

The Filson Historical Society

**Brown, John Mason
Diary, 1862**

For information regarding literary and copyright interest for this collection, see the
Curator of Special Collections, James J. Holmberg.

Size of Collection:
1 volume

Locator Number:
Mss./A/B878a

**Brown, John Mason
Diary, 1862**

Scope and Content Note

Collection consists of a diary kept by Brown as leader of an expedition to the Dakota and Montana Territories from May to October, 1862. The diary contains daily entries describing the trip up the Missouri River from St. Joseph, Mo, to Ft. Benton, Montana Territory, his encounters with traders, miners and hunters, as well as various Indian tribes in the Northern Plains, Rocky Mountains and southwestern Alberta, Canada, and the return trip down the Missouri. He describes the dangers of river travel and continuing conflicts between Native Americans and white hunters and settlers. Frequent mention is also made of wildlife and geographical features observed during his travels.

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Biographical Note

John Mason Brown was born in Frankfort, Ky., 26 April, 1837, the son of Mason and Mary (Yoder) Brown. He graduated from Yale College in 1856. He returned to Frankfort where he taught school and studied law. In April, 1860, he opened a law practice in St. Louis, Mo. He spent several months in 1861 and 1862 traveling in the Northwestern United States and British America. Upon his return from his trip to the Montana Territory in October, 1862, he was commissioned Major of the 10th Cavalry. He was promoted to the rank of Colonel in the 45th Kentucky Mounted Rifles regiment in December, 1863. He left the service in December, 1864 and resumed his law practice in Frankfort. He married Mary O. Preston, eldest daughter of Gen. William Preston, 25 November, 1869. They had 4 children. He eventually settled in Louisville, Ky., where he remained in practice until his death on 29 January, 1890, at the age of 53.

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List of Folders

Folder 1: Diary, 1862 (1 item)

Folder 2: Typewritten transcript of 1862 diary, including photocopy of article, "A trip to the Northwest in 1861," by John Mason Brown, printed in *The Filson Club History Quarterly*, April 1950

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Subject Headings

Assiniboine Indians
Gold mines and mining - Montana
Hunting - Montana
Indians of North America - Montana
Iowa - Description and travel
Kootenai Indians
Missouri River - Description and travel - 19th century
Montana - Description and travel
North Dakota - Description and travel
Piegan Indians
South Dakota - Description and travel
Steamboats - Missouri River
Trading posts - North America
United States - Emigration and immigration
West (U.S.) - History - 1860-1890
Whites - Relations with Indians