

CHAPTER 2
THE MARCH TO THE WALLA WALLA VALLEY
(As of January 23, 2011)

December 2, 1855 (Sunday):

1: Colonel James Kelly Official Report: “As soon as it was dark on the evening of the 2nd, I proceeded with my command from Fort Henrietta to Walla Walla.”

4: Captain A. V. Wilson (Company A) Account: “About 7 o’clock P.M. on the night of the 3rd (December 2nd), we took up our line of march for Fort Walla Walla intending by a night forced march to surprise the enemy, but being encumbered with an ammunition wagon we were unable to cross the river range of mountains near the fort, and consequently were compelled to make a circuit of several miles before we arrived on the Walla Walla River.”

6: Lieutenant Charles B. Pillow (Company A) Official Report: “On the night of December 2nd 1855, the command under Lieutenant Colonel Kelly, marched from Fort Henrietta, en route for the Hudson’s Bay Company’s Fort Walla Walla.”

37: Sergeant A. B. Roberts (Company A) Account: “All the long night we wandered on that trackless and monotonous plain.”

5: Private Plympton Kelly (Company A) Account: “Snowing this morning. All hands making preparations to march for Fort Walla Walla tonight. In the evening it cleared up. We were all ready to march an hour after dark except 25 men who were left as a guard to the fort. The fore part of the night was clear and cold without any wind about midnight the sky became hazy and the wind arose. It was not possible to keep warm without walking. The country through which we traveled in the forepart of the night was a level plain with a few depressions and elevations. Some parts of which was covered with dry bunch grass and others bare. The cause of which I could not tell whether it was fire or sterility of the soil.”

“About midnight we went up a ravine. From that time till daylight we were sometimes in ravines and sometimes on the tops of mountains. The ground was frozen hard. The grass has been burnt up. The ground seemed as if some farmer had fed hogs on the ground such I frequently fancied. As we ascended the hills that I could see some old farm building with a line of fence near it such

was the illusion caused by the darkness and sleepy eyes. **I lost my cartridge box.** It is very difficult for a large body of men to travel together in the night without getting separated where they have no road. One time during the night, the regiment came close very near being separated. Daylight found us in a deep ravine instead of being round the fort. Not knowing exactly where we were, it was not the fault of the guide altogether for he had been trying to pick a way for a wagon we had along as it was designed for a hospital wagon.”

43: '55ER (Company F) Account: “When we got to Fort Henrietta, on the Umatilla River, we learned that the main body of the Cayuse tribe of Indians were at Fort Walla Walla at the mouth of the Walla Walla River. We were all ordered to get our suppers over as soon as possible and make a hasty night ride (of 40 miles) to strike the Indians in their camps just at the peep of day. (We had just traveled 25 miles before we struck the Umatilla River and our horses were very tired).”

3: Private George Washington Miller (Company H) Account: “On the evening of December 2nd his (Kelly’s) command moved out of Fort Henrietta, hoping to surprise the enemy at daybreak the next morning (December 3rd), but incidental delays of the nights march caused by a heavy rain until late next morning (December 3rd), prevented their reaching (Hudson’s Bay Company) Fort Walla Walla until late in the forenoon (December 3rd).”

“Fort Henrietta was named in honor of 4th US Infantry, Major Granville O. Haller’s, wife, and was located on the north side of the Umatilla River (at present day Echo, Oregon). It was a stockade of large split timbers, 100 feet square, and erected on two of the angles were bastions of round logs.”

NOTE: The wrong date is given in data (4) as December 3...this should be December 2!

DOCUMENTS USED

1. The Oregonian, January 5, 1856, "**Official Report of Col. Kelly Of The Battle Between The Oregon Mounted Volunteers And The Indians**" from Fort Bennett, December 14, 1855, To Wm. H. Farrar, (Adjutant 1st Regt. O. V.) from Lieut. Col. James K. Kelly (December 14, 1855: Kelly to Farrar: **Official Report**);
3. Walla Walla Daily Union, December 7 and 8, 1905, and Tacoma Tribune, October 28, 1892: an account by George Washington Miller, Company H (Linn County, 1st Reg. Oregon Mounted Volunteers);
4. The Weekly Oregonian, December 29, 1855 "**Particulars of the Fight at Walla Walla**" from Fort Bennett, December 14, 1855, To T. J. Dryer from Unknown (Captain A. V. Wilson, Company A, a daily account) (December 14, 1855: Wilson to Dryer);
5. "**We Were Not Just Summer Soldiers**" a daily account (in diary form) by Plympton Kelly, Oregon Mounted Volunteers, Company A (FHA);
6. #906 HED 3rd Sess., 34th Cong., Vol. 9, Ex. Doc. #76, Indian Affairs On the Pacific, 1856-1857: (Report of Battle of Walla Walla) To W. H. Farrar (Adjutant First Regiment Oregon Mounted Volunteers) from Charles B. Pillow (2nd Lieut., Company A, First Regiment, O.M.V), June 18, 1856, page 201-203 (June 18, 1856: Pillow to Farrar: **Official Report**);
37. "**The Yakima War of 1855: The Campaign to Walla Walla: The Capture of the Most Noted War Chief of the Pacific Coast**" by (Sergeant) Alvin Brown (A. B.) Roberts (Oregon Mounted Volunteers, Company A, Multnomah County), Clark County History, 1967, (FHA);
43. "**The Cayuse War**" by '55ER (Company F), The Morning Oregonian, March 1, 1897 (Also 23-B) (FHA);