafayette Spencer.