

Arthur Armstrong Denny

MsSc 100

Background:

During Seattle's early history, Arthur Armstrong Denny was its wealthiest citizen, who owned vast property, both real estate and personal, the latter covered banking, street railway, irrigation, and other properties. He was born on June 20, 1822 near Salem, Washington County, Indiana to John and Sarah (Wilson) Denny. Denny's family subsequently settled in Knox County, Illinois where Arthur attended school. He became a civil engineer and in 1843 elected county surveyor of Knox County, Illinois. Also in 1843, Arthur married Mary Ann Boren with whom he had six children: Louisa Catherine Frye, Margaret Leona Denny, Rolland Herschell Denny, Orion Orvil Denny, Arthur Wilson Denny, and Charles Latimer Denny.

On April 10, 1851, the Denny family began their voyage to the west. On August 11, 1851 they reached The Dalles and Portland, Oregon on August 23, 1851. Then on November 5, 1851, the family sailed for the Puget Sound and arrived at Elliot Bay on November 13, 1851. Along with William N. Bell and Carson Boren, Arthur Denny decided to settle on the east side of Elliott Bay.

Arthur Denny sold cargo on commission for ship captains until 1854 when he began a partnership with David Phillips and Dexter Horton in general merchandise. This arrangement lasted until 1855, when he volunteered to serve in the Indian War.

Besides business arrangements Denny served in several political offices. He was the county commissioner for Thurston County, Oregon, and then King County commissioner. Denny was appointed to serve as Seattle's first postmaster in 1853. He was elected to the House of Representatives for the Washington Territory for nine consecutive sessions. He was the speaker of the House during the third session. He was registrar of the U.S. Land Office from 1861 to 1865. Denny was elected territorial delegate to the thirty-ninth Congress to serve under Governor William Pickering in 1865.

After political office Denny took a half interest in Dexter Horton and Co., a bank founded by Dexter Horton and David Phillips in 1870. Denny served as the president of the Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company. He also was active in Society of Washington Pioneers and wrote *Pioneer Days in Puget Sound*. Also Denny was involved in finding a site for the state university and the foundation of the Puget Sound University and the University of Washington. On January 9, 1899 Arthur Denny passed away at the age of 77.

Scope and Content:

The Arthur Armstrong Denny papers cover the years 1851-1959. The records divided into thirteen series: Correspondence, Family, Financial Records, Receipts, Territorial Delegate, Postmaster, Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Co., Society of Washington Pioneers, Estates, Percy Bamford, Arcade Building and Realty Co., Manuscripts, and Miscellaneous Items.

The Correspondence files are arranged chronologically and cover the years, 1863-1894. This series consists of correspondence dealing with the location of the state university, personal loans, the first steamboat on Puget Sound, and earthquakes.

Family files are arranged by family member and cover the years, 1851-1959. The series contains correspondence between Arthur Denny and various family members, the disposition of L.H. Denny and Arthur Denny's estates, and obituaries.

The Financial Records are arranged chronologically and cover the years, 1882-1899. The records include bank ledgers, and a ledge book detailing the various accounts of Arthur Denny.

The Receipts records are arranged chronologically and range from 1861-1899. The records are receipts for household purchases, city and county taxes, and loan payments.

Territorial Delegate records are arranged chronologically and cover the years, 1865-1866. This series consists of correspondence, receipts, congressional acts and petitions, and Arthur Denny's certification of election.

The Postmaster records range from 1865-1871 and are arranged chronologically. The series contains correspondence, testimonies, power of attorney granting Arthur Denny the right to collect and deliver the mail.

Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company records are arranged chronologically, range from 1872-1888 and describe the financial dealings of the company. The records include correspondence between investors and the company, minutes of the company, a ledger book, agreements, legal documents, and stock certificates.

The Society of Washington Territory Pioneers records, 1871-1872 are arranged chronologically. The records consists of by-laws, minutes, correspondence, and resolutions.

Estates records are records from some of the estates that Arthur Denny served as the executor or guardian of. The records are from 1867-1879 and include correspondence, receipts, wills, power of attorneys, and account books.

Percy Bamford records are arranged chronologically and cover the years, 1892-1932. Percy Bamford was the husband of Caroline Denny, Arthur Denny's granddaughter. His records include real estate transactions in Sioux City, Iowa, a cemetery deed, invitations, and a court case proceedings.

The Arcade Building and Realty Company records are from 1901-1932 and are arranged chronologically. This series includes the leases, bonds, and correspondence regarding the rental of property owned by Mary Denny's estate.

The Manuscripts files cover the years, 1852-1886. The series includes the original and revised drafts of Denny's manuscript, *Pioneer Days on Puget Sound* with photocopies of both drafts, a manuscripts entitled *Christmas Time in Pioneer Days*, and a copy of Miss C.A. Terry's diary.

Miscellaneous Items files range from 1861-1941 and are various items collected, received, or about Arthur Denny. Some of the items are wedding invitations, an invitation to President Harrison's reception in 1891, a petition for John McGilvra, a list of original Seattle telephone subscribers, and the Latimer family genealogical chart. Also there are photocopied pages of ephemera which have been transferred to the ephemera collection.

Inclusive Dates: 1851-1959 (bulk 1851-1899)

Restrictions:

Volume: 1.5 linear ft.

Accession Number: 1997.15 and 1997.16

Record Series 1: Correspondence.

Box 1: Correspondence, 1863-1894.

Folder:

1 Correspondence, 1863-1894

Special Item: Arthur Denny to an unknown person about earthquakes in Seattle, December 1880.

Record Series 2: Family.

Box 1: Family, 1851-1959.

Folder:

- 2 Family, Kellogg Family Correspondence, February 7, 1853 - September 8, 1858.**
Note: Rolland Denny married Alice Kellogg.
Special Items: April 4, 1853, N.A. Kellogg wrote to John and Sarah Denny about life back home and that cousin Orlando is on his way to Oregon.
September 7, 1858, Chester Kellogg to J.C. Kellogg about his loneliness after the death of his wife and his ill health.
September 8, 1858, Chester Kellogg to J.C. Kellogg about drought conditions and crop failures in the Midwest.
- 3 Family, Kellogg Family Correspondence, February 7, 1853 - September 8, 1858.**
Note: These are photocopies of the correspondence in Folder 2.
- 4 Family, John Denny Correspondence, March 26, 1851 - May 3, 1853.**
Note: Father of Arthur Denny.
Special Items: March 26, 1851, Francis Voriz to James M. Moore. Letter of introduction for John Denny in Peoria, Illinois.
January 12, 1853 James Knox to John Denny about the election results and prosperity in Illinois and of his election to Congress.
May 3, 1853, John and Sarah Denny to Mother about the conditions in Seattle, the death of grandmother, and the lack of news from the states.
- 5 Family, L.H. Denny to Arthur Denny Correspondence, October 25, 1876.**
Note: L.H. Denny was Arthur Denny's brother.
- 6 Family, L.H. Denny to Arthur Denny Correspondence, November 23, 1886 - September 11, 1887.**
Special Item: A letter from L.H. Denny on March 28, 1887 in Waldo Hills, Oregon describing the accounts he had paid for A.W. Denny. A.W. Denny was another brother of Arthur Denny.
- 7 Family, L.H. Denny to Arthur Denny Correspondence, January 13, 1888 - February 18, 1889.**
- 8 Family, L.H. Denny Estate, 1891.**
Special Item: Power of Attorney for L.H. Denny's estate.
- 9 Family, Miscellaneous Correspondence, July 23, 1866 - September 18, 1905.**
Note: Correspondence between various relatives including Mary Denny, Arthur's wife.
- 10 Family, Disposition of Arthur Armstrong Denny's Estate, 1899.**
Note: Legal document regarding the distribution of Arthur Denny's estate.
- 11 Family, Obituaries**
Note: The folder contains the obituaries for Arthur W. Denny, Caroline Denny Bamford, Loretta Denny, Victor W.S. Denny, John Denny, Leona Denny, and Charles T. Terry.

Record Series 3: Financial Records.

Box 1: Financial Records, 1882-1899.

Folder:

- 12 Financial Records, Bank Ledger, 1882.**
Note: Account with Dexter Horton and Co. from February 4 - December 12, 1882.

13 Financial Records, Ledger, 1883-1887.

Box 2: Financial Records, 1882-1899.

Folder:

1 Financial Records, Ledger Book, 1883-1899.

Record Series 4: Receipts.

Box 2: Receipts, 1861-1899.

Folder:

2 Receipts, June 1861 - October 1865.

3 Receipts, February - October 1866.

4 Receipts, January - November 1867.

5 Receipts, January 1868 - December 1869.

6 Receipts, July 1872 - December 1885.

7 Receipts, May 1891 - August 1899.

8 Receipts, No Dates.

Record Series 5: Territorial Delegate.

Box 2: Territorial Delegate, 1865-1866.

Folder:

9 Territorial Delegate, Certification of Election, July 12, 1865.

10 Territorial Delegate, Correspondence, July 1, 1865 - September 8, 1866.

Note: July 1, 1865, William Pickering to Arthur Denny. He wrote about his trip from President Lincoln's grave to Washington. Congratulates Denny on his election to Congress and discusses the need for a bank in Washington Territory. Also there are several letters between Denny and Hugh McCulloch, Secretary of the Treasury about the appropriation of funds for construction of a capitol in Washington Territory.

11 Territorial Delegate, Congressional Petition, November 4, 1865.

Note: Petition to Congress for incorporating Puget Sound Railroad Company.

12 Territorial Delegate, Congressional Acts, 1866.

Special Items: Bill H.R. 138 Amendment Granting Land to the Washington and Oregon Railroad Company, March 5, 1866.

Act to provide funds for the construction and improvement of roads in Washington Territory, April 14, 1866.

Act to provide compensation for local land offices in Washington Territory, ca. 1866 (handwritten draft).

13 Territorial Delegate, Receipt, July 1, 1866.

Note: The receipt was for housing in Washington D.C.

Record Series 6: Postmaster.

Box 2: Postmaster, 1865-1871.

Folder:

14 Postmaster, Correspondence, September 9, 1865 - March 14, 1871.

Special Items: Testimony on behalf of F.A. Wilson, September 1865
November 12, 1865 G.S. Paige to A.A. Denny, Power of Attorney “executed by S.W. Sherlock to you to draw and collect the money due for carrying mails from here (Fort Colville) to Walla Walla.
Agreement of mail contract, March 14, 1871.

Records Series 7: Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company.

Box 2: Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company, 1872-1888.

Folder:

- 15 Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company, Correspondence, October 23, 1872 - August 10, 1877.**
- 16 Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company, Correspondence, January 10, 1879 - October 29, 1879.**

Special Items: January 10, 1879, George Bode to A.A. Denny about the financial problems of the Seattle and Walla Wall Railroad.
October 29, 1879, George Bode to A.A. Denny about the \$30,000 lien against the Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad.
- 17 Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company, Correspondence, March 23, 1880 - October 6, 1880.**

Special Items: May 6, 1880, Dexter Horton and Company to Henry Villard about the financial problems of the Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad.
June 9, 1880, Seattle Coal and Transportation Co. to A.A. Denny offering to pay 50 cents freight per ton if the Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Co. agreed to pay its debt to them of \$100,000.
- 18 Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company, Correspondence, October 11, 1880 - December 20, 1880.**

Special Items: October 12-30, 1880, resignations of members of the Board of Trustee for the Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company.
- 19 Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company, Correspondence, February 25, 1881 - December 17, 1881.**

Special Item: August 3, 1881, Martin Tierney to the President and Directors of the Columbia and Puget Sound Railroad Company desiring to buy apiece of waterfront property promised to him by the company.
- 20 Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company, Minutes Book, January 14, 1878 - December 23, 1880.**
- 21 Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company, Minutes Book, January 14, 1878 - December 23, 1880.**

Note: This is a photocopy of folder 20.

Box 3: Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company, 1872-1888.

Folder:

- 1 Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company, Financial Records, Financial Ledger Claims against the Company, 1880 - 1883.**
- 2 Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company, Financial Records, Financial Ledger Claims against the Company, 1880 - 1883.**

Note: This is a photocopy of folder 1.

- 3 **Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company, Financial Records, Mortgage to Bailey Gertzert, Trustee, August 14, 1876.**
- 4 **Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company, Financial Records, Receipts, No Dates.**
- 5 **Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company, Agreement, Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company and S.H. Foster of the City of Seattle, April 3, 1874.**
Note: Foster agreed to allow the railroad to construct a line across his property as long as the railroad did not damage any of his buildings. The railroad also agreed to pay Foster for any damage incurred during construction.
- 6 **Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company, Agreement, Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company and James Colman, April 14, 1876.**
Note: Subscription of \$30,000, in bonds payable in 10 years to pay for the last fifteen miles of railroad construction.
- 7 **Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company, Agreement, A.A. Denny and Henry Villard, October 11, 1880.**
Note: Villard agreed to buy the railroad for \$350,000, gold. Further Denny was appointed as trustees until the sale was finished.
- 8 **Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company, Legal, Henry Yesler v. James Colman, July 31, 1880.**
Note: Colman tried to regain property and shares of the Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company shares that were auctioned off.
- 9 **Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company, Legal, Squire v. Villard, August 11, 1881.**
Note: Subpoena for A.A. Denny to testify on Squire's behalf.
- 10 **Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company, Stock Certificates, #2 - 21, July - August 1873.**
- 11 **Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company, Stock Certificates, #24 - 46, August 1873.**
- 12 **Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company, Stock Certificates, #47 - 72, August 1873.**
- 13 **Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company, Stock Certificates, #75-119, August - December 1873.**
- 14 **Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company, Stock Certificates, #120 - 142, December 1873 - January 1874.**
- 15 **Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company, Stock Certificates, #143 - 180, January 1874 - December 1876.**
- 16 **Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company, Stock Certificates, #181 - 201, December 1876 - January 1881.**
- 17 **Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad Company, Stock Dividends Paid List No. 1.**

Records Series 8: Society of Washington Territory Pioneers.

Box 3: Society of Washington Territory Pioneers, 1871-1872.

Folder:

- 18 **Society of Washington Territory Pioneers, Bylaws, No Date.**
- 19 **Society of Washington Territory Pioneers, Minutes, 1871-1872.**
- 20 **Society of Washington Territory Pioneers, Correspondence, March - July 1872.**
- 21 **Society of Washington Territory Pioneers, Correspondence, David L. Phillips, March - August 1872.**
Note: David L. Phillips thanked the Society for its resolutions on the death of his father.
- 22 **Society of Washington Territory Pioneers, Resolutions, 1872.**
Note: Resolutions for David Phillips and David Maurer.
- 23 **Society of Washington Territory Pioneers, Membership Lists, No Dates.**
- 24 **Society of Washington Territory Pioneers, Receipts, 1872.**

Records Series 9: Estates.

Box 4: Estates, 1867-1879.

Folder:

- 25 **Estates, William Winlock Miller, Correspondence, November - December 1875.**
- 26 **Estates, William Winlock Miller, Correspondence, John P. Judson, February 1876 - January 1877.**
Note: February 22, 1876, inventory of the Miller estate.
Judson was the attorney for Miller's estate.
- 27 **Estates, William Winlock Miller, Correspondence, Mary M. Miller, October 1877 - February 1878.**
- 28 **Estates, William Winlock Miller, Will and Testament, February 15, 1876, February 22, 1876.**
- 29 **Estates, William Winlock Miller, Receipts, 1875 - 1877.**
- 30 **Estates, John Buckley, Account Book, 1872 - 1874.**
Note: Expenses paid for John Buckley while under the guardianship of A.A. Denny.
- 31 **Estates, John Buckley, Probate Court Hearing, February 26, 1874.**
Note: Termination of Denny's guardianship due to the death of John Buckley.
- 32 **Estates, Carl M. Larsson, Power of Attorney, June 4, 1879.**
Note: Power of Attorney given to A.A. Denny by Larsson's relatives in Sweden.
- 33 **Estates, Carl M. Larsson, Correspondence, C.B. Bagley, October 1878 - May 1879.**
Note: Correspondence about the taxes on Carl Larsson's estate.
- 34 **Estates, C.A. Terry, 1867.**

Records Series 10: Percy Bamford.

Box 4: Percy Bamford, 1892 - 1938.

Folder:

- 1 **Percy Bamford, Correspondence, September 1892 - December 1898.**

Note: Correspondence about the Wright property in Sioux City, Iowa.

- 2 **Percy Bamford, Correspondence, January 1899 - October 1900.**
- 3 **Percy Bamford, Correspondence, December 1901 - December 1902.**
- 4 **Percy Bamford, Correspondence, April 1903 - July 1903.**
- 5 **Percy Bamford, Cemetery Deed, December 31, 1898.**
Note: Forest Home Cemetery, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
- 6 **Percy Bamford, Invitations, 1908 - 1909.**
Special Items: January 21, 1908, Republican Club of the City of New York.
February 20, 1909, Boston Athletic Club.
- 7 **Percy Bamford, Court Case, August 1938.**
Special Item: United States v. Alice Hart, Emma Hart, Leila Hart, Washington Mutual Savings Bank and others. Petition of the federal government to condemn, appropriate and take certain real estate and other property rights adjacent to the Naval Air Station at Sand Point, King County, Washington.

Records Series 11: Arcade Building and Realty Company.

Box 4: Arcade Building and Realty Company, 1901-1932.

Folder:

- 8 **Arcade Building and Realty Company, Moore Investment Company, Lease, August 16, 1901.**
- 9 **Arcade Building and Realty Company, Moore Investment Company, Bond, July 16, 1902.**
- 10 **Arcade Building and Realty Company, Consent to Transfer from Moore Investment Company to Arcade Building Company, October 2, 1905.**
- 11 **Arcade Building and Realty Company, Lease, February 3, 1906.**
- 12 **Arcade Building and Realty Company, Articles of Incorporation, February 19, 1906.**
- 13 **Arcade Building and Realty Company, Transfer, February 21, 1906, Bond, February 26, 1906.**
- 14 **Arcade Building and Realty Company, Bond, July 29, 1907.**
- 15 **Arcade Building and Realty Company, Correspondence, 1927.**
- 16 **Arcade Building and Realty Company, Bond, January 24, 1927.**
- 17 **Arcade Building and Realty Company, Correspondence, May 2, 1932.**

Records Series 12: Manuscripts.

Box 4: Manuscripts, 1852 - 1886.

Folder:

- 18 **Manuscripts, Pioneer Days in Puget Sound, original draft.**
- 19 **Manuscripts, Pioneer Days in Puget Sound, photocopy of original draft.**
- 20 **Manuscripts, Pioneer Days in Puget Sound, revised draft.**

- 21 **Manuscripts, Pioneer Days in Puget Sound, photocopy of revised draft.**
- 22 **Manuscripts, Christmas Time in Pioneer Days.**
Note: The manuscripts describes the first Christmas in Seattle in 1864, at Alki Point, December 25, 1851 and 1852.
- 23 **Manuscripts, Miss C.A. Terry's Diary Kept While Crossing the Plains in 1852.**
Note: Miss C.A. Terry, Chloe Ann Terry was the sister of C.T. Terry.

Records Series 13: Miscellaneous Items.

Box 4: Miscellaneous Items, 1861-1941.

Folder:

- 24 **Miscellaneous Items, 1861 - 1899.**
Special Items: 1860-1861, House of Representatives, Territory of Washington, Rules and Orders.
Plat of an addition to the town of Seattle, March 18, 1875.
Invitations and Programs to the Seattle reception for President Harrison in 1891.
Petition for John McGilvra asking him to run for a Senate position.
- 25 **Miscellaneous Items, 1924 - No Date.**
Special Items: List of original Seattle telephone subscribers.
Transfer of land to Rolland Denny's estate.
Latimer family genealogical chart.
Theodore Oscar Williams biography.
- 26 **Miscellaneous Items, Ephemera.**
Note: These items have been transferred to the Ephemera Collection.
The Political Views and Opinions of Selucius Garfielde, Delegate in Congress from Washington Territory, as Expressed by Himself in Writing, November 28, 1866. (EPH 979.7022).
1869, Interesting and Important Correspondence. Letters Between Selucius Garfielde and J.W. Nesmith. (EPH 979.7022).
1909, The Exposition Beautiful: Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition Guidebook.
No Date, The Monumental Bronze Company.