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A TRIP TO THE NORTHWEST IN 1861

By JOHN MASON BROWN (1837-1890)

With an Introduction by his Grandson

JOHN MASON BROWN*

New York City

INTRODUCTION

The West, though rapidly growing up, was still young in 1861. My grandfather, John Mason Brown, was young, too. He was twenty-four when he shut the door of his law office in St. Louis and on May 1st boarded the steamboat *Spread Eagle* to head for adventure in the Northwest. Five years before, having barely become nineteen, he had returned to Frankfort and Liberty Hall after his graduation from Yale. In the meantime my grandfather, always a scholarly man, had taught at Dr. Sayre's School, had been employed by the State Geological Survey, had studied law, had been admitted to the Kentucky bar, and in 1860 had followed his half-brother, Benjamin Gratz Brown, to St. Louis.

As is amply indicated in his later writings such as *The Battle of the Blue Licks* and *The Frankfort Centennial* (both commemorative addresses) and, above all, *The Political Beginnings of Kentucky*, my grandfather was an historian with a true sense of scene and capable of eloquence. But the daily entries he made in the small Morocco-bound diary he carried West with him were without literary pretensions. They were jotted down in pencil in a fine, neat hand which reflected a mind that was orderly, logical, and harmonious. Although he afterwards inked over the first forty of his 197 pages, the script young Brown wrote unhesitatingly and with almost no corrections or erasures could not have gained in tidiness. Certainly his diary was not kept with publication in view. Considering the difficulties, not

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to say the hazards and the dangers of the trip, the wonder is that it was ever kept at all.

As will happen to those rash enough to put words on paper, the man who kept this diary emerges from its pages without having meant to do so. Plainly he was as interested in geology as he was in military men and matters. History and geography being also among his absorptions, it amused him to compare his own route with the records of Lewis and Clark who, fifty-five years earlier, had followed much the same course. His skill at languages, which was pronounced throughout his life, found him at once eager and able to master the difficult sign language of the Indians and to start compiling a dictionary of the Black-foot dialect.

He was in search of a romantic West; the kind of frontier country that, in its first turbulent years, his own Kentucky had been. Brown's fondness for Nature equipped him not only to observe it, but to meet it on its own unpredictable terms. The stuffs of leadership were in him. For a young man he had remarkable maturity of judgment. That his heart quickened when he shot antelope, grizzlies, or buffalo seems incontestable. Even so, whatever excitement he may have felt is stated with an almost judicial or scientific calm. He was blessed with a happy gift for accepting the surprises or disappointments each day brought, and a happier talent for improvising plans or solutions without bothering about complaints.

Brown carried his home with him, as travelers will. He was always running into friends or friends of friends from Frankfort and Yale. His highest praise for a good meal, and good meals were rare during his six months of travel, was that he had had "a supper that would have shamed the Galt House."

Brown had an understandable pride in his marksmanship. This was perhaps the most boyish thing about him. He liked hunting and fishing. He liked books and talking and singing. He also liked people. But there was a fastidiousness about him which made him far happier in the quiet of a Jesuit mission or in the order of an army post than in such a "humbug" city as he found San Francisco, or in the midst of the saloons, gambling houses, and "riot" of Walla Walla. The country, however, on this particular trip was his paramount concern. No doubt this is why he was content to mention so many persons without characterizing them and, most disappointing of all, to squander a real opportunity for reporting by merely writing, "In evening

called on Brigham (Young), but he excused himself after a few minutes conversation, on plea of business." (!)

The America upon which he concentrated was not the America Parkman had seen as a youth in 1846. Neither was it the America that Parkman lamented as having ceased to exist when, in 1872, he came to write a preface for the fourth edition of *The Oregon Trail*. It was, however, still frontier America. It was the West in the process of being tamed; the West sparsely spotted with white men rather than populated by them, and subject already to the dulling encroachments of civilization. Even so, as the West it remained wild and woolly.

A person venturing beyond Minnesota had left the States and could not say he was in them again until he had reached Oregon or California. If his route were young Brown's, he found himself a stranger in the strange and untamed vastness of what was then called the Dakota Territory. Indians not only lived and hunted there, but there they were on the warpath. The bodies of white men freshly scalped could be encountered. If travelers carried guns, it was because they needed them. The great fur companies were an empire of which St. Louis was the distant capital. Buffaloes, though scarcer than they had been, could be seen and shot by day. Sometimes they could be heard "bellowing all night." Indians migrated each year to hunt them without mercy.

If fish and game were abundant, so were perils and inconveniences. Although the Wild West was already condemned by the telegraph, the railroads (my grandfather referred to them as "the cars"), and the steamboat, travel through it required high courage and a strong constitution. The Missouri was a river which presented many problems. It was filled with snags; worse still, with sandbars which not only halted boats continually but demanded their unloading and reloading.

As young Brown discovered, travel on the Missouri was both slow and uncertain. During his trip, soon after he transferred from the *Spread Eagle* to the smaller *Chippewa*, a fire broke out on this stern-wheeler. Since it was carrying 200 kegs of powder in its hold, the boat exploded. Although no lives were lost, the stern-wheeler was. This meant that Brown continued his journey first in a wagon drawn by oxen, then for many miles on foot, and thereafter on horseback, by steamer again, by the Overland Mail stage, and finally by "the cars" until he had completed the long circle which led him back to St. Louis.

The experiences he had had and the hardships he had undergone were of great value when, after a second trip to the Northwest in 1862, John Mason Brown wound up his affairs in St. Louis and left for Kentucky, there to serve with distinction first as a Major then as a Colonel in the Union Army. He had seen an America beyond our seeing but of which in his diary he gives us tantalizing glimpses. Parkman had spoken of the interest which will always attach to the record of that which has passed away never to return. It is such a record that my grandfather's diary represents.

JOHN MASON BROWN

DIARY

OF

JOHN MASON BROWN

MAY - NOVEMBER, 1861

May 1st, 1861 Wednesday—Left St. Louis in Am. Fur Company's Steamer "Spread Eagle" at 12- $\frac{3}{4}$ o'clock. Passage to Fort Benton paid at Pierre Chouteau Jr. & Co.'s \$100. Carry with me a Hawken rifle, 7 canisters powder and other ammunition, a few articles of clothing and a small assortment of beads, vermilion, &c., for presents. Assigned to state room No. 10 with Albert Clark of St. Louis as chum. Find the boat very roomy and pleasant, additional exertion being made by the owners to render the boat agreeable to several ladies en route for the mountains. Weight this day 160 $\frac{1}{2}$ pounds. Entered the Missouri river at 4 P.M.

May 2nd, Thursday—Passengers by this time, with their baggage, guns &c, all settled for the long trip before us. Was much amused with the excited manner of an English gentleman, named Scholfield, who with his wife, a young lady protege, and two or three young New Yorkers in company are making a pleasure excursion to Ft. Benton. He carries baggage enough for a regiment and fire arms sufficient to arm a platoon of riflemen. Seems not in the least aware that the latter part of our journey must necessarily lack many of the comforts—milk and the like—that make our voyage as yet but an ordinary Steamboat trip. He seems a good natured, bustling old fellow, and his party make excellent music in the after cabin. I never expected to go to the



Veasey—The Doerr Gallery

John Mason Brown

1837-1890

FRONTISPIECE: *The Political Beginnings of Kentucky*

Filson Club Publications No. 6



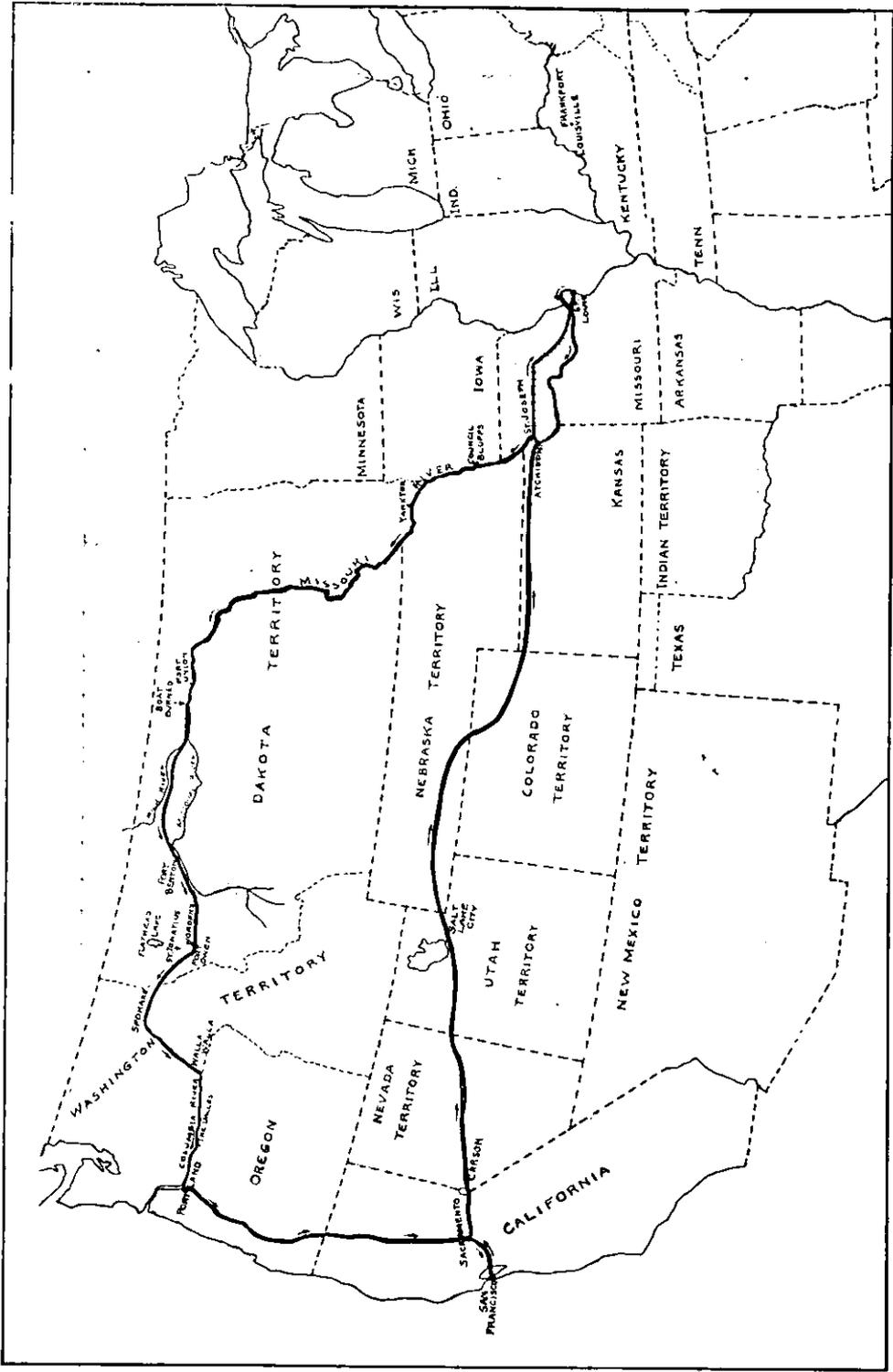
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John Mason Brown

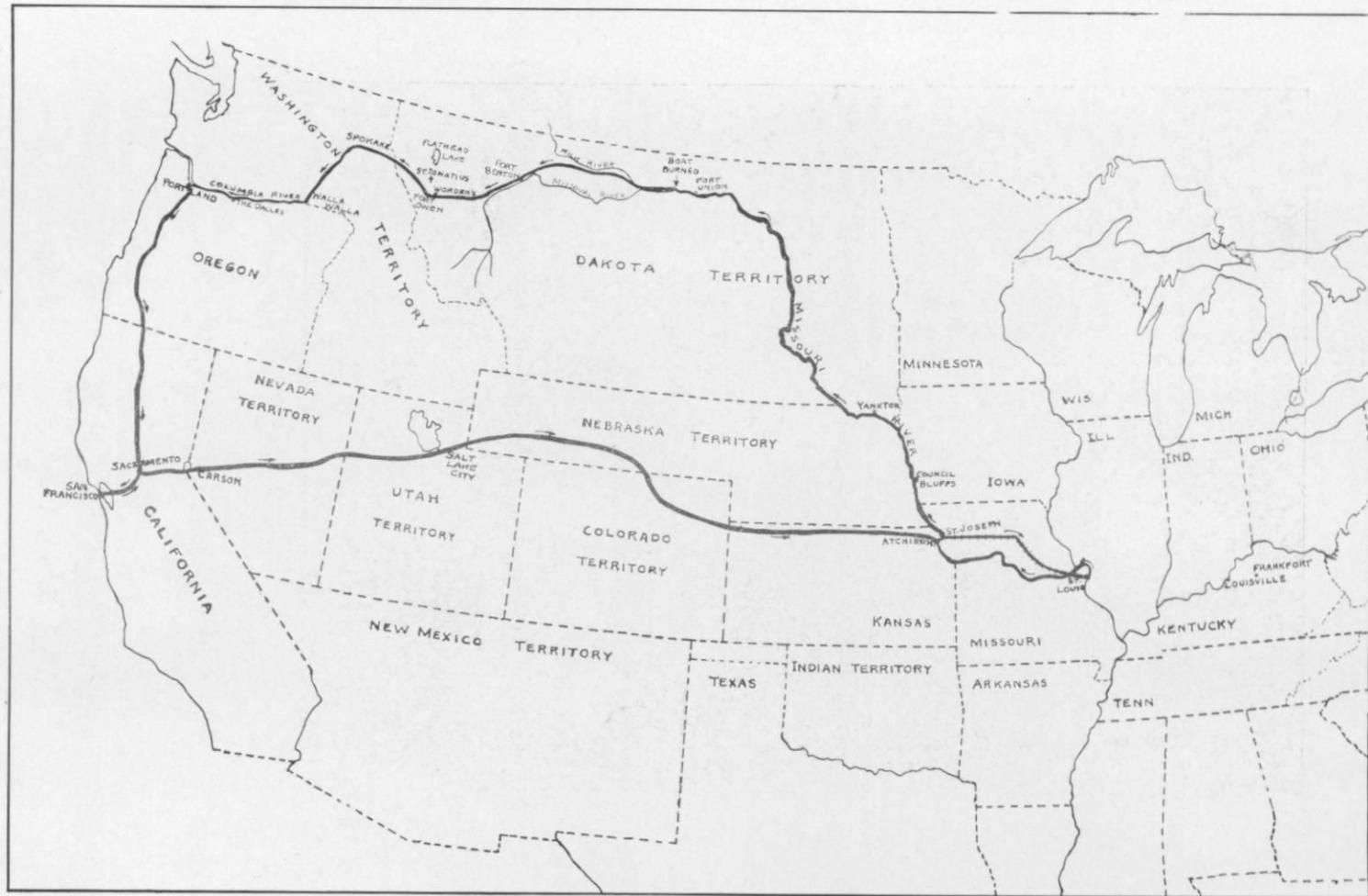
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Map Showing The Route Taken By John Mason Brown
On His Trip To The Northwest In 1861



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mountains in a boat carrying a *Piano**; but here we have Piano, Melodeon, flutes, violins and banjos, and, what is an important accessory, persons on board who play them well. I will work my way to-day into the musical world of the after cabin. Find on board Frank Newcomb brother of H.D.N. of Louisville, a very agreeable gentleman and an acquisition as a companion. Begin already to talk mountain talk with the trappers and voyageurs on board. Am a little surprised to find that *weak eyes* are a very frequent source of trouble with the Mtneers, caused they tell me by the glare of snow and the cold winds which they face. Two on board have had operations for Cataract performed while in St. Louis. Have made a good run up to Breakfast, to Washington 84 m. from St. Louis. General overhauling of rifles and proposals to form a rifle company for diversion, of which I am asked to take command. When we are hard up for amusement possibly we may resort to it, not till then.

Contrary to my expectation the military proposition gains ground on the score of exercise and pour passer le temps. Assisted by Schiefflen of the N.Y. 7th Regt. drilled 15 men for an hour. Mr. Charles Chouteau opened a box of Govt. annuity rifles destined for the Yankton Indians. These give a uniformity of arms at least to our squad, the name of which yet hangs in suspense between "The Spread Eagle Guards" and "The Invincible Never-Sweats." Find considerable difficulty in navigation, constantly heaving the lead.

May 3rd, Friday—Laid by most of last night, the channel being difficult. Thus far have met but one Steamboat, the H.D. Bacon, 10 m. this side of the mouth of the Mo. This morning drilled my recruits and by way of a joke almost every passenger had his hair cut close. Had long talks with Mr. Dawson who is to be in charge of Ft. Benton, and a Trapper named Dauphin in regard to Indian peculiarities and the mysteries of hunting the buffalo and beaver. Mr. Dawson mentioned the Gros Ventres of the Prairie near whom he has lived 10 years, as having a most peculiar language, not in the slightest degree labial, and utterly impossible to be attained in perfection by a white man. He mentioned a conference of the tribe at which he was present. Though an orator was speaking at the top of his voice, it was impossible to detect the slightest movement of his lips or to distinguish him as the speaker except by guess, from several others who stood near him. These and other bits of information I must try and verify. Laid by from 9 o'clock P.M. not being

* Italics indicate underscoring by the author. The author's spelling has been retained. Ed.

able to make a woodyard. About day break the crew began cutting & carrying wood from the shore to furnish fuel to next woodyard. Under weigh very early.

May 4th, Saturday.—Met a small steamer of the ferry boat build. The troubles seem to have killed the river trade. In the after noon came up with the steamer "White Cloud" hard aground. She left St. Louis 2 days before us and we passed her.

May 5th, Sunday—Laid by last night. This morning are all very quiet, endeavoring to preserve the solemnity of the day. Rather unsuccessful however as is generally the case on board steamboat. Had an example of what is said to be general with river Captains. Two of the passengers tried their rifles, the Captain fined each a bottle of wine for Sabbath-breaking, and sternly collected it.

May 6th, Monday—The day mild and without incident. Have been busily comparing Lewis & Clarke's work with late Govt. maps. Am surprised at their accuracy. Made Kansas City 457 m. from St. Louis at 4 P.M. Laid up last night at a bar.

May 7th, Tuesday—Laid up last night at a difficult bar about 15 or 20 miles from Leavenworth. Got aground and were until 10 o'clock getting to Leavenworth 496 m. from Saint Louis. At Ft. Leavenworth, 2 m. above the town, took on board Mrs. Swift, wife of Dr. S., U.S. Army 4th Arty., a passenger for Fort Randall. Laid by at night and

May 8th, Wednesday—Reached St. Joe at 12 m where we took on board 3 passengers for Ft. Benton, a number for Omaha, and 12 or 15 tons of U.S. Annuity goods for various tribes. Saw Harrison Branch the new Indian Superintendent, an old acquaintance of mine. Left St. Joseph at 2½ P.M. Met at St. Joe Mr. D. A. Constable son of the junior partner in the old Edinburg firm of Constable & Co. publishers for Walter Scott. He is an old acquaintance of Dawson's, who introduced me. He is a hardware man at St. Joe and an intelligent, canny Scot. Took on board among others for Omaha a *professional* in the Negro Minstrel line, who plays the violin beautifully. Also my old friend John L. Lewis of the firm of Lewis & Groshon, St. L., who makes the Ft. Benton trip for his health. Tied up the boat as usual about 9 o'clock.

May 9th, Thursday—Passed to-day for 30 m. through the Indian Reservation of the half breeds of the almost extinct tribes of Ottoes, Omahas, and others. The country on the Kansas shore and included in the boundaries of the reservation very

picturesque and apparently very fertile. The scenery very diversified with prairie and wooded hills of 150 or 200 feet height, and altogether the most beautiful that we have yet seen. A severe storm of wind and rain in the afternoon did not impede our progress materially, and we made an excellent run to Brownsville or rather to a point just below where we wooded and tied up for the night—to St. Louis 669 m.

May 10th, Friday—Spent the entire day from 8½ A.M. in lightning our Steamboat over a most difficult bar at Sonora, Mo., 677 m. from St. Louis by the card. Succeeded in clearing the bar and tied up for the night about 2 m. above Sonora. Was much amused as well as instructed by the conversation of Maj. Graham, a man of colossal proportions who has travelled most extensively through all the wilder portions of our Country and with a very observant eye. His description of Chippeaway lake-navigation was particularly diverting.

Saturday, May 11th—Drilled my little company for the first time as skirmishers and am surprised at the readiness with which they learn what is generally esteemed an intricate drill. Heard various rumors at Nebraska City of collisions in the States which proved most fortunately only rumors and without reliable foundation.—Met the Steamer Florence at 12½ P.M. About supper time passed Plattsmouth, a small town just below the junction of the Platte and Missouri, the disappointed and dwarfed embryo of what Land Agents predicted would be a great city. An immense bank of sand shows the occasional violence of the Streams, but the Platte is ordinarily a river very wide and very shallow, dangerous from its rapidity in times of flood, and its treacherous quicksands in the dry season. Major Schoonover, Indian Agt., tells me that on more than one occasion he has *circumnavigated* the Platte by riding to its mouth and making a double crossing of the Mo., passing through Iowa. The description given by Cpts. Lewis and Clarke still holds good in all essential points, a few changes in the bar being the only noticeable alteration. We found a difficult channel and night coming on with a high wind and rain Capt. La Barge tied up the boat to the Iowa bank for the night.

May 12th, Sunday—Had much amusement at Dawson's expense. Sleeping a good deal in the day time, he is of course rather wakeful at night, complaining that every chicken purchased by the Steward is brought in through the door next to his State room, every cabin boy and passenger making it a

thoroughfare and his chum Riter, (in charge of Ft. Union) snoring horribly. Saw at St. Mary's (772 m. fr. St. Louis) Peter Sarpy, a brother of Capt. Jno. B. Sarpy decd. one of the chief men of the fur trade in his day.—Peter a man of 65 with a splendid face, wealthy, a very large landholder and, though a bachelor, emphatically the father of his people. We reached the pretty town of Omaha, capital of Nebraska Territory, about 3 o'clock P.M. The town which is about a mile distant from the landing-place is beautifully situated on several hills—well built and apparently a very thriving place. It is the point for the Pikes Peak trade. The territorial State House built by the U. S. Govt. is a strikingly handsome building of grey stone, designed with great taste. The Prison also well built. A number of fine and extensive store houses of brick are collected in the central part of the town. Here we landed our freight destined for the Pawnee Indians, whose Reservation is to the Southward.—This tribe which even in the days of Lewis & Clarke had begun to decline before the growing power of the Sioux, has been so hemmed in by civilization that they must perforce adopt in some degree the habits of the white man. The Govt. annuities are to them indispensable, for aside from their thievish propensities, which they retain in unimpaired vigor, they possess but little that they can turn to practical account. I am told by those on board well acquainted with the various Indian tribes for many years, that the term "Pawnee" is one of reproach even among tribes not in contact with them. The only hunting grounds now visited by these poor devils are the praries to the north-ward along the Mo. The Pikes Peak trade, extensively carried on from Omaha, has driven the buffalo and consequently the Pawnees from their former hunting grounds on the Platte—at least in a very great degree. The Sioux annually scalp a greater or less number of these interlopers upon their hunting grounds.—Leaving Omaha in the midst of a cold rain we continued our course; but the rain becoming more violent and accompanied with high winds which took the boat from the pilot's control, our captain deemed it prudent to lie by at a point 10 or 15 m. above Omaha where accordingly we tied up for the night. The day was acknowledged in some sort by a display of tidier red, blue and gray shirts (for we have all assumed mountain costume, save only belt and knife) and by a general quiet smoke and chat throughout the day. Mr. Clark showed me in the evening a scar upon his head inflicted by a Grizzly

Bear that tore away a part of his scalp in a hand to hand fight, a fight by the by in which the bear was victor, leaving Mr. C. for dead and herself escaping unhurt or but slightly wounded.

May 13th, Monday—Passed at an early hour, before any but the officers of the boat were stirring, Council Bluffs. I was particularly disappointed not to have had a glimpse of this place of which I have heard so much and which was for so long a time the very outpost of outposts of the Army.—The Bluffs are noticeable from a long distance up and down the river, very conspicuous and justifying in appearance, from a distance, the judgment of those who located the principal Indian post there. The suggestion originated with Lewis & Clarke as also did the location of every post of Government or Fur Company that has proved anything more than a temporary cantonment. Amused ourselves to-day by a formal court martial upon Rea, the Bar Keeper on various charges, ridiculous but amusing.—Are now about out of the region of woodyards. To-day our wooding was done by the crew cutting from the Cottonwood forest and carrying it in.

May 14th, Tuesday—To-day at about 8 A.M. passed the mouth of Little Sioux river, a stream of singular appearance on the Iowa side of the Mo. The mouth is almost completely concealed with a dense willow growth, which causes the rivermen to speak occasionally of the Little Sioux as being in *ambuscade*. The day is raw and disagreeable, the cold increasing until the latter part of the afternoon was so uncomfortably cold as to drive us all within the Cabin and collect us around the stove. Towards supper time we approached Decatur a small (very small) village on the Nebraska side of the river, and had a particularly fine view of the "Blackbird Hills" near the town. These hills derive their name from Blackbird a chief of the Omahas, a man of genius but singularly cruel and ambitious. He must have died previous to 1800 as Lewis & Clarke mention his grave at a spot held in great veneration by his tribe, and wonder that the practice of placing gifts of food &c. on the grave should have survived him so long. They visited the spot in the summer of 1804. Blackbird, if my memory serve me aright, is spoken of at some length by Irving in his "Tour of the Praries." His tribe, the Omahas, are located about 8 m. to the S.W. of Decatur (which point is 950 m. from St. Louis) on a Reservation. We saw some of them on the banks of the river—a squallid and miserable looking race. The north-

ern bute of the range of hills most noticeable here and which bear the Chief's name, is the spot where tradition locates the grave of Blackbird. His resting place has been respected in the excavations that have been made for the purpose of opening quarries of sandstone, which is found in quantities in these hills. We heard at Decatur that our Consort the "Chippeway" had laid by last night near that place. We will overtake her tomorrow or next day. In spite of violent winds from the North and North West we made a bar 20 m. above Decatur before tying up for the night. The passage of the bar we deferred until morning.

May 15th, Wednesday—Before any of those in the cabin were awake we were already well advanced on our way. Passing the town of Omadi, which I did not see, we had but little difficulty in making a good run through a beautiful country, bordered by a bluff which appeared alternately on the different sides of the river. In the afternoon we sparred over a difficult bar and at about 5½ o'clock arrived at Sergeant's Bluffs a small town on the Iowa bank. This village derives its name from a bold naked bluff about 1½ mile above it called the Sergeant Bluff from Sergeant Floyd of Lewis and Clarke's party who died near here and was buried on the summit of the bluff. The name given in 1804 has endured, as in fact have all those given by those most remarkable explorers. Not far from Sergeant's Bluffs is Sioux City, also in Iowa, a town which was considered in 1856 as the prospective metropolis (or one of the largest inland towns) of the Continent. Untoward events have rather checked its growth, and we found it only a village of some 200 inhabitants. Lots which formerly were sold by the foot and inch at Broadway prices are now begging purchasers for half acre tracts at rates upon which a farmer might thrive. We were detained near the town completing some necessary purchases of potatoes etc. till such a late hour that it was judged prudent to tie up for the night. As I write an individual whom I as a lawyer recognize as a Sheriff's Deputy is reading a paper, which instinct tells me is an attachment, to Mr. Chouteau. The affair is, it seems, of easy adjustment for I observe the stranger affixing his hand and seal to a few lines of MSS and bowing himself out. We have now reached the last Post Office and regard ourselves as on the verge of the white man's country. And every one seems not unwilling to enter upon the new scenes that we are daily nearing. We

discerned the steam of our stern wheel Consort the "Chippeway" this afternoon at a late hour, apparently about 10 m. ahead. Up to this point we have made according to the card 1025 miles, but really as the pilots assure us 1053 m.

May 16th, Thursday—Were occupied until late in the forenoon in clearing a bar not a mile from Sioux City, reputed to be the most difficult in the upper Mo. By unloading a good portion of freight our boat was with great labor sparred over, when the goods unloaded were brought up to us in a small steam ferry. During the delay our passengers scattered in every direction and one, a German, was left behind. He joined us at night having walked across the country to intercept us. During the day saw the first brood of wild geese that we have yet seen. I was not aware before that this bird reared its young thus far South; but Dawson and Schoonover tell me that they breed in quantities on the Mo. between the Mouth of the Yellowstone and the Falls, building nests in *trees*—the only instance, to my knowledge, of tree-nests belonging to aquatic birds. Saw in the afternoon, not far from Sioux City, a pole raised on a beautiful bluff, marking the burial spot of an old Chief of some distinction, long since dead, but how named I could not learn. At Plaut's, a half-breed Frenchman's, we took on a quantity of wood and saw a number of the *Santee* Indians. This tribe formerly located on the lower Mississippi, must I conjecture from their name have originally inhabited a portion of South Carolina. Being but a broken remnant they affiliate with the Yanktons, the boundaries of whose reservation we are just entering. The officers of the boat chose to tie here for the night. Just below us is the Big Sioux River, opposite the mouth of which is the initial point of the Southern boundary of the new territory of Dakotah, organized last winter and comprising all the Country North of Nebraska, West of Minnesota and East of the Rocky Mts. This part of the Southern line runs Eastward to the Minnesota line. The initial point of the remainder of the Southern line is at the mouth of the L'Eau qui court.

May 17th, Friday—Was enlivened with various ceremonies in honor of the 36th birth-day of Frank Newcomb one of our passengers. His popularity, if the frequent good wishes expressed by the passengers over the numerous drinks may be taken as a criterion, is very great, and indeed he is a most excellent gentleman. He and I, as partners at cards, prove thus

far invincible. The night was passed at a point on the North bank, about 12 miles below the mouth of Vermillion River and about 1112 m. from St. Louis.

May 18th, Saturday—Some of our party who had risen very early saw this morning a very large wolf and a number of turkeys, the first game yet observed. No one got a shot, the boat as well as the animals being in rapid motion—and in opposite directions. The remainder of the day we got along very well until about 6 P.M. when at a point a few miles below the village of the Yanktons we encountered a bad shoal which requires sounding ahead for several miles, before it will be prudent for the boat to advance. So we may probably be detained here until a late hour tomorrow morning. We now lay to, about 1205 m. from St. Louis.

May 19th, Sunday—During the whole day we made but 5 miles or rather less. The worst bar that we have yet encountered opposed us. To get over, we had to *lighten*, as it is termed; that is we left half of our cargo below, crossed the Bar, discharged the remainder above, and returned empty to take on board that left below. This method, the only one, is as might be supposed very tedious and wearying to the men, as well as injurious to the Cargo. So much time was consumed in the various transfers that we tied up at the spot where we first unloaded, leaving some adventurous spirits, whose zeal for camp experience could not be repressed, to pass the night above the bar and across the river. The participants in the scheme were the New Yorkers who came in next morning heartily tired of the experiment. During the day I and Dauphin hunted a short time, killing a few ducks and seeing a beaver dam across a slough, which we could not reach, having no boat. The day has been cold and dreary.

May 20th, Monday—Early this morning crossed the bar to our upper heap of goods. This is near the cabin of Picotte, Chief of the Yanktons and one of the head Chiefs of the Confederacy of the Sioux tribes. The Yanktons, having recently sold large bodies of land to the U. S. and the buffalo having disappeared from among them, are the most *humanely* inclined of any of the Sioux. As a consequence of their cession of lands claimed by the Sioux in common, they have forfeited in a great degree the consideration of the other bands. There seems to be dissension among themselves, Picotte and his adherents have built cabins and located upon the reservation, old "Strike

the Ree" and those siding with him seem to prefer the old way and are now absent—whether to hunt or on a war-party is uncertain. We had a strike on the part of the engagees, this morning. About 20 of them convinced that their services were indispensable walked off the boat. Their neglect of Captain Dalgetty's maxim "to lay in before hand a stock of provant" made them, after missing Breakfast and Dinner, quite willing to return to duty; but they were informed that their presence was no longer desirable, and so we left them in the woods. It was 2 o'clock before we completed our reloading, nearly 48 hours having been consumed in clearing the bar. The number of deserters made all our operations more slow than usual. These engaged men or "engagees," as they are termed, are almost if not altogether Canadian French or their descendants. They are employed not for any peculiar fitness they may possess for the frontier life, being only used in and about the Forts, for hewing wood, drawing water and packing the buffalo robes into bales. Their services are poorly paid for. No Irishman could be hired for such a sum (\$20 for 14 months), their food uniformly meat, without bread, vegetables, sugar or coffee, which luxuries they must purchase, at exorbitant rates if they wish them. Being of an unthrifty nature they cannot compete with Irish or German labor in the cities, they disappear before the sturdier races and seem destined to hang upon the waning borders of the Indian tribes. Their very nature seems at once servile and impudent. Having cleared this obstruction we steamed on for a few miles but were brought to an abrupt halt at "Smutty Bear's Camp" about 12 m. above Yankton. The low stage of water renders this point impassable at this time by a boat of such draught as the Spread Eagle. A half breed Sioux was dispatched to Fort Randall to intercept the Chippeway and turn her back to our relief. Like the Indian in the story we have all the time there is, and bear these detentions with philosophic gravity. The prospect is that we may be detained at our present moorings for several days. Unfortunately the Yankton Sioux have exterminated the game in this locality and we can expect no diversion like hunting. We now lie 12 m. above Yankton and about 80 m. from Ft. Randall.

May 21, Tuesday—The river at a stand-still and any movement up-stream utterly impossible. Our half breed messenger returned about 3 o'clock having intercepted the Chippeway near Niobrara. We have a faint hope of clearing the succession of bars lying ahead of us with her assistance and of re-com-

mencing our travel tomorrow afternoon. Several hunted to-day but without any success, only one or two pigeons and they poor.

May 22, Wednesday—Are still unable to advance, the river falling a little. The crew collecting wood. Have taken what will run us to Randall and will cord up the surplus for use on return trip. Weather very cool and misty.

May 23rd, Thursday—Are still tied up, apparently waiting for something to turn up either in the shape of the Chippeway or in a providential deepening of the channel. The afternoon very warm. Found on the bank a piece of imperfect pumice evidently brought down in ice from a point above. The rocks hereabouts show no signs of igneous origin. The cliffs are limestone, sand stone, with a top stratum of chalk, and are of the Cretaceous period, at least so I am told by Col. Frusch who examined them. (Note in margin: Cretaceous? Doubtful.)

May 24th, Friday—Despairing of the arrival we dropped down to the foot of the bar and discharged about half of our freight and leaving it in charge of a couple of men made our way painfully up the river. Met the Chippeway, sent her back for our freight, and brought up at Bonhomme's Island a few miles ahead where we are to encounter the most difficult bar of the river with only 2 ft. 10 in. of water and 3 ft. 8 in. draft. This the birth day of Queen Victoria, and we are reminded of the anniversary by our English passengers, who have some observances of their own for the day.

May 25th, Saturday. The Chippeway having come up with our freight, another quantity was shipped on board her and she crossed the bar at the head of Bonhomme Island. The Spread Eagle is still too deep to get over. Patience has become a second nature with us. We smoke very contentedly hoping to get forward at some indefinite day and trusting to luck for something to "turn up." Was astonished at the rashness with which one of the crew attacked a rattlesnake. He only used a long stick to separate the snake's coils; then, throwing aside his stick seized the reptile by the tail and snapped it, like a whip, until the head was almost severed. He did not appear to regard the experiment as hazardous, said it was his usual way of killing snakes. I had heard of this method of attacking the Blacksnake but never before knew that the same tactics were used against the formidable Rattlesnake. As night came on a heavy gale of wind and rain sprung up from the S.W., accompanied by the most vivid and fantastic lightning I have

ever witnessed. The atmosphere much purified and cooled and very pleasant although the day has been exceedingly sultry.

May 26th, Sunday—Rainy and cold. The cabin very quiet and orderly as indeed it has been every Sunday since our departure from St. Louis. Did not attempt to cross the bar at the head of Bonhomme Island. Must wait for the Chippeway to do so. Made an unsuccessful attempt to sein. This Island (Bonhomme) is regarded with superstitious veneration by the Sioux, who hold it to be in some way the residence or resort of the Great Spirit. Not one of them will hunt on it—no thanks to them for there is no game—and they seem to wonder at the temerity of a white man who not having the fear of the Medicine before his eyes has built a hut upon the sacred shore. Not far above us we can see a cabin marking the site of Bonhomme—where the knowing ones say the capital of Dakotah.

May 27, Monday—The Chippeway relieved us of nearly 75 tons of freight and started up the river taking several of our passengers, and expecting us to follow. We attempted to do so, but found the bar impassable. So we turned back to our former landing and making a virtue of necessity opened a wood yard for the use of the boat on her homeward voyage. The next day

May 28th, Tuesday—The channel not yet being practicable we diverted ourselves with pistol shooting and boat sailing, the navigation being under the superintendence of Maj. Graham who has some acquaintance with nautical affairs.

May 29th, Wednesday—A boat's crew of us explored the river for 10 or 12 m. up. Cannot yet get over the bar at the head of Island. The crew continue to chop wood. Begin to be annoyed about sunset by mosquitoes in great numbers, but the nights are still cool enough to prevent them interrupting sleep. An overcoat thrown over the feet is not an uncomfortable addition to the bed-clothing.

May 30th, Thursday—In the morning sailed up to Bonhomme, a very stiff breeze blowing which carried away our sprit. In afternoon went seining with two boats. Had no luck and returned much fatigued. Rained heavily all night.

May 31st, Friday—River rose 8 inches last night. At 8 o'clock got under way, dropped down to the foot of Bonhomme Island, & succeeded in passing by the North chute. At a distance of 15 m. by usual computation but in reality a good 20 m. passed Niobrara a little hamlet about $\frac{1}{2}$ m. below the L'eau qui court or Running Water River. Took on a quantity of flour left by

the Chippeway, but did not find our boat too heavy thanks to the rise. From Niobrara we had beautiful scenery on both banks. High bluffs of shaly limestone shaped by the action of wind and storm into fantastic forms border both banks. The country back seems to be high rolling prairie very picturesque. Near the Ponka River passed a band of Ponkas who lined the bank as we came in sight, and invited us by signs to land. Several ran along the shore shouting their only English word *Whisky*. Made a beautiful run to the Yankton Agency 30 miles above Niobrara. Found here the entire Yankton band of the Sioux Nation numbering 300 or more lodges and about 2500 souls, collected to receive their annuity. The band seems well furnished with horses and other articles of Indian wealth. The majority of them rushed on horseback and on foot to the landing to see us, and the effect of red, blue & green blankets, gaudy trappings and various tawdry finery was very picturesque. I was taken by Picotte, whom we had met below, to his lodge where the pipe circulated. Hundreds crowded round the boat exhibiting scalps, bows and other warlike trophies and weapons. The presents had already been distributed when we arrived and the various divisions of the band are to leave for their hunting grounds tomorrow. We were too late to witness the grand annual feast and dance and partake of the Dog banquet that forms an important part of the ceremony of Present-giving. At night the band left us, without any disturbance. It seems that if whisky is kept from them they are quiet enough and the Government takes severe and summary measures to prevent the selling or giving of ardent spirit of any kind. The Fur Company were fined \$36,000 a few years since for a keg of whisky sold to an Indian by an employee. A very severe storm blew us from our moorings about midnight and we had much difficulty in securing the boat.

June 1st, Saturday—At about 7 A.M. left the Agency taking with us 3 headmen or sub-chiefs who are on a visit to their bretheren near Fort Pierre. The Yanktons gave us Godspeed in a yell and whoop. About 6 m. on passed on the South bank of the river a very remarkable butte of red clay and gravel known to the mountaineers as *La Tour de Nesle*, shaped very like the hemp stacks in Ky. and about 175 ft. in height. Arrived, about 11 o'clock at *Ft. Randall* where we stopped for a couple of hours. The fort is well built and the quarters very comfortable. A garrison of 2 companies of the 4th Artillery stationed here commanded by Capt. J. A. Brown of that Regt. Made the

acquaintance of Capt. Brown, Capt. Best, Lieut. Bainbridge and Dr. Swift, pleasant gentlemen, and had an interchange of civilities on board and at the Fort. Left at 1½ o'clock. The face of the country near the river still more broken; the bluffs nearer the river on both sides, the stone a limestone very argillaceous and shaly. See many lodges of Yanktons on both sides of the river. Capt. Best informs me that the Yanktons are in an unhappy transition state between savage and semi-civilized life. The scarcity of game forces them to depend on the charity of Govt. and their own feeble attempts at agriculture. In the latter they are necessarily very unskilful. We see a good many fields, however, which they have planted in corn. Had a good river during the afternoon to our stopping place at a small clearing where lives a Canadian named Rochambeau. See many old buffalo trails along the hills, but no live game.

June 2nd, Sunday—During the day the country adjacent to the river has a more than usually barren aspect. We are in what are called "Les mauvais terres du riviere blanche," or the "Bad Lands of White River." The face of the country is a succession of hills of moderate height, sterile and bleak, with but a scanty covering of inferior grass. The hill sides which are in most cases bare show strata of argillaceous limestone, very shaly and perishable. The debris of the stone gives the entire country a black look. These "Bad Lands" are similar in many respects to the *Black Hills* of the interior, if my information be correct. They must not be confounded with the Bad Lands above the Mo. of the Yellowstone, which show traces of volcanic agency if report is correct. A portion of the range along the Bad lands is called the Bijou Hills but from what cause founded in reason or fancy I cannot discover. At about 7 P.M. passed the mouth of White River emptying from the West. Its source is in the Black Hills and the inference would seem to be that the country traversed by the River is generally unfertile. The water of this stream is described as being unpleasant to the taste and unhealthy, strongly impregnated with alkaline substances. Tied up for the night at 2nd Cedar Island.

3rd June, Monday—At about 10 o'clock we reached the foot of Ft. Lookout the Grand Detour or Big Bend one of the most singular spots on the river. The bend is much in this shape [drawing of a large loop of the river] its transit in a direct line being a short 1½ miles, while the circuit is between 38 and 45 miles. It is usual for a party to cross, hunting during the day and meeting the boat on the opposite side. 10 of our passengers

with one of the Indians, "Prairie on Fire" by name, made the expedition to day but with no success. We who had remained on the boat saw during the forenoon 5 antelope, a wolf and a number of beaver; one of the latter was shot by Chas. Lemon. Passed in the afternoon a little hut of bushes, at the sight of which our two Sioux on board set up a great talking and gesticulation intimating that a war-party of Rees (properly called Arickaras) had lain there for several days last spring while on an expedition against the Yanktons. Very heavy showers fell during the afternoon and towards 5 o'clock we had a double rainbow the most splendid I have ever witnessed. Have been putting in practice and augmenting my stock of signs for intercourse with Indians. Can get along surprisingly well already. The sign language is common to all tribes on the Eastern side of the Rocky Mts. The simplicity and appropriateness of the gestures that one feels at first surprised that they need any explanation. The Indians use them even when talking. Tied up for the night a short distance above the Grand Detour out of wood. Had we enough wood already cut we would reach Ft. Pierre tomorrow night, the distance somewhere about 70 m.

4th June, Tuesday—Passed Medicine River early this morning and during the forenoon sailed up what is called the "Chain" from the succession of bluffs which alternates from side to side of the river for 20 m. or more. Early in afternoon passed the remains of Ft. George which was a post in former years, a post of an opposition Fur Co. but deserted and burned since the dissolution of the firm of Harvey Primo & Co. Found much inconvenience from want of wood. Made several landings during the day to pick up fuel. Chopped Cedar chiefly. This timber is abundant in most of the ravines. Made a capital run during the day and at night stopped at Farm Island 6 m. below Fort Pierre, so-called from a farm formerly carried on here by the Am. Fur Co. to supply their Fort with vegetables. A few miles below this met the Chippeway which had put back to lighten us if necessary. Her coming is opportune as we have a bad bar before us for tomorrow. We laid our boats alongside and begun shifting freight at 9½ or 10 P.M.

5th June, Wednesday—Experienced much difficulty in clearing the foot of Farm Island; were detained there so long that it was not until about 1 o'clock that we passed *Fort Pierre*, the first of the Fur Co.'s posts. It was established somewhere about 1825 but the present Fort occupies a site about a mile and ½ higher up the river and was only completed 18 months since.

The Chippeway had already landed the Company freight and annuities for this point so we did not round to. Set our ensigns—one a Buffalo bull, at the Jackstaff head, the other the Stars & Stripes at the peak of our Anchor derrick. Fired a salute which was returned. Counted 43 lodges of Indians next the fort. They must contain Yanktonaise Sioux as the Brules Sans Arc and Minikaujons ought to be well back towards their hunting grounds West of the River. Major Schoonover has already distributed the annuities of the lower bands of his district except those of the Cut Head band (Sioux) who refused to come in. Old Big Head their chief sent in the same reply that he gave Gen. Harvey in '56 "that he was a chief and those wishing to see him must come to *him*, not he to them." A high wind detained us almost the whole afternoon in sight of Ft. Pierre. We succeeded in getting about 12 or 15 m. beyond, passing a cleared spot where a batallion of the 6th Infantry were posted in 1856. Saw during the day many antelope on the ridges back from the River. Killed a beaver (Capt. La Baye) which we failed to secure. Tied up at 9 o'clk and put a guard on duty. We are now in the midst of hostile Sioux who would not scruple to attack and scalp us if they thought it could be done. We may very possibly have trouble with Big Head's band, the Cut Heads, above. This day 5 weeks since we left St. Louis.

6th June, Thursday—Rose early as this is commencement of the game country. Saw numerous antelope and one elk during the day. Put Dauphin on shore to hunt across the bend below Chyenne Riv; but the heat was so great that he hunted unsuccessfully. At the mouth of Big Cheyenne saw the chimney of a house occupied long since by Primo when in the opposition Fur Co. The building has long since been converted into fuel for steamboats. Made during the day about 65 m. to Assiniboin Island where several of us hunted unsuccessfully. Saw bones of Buffalo, the first proof of our close approach to their range. I saw on the Island the circles marking the location of lodges, also a war party camp apparently of recent date. The afternoon very hot. Mosquitoes exceedingly troublesome until about 9 o'clock when a cool wind drove them off.

June 7th, Friday—Waited until about 9 o'clock to collect a quantity of seasoned ash and other good fuel that lay near us. Sent out two hunters, Dauphin and Fuguay, and got under way just as the Chippeway came in sight. Picked up our hunters a few miles on. They brought a doe antelope. A deer, severely wounded by them had escaped. Saw during the day several

eagles but of what species I could not tell at the distance. Hunted myself at midday but although the ground lay most fair and signs of deer, Elk and antelope were abundant, did not find game. The severe heat probably caused the animals to lie close. A fine buck antelope was killed and brought in after we had stopped to wait for the Chippeway. The country now is dangerous and it is not thought prudent for the boats to be long apart. We anchored in the middle of the stream, contrary to our usual course, at a point about 5 m. below the Little Cheyenne Riv. Chouteau and Maj. Schoonover came from the Chippeway to see us.

June 8th, Saturday—Were late getting up steam for some cause which I did not ascertain. Took the lead but mistaking the channel had to retreat after various ineffectual trials about 3 m. and resume in a new direction. Saw multitudes of antelope and a few Elk but no one hunted. In the afternoon I killed an antelope from the boat at a distance of at least 550 or 600 yds, a most remarkable shot for a Hawken Rifle with plain sights. Passed the Mouth of Moreau river about noon. It is a full stream of 25 or 30 yds in width, putting in from W.S.W. Near nightfall I killed an eagle with a Sharp's Rifle. Finding a deep channel we kept on until 10 o'clock when we overhauled the Chippeway about a mile below Grand River, about 1680 m. from St. Louis. The face of the adjoining country under goes a remarkable change above Moreau river. Instead of the high sterile knolls, closely packed along the banks, bare of vegetation and sprinkled over with fragments of trap and gneiss, broad plains of meadow land rising in one, two or three benches extend back to green undulations far from the river. The grass on these appears to be abundant and nutritious, the panorama beautiful especially when enlivened with bands of Antelope.

June 9th, Sunday—Find a marked change in the river. The water instead of filling a wide and shallow bed as heretofore is narrowed and deepened into a channel conveniently navigable. This change is noticeable immediately upon passing the Moreau river, and is so sudden as to attract the notice of the most unobserving. During the day saw several bands of Elk varying from 5 to 8 each, beside numerous Antelope and deer. Had a good run during the day. Saw, just as we tied up, the fires of the Cut Head band of Yanktonaise of which the formidable Big Head is chief. Fortunately the camp is across the river, though for all that a vigilant watch is kept. Big Head refused to go down to Fort Pierre last week to receive the presents of his band from

the U.S. agents Maj. Schoonover. Having avowed his intention to aveng some imaginary wrong upon the first whites who may be fit subjects for attack. His caprice may or may not cause us trouble. The day cool and overcast with rain at night. We lay at the mouth of Beaver Creek about 25 m. below Cannon Ball river and somewhere near 1770 m. from St. Louis.

June 10th, Monday—Had no alarm last night from Indians, and slept quietly notwithstanding their proximity. In the morning passed the shoal at Beaver Creek and had a good river to Cannon Ball River so called from the numbers of round boulders imbedded in the sandstone cliff just at its mouth and strewn along the shore. At this point is the most difficult river in the upper Mo., the water divided into no less than 11 channels, in each of which an ordinary stage of water is not more than 18 in. water. Just above Cannon Ball River is the bluff from which Big Head's band fired on the Steamer Clara in 1856, compelling her to land and dispense sugar, coffee & pilot bread to the natives. We saw nothing of Indians hereabouts save a camp recently deserted. Conclude that they have gone from the River to hunt buffalo. Killed a deer and 2 antelope in an hours hunting this afternoon.

June 11th, Tuesday—Passed Heart River in the forenoon. So named from the "Bute de Coeur" a high flat topped mound the form of which is [diagram of a heart] thus. 12 m. above Heart River are the "Square Butes" so called from their form. These Butes are generally regarded as the rightful limit of Sioux territory. But the Dakotahs pay but little attention to any claim their enemies the Rees may advance. In afternoon saw site of a large winter encampment of last season with the meat scaffolds and many poles yet standing. No Indians in sight. Richards killed a fine yearling Elk below Heart River. Two wolves, one very large were also killed. Have been for a couple of weeks learning the management of steam engine under Frank Constance's auspices and this morning was allowed to take the engine at moorings and bring the boat out. In afternoon saw a bull-boat, or boat made of buffalo hides stretched over a light framework of hoops, abandoned on the shore. Near by hung a buffalo robe. We were told by White Faced Bull that last night was fixed for the descent of a Sioux war party upon the Ree village 15 m. above the point where we are to-night. The boat & robe may have some connection with the fight or flight if there was one. We will know to-morrow.

June 12th, Wednesday—Arrived at the Ree village about 10

o'clock. At this village is Fort Clark a post formerly occupied by the Fur Co. but abandoned last year. The buildings in good repair and the situation very good for trading or military purposes except that timber is very scarce. The squaws were out in numbers in their bull boats catching drift wood for fuel. Their occupations in flood and field were suspended as our two steamers neared the bank. Was struck by the numerous patches of cultivated land surrounding the village. The Rees supply all the other tribes with Corn, and their most inveterate enemies make an armistice once a year for the purpose of purchasing it. They are even more careful than usual this year in preparing the ground as hunting, on an extensive scale is impossible. Last winter the Yanktonaise stole, in one foray 193 horses from them. The Rees from their agricultural life are necessarily stationary. Their lodges are built of rafters supported on large posts and heavily thached and covered with earth and sod. Their average diameter is 35 or 40 feet the entrance through a single door the exit of the smoke through a hole in the center of the roof. The lodges are commodious and comfortable, much superior in every respect to the skin lodge. Maj. Schoonover held a council on board the boat. A number of braves attended headed by the chiefs, in dignified and decorous silence. The speakers were "White Bear," "White Parfleche" or "White Shield" and "He who watches the Sun." The matter of their discourse was well arranged and delivered, although the round about way of interpretation from Ree into French by old Pierre Garreau and from French into English by Mr. Chouteau made the speechifying rather tedious. The Rees' language is altogether nasal, when a change is made from the gutturals. It is harsh, unmusical, and difficult to attain in any perfection. Dawson put us through here among his old friends. He resided here 7 years. Having distributed the Annuities we took leave carrying 15 or 20 men & women who are going to Fort Berthold, 65 m. above, to visit their friends the Gros Ventres. Chose to remain to the council and try the Chippeway. Tied up early to wood and do some repairing about the engines. I and Macadow hunted, killed each a fine white tail buck and returned much fatigued. Abundant signs of buffalo. No news of the Sioux war party.

June 13th, Thursday—Got along very well to-day, at a distance of 10 or 12 m. behind the Spread Eagle. Had much entertainment in talking with and observing the Indians on board. They are Mandans and Rees carrying Corn from the Ree village to the Gros Ventres. These three tribes live in intimate friend-

ship. They are in effect united against their usual enemy the Sioux. Cary took a number of sketches of different individuals. A young Ree and his squaw, both very handsome, attracted the greatest notice. Theirs is evidently a love-match. His attention to his *cara-sposa* is very white-like. Another of the Indians is a girl of about 19 years known as the Belle of the Rees. Her proper name is "The White Corn" and so distinguished is her beauty that a marriage settlement of 17 horses was a short time since vainly urged. The corn which they are carrying is small in grain and ear and of every color from white to deep blue and the darkest red. Induced a couple of the men to sing. Their music, from this specimen, is wild and unregulated, commencing in a very high key and subsiding into a most dismal grumble. Was very much interested and entertained all day, particularly with the Mandans of whom more hereafter. Spent some time in the afternoon in wooding, taking the timbers of the last winter quarters of the Rees for that purpose. This delay caused us to be as late as 9 o'clock in reaching *Fort Berthold*, a very strong current just below the Fort conspiring to detain us. Found there the *Spread Eagle*. Regretted to learn that one of her cooks was shot through the head and instantly killed by one of the negro cabin-boys. Supposed to have been accidental. The *Spread Eagle* to maintain discipline and keep away from the Indians got under way a few moments after we arrived; but I preferred remaining on the Chippeway to witness the Council to-morrow morning. Find here plenty of ice. Buffalo reported to be abundant near at hand. A hunting party came in today with plenty of meat. All of us are surprised to learn that a band of Sioux are consorting with the Gros Ventres and in the village.

June 14th, Friday—Every one up at day-break and busily getting ready for Council and distribution of the goods. While preparations were making I walked through the village escorted by Riter, superintendent of the Post and a good friend of mine. The lodges are earth-covered precisely similar to those of the Rees. Each will accommodate an average of 5 families aggregating about 25 or 30 persons. The village contains some what more than 100 lodges. At the upper end is the original fort built by the Am. Fur Co. and yet used by them. At the lower end stands the opposition Fort, abandoned to the Indians. The entire community turned out, the Chiefs and Braves to take part in the council, the woman kind and other inferior personages to gaze at the boat and see the sights. The men who took part in council struck me as being better looking and more muscular than the

Rees, beside lacking their poverty-pinched expression. No physical peculiarity, that I could see or hear of, exists which warrants the name "Gros Ventres." The real name of the tribe is the "Minnitarees" or "People of the Willows." At council the Gros Ventres spoke by their head Chief. "Four Bears" and "Bear's Nose" and "The Lean Wolf" lesser chiefs. The council had been some time convened when "The Long Mandan" came in and was welcomed by all. He is esteemed a most potent medicine man, is sagacious and possesses very great influence not only with his own tribe but also with the Gros Ventres and Rees. He took his place at the head of the Mandans and spoke for them as did "Little Walker" another chief and medicine man. The Mandans attracted my attention not only because I had read so much of their former greatness and reverses but by their fine development, tall erect forms and intelligent features. They are conspicuous for lighter complexion than other Indians, and in many instances have light or brown hair and blue eyes—an anomaly which Catlin cites in support of his theory that they are descended from Prince Madoc and his Welchmen. The Mandans are continent, industrious, honest and truthful and brave beyond all the Missouri River tribes. Their bravery is respected and feared by all the neighboring bands. Dawson and Galpin tell me that a theft has never yet been brought home to a Mandan. They boast never to have shed a white man's blood. All the mountain men pronounce them the best Indians in the country, an opinion which I readily agreed with. I preserved a copy of "The Long Mandan's" speech, the only very good thing of the kind I have yet heard. The council over the goods were distributed and we cast our lines loose at about 10 o'clock, a gale of wind just rising. Fort Berthold is distant from St. Louis, by the best table of distances that I have yet procured, 1975 m. The day very chilly a high wind blowing and occasionally torrents of rain. Three or four head men of the Gros Ventres go with us to Union, ostensibly on business but really for no purpose but a pleasure trip. Overtook the Spread Eagle a few miles below mouth of the Little Missouri. Her detention caused by the burial of the unfortunate negro killed yesterday. Moved over to my old quarters on the S. Eagle.

15th June, Saturday—Stopped to wood at an old Gros Ventre winter village 50 m. from Ft. Berthold; while there were hailed from across the River by runners from the Chippeway, asking assistance to repair her boilers. Frank Constance our 1st Engineer with his striker went. Filled every vacant spot below

with excellent wood. About noon a skiff from Ft. Union, with information relative to furs &c. They report an attack on the Fort by the Sioux, about 3 weeks since and the capture by them of 4 horses. Not known whether any were killed though Mel-dram fired a field piece at them. Went forward about 10 m. to the foot of the Great Bend where our boat stopped over night. Hunted successfully. Dauphin Fuguay and I killed 7 Elk and Antelope. This bend 40 m. round and 9 m. across is the spot of young Lord Grosvenor's misadventure. He hunted across, was taken by Sioux, robbed of everything but his scalp and missed his boat. He wandered back to Ft. Berthold.

16th June, Sunday—Went forward a short distance to a good spot for wood and there lay awaiting the Chippeway. Examined a high bluff on the North bank. Found beds of bituminous shale several of which have been burned which explains the name "burnt banks" given by Lewis & Clarke. On the sides of bluff numerous boulders and a good deal of mica. Several petrified stumps stand near the base of the bluff. Afternoon excessively hot, mosquitoes more numerous than I have ever seen them; but the night quite cool and they did not annoy us after dark. Found the camping ground and recent traces of a war party supposed to be the Sioux now infesting Ft. Union. No news of the Chippeway.

June 17th, Monday—Finished wooding and have enough on board for 3 days. Killed only one deer. About 7 P. M. the Chippeway came up thoroughly repaired.

June 18th, Tuesday—Passed Little Knife River and about 20 m. above it came to White Earth River a stream of 15 or 20 yds. width debouching thro a willow swamp. The mouth of White Earth Riv is distant from St. Louis by usual (inaccurate) computation 2060 m. Distance really about 2150 m. Derives its name from an unctious clay found on its banks which is used by the various tribes for whitening their lodges and occasionally for face paint. On its banks gold is reported to have been found. Saw near White Earth River our first band of buffalo about 150 in number. Jack Culbertson killed a cow from the boat but we did not land to get her. Three Antelope were killed while swimming the river. Several wolves in the stream were summarily disposed of. Maj. Schoonover Indian Agent for the Upper Mt. Tribes, a fellow passenger, held an examining Court for the trial of the homicide of Thursday last. I was employed as counsel for U.S. but failed to make out a case. Fee collected, a pair of Govt. bullet moulds. On North bank of River are sandstone bluffs and

butes of soft texture cut by action of water and weather into fantastic shapes. Game not very abundant in afternoon along the river. Saw several Elk and two Grizzly bear. Many of the hills are composed in a great degree of red clay under lied by beds of imperfect and in many cases burnt bituminous shale. Found the current very strong probably caused by the rise in the Yellowstone now about 125 m. distant. Hard wind and rain in later part of afternoon clearing off before sunset. Latitude by the maps $48^{\circ} 15'$, sunset at 8.45 nearly.—Laid up about 12 m. above White Riv near the most northern point of the Mo. River.

June 19th, Wednesday—Cool with drizzling rain. In the forenoon came up with 5 buffalo bulls swimming the river. Killed 3, I one, Richards one and some one else the other. About noon passed mouth of Big Muddy riv., or Sandy Creek as it is called in Warren's map about 70 m. from Mo of Yellowstone. Width of the stream about 15 yds. with 4 or 5 mouths. Water strongly alkaline. Heavy rain all afternoon and most of the night. Along the banks from near Muddy riv a range of bluffs called the Glass bluffs not remarkable for anything but name. Tied up for the boat about 25 m. below Ft. Union.

June 20th, Thursday—Wooded before starting. At about 11 o'clock passed Makenzie's Bute on the right bank 4 m. from the Yellowstone by water, 2 by land. Noticed the marked difference of color in the waters of the Missouri and Yellowstone some miles below their confluence. The two rivers at their junction are each 500 or 600 yds in width and have bold and rapid currents. The Yellowstone is the more turbid and larger. The mouth of the Yellowstone is distant from St. Louis 2210 miles. The view is insignificant. A short distance below the confluence stand the ruins of Fort William an old post of the opposition Company. Eight miles above the Yellowstone and on the north bank of the Mo. is Fort Union which we reached at $12\text{-}\frac{3}{4}$ o'clk having been exactly 50 days on the route. Salutes passed between boat and Fort. No Indians in the neighborhood who should be here to receive annuities, viz Crows & Assiniboins. Sioux lurking about. Find a pleasant man in Meldram the Bourgeois. River still rising. 2218 m. to St. Louis. Talked a long while with Meldram who lived when young in Shelby County, Ky. with Bell & Bradshaw. He recollects well a host of departed worthies, Allens, Logans, &c and had a very distinct remembrance of both my grandfathers. His departure from Ky dates as far back as 1825. He lived for 8 years entirely among the Crows and has made but two visits of a few days each to the States in 36

years. Saw too his snow machine.

June 21st, Friday—The Chippeway detained by winds came up at 8 A.M. Both boats busy unloading and transferring freight. The fort is well arranged internally but the defences poor. The two bastions utterly unfit for the 4 pounders which they contain. A strong pallisade encloses the fort in a quadrangle of about 100 x 120 yds. The trade of this post has been steadily declining for some years, the Indians finding it more convenient to traffic higher up the river. Ft. Union is a general Depot for a number of temporary outposts. In evening moved over to Chippeway. Was presented by Maj. Schoonover with an elegant robe, which had hardly passed into my hands when it was stolen. The Spread Eagle takes on board here 24000 robes principally from Fort Benton brought down in Mackinac boats. Was much amused at a tame Grizzly Bear kept at the Fort who diverted himself by boxing the pigs and frightening the horses of a few Assinaboins who came in last evening. I, Shiefflin, Cary & Bob Lemon made music, to the huge delight of the Indians and white residents. Retired early to see the departure of the Spread Eagle tomorrow morning at daybreak.

June 22nd, Saturday—The Spread Eagle got under steam for St. Louis at 4, at 6 we left, both boats moving off with salutes. Last night a very large band of buffalo swam the Mo from the Yellowstone point and would have passed between our boats and furnished much game, had not some one indiscreetly frightened them. 3 were killed and secured. The river above the Fort is about the width of the Ky at Frankfort, and within a few miles the Bad Lands commence. Beaver very numerous. In afternoon scenery very fine. High bluffs, very steep and craggy, composed at base of sub-carboniferous limestone, overlaid with a thin stratum of very inferior bituminous shale and the upper mass of a soft sandstone often, to appearance, highly feruginous tinging the debris a deep red color. Occasionally coves of grass and timber relieve the scenery. No Big Horn seen during the day though the country is peculiarly fitted for them. Buffalo seen occasionally during the day. Tied up a few miles below Big Muddy.

June 23rd, Sunday—High winds in the morning detained us 2 or 3 hours. Passed at 8 o'clk the ruins of Forts Stewart and Kipp on the North bank. Estimated 80 m. from Fort Union. Fort Stewart built by Graham Atkinson when in the opposition Fur trade and named for Col. A. D. Stewart. The A. F. Co. established Ft. Kipp as game station and outposts. Both abandoned

a year since at dissolution of opposition Co. The Assinaboins angry at the removal of the trade from this point burned the Forts. At supper time we approached the "Riviere aux Tremble", having made a good run. We were smoking our after-supper pipes when the cry of *Fire!* was raised below. The rush and excitement was terrifying but the boat being near shore a hawser was gotten out a head and after some delay the human freight safely landed. I managed to save my gun, pistol, overcoat, valise and blankets, besides various property of others. 200 kegs of Powder were aboard, fire in the hold. The knowledge of this deterred us from making exertions that might have saved a great part of the cargo. The boat floated down after the hawser burned and the powder exploded with a tremendous noise. Boat and cargo total loss. Uninsured except Wordens freight. Camped on the bank.

June 24, Monday—Examined the wreck which had floated about a mile down and across the river. Got a little damaged flour. At 10½ A.M. Mr. Chouteau and the cabin department of the Chippeway left in a Mackinac boat brought from the Company post on the Rivere aux Trembles. At same hour I and Maj. Graham, Worden, Macadow, Frush and Fuguay moved off for Fort Nolan (opposition) at Bob Lemon's invitation. I and the Maj. had succeeded in obtaining a couple of horses from one Jim Chambers whom I found to be originally from Frankfort Ky. Reached Fort Nolan on Rivere aux Trembles about 2 o'clk leaving all our baggage except guns & pistols under care of Rock and the Company men of his party. Late in afternoon went over to see Makenzie (son of Kenneth M. of St. Louis) a half breed in charge of A.F.C.'s outpost Fort Alert. A man came in from the river bringing word that a good deal of liquor had fallen into the Indians hands and been given them and that they were becoming troublesome. Sent a tried man down to pack up our dunnage on our two horses. He returned with part of our effects and my horse. The other horse was ridden off by a drunken Indian. Our plunder was overhauled by the Indians in search of liquor but nothing missing in any of the bundles thus far. Were annoyed by a drunken Indian who about dark came up to the Fort and being admitted made himself particularly disagreeable with his tomahawk. Quite tired with the work of the day and went to sleep early.

June 25th, Tuesday—Makenzie rode over to the Assinaboins who were just breaking up camp to move to Fort Union to receive their Annuities. He called up The Black Boy who was sup-

posed to have taken our horse. Makenzie found our horse but did not recognize it, being under the impression that a *roan*, not a *bay*, had been lost. Dauphin had given away our bay. The two Forts, Company and opposition, are within 200 yds of each other, roughly built and apparently temporary structures. No provisions in the forts except dried buffalo meat. Mackenzie gave me several buffalo tongues. Maj. Graham wrote back to Ft. Union to Schoonover regarding our lost horse. Worden negotiated on speculation for a wagon and two yoke of excellent cattle, in which we start tomorrow.

June 26th, Wednesday—Rose early, caught our cattle after much trouble, packed up and started at 9½ A.M. for Fort Benton taking along my horse for hunting purposes. Crossed Riviere aux Trembles 2 m. above Ft. Nolan. Halted for noon at *Reed* or *Tobacco Creek*, 12 m. Camped at Government Point 8 m. Road all day along base of the hills. Ridges much broken. Prairie level and somewhat swampy. Game "non est inventus"—cause the number of Assinabois lately here. Musquitoes and horse-flies exceeding troublesome. Saw Indian signs in vicinity of our camp and kept out a guard all night. Days travel 21 m.

June 27th, Thursday—Broke up camp at 4 o'clock. Passed Wolf Point, a beautifully timbered and well watered point, 4 m. Saw two large bands of buffalo but we were to windward and unable to approach them. Halted at 10½ to rest cattle at Chambers Creek, so called by us, 10 m. Made a short drive in afternoon to the Porcupine Riv, emptying into Mo. 6 m. below our camp. Heat excessive. Days travel 22 m.

June 28th, Friday—Made before halting at 12 o'clock 18 m. to another Porcupine River emptying into Milk river and cooked our dinner and rested the stock 4 m. above mouth of Porcupine. Early in morning I killed a buffalo bull, supplying abundant fresh meat. Chambers shot another. Land passed through this morning absolutely sterile and covered with large pebbles. Only a few antelope seen and small bands of buffalo bulls on the prairie. A large band of 700 or more were in sight as we neared the mouth of Milk River. In afternoon a heavy shower wet us all to the skin before we could form camp. The banks of Milk River where we halted are precipitous clay banks of 25 feet. We were forced to select a most inconvenient spot for camping, where the musquitoes almost devoured us. Heard buffalo bellowing all night, and on my guard about 1 at night, a band of several hundred plunged into the river a few hundred yds below us. Milk River about 40 yds wide, water very thick with mud though the river

is not high. During our march to-day passed numerous dried-up Alkaline Springs one of which was surrounded for 60 ft with a deposit of 4 to 6 in depth. Face of country very desolate. Pebbles and other stones preventing any growth of grass. Days travel 28 m.

June 29th, Saturday—Started at day break and travelled until nooning over sage plains and points of gravel. The latter distressed our oxen very much. Met 4 Crow Indians who hung by us until after nooning, evidently desirous to share our repast; but we had no rations to give away. Halted having made 12 m. at Broken Buggy Creek (so called from some mishap to one of Gov. Stevens assistants) in a small clump of box-alders. In second stage left our Indians and made 13 m. to Willow Creek without much inconvenience. Notwithstanding heavy rain of yesterday prairie dry and in places almost arid. 25 m. to-day.

Note in margin reads: 3 Buffalo of which we took only the tongues and humps.

June 30th, Sunday—Made 13 m. over very tiresome prairies fatiguing our cattle much and getting to Sandy Creek at 12 o'clock after much detention and anxiety about our team. Rested for several hours and succeeded in crossing Sandy over a hazardous quicksand—all hands in the water assisting the oxen. On 6 m. to the crossing of Milk River which we accomplished without much difficulty altho the banks are steep. Had ill success hunting. Days travel 19 m. Camped on South bank of Milk River. Saw a very large She Grizzly but did not get a shot. 3 cubs with her, an unusual number.

July 1st, Monday—Commenced travelling across the Big Bend of Milk River by what the voyageurs call a "half traverse" i.e. two days journey with an intermediate camp on the river. Made 18 m. to Medicine Lodge Creek and Milk R. Saw there lodges of the Gros Ventres of the Prairie built for their Medicine Ceremonies. Day very hot, and no water our cattle much distressed. Observed while on guard (1 to 2) a large comet in the N.E. sky at an elevation of about 35°. Nucleus very brilliant, about the magnitude of Venus or larger. Coma of 12° or 15° indistinct and directed towards the zenith. Rolling prairie, very stony and hard on the team. 18 m. to-day.

July 2nd, Tuesday—Set out very early to complete the traverse. At about 5 m. killed a young Buffalo Bull. Chambers shot 2 soon after. Great numbers in sight. On the top of a ridge crossing the prairie saw a large rock rudely resembling a bulls head, called by the Gros Ventres the Medicine Bull and highly ven-

erated by them. No water all day. Sky fortunately overcast and a strong N.W. breeze blowing which saved our cattle. Made the second crossing of Milk River 23 m. in excellent style. Frush killed a couple of Antelope in afternoon. Put the party on short allowance of sugar and flour. The prickly pears have for several days vexed us sadly, penetrating every species of moccasin and thin shoe and causing much pain. No water on to-days route. Distance gone 23 miles.

July 3rd, Wednesday—Made before halting 11 m. over prairie difficult from its softness. In forenoon Chambers killed a bull. Met a large party of Gros Ventres, whose camp is a few miles above our night halt. They faithfully stuck very close to us during the day, but we had nothing to give them and gave them no opportunity to steal. About noon a high wind from the West, increasing within an hour to a gale retarded our progress and finally compelled us to halt having accomplished in the day 16 miles. The Indians finding us unable to feed them with flour etc. roused their energies and killed a couple of black tailed deer. At night all the Indians except one Soldier who remained to keep the young choice spirits from molesting our Camp—*Phamaci* or “The Sitting Woman” Head Chief of the nation came down to see us, also “The Spotted Elk” or “Limpy” 2nd in rank. The Medicine Man was highly gratified at a present of a little Cayenne Pepper, the pungency of which amazed him and which he was informed was an excellent remedy for sore throats etc. Baptiste Champaign and Chs Cannoyer came up after supper reporting Dawson and party within 7 or 8 m. all their horses stolen at their Camp near Willow Creek. 4 Antelope and 2 Elk.

July 4th, Thursday—Passed in the morning the outposts of the Gros Ventres camp, saw their horse guards and about 1200 horses, not a tithe of their wealth. Many Indians hung around us until we had finished our dinner. During the day the Bears Paw Mt. very distinctly visible in W.S.W. The Little Rocky Mts. which we have seen for some days now lie to the S. and W. Both ranges situate between the Mo. River and Milk River, the distance from River to river from our camp in a direct line being not more than 45 to 60 m. Late in afternoon passed a bold Soda Spring, some of the water we took to make bread in honor of the day and found it answered excellently. Had a supper extraordinary in honor of the day with all the rarities of the game market. Musquitoes very bad—were forced to make “smudges” of Sage all round camp. Found abundance of currants along the road. Made 24 good long miles to day. 4 Bulls.

July 5th, Friday—During the first part of march were much obstructed by heavy growth of sage which covers the Long Prairie. Made 16 miles and rested our Cattle for several hours the day being sultry. In afternoon 9 m. to Lower Fork of Milk River now a dry bed. Saw many wolves, an excellent indication of plenty of buffalo. Passed through prairie dog villages comprising hundreds of acres. A slight rain came on about 9 o'clock which continued all night. Days travel 25 m. Buffalo and Antelope scarce owing to the nearness of the Gros Ventre Camp. The Bears Paw bearing W.S.W. 3 Buffalo.

July 6th, Saturday—Raining hard at daylight, our baggage piled under the wagon covered with my gum blanket. Did not think it advisable to leave until 11½ when the sky cleared. At 5 m. crossed the Upper Fork a handsome stream affording excellent camp grounds. About 3 m. further on crossed a coulee on the banks of which found quantities of excellent Service Berries. Find the country this side of the Lower Fork much improved, grass fine, timber thrifty. See no buffalo on this side of Milk River but an abundance on other side. Witnessed a chase of a wounded buffalo cow by several wolves, but did not see the termination. Killed a buck Elk at sundown. Made to day 16 m. to our camp, the last on Milk River (D.V.) 10 m. below the 3rd and last crossing. Graham killed largest Bull yet seen.

July 7th, Sunday—A cool day with a bracing Westerly wind. Made before 9 o'clock 11 m. to the crossing of Milk River where we stopped to rest our cattle and lunch. Saw no game. The prairie is high and rolling covered with excellent grass and altogether superior in every respect to the lands further down the river. Here Cannoyer overtook us with his team and 11 men for Fort Benton. From them we got a little sugar. In the afternoon crossed Milk River and left that stream. Passed the Bears Paw 300 yds to the south, a large rock giving name to the range. Over a high plateau 11 m. to Beaver creek which puts out from Bears Paw. The horse flies and mosquitoes exceedingly troublesome. Made 22 m. An engagee "Buffalo Bill" from Ft. Benton met us here with about 20 horses which he is taking down to Dawson who is a couple of days behind us. Cannoyer overtook us and we camped together.

July 8th, Monday—Took an early start and the teams traveling well in company we made the *Three Trees* a little after 6 o'clock 8 miles. Stopped a short time to let our cattle graze and laid in a little wood for our camp to night on Box Alder Creek.

Killed my first Grizzly here, broke his shoulder with my rifle and dispatched him with revolver. His weight estimated at 600 lbs and his age at 4 years. The flesh strong in flavor and bad eating. Mountaineers do not eat it. Reaching Box Alder Creek about 2 o'clock (11 m.) a tributary of Sandy which in turn empties into Milk River north of this. Box Alder courses through a channel cut through the prairie, without timber on its banks and rises in the breaks of the Bears Paw about 2 m. distant from our trails. Maj. Graham caught a few trout. Rested our teams until 5 o'clock and pushed on for Sandy Creek Island 4 miles. Dawson came in sight as we were leaving Box Alder and with him Seaman. We all camped together at Sandy. 23 m. to day.

July 9th, Tuesday—Got on the march at 1 o'clock A.M. to pass the unwatered tract between this and the Maria River. Travelled rapidly for oxen. At 9 o'clock stopped at *The Spring* a pool of poor water 13 m. At 2 pushed forward again and before sunset descended the hill of the Maria. Raised our wagon bed and forded. Kept up the bank 2 m. to Mouth of Teton Creek where we camped. 26 m. Maria's River a handsome stream, as large as the Missouri, 120 yds at ford, high earth banks back from the bottom lands 200 ft in height. Lewis & Clarke doubted but the Maria might be the main River. No flies or mosquitoes to day, our road being over high rolling prairies. The Teton where we camped is a most beautiful stream. Heard of a war party of Crows in our neighborhood. Kept a close watch on everything although quite fatigued with 39 m. journey.

July 10th, Wednesday—Ascended the high range of hills dividing the Teton from the Mo. These are of a loamy clay without rock. After 4 or 5 m. again descended into the valley of the Teton by a steep and somewhat dangerous hill. Crossed the Teton 4 times before we again left the valley. (Another road makes 12 crossings) and about 9½ o'clock reached Fort Benton where we were heartily received by Dawson, Col. Vaughan, Ind. Agent for the Blackfeet and other worthies. A band of Indians were on hand trading ponies to Dawson whose intention it is to freight up from Ft. Union supplies for the coming season. Discovered that it will be impossible to dispose of our Cattle (owned by Maj. Graham and Worden) without loss and we concluded to tramp a-foot across the Mounts, and convoy the wagon instead of purchasing horses as we at first intended. The Fort stands on the river bank, here 120 yds wide, and is built, walls, bastions and houses of Adobe. Its appearance is good and the arrangements convenient. Were hospitably entertained by my friend Dawson,

who has an excellent dairy of about 50 cows. Sugar and Coffee none. We pillaged Uncle Sam's stores of bacon and pilot bread, leaving money and memoranda for Commissaries. Watched the Indians swimming the Mo., here very rapid, with their horses. Got rid of Frush, unpleasant companion who went on with Johnny Grant. Were sorry to lose Fugua who went with him. Travelled this morning 12 m. making the distance from Riviere aux Trembles to Ft. Benton by my computation 333 m.

[*To be continued.*]