

**COPY OF DIARY KEPT BY SARAH AN QUARLES CHANDLER**  
**OF HER TRIP FROM VIRGINIA TO MISSOURI**

Sarah Ann Quarles Chandler, wife of Leroy Chandler, migrated from Louisa County, Virginia to Cooper County, Missouri in 1836. She died October 26.1865

September 16th 1836:

This day set off from Green Springs Valley, Louisa County, State of Virginia, for the land of the Missouri and arrived Lindsay's Store about night where we encamped This night has proven a most stormy one, the rain poured in torrents and literally drenched our beds and most of our clothes, but from the old saying I hope the ultimate turn of this adventure will be more propitious then the commencement. I cannot, however, fail to do Mr. Perkins the justice to say that his hospitality greatly alleviated our misfortune.

17th:

This has been a most busy day washing and ironing good part of the day to repair the misfortune received from the rain. James and company overtook us before dinner and we again made a move and got as far as Walker's Church were we stopped for the night which was a very pleasant one. The weather has been oppressively hot since we set out. My appetite has not been sufficiently good to describe in very glowing colours the pleasure of eating which the epicure receives with so much avidity, especially just before he dines, and as we had nothing but what we brought from home I will defer saying anything on this subject until a future time.

18th:

This is the Sabbath, but with us it knows no distinction. Set out very early and passed through a finely cultivated and beautiful country, but had I the capacity at any time to delineate this beautiful scenery should now be totally unfit from excessive fatigue James and Sarah are quite sick and the weather is very warm. Got to Charlottesville early in the day and went to visit the University, and were received very politely and shown this great building. Great was the genius that planned and skillful the hand that executed the vast design of this noble structure. Got a gill of milk at Evertsville and paid 4 pence and at night more than a quart and paid same price. Got to McGehees today. Weather very warm.

19th:

After passing a tolerably comfortable night we proceeded on our journey this morning and got to Tyler's about twelve, and got our dinner and shortly after began to ascend the Blue Ridge. This ascent is very gradual and the road very good. It would give me infinite satisfaction to describe the grandeur and beauty of the lovely scene but conscious inability prevents, for nothing short of the poetical fancy of a Burns, and powerful pen of a Byron would accomplish it; the descent is but one mile and we camped at the bottom; the weather intensely hot all day but night quite cool.

20th:

This morning Jack ----- after going as far as Waynesborough a village at the foot of the Blue Ridge. Here we got into Augusta. The Dutch as far as I can discover are people like the rest, as possessed of as rational minds and fully as genteel. Got milk frequently and but seldom had to pay for it. Ann's children and mine

sick, which renders our journey quite disagreeable, and, to make the best of it, is a tedious and wearisome one. At night all is commotion fixing the tents, cooking, etc., and then in the morning taking them up, eating and preparing to go, and then the confusion of tongues not inferior to the clack of Babel. Had a thunder cloud this evening, and camped in a beautiful grove three miles below Greenville; the roads are very good.

21st:

Made a move this morning and came through Greenville, a very inconsiderable town in Augusta, and passed on over rougher roads, nothing of consequence occurring, and arrived about dinner time at Bell's. Today we saw people that just answered by idea of the Dutch. Fat men with loose linen trousers very unlike our tight lowland beaux; fat women waddling about, white headed children sunning themselves; fat cows yielding gallons of milk, and flit hogs too lazy to grunt. Had a very fatiguing ride this evening over rough roads, and did not camp till dark, when we had scolding enough. Passed through --- a small village in Rockbridge. This is beautiful country, the most lovely meadows I ever saw, and you will not see a farm but has meadow ground attached to it but, lamentable to say, the people appear to be hardly civilized. You will scarcely pass a house but some dirty barefooted woman will poke out her sunburnt uncombed head to gaze at you - sure mark of ill-breeding. Got a Dutch cheese in Fairfield about the size of a dinner plate, and paid 3d per pound.

22nd:

Today we came over the worst roads I ever saw, and although I am as comfortably fixed as possible, I never was so jolted in my life. Came on through Lexington, a beautiful little town situated on the North River, in a beautiful part of Rockbridge. This town has a college and an arsenal. This must be a healthy country; the air is as pure and fresh as possible. Came over a covered bridge today, the first I ever saw. Did not pay for milk today until night. We are now in a very pleasant grove, and will remain here tonight. Good apples are very abundant here, but other kinds of fruit scarce. It is a very uncommon thing that you pass a Dutch house, however mean, without seeing curtained windows. I also observe another peculiarity among them, and that is they seem generally to choose low situations for their houses. This, I suppose, is to be convenient to their spring houses which they consider indispensably necessary.

23rd:

This morning we reached the Natural Bridge; this is surely the most stupendous work of nature I ever saw, but it made so disagreeable an impression on my mind I was glad to get away, and our way under bridge was very circuitous and fatiguing. Very warm still, and I hope I may never see worse roads. Our horses have drawn admirably until this evening, when one which was hitched to the carriage took flight from the swingle tree falling on her heels, which made her kick most violently, and they would have run away had they not been prevented. After leaving Rockbridge we came into Boltecourt and passed through two villages divided only by James River, one called Pattonsburg, and the other Buchanan. This has been the most fatiguing day I every knew, and surely I never saw the roads deeper in dust. Came by some beautiful farms and fine houses. After leaving Charlottesville it is almost as uncommon to see a wood house as it is to see a brick one in the low country.

24th:

Very bad roads again today, and a heavy rain which wet out bedding considerably. This is quite troublesome to us. Came through Amsterdam this evening and if the European city is of no more consequence, I do not think geographers need trouble themselves much about it Quinces are abundant in this country.

25th:

Our way today has been through Montgomery. We came through Fayette, a village in this country - a great name but an indifferent place. Here I saw rope making, which was a smart curiosity Crossed the Roanoke several times today. Very cold. Began to ascent the Alleghenies.

27th:

Very rainy this morning, and traveling extremely disagreeable. Went all day without our dinners, and in the evening crossed the New River in a ferry boat. I omitted mention that we passed through Christiansburg this morning, a village in Montgomery. There are very few good buildings in this country and I am disposed to think there are a great many poor people. Walnut trees are common; ducks and geese are numerous in the upper country; chickens are scarce, and but few flocks of turkeys are to be seen. Bought some of the largest cabbages this evening I ever saw, and gave five cents each. I also neglected to say we passed three public burying grounds. I think they were all in Rockbridge.

28th:

Came through Newbern today. This is pretty much as the other towns through we have come - very inconsiderable. We have passed through a very mountainous country, and crossed a great many streams, none of which I consider of sufficient importance to inquire their names. The crossing places are generally very shallow and rocky and transparent as can be imagined.

29th:

Proceeded onward this morning through the rain, and about mid-day got to Wythe Court House; this is a pretty little place, and has a street a mile long. The roads have been quite good today. Saw four dwarfs which were great curiosities to us. The oldest called himself a man. He had attained the height of two feet 6 inches and was 36 years old last April. Good many of our horses sick from eating new fodder. Had frost last night; roads quite rough. This is a fine country for buckwheat, and I would have been glad to get some flour. Got some very good peaches today. Our way has been chiefly in Smith. I see here the greatest abundance of the most beautiful red and yellow pepper and the greatest quantity of apples I every saw.

October 1st, 1836:

Passed through Marion today. the county seat of Smythe; roads very good and weather fine. Stopped much earlier than usual.

2nd:

Weather not so good today, but the roads very smooth. Came through Abingdon, a small town in Washington, the last county through which we pass before we leave the land of our birth. Abingdon is nothing like as good a place as I expected to see, though it contains some handsome buildings. Weeping willows are very abundant in the southwestern counties.

3rd:

Monday, weather very fine; roads good and bad alternately. Got into Tennessee today. Nothing of consequence occurred except that we have left Virginia and this makes me feel sorrowful enough.

4th:

Unfortunate enough today, weather desperately bad; cold enough to freeze us, and repeated snowstorms, and besides this from bad management broke James' carriage wheel. Came through a covered bridge which was built across the Holston. Passed by the boat yard, and a place the folks here call town, but I feel very certain that people of common observation would not have noticed it at all.

5th:

Misty morning, but the day terminated pleasantly. Passed through Rogersville, Tennessee, and the country seems to improve a little. Cedar grows in great quantities and I see plenty of beautiful vessels made of this wood. I have also seen a great deal of the Balm of Gilead. Passed through Sullivan and Hawkins, and we are now in Granger.

6th:

This country does not present a very alluring appearance, and if I can find no better I would sooner be at my native home. Roads have been good today, and our horses took it into their heads to run away, but did no mischief. Weather dowdy. The Catalpa grows spontaneously here, and the largest peach orchards I ever saw. The yellow larkspur grows wild, and the eggplant lines the roadside.

7th:

Came by Beans station this morning, and then across the Clinch Mountains - fit haunts alone for prowling beasts and robbers and murderers. We cross the Clinch river among this dreary solitude was nothing but the road, and a few wretched huts to declare any human footsteps had ever trod there. Tennessee is a miserable place enough to make the best of, though at some of the places that the people call hotels, which would truly divert the eastern innkeepers, they have fine signs hung painted with all the emblems of agriculture. Came by a little place called Tazewell. Been raining all day, and we stopped after night with well exercised bodies. The bear grape grows wild on the banks of the Clinch, which has a beautiful clear ford.

8th:

Crossed the Cumberland river this morning, and shortly after begun to ascend the hills. They were the most rugged I ever saw, and if we reached the bottom with dislocated joints, I could not have wondered, and beside this we had to bear in remembrance the many murders that had been here committed, and saw the dreadful precipices down which their bodies were cast, and saw too the tremendous stone by which their early remains were deposited. Rainy today. Got into Kentucky and I never want to see Tennessee again.

9th:

Today we came through the most lovely forest I ever saw, and although it is the 9th of October, the woods are appareled in the liveliest verdure of spring. These are composed chiefly of beech with its broad-spreading branches and lively smooth bark, with many a name engraved on it. Came over the greatest number of rock I ever saw, and had to pay toll for it. This I, was not so well reconciled to after such a jolting. Beautiful roads this evening and the sun has again shed his influence on us, which is quite reviving.

10th:

Nothing worthy of notice this day. We had plenty jolting. Came by a place called Barboursville. This a very familiar name to me, and I expect it is pretty much on a par with the he Virginia Barboursville. We have passed through Knox and Harland and we are now in Laurel County. I guess the Eastern Virginia merchants would be smartly amused to see the signs over the store doors in this country, and among the Dutch such as John Hoosnogle's store, smeared on a dirty plank with a piece of charcoal, and the latter part of the name in small letters because the board would give out before the injudicious painter had finished this prodigious performance.

11th:

We are still in Laurel County, and still with the most degraded set of human beings the sun ever rose on. We saw a party of men today carrying two criminals to the penitentiary - miserable looking wretches well worthy the place from whence they sprung, and I will also add that this country has a place in it that call London. I wonder what makes folks such simpletons as to give such names to such places. Do they build their hopes on this that Rome had a beginning? But, if they make such calculations on this city I judge their hopes will not be crowned with success. I saw but one tolerable house, and that was left for the owls to inhabit if they felt like it. Weather good, and roads not to be complained of. The people in the southwestern parts of Virginia and in Tennessee and Kentucky seem to like to build their houses very near the road. This I suppose is for the purpose of disposing their produce which they have no other means of getting rid of. The Kentuckians have a novel mode of enclosing their gardens - this they do by sharpening one end of a fence rail and setting it erect in the ground. They do not pattern after the Virginians in this, I am sure, if they do in the names of their towns. I never witnessed anywhere such total depravity and utter degradation as in Tennessee and Kentucky.

12th:

Came over intolerable roads this morning, and had to pay a heavy toll. These people understand their own interest as well as any I have seen. Came through a little dirty place this evening which they call Mt. Vernon. Everyone must know where they got this from. A great compliment to our illustrious Washington. They have machines in this state for grinding corn worked by horses. This is done with much more facility than I had thought. Weather good today.

13th:

Came through Crab Orchard this morning; this is a pretty little village; here I was a carding machine moved by horse power. Everything begins to wear a more enlivening aspect. Shortly after this we came by the Walnut flat and got butter, cheese and lard for C. Came through Stanford this evening. We passed fine cornfields, meadow grounds and beautiful woodland.

14th:

Today our way has been through a fine fertile country and cultivated fields. Corn is very abundant here. Hogs running about the woods in great numbers, 1~t enough to kill, and everything betokens plenty. Came through Danville and Harrodsburg, two flourishing business looking little towns in newer country. The people here are making a McAdamized road from Cumberland Gap to Louisville. This is a prodigious work, but when completed it will be a most perfect one. It is delightful riding on this road, but after this pleasure has vanished we shall then have the satisfaction of emptying our purses into the hands of these calculating Kentuckians.

15th:

Weather cloudy, cold and disagreeable, and the country not so rich in loveliness as yesterday. Came through Salvin and Lawrenceville in Anderson County, neither of which will I eulogize very much.

16th:

Last night we very near akin to the first I spent upon the road, but happily for us we profited by experience and did not get ourselves in so dreadful a predicament as then. The rain poured with unabated fury and we would have been a find subject for a painter. Cleared off this morning and weather quite cold, and roads miserably bad this morning, but this evening we rolled over the smooth McAdamized road.

17th:

Weather very clear and cold and roads delightfully smooth, a thing that travelers never neglect to notice. Saw six states. Came through Shelbyville a find thriving village in Shelby County. Here I saw weaving done with the flying shuttle, and the weaver said that 55 yards could be woven in a day; this cloth was made of hemp and for the purpose of baling cotton in the south. Came through Simpsonville and Middletown, two very indifferent places. This business of journal writing is very irksome under inauspicious circumstances, as I write, but as I am under a promise to write this I like to be more indefatigable than to give out halfway.

18th:

Stopped to wash today. A very troublesome business on the road. Had to travel about six miles before we could find a convenient place.

19th:

Came through Louisville today. This is the most thriving and commercial city I have saw situated on the Ohio River in a lovely country; as fertile as nature can make it. The main street in this town is a most splendid one. Here we went to see the steam boats and went on board the Echo. No one who has never seen the apartments can have an idea of their splendor. Eastern workmanship cannot excel them. The captain was very polite and took great pains to show and explain everything to us. Now begins the chapter of our misfortunes. Will it ever end? Shortly after leaving Louisville it began to rain, and about night we crossed the Ohio in a steamboat. The captain was grim enough and scolded prodigiously. This is a lovely and graceful motion, and we sailed over the waters with amazing avidity, but I had rather have my feet firmly placed on Terra Firma. We crossed the Ohio just between Portland on the Kentucky and New Albany on the Indiana side. The rain poured and we continued to travel on in darkness until about 9:00 in the night, and to add to our misfortunes our horses behaved badly and one of our servants was taken sick. We had to put our beds on the ground completely saturated with water, and got into them about eleven, but fortunately we received no injury from this.

20th:

Made an attempt to move this morning when we perceived two of our best horses were sick, and about midday one died. We proceeded onward a short distance with the other, and with the greatest care and attention this one was kept alive. Something in the oats together with excessive coldness and rain of the preceding night was the supposed cause.

21st:

The carriage horse not well enough to draw today and in consequence of it had to put a flesh one in harness. We had gone about 4 or 5 miles when in going over a very rough place James, who was driving was thrown from his seat on the tongue, which so frightened the horses that they ran off and upset the carriage with me and all my little children, but one, and strange to say no one was materially hurt. The carriage was very much broken and the expense of repairing very considerable. The recompense in the distant west for all this trouble and expense I fear is too obscurely hid ever to be brought to the noonday light. We are now in Indiana, and I look upon it as a detestable place, but I hope the country will improve as we go on. Weather very good, but roads insupportable. Came as far as Greenville, a very insignificant place.

22nd:

Delayed the whole day to have the carriage repaired and nothing interesting to write about.

Sunday, 23rd:

Came about 20 miles today through the most wretched and dissolute country that ever human eyes were annoyed with, and over roads as rough and bas as possible. Last night we camped at a place call Greenville, and today came by one named Fredericksburg.

24th:

Saw what the people here call the sinking spring. This is a very large spring which rises and runs six or seven yards and sinks again in the earth. Horses behaved very badly this morning and we have come the whole day through incessant rain and roads just as bad as possible. Passed by Levania, a despicable place, and afterwards by New Orleans which is not much better. I have a horrid aversion to Indiana, and I do not think I shall like a free state again. However great a predilection I may have had for them heretofore, the people here seem to be in the most abject and degraded state, and frequently their situation nothing like as comfortable as ourselves.

25th:

This day is but a repetition of yesterday - roads and weather as bad as they can be.

26th:

Weather very good which seems to give everything a more exhilarating appearance. Came through very rich country and scarcely saw a human habitation. Crossed the White River in a ferry boat and passed through Mt. Pleasant, which is no great thing.

27th:

This is a most miserable place; nothing like improvements in it, and certainly the most ignorant and lazy people I ever saw. The roads we have traveled over would be a scandal to any country. Crossed the White River again this evening in a terry boat, and then passed through the most contemptible swamps I ever saw. Came by Washington, but I can say nothing in praise of it. Weather very good.

28th:

The same dull tale told day after day about the bad roads. They were so bad today that our wagon was upset. The harness to both carryalls broken and one of the carriage springs. A part of this state is the richest land I ever saw, but as there are no slaves here it appears to be almost entirely valueless to the owners. Weather very good.

29th:

Came through Vincennes and crossed the Wabash and reached the much dreaded Prairie call Purgatory. This is five miles in length and is astonishing to one who has never before seen anything of the kind. It was a day pregnant with horrors. Great numbers of movers were passing on and frequently the wagons stuck, and the people were in imminent danger of their lives. This land is rich as possible, and I never in any country saw as many hogs. We saw great numbers of cranes and Prairie Hens are very abundant. I see but little wheat here, but corn as plentiful as possible.

30th:

Roads not very bad, and came about 20 miles; passed Lawrenceville a trifling place. The people here are in the most profound ignorance, and their houses are none too good for stables.



31st:

Roads tolerably good today, and weather very good. Traveled very well and camped at the Settle Wabash. This state contains many large rich and extensive prairies, and it might be made a garden spot but the people are so lazy and ignorant that is never can improve so long as the slave labour is lost to it. I never saw any good bacon here, but great numbers of fine hogs, which renders it very astonishing, but the real cause is that they are too indolent to attend to anything. We have venison in the highest state of perfection, but the butter is so filthy I am afraid to eat it. The people here have an uncommon way of making meal; this they do by boiling their corn and when very hot rubbing it on a grater made of tin. I suppose they grind it as they use it.

November 1st, 1836:

Today we crossed the little Wabash and came over the muddiest swamp I ever saw. I think our wagons were until 12 or 1 coming thru. We proceeded but little further in consequence of arriving at the end of a very large prairie.

2nd:

Roads and weather good. Came 17 miles and camped very early as we got to Prairie that we could not cross this evening. Got some very nice turnips this evening and the finest venison I ever saw, but butter shockingly bad. It is a very difficult matter in this fine country to get meal. I never saw more delightful turnips in my life than in this country but they are very small.

3rd:

Came through a very fertile country abounding with small prairies. Roads bad enough and the wagons started often enough for everybody, but one cracked brain fellow, an inhabitant of the country, seemed to take great pleasure in seeing them pryed out of the mud. Weather very good and we have been greatly blessed in that respect for a considerable time.

4th:

Came through a Prairie today 22 miles in length, and the roads so good that we camped about 2 o'clock. Quite cold, and snow enough to be discovered but most of the day clear. A deer killed and one wagon upset. The people in this country are irreconcilably filthy, and a Virginian could scarcely exist amongst them.

5th:

Ferried over the Kashaskias by surly Spaniard, and made to pay enough for it. The river was 50 yards wide, and we had to pay 7s for 4 horse wagons. Came through Carlisle, a small town and over delightfully smooth prairie ground. I have never seen but one genteel looking woman in Illinois, and that was today. Fruit very scarce in this state, and that indifferent. Weather still good.

6th:

Came 24 miles today over a beautifully smooth road, and through a country as rich as the most avaricious would desire. Oh! that this goodly land could be inhabited by a race of beings that would appreciate the value, but how often shall I repeat the tale that they seem almost too lazy to inhale the air that is nourish their existence. Came through the village of Lebanon, but the cedars were not there, and passed by some better looking houses than we had formerly seen.

7th:

This morning crossed the great Mississippi, and our feet first touched Missouri soil, and, oh! how pleasant to think after all our journeyings we may still find a home in the very name of which ten thousand charms are concentrated. Came through the town of St. Louis without making any particular observations, and stopped just above. There are three grounds here, one Roman Catholic, another Presbyterian, and a third Methodist. There are some elegant monuments and tombstones here, and for the first time in my life I here saw a vault. The French taste for ornament will predominate even among the tombs. I cannot help observing the flowers with which they had ornamented the graves of those who had gone before

8th:

Went to see St. Louis. This is a very commercial place, and from its locality will, in course of time, be a great city, but immediately upon entering it everyone must perceive its great deficiency in width of streets. It is a very noisy place, and certainly a very dirty one. Everything sells for double its value here.

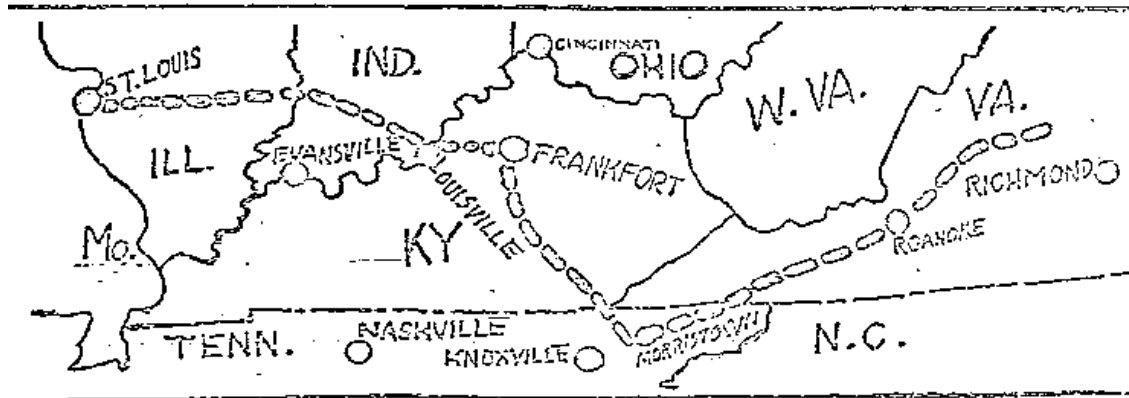
\*\*\*\*\*

(On this 8th day of November, 1836, the diary ceased, but the family proceeded from St. Louis to a point in Cooper County, Missouri, about ten miles east of Booneville, where land was purchased, and Bellecolte, in name at least, was re-established, and on this farm the other children of LeRoy and Sarah Ann Chandler were born and reared, and here, in 1865, under the proclamation of Abraham Lincoln 41 slaves were freed. Here lived Sarah Ann Chandler until the 26th day of October, 1865, when she passed away Her life and character are fittingly described in the obituary on the following page.)

MAP OF ROUTE FOLLOWED BY SARAH ANN QUARLES CHANDLER AND CARAVAN

On their trek from Louisa County, Virginia, to Cooper County, Missouri, 1836

\*\*\*\*\*



ON THE TRIP FROM VIRGINIA TO ST. LOUIS, THEY TRAVELED:

<u>In Virginia</u>	<u>304 miles</u>
<u>In Tennessee</u>	<u>131 miles</u>
<u>In Kentucky</u>	<u>245 miles</u>
<u>In Indiana</u>	<u>113 miles</u>
<u>In Illinois</u>	<u>150 miles</u>
<u>TOTAL TO ST. LOUIS</u>	<u>943 MILES</u>
<u>From St. Louis, Missouri, to Booneville</u>	<u>148 miles</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>1091 miles</u>

It required 53 days to St. Louis, an average of 16½ miles per day

Sarah Ann Quarles Chandler, wife of Leroy Chandler.  
Migrated from Louisa County, Virginia to Cooper County,  
Missouri, in 1836  
Died October 26, 1865  
dau. Charles Quarles