

Trip Across The Continent, In 1860. By Martin D. Hardin

By Martin D. Hardin

the expiration of my graduating leave, I was ordered to Ft. Monroe, (Artillery School) and attached to a Co. of the 3rd. Artillery. The quietness of my life was broken up in October 1859, by orders to go to Harper's Ferry to quell the disturbance there, and to retake the Government Arsenal, which was in the hands of Rioters. The reports were that some of the Kansas Free-Soil men had raised a rebellion among the negroes, that several hundred white men, and negroes were in possession of the Arsenal, and all the country thereabouts. Several Companies were at once started for Baltimore, I think with Captain Ord in command. The Company to which I was attached was sent. We were delayed at Baltimore a few hours. The B. & O. R.R. was in the hands of the Rebels at Harper's Ferry, and it was some time before we could get transportation. We were left a day at Ft. McHenry. I have still a pleasant recollection of our short visit to that now well known Post. We arrived at Harper's Ferry a few hours after the Marines had taken the Engine house in which old John Brown, and his followers made their last stand. Lt. Colonel R.E. Lee, (who had been Superintendent of the Military Academy a portion of the time whilst I was a cadet, and whose family I had then frequently visited) was the senior regular officer, and commander. I was placed on Colonel Lee's Staff. There were numerous rumors of risings of the negroes in Maryland, and Virginia, and it ^{was} thought there might be an attempt to rescue old John Brown. Colonel Lee caused an examination to be made of the country about the Ferry. I rode over much of the country on both sides of the river, and after all reports were in, Colonel Lee said that Harper's Ferry was not defensible, that it could best be defended from the heights on the Maryland side: but that a field work should be established on the heights east of Harper's Ferry. This opinion of Colonel Lee, (afterwards the great Confederate General) frequently occurred to me, during the War of the Rebellion, when we heard of the many great misfortunes of our troops at this strategic point. I was on duty at Harper's Ferry, when the troops went to the execution by the State of Virginia of John Brown. After which the troops from Ft. Monroe were returned there, and I accompanied the Company to which I was attached. General Lee was a very fine looking man, with reserved manners, he was very pleasant in social; but rather distant in military intercourse. He was regarded as a man of great political influence, and a good officer above the average, but not extra brilliant. He had no such reputation as a soldier as Albert Sidney Johnson, or P.F. Smith. I never met General Lee after this duty on his Staff.

In February of March 1860, I took a ten day, s leave from Ft. Monroe, went to Washington D.C., where I was advised by some of my friends, to get a six months leave of absence to visit Europe. I did not wish to take such a leave at that time, as I had not seen enough service, and because I wished to visit the West, and particularly the Pacific Coast, before I went abroad. Such were the reasons I then gave for not applying for a leave to visit Europe. I returned to Ft Monroe at the end of my leave, and almost upon my return, I heard that an expedition was to cross the plains the ensuing summer. As I remember it now, I received a letter from some military friend in Washington, asking me if I wanted to join such an expedition, that some of the officers detailed on it, did not want to go, and I could be put in one of their places. I wrote that I wanted to go on the expedition, and was detailed. It has since been known as "Blake, s Expedition", for General then Major Blake, who commanded it. I think my order was dated March 4, 1860. I left Ft. MONroe about the 6th., visited my Mother, at Saratoga, N.Y., and then proceeded West, reaching St. Louis about the latter part of March. I do not remember whether I went via Ky., or via Chicago; but I think I went via the latter city. *The Command was organized out of recruits who had been sent to Jefferson Barracks, then the recruiting Hd. Qrs. of the West. Old Colonel Bonneville, whose early adventures have been so delightfully sketched by Washington Irving, was in command. With ^{age} his eccentricities had increased, so that, at that time, he was a living curiosity. He advised all of us, to learn to do without salt, for, said he, you may at some time of your life, be unable to get it, *and you will miss it greatly. Besides Major Blake, there was Captain Floyd Jones of the Infy. second in rank, Captain Lendrum of the 3rd. Artillery, Lt. A.V. Kantz of the Infy. (now General Kantz) Lt. L.L. Livingston of the 3rd. Artillery, Lt. B.L. Smith of the 6th. Infy. Lt. Carr of the Infy., and Lts. Stoughton, Upham, Carlton, and myself, and Dr. Cooper Surgeon, and "Big Doctor". The recruits were formed into four companies of one hundred men each, and a full complement of Laundresses. The necessity of the last encumbrances, no one of our command could understand. The recruits were drilled as well as possible during April at Jefferson Barracks; but they were strange material, to form an expedition with to attempt a new route of transportation across the Continent. B.F. Smith, who had been Qr. Master for the 6th. Infy. in its march across the continent in 1857 was appointed Qr. Master, and Comy.

*"Within two months the funds & equipment had been addressed to the post."

The custom then, as now, was to have all ^{field} Qr. Mrs. and Comy. duties (which are the only difficult duties of these deptmts.) performed by line officers. Major Blake, Floyd Jones, Livingston, and Kantz, had just returned from Europe. Another custom which is still carried out, was in their cases fulfilled, to wit, that of sending officers, who had just returned from Europe, on the meanest duty that could be found, and especially that which they could financially least afford. However we had, by reason of this last mentioned custom, a good variety of officers of all branches of the line and medical department. Our transportation, which was a matter of great importance, was designed as follows: three Steamboats, the Spread Eagle, Key West, and the Chippawa, to take us to the head of navigation on the Missouri. Our boats carrying as part of their freight a number of wagons, and ~~ox yokes~~ ^{ox yokes}. These ~~wagons~~ ^{wagons} were to be drawn by oxen, which we could buy from the Indians, and American Fur Company, at the Falls of the Mo. A number of pack saddles were also taken. The animals to carry them, were to be purchased as the oxen. It was also intended that we should use such portion of Mullan's transportation as he could spare. Mullan, was at this time, building a road across the mountains between the head waters of the Columbia, and the Missouri, commencing on the West side. He was also to bring over a herd of cattle for our Comy. Department. The northern route, had as yet been passed over, by nothing stronger, than a surveying party. It had been reported, as very easily made fit for transportation of troops ~~and~~ and supplies. Especially was it ^{was} reported free from snow. Dr. Cooper, of our party, had made a report to the War Department in 1859, that it seldom snowed in the Bitter Root Mountains, and that not more than two, or three feet of snow would be found in the ravines and drifts. The Missouri river had been navigated, by steamboats, only as far as the mouth of the Milk River, and I believe, only one Steamboat had gone there, the others had stopped at the mouth of the Yellowstone. Our knowledge of the country about the head waters of the Columbia, and Missouri, was derived from the reports of Lewis, and Clarke, on their route from St. Louis in 1804-5 and 6, the reports of Lunts, I. I. Stevens, and Warren of the Engineer ^{Cy.} and that of Captain John Mullen. These last officers, having made their trip a few years before our expedition started. The Spread Eagle was about 350 tons burden, drawing six feet of water, having engines of unusual power. Each of the other boats were a little less than half this size, with engines

of moderate power. The Key West was a stern wheel boat, the others side wheel. Captain Lalarge commanded the Spread Eagle. We left St. Louis on the 4th. of May. Our boats were strongly manned, for it was known, that we would have to cut wood for the engines, after we got above Ft. Randell. We started before the spring freshet had raised the water in the Missouri. We therefore made exceedingly slow progress, for the first three weeks, at which time we had reached Sioux City. At this point our large boat had to ~~be~~ be lightened. We had much experience during these three weeks, in crossing sand bars. The two small boats could readily cross any bar, so that the large boat only gave trouble. When we came to a bar, on which was less water than the boat drew, a portion of her load was put on the smaller boat, and thus lightened the large boat got over all the bars, by means of her own machinery, except their once or twice, one of the small boats acted as a tug. At Sioux City there were only about three feet on the bar, the Spread Eagle was therefore unloaded, but before she had crossed the bar. just as the Spread Eagle reached the upper end of this bar, (she had been three days getting over) the beginning of the freshet came upon us. In the meantime the Key West had gotten so far ahead, it was decided, to send a half breed, ^{who was to} act as a hunter after we got above civilization) to over haul her. He started out at a jog trot, and we heard afterwards, that he made in the first day out, over a ^{hundred} miles. We considered this a wonderful feat; but now we hear of such performances, every time there is a pedestrian match. This hunter was a half breed named Joe; but we had another hunter, a full blood Indian, named "Cadott" for whom, Cadott's Pass, in the Rocky Mountains is named. They were wonderfully expert in killing game. As I was out with both of them, at various times, I had good opportunities of judging. Our provisions consisted of plain soldiers rations, except what vegetables we could buy, until we got to Ft. Randall; above there, we had game for the officers all the time, and frequently enough for the men. The only anti-scorbutics, were a few pickles, and dissicated vegetables for soup. I might class amongst these, whisky, this lasted until we reached Ft. Benton. We had a few barrels of high price whisky for the officers, one dollar a gallon, a high price at that time. We finished

this about the time we got to Ft. Union, at the mouth of the Yellowstone, and there ^{had} to come down to the seventeen cents per gallon; but I think we enjoyed this the most. Our sources of amusement were cards for those who liked a quiet game of draw, or whist, hunting, and studying the channel, for myself, and those who did not care for cards. We drilled the men in company drill whenever we could, teaching them the manual of arms nearly every day as we could have a drill on the hurricane deck. The present great cities of Kansas City, and Omaha were of such little consequence that I scarcely recollect them. We stopped at Ft. Leavenworth, and had a pleasant visit with the officers, and the Sutler, Captain Rich. The location of the town, I thought such, that it would be the great city of that region. We saw a good deal of Sioux City, it was a thriving place, so much so that some of the officers invested their spare money in lots. We had been permitted to draw three months pay in advance, some of us had invested a large portion of it in equipments, such as saddles, fishing tackle, guns, powder, and shot in St. Louis. We also left a portion with some rascally dentists, to whom we had been recommended. As I stated above the study of the current, was a great source of occupation. The Pilots of these western rivers distinguish the best channel by the looks of the water, this seems incredible; but by the time we had been a month on the boats, I could ^{run Pilot} run one of them, and tell the best water almost as well as an old Pilot. It is very extraordinary, how readily the eye will become accustomed, to select the best water, it is impossible to describe in language how it is done. It is, as I might say, by an education of the eye sight. Of course the pilot must act mostly on his judgment, this is a case certainly, where to hesitate, is to be lost. The skill of the Missouri river pilots is so extraordinary, as to be worthy of study, especially their skill in handling a boat at night. As soon as we passed above civilization which terminated near Ft. Randall, we found plenty of game for sport, and to supply the officers, and partly the men. The Yanktonnais sioux were the first real Indians we met. At this time the Yanktonnais were regarded as civilized or non war like Indians: they had ^{some} a little corn, and a few pumpkins planted. We certainly thought them a fine, peaceable lot. The monotony of the trip above Randall was first broken by our stop at St. Pierre, where we collected

several hundred Indians to receive their annuities. ^{They} accompanied us an Indian agent, and several gentlemen connected with the American Fur Company and also the artists, Terry, and Hayes, the latter afterwards celebrated as an animal painter. Pierre Choteau, President of the American Fur Company, was the contractor for the transportation, and accompanied us. He was a man of much force of character. Most of our boatmen were french Canadians. The Sioux we saw at St. Pierre were fair specimens of the mild Indians. The Squaw did all the unloading, and carrying of the supplies from the bank near the water, wher they were unloaded from the boats, up the hill, which rose about ~~was~~ two hundred feet above the river. I remarked one old squaw, carrying, what I estimated to be two hundred pounds_ she had a strap passing around her pack (which rested on her back) and around her forehead. She was about four feet, six inches high; but very squarely built, small feet, and very pigeon_toed. The Indians were not very friendly_ they informed us that Sitting Bull was out with seven, or eight hundred warriors, watching for Colonel Reynolds, and his surveying party. Sitting Bull was described as about thirty years of age, never having been on a reservation, and always refusing supplies from our government_ He, and some of the chiefs had opposed ~~Colonel's~~ Reynolds projected survey, and the year before, when the Colonel left Ft. Pierre, for Ft. Laramie. We were told that the Crows were much provoked about the delivery of their supplies. That this year, they were informed, that their supplies would be delivered at Ft. Laramie, whilst we had them with us_ That the year before, they went to get them on the ^{Missouri} Mission river, whereas they were sent to Laramie_ one result of this misunderstanding, to put it mildly, was, that very few Sioux, and no Crow were seen by us whilst passing through their country. From the time we left Ft. Pierre, until we got to Ft. Union, we thought we might be attacked; but we had only one alarm, and no attack. The next Indians we saw, were the Arickarees, or Rees, of whom there were not many, probably three, or four hundred, mostly females. They had been numerous; but had been depopulated by the small pox, a few years before. We were told that they got the disease from some blankets sent ^{by} the Indian Department_ These blankets were bought at a bargain in New York, and shipped to the Indians on the Missouri. It was said, that many of the Indians, when taken with the disease, jumped from the Bluff into the river,

and were drowned. When we saw them, they were a very demoralized lot. The ~~men~~ women appeared to have lost pretty much all moral sense, and there were only about half a dozen warriors in the tribe. Their home was near old Ft. Berthel ~~the~~ A few miles up the river, but on the east bank, were the Mandans, the finest looking Indians, I have ever seen. The chiefs, and ~~many~~ warriors visited us in the boats. They were in full Indian gala dress, all war paint, and wore ~~in~~ their entire stock of feathers. Most of them wore very long hair, braided, and plaited, long enough to reach to the ground. They invited us to a scalp dance which most of the officers attended. They had ~~on~~ fresh scalps for the occasion. I did not get to the dance; but visited their village after it was over. Their houses were very large, having walls ten, or twelve feet high, with entrance only on top of wall, ladders being used for entering. The roofs were made of poles, lashed together at the top, the whole roof, and walls filled in with mud. Their houses were warm, and as comfortable as any in the world, except for the smoke. One house was very large, over eighty feet in diameter. It was sort of Council house. I think there were only forty odd warriors in the tribe at this time. We were told, that this was the dominant tribe in this region before the small pox depopulated their village. The huts of the coast Indians of Oregon, which I saw a few months later, were made the same as theirs; except the Oregon huts were narrow, and long, whereas the Mandan huts were large, and round. When we came within three days of Ft. Union we saw a small party of Indians, on the East bank, and for the next few days they kept about abreast of us, and now and then at night, we would see a signal fire. We became quite interested in the movements of this party, and tried to open communication with them; but they declined our offers. We therefore prepared for an attack, and continued on the alert, until we reached Ft. Union; where we heard that the party of Indians, were a horse stealing party, who had made a successful raid on some Indians, farther down the river. We had one other alarm about Indians on our trip. As I said above I often accompanied the hunters, or rather one of them at a time. One day in very open timber-~~the~~ Joe, and I saw a herd of Elk, about half a mile distant. There was nothing between us and them; but a few scattered trees. Now, the question was, how to get near enough for a shot. Joe, intimated to me to follow him, and do as he did. He watched the Elk, keeping himself perfectly still until he saw all of them ~~po~~ ~~ing~~, then he rapidly moved forward a few yards

The instant he noticed any of them stop browsing, he stopped and waited for them to begin eating again, in this way he got to within sixty yards, or less of the largest Buck, which he shot. I got a shot when they ran, and between us, we got a second Elk. I have never seen greater skill, than this half breed displayed in stalking game. I learnt much from him, which was of service to me afterwards. The first grizzly I saw, was chained in a hut in Ft. Pierre. Mr. Choteau told me I could have him, and he would send him to me at St. Louis; but I had to decline his kind offer. This was about an eight hundred pound black bear, and very fierce, he frightened several persons who went to see him, as they opened the door of the hut, he would spring towards them, to the full length of his chain, which brought him very close. Whilst I was out one day with Cadott, I was about a third of a mile from him on the prairie, and about a mile, and a half from the boats. I happened to look in his direction, when I saw he was motioning me to go towards the boats. I started on a walk in that direction, watching Cadott. Soon I saw him run very fast towards the boats then stop. As he stopped, I saw what I took to be an Indian horseback, come up a small rise. I struck across at a run, so as to cross Cadott's trail, so that we could come together, about three quarters of a mile from the boats. The prairie was somewhat rolling, so that I did not learn what was the matter, till I got a hundred yards, or so from Cadott, when I saw Two Grizzlies following him. We had come across them some time before I saw him motioning me, and had kept out of their reach, by running, until the leader would lift himself to run, then Cadott would stop, and face the bear, who would then drop to a walk, and thus Cadott had kept ahead of the leading bear, for a mile or more on the open prairie. Cadott's gun was an old fashioned patch rifle, firing a large ball; but would not kill a grizzly outright. Unfortunately I had a small cavalry carbine, whose point blank was eighty yards, and would scarcely kill a deer at that distance. Cadott, and I therefore continued his movement, till we came within hail of the boat, where were plenty of Springfield rifles. As we got near, the officers and men came running out, with such noise, that they alarmed the grizzlies, which in turn, took to their heels, down the river, where was a swamp, and dusk and night coming on, we lost them. A few evenings after this, one of the

officers, and the chief engineer, returned from a hunt, looking very tired, and they were remarkably quiet about the days hunt. As they brought no game we were all curious, and we finally got them talking. When it appeared that after hunting sometime without finding anything, they sat down under a small tree to rest, Happening to glance towards the river, which was about half a mile away, they saw what they took to be a couple of buffaloes, coming towards them at a lope. Both prepared for a shot; but as the animals came close enough to distinguish them, the hunters recognized them as two grizzlies making for their tree. A lively discussion arose between the officers, as to what they would do. The Engineer was for lighting out at double quick, and get out of the way. But the officer, having a good sharp rifle, was for making a stand. As he prevailed, the Engineer took off his boots, and made ready to climb the small tree. When the bears came within range, he forgetting his gun, made back to climb the tree. The officer prepared to shoot; but being unable to decide which bear to shoot, and possibly becoming bear struck, he so the Engineer said dropped his rifle, and made good time up the tree. The officer claimed that he took his gun with him; however this may be, the two animals came on at a lope, and without so much as looking up the tree, went on into the brush beyond. As they had both been severe on Caditt and myself for not attacking two grizzlies, on the open prairie, with a small rifle, and a carbine, I thought that two such valarous hunters, one with a Sharpe's breech loading rifle and the other, with a Springfield musket, might at least have tried a shot from their safe perch in the tree! I dont believe any man ever attacked a single grizzly without having some great advantage, unless he was obliged to do so in self defense. I was told, no Indian, or hunter was ever known to attack even one on the open prairie, except on horseback. The grizzly is known to live ten, or more minutes, and to be able to make a desperate fight, after he is shot through the heart. Our hunters reported, that they saw as many as ten grizzlies in one day; but not one was killed by our hunters or command. We first saw a few stray buffalo, along the river, before reaching Ft. Pierre; but they were more numerous above Ft. Union. When we arrived at this fort, (it was only an American Fur Company Fort, or Station) it was reported that a herder had been killed, and his herd stolen. All sorts of rumors floated in the air from this time, till we reached Ft. Benton about Indian troubles; their opposition to our expedition, and to that of Colonel

Reynolds. We all continued to keep near the river in hunting, and precautions were taken, when the boats laid up at night, against surprises, such as posting pickets on shore. We ~~never~~ saw no Indians, after leaving Ft. Union, till we reached the camp of the Peighans, about 150 miles from Benton. The hunting was much better above the mouth of the Yellowstone than below it. Elk, and deer were found every day, and buffalo almost every hour, were seen along the shore. There was much shooting at the lone ones that had come down to the river for water. Occasionally some one would kill one, when a boat would go for it; but I must say, there was a fearful amount of bad shooting. We stopped three days at the mouth of the Milk River, landed some of our wagons, and ox yokes, which were left here for oxen, expected here, but which had not arrived when we left. A herd of buffalo was crossing the Missouri, just below the mouth of Milk river, when we arrived, and it continued to cross all the time we were at this point. As it is a mile or more from each river bank to the bluffs, and buffalo could be seen all the time coming down one bluff, and going up the other, the width of the line being from half a mile to a mile wide, one can believe that this herd must have contained a million or so. Whilst laying here, one day, I was sent with a squad of soldiers, in a boat to hunt, and bring in some buffalo meat for the command. We landed on an island covered with dense hazel, and other kinds of brush. Knowing that the buffalo were swimming to this island at its lower end, where they made a new start, and swam across the river: we went cautiously through the brush, on the buffalo paths. I lead, being armed with a double handled shot gun, (which I had bought at St. Louis) having ball in one barrel, and buck shot in the other. As I came into a small opening, near the lower end of the island, I met a buffalo bull face to face, certainly not ten feet off. The ground being soft, I had not heard him, and was considerably startled. I became a victim of the buffalo fever. I ~~kn~~ fired both barrels, and missed him clear, ~~altho~~ although he looked much bigger than a barn door. Upon hearing my shots he wheeled, and ran for the river. All ~~the~~ the men with me, fired at once, but that old bull was not touched, he, and one, or two other bulls that were following him, struck into the portion of the river nearest us, and swam for the shore, which was about one hundred yards away. We all went to the island bank, and shot at them as they climbed the bank. One fell back into the water, evidently badly wounded, and swam half a mile, before he gave up.

Another, continued to climb the bank, although not less than three rifle balls went clear through him, all just below the shoulder, he got up the bank, and ran more than a hundred yards before he gave up. When we got him we found he had more than four deaths wounds. We got all the calves, and cows we wanted in a few minutes after this. The cows were almost as tender as the wild cattle we got from Mullan on this trip, but not so agreeable to the palate. Two of the officers were hunting one day, when they came across an old buffalo bull near the river—the officers approached from the swamp, one in advance fired, and broke the back of the buffalo. He fell, and the officer approached nearer, when he rose on his fore feet, dragging his haunches, and rushed for the officer, who seeing no chance for a fatal shot drew back towards the swamp, where the buffalo followed him, till he got into the mud and water up to his neck. His companion got on a log, and fired several times, but could not get a fatal shot. They remained in the swamp until one of the hunters, hearing the shots came up, and killed the buffalo. The vitality of the buffalo is wonderful! The Indians kill them by striking them with arrow, or ball in a fatal spot, then letting them run, till they bleed to death. We saw the first mountain sheep whilst we were near Milk river. Upham shot into a herd a half mile off from the boat, and hit one. At the mouth of Milk river, the Spread Eagle transferred her load to two small steamers, and returned down the river. Ours boats of course had lost a large part of their loads by leaving the indian goods at Fts. Pierre, Berthold, and Union. I think Lt. Carr returned by the Spread Eagle. He had been shot in the neck by one of the pilots. The circumstances, as I remember them were these: Lt. Carr had command of the troops on Key West. On making a landing one day to cut wood, the troops were sent ashore to drill, and exercise, when the time to start came, the Pilot blew the whistle. Most of the men came on board; but some delayed. The Pilot blew the whistle again; but the men did not come on board. Lt. Carr was standing on the front part of the hurricane deck with a carbine in his hand. After the second whistle, the Pilot intimated that he was going to leave, and rang the Engineer's bell accordingly. When he said he was going to start—Lt. Carr told him to stop; but the Pilot paid no attention to him. Lt. Carr turned, and threatened to shoot him, if he did

not stop the boat, whereupon the Pilot drew a small pocket pistol, and fired hitting Lt. Carr in the neck. Lt. Carr took charge of the boat, and had the Pilot locked up. Lt. Carr was seriously, but not dangerously wounded—he went back to the States, resigned, and went south. The Yellowstone river at its mouth has all the characteristics of the Missouri below it—wide bed, rapid current, muddy yellow water spread in uncertain depths, irregularly between its banks, sand bars visible in every direction. The Missouri, below the mouth of the Yellowstone appears to be the continuation of that river, as the Mississippi below the mouth of the Missouri is the continuation of the Missouri. The Mississippi is a great river with its yellow water, shifting current, and sand bars, appears to have its origin in the Yellowstone. I was struck with this on our trip from St. Louis to Ft. Union. The Missouri above its junction with the Yellowstone is generally a clear, narrow stream, frequently deep, where shallow, very swift—in fact the shallow places are rapids, which we were obliged to cordel over, putting one or more companies to the cordel lines to assist the steam power to get our boats over the rapids. Our steamers were all high pressure boats, and on account of the mud in the stream, the boilers had to be cleaned frequently, which required us lay by. The boiler of the Chippewa gave out about the time we reached Ft. Union, and had to be patched. The Chief Engineer was a man of great skill, and experience—he had little trouble with the engines of the Spread Eagle, but those of the small boats were almost constantly out of order; he worked three days, and nights without ceasing, in patching a boiler that gave way. Our boats laid up at night, when we endeavored to be near some wood, that the boat crews could cut, and load enough at night to run us the following day. The forests are all cotton wood near the river. Of course we could not find a wooded landing at night, and we had to lay up to the shore. In the "~~Mauvaise~~" "Mauvaises Terres" the wood was very scarce, mostly pine, and cedar, and difficult to get. The banks through these bad lands exhibited some very odd features. The soil is a hard clay, which is washed into fantastic shapes, I suppose from the melting snows in the spring. The wind was always quite strong, sometimes causing a boat to make several efforts, before she could round a bend. Ft. Pierre was said to be the coldest and windiest place in the North West. Our trip to Benton was tedious; but interesting.

We arrived at Ft. Benton July 3rd. QIXRx 1860_ This was an American Fur Compa
Company Station, built as are their stations on the Missouri, somewhat in
imitation of the forts of our ancestors, for protection against the indians.
It consisted of a mud, or adobe wall, twelve, to twenty feet high, surrounding
a square, with only one main entrance. Where the wall was highest, huts, or
wind houses were built against the wall. In portions of these, the employes
of the Company lived, and kept their stores, along the lower part, were sheds
for the animals. The stores contained such articles as the Indians required
except liquor. The Fur Company employes were very particular about letting
the Indians have liquor, for two reasons; that intoxicated indians were very
dangerous, and because the employes wanted all they could get, to carry them
through the long winters. These stores were said to be principally supported
by our Indian Department. Our arrival was the greatest event which ever
occurred in this region. The noise of it brought in more hunters, and Indian
than had ever been collected at one point. The last day of our journey was
made on the Key West. We put ashore about half of the command to cordal, put
on all the steam the boiler could carry, burning boxes and barrels, and
every thing combustibile on board, the boat shook, and palpitated, like a wind
blown horse, I was reminded of the steam boat races on the lower Mississippi
and Ohio. Fortunately, there was no accident, and we came to dock in front of
Ft. Benton, the first steam boat that had ever landed there. We pitched our
camp about a mile up the river, from the Fur Company's Fort, on the open
prairie. I forgot to mention, that about five miles below the fort, one of
the soldiers, fell over board. He began to swim up stream, every one hollowed
at him. to turn, and swim down; whilst two soldiers jumped over, and swam for
him. But he went down before either of the rescuers reached him. One of the
latter said that he had to swim more than a mile to reach shore; although
the river is little over a hundred yards wide. The current is so swift he
could not make it sooner. We lost a soldier over board, near what is now
Kansas City, he was also drowned by attempting to swim up stream. Our Camp
was pleasantly; ^{located} except that it was subject to winds that travelled from
thirty miles an hour, upwards. One night, we had a general levelling of tents
and distribution of effects all over the prairie. Our Camp was in form an
ordinary regimental camp, with sentries on the four sides. The ground was so

hard a hole had to be made for the wooden tent pegs, and the wind blew so strong, that guy ropes were necessary. The days were very hot, and the nights cold, a rain storm nearly every afternoon, lasting only a few minutes. Our occupation principally drilling, squad, company, and battallion. Major Blake being a cavalryman, did not take much interest in drilling, or commanding the battallion. Floyd Jones, the senior Captain, had charge of all drills, and in fact the immediate command of the men. Captain Lendrum was a good officer and well informed, except that he was eccentric, and rather fond of his toddy. Our amusements consisted of riding, racing, visiting the Fort, hunting, and fishing. After we had been in Camp about two weeks, the Indians began coming in many crossed the river near our Camp, using bull boats to transport their children, and effects. The bucks swimming with their horses, which were attached to the bull boats by lariats. We estimated, that at one time, there were at least eight thousand Indians in sight, and countless horses. The bucks would often dress up, and ride about our camp, going through evolutions, quite as skillful as any cavalry. Their skirmish drill was very skillful, and ought to have been studied by our cavalry officers. Good ponies, called buffolo horses, (being able to run down a buffalo), were worth from fifteen to fifty dollars nearly all the officers purchased ponies. I bought a very fine one for fifty dollars. One of our regular amusements was horse racing. The Indians had races several times for our benefit. Except when dressed in their war rig, all the Indians rode bare backed, and had no bridle only the lariat rope of leather, usually fastened to the horses lower jaw. The Indians were skillful riders, but not better than our officers, who had been trained to ride. I saw a young buck galloping to the gate of the Fort one day, he was riding a very fine pony, himself dressed in gala costume. As he passed us, he made a special flourish of his whip, (all Indians carry a whip, usually made with a hickory handle, 18 inches long, and a leather strap attached, two feet long), when some one coming out of the gate, allowed a blanket, or other gaily colored article to fly in the wind. The horse turned very suddenly, throwing the young buck with such force, that he was almost killed, so that when not on his guard, the Indian has no more secure seat than other good riders, he rides what is called the balance seat. There is a high piece of ground back of Ft. Benton, it is about four miles around

its base. It was around this that the Indians raced, they bet quite as heavily as we do. The principal Indian chief ~~of~~ ^{of} the Blackfeet was Little Dog, a Peighon Indian. He had been a great warrior in his younger days, but was now in favor of peace with the adjoining tribes, as well as with the whites. When the supplies were issued to the Indians, the management of the issue was conducted by Little Dog. All the Indians were in war paint, as gala ~~east~~ costume is usually designated in the Indian country. The senior chiefs by age, and influence, were seated on their blankets forming a small circle, ~~the~~ ^{there} being only six, or seven of them, a space about fifteen feet intervened between these, and the next circle which consisted of lesser chiefs, and warriors noted for eloquence, and war deeds. About twenty feet out from this last circle was another, of old warriors, and very young ones. Ten, or fifteen feet from this last circle was the first circle of females, consisting of the wives of the principal chiefs, and warriors, some few, the favorite wives of the most noted chiefs, being a little advanced ~~in~~ front of the line, and having five, or six feet of clear space about each. After a short speech by ~~Little Dog~~ ^{Little Dog}, such as one of our Governors, might make upon such an occasion, he proceeded to distribute the supplies, commencing with the inner circle, where he piled up every thing in great profusion. Then selecting special articles for each individual, chief, or warrior, not neglecting the young warriors of the third circle. He reminded me very much of Stephen A. Douglas, whom he resembled very much in person, and manner, his proceedings were certainly characteristic of the politician. He gave most bountifully to the favorite wives of favorite chiefs. To the "Hoi Polloi", he made up in sugar, and flour. The sugar, the squaws proceeded to eat, so that those who did not get finery got their stomachs full. The Falls of the Missouri are about thirty miles by river, in direct line from Ft. Benton. The officers of our command went in detachments to see them. The second party which consists of Blake, Livingston, Upham, and two other officers, with two guides, and several ~~saxdix~~ soldiers, were to be gone three days. At the end of that time we began to look for them. They not returning the third night, we became uneasy, fearing they might have met a hostile band, who objected to their hunting. We had been told by interpreters, that the Indians objected to our expedition,

which threatened to open up a route through their country. So when the faux fourth day came, and the guide whom we had sent, returned, and reported that our party had not been at the Falls, we became seriously alarmed. We started out runners in all directions. But to our great relief they returned the fourth night. They had been lost on the prairie for two days, having undergone great suffering, and anxiety. It appeared, that soon after leaving the Camp, deer were seen, and some of the officers took after them, the rest of the party following in the direction of the hunters. In this way the whole party got off the trail, and away from the river. Finding they could not reach the river the first night, they camped on the prairie. The next day they took a supposed short cut, but went out of the way, striking above the Falls, and thus spent another night on the prairie. The third day they made the Falls, but after our man had been there. They were so exhausted, they remained the third night, and till late the fourth day, before starting back. Then they followed the river, or longer trail, so as not to be lost the second time. A few days after this I went with a small party to the Falls. These are about Seventy feet high, at the greatest fall, and there is a fine fall of twelve feet, a hundred yards below. The banks are precipitous all along here so that the water below the Falls is in a canyon, with walls over two hundred feet high. A few cedars, and other shrubs grow along the rocks, and crevices, and thus the picture seen from below is very beautiful. The night here was quite cold, as were most of the nights at Benton; but we had the most voracious mosquitoes that I ever fought. For tired as we were, we had to build a fire, in a circle about us, and smoke all night. We caught some salmon, and common fish. These salmon trout are speckled, and resemble brook trout. Soon after we arrived at Benton, we heard through the Indians that "Sitting Bull" was lying in wait near the Black Hills for Colonel Reynolds, and party. The "Nez Perces" Indians, who gave us the information were the most intelligent Indians I met. Each buck carried a rifle, and bows, and arrows were to be found in each party. We were told these Indians fortified their camp every night, and that twenty of them were a match for all the Indians that could be assembled to fight them. A party of thirty officers and men went about twenty miles south to fish. We thought it imprudent. The day they were to return, when we saw a number of Indians coming down the bluff, single file, we were quite uneasy. But soon a long line

of pack animals appeared over the bluff, then some cavalry, and we knew it was Colonel's Reynolds party, about whom we had heard so many dire rumours. They were a hard looking lot, as regards clothing, but looked otherwise, as though Sitting Bull would have lost many fine warriors before he got them. The party consisted of Colonel Reynolds, a Lieutenant, and twenty soldiers of cavalry, and a pack train of about fifty animals, and usual number of packers. They had come west of the Black Hills, and thus accidentally avoided Sitting Bull, and his warriors. Colonel Reynolds reported, that they had discovered a good road, west of the Black Hills, over which they could go without great amount of work. He and his party had left Ft. Laramie as early in the season as they could. We were waiting for John Mullen, over whose road we were to go. He was due about the same time as Reynolds, but did not arrive till the twenty seventh of July. He brought many less beef, cattle, and oxen than we had expected. The road over the Bitter Root mountains, and along Clark's Fork river below Hell Gate was more difficult than we had anticipated, and we had another misfortune. As I said, Dr. Cooper and others had reported that it never snowed in the Bitter Root mountains., at least not over two feet. It appeared that in October, a month earlier than expected, it began to snow, and continued pretty steadily until November. Mullen had to quit work on the forest side. He cached all the articles he could, and made haste to cross the mountains by the main trail, eastward into Bitter Root valley. He started too late, and very nearly lost all his cattle, and pack animals. Unfortunately, he did not notify ^{us} of this, till he arrived, when the Indians, from whom we could have bought any number of ponies had left to hunt. We had to buy all the cattle, oxen, mules, and ponies we could get, and we had to improvise a pack train. Our command of five hundred could not rush along, in case we were hurried, like a small party. B. F. Smith was one of the best Quarter Masters the Army ever produced, and if Major ~~Blake~~ ^{Blake} did not seem to take much interest in his Infantry command, he had served long enough on the Plains, not to fear responsibility. The Quarter Master was authorized to buy everything that could pull, or carry. Our transportation consisted of thirty ox wagons, one mule head quarter wagon, and a pack train of about one hundred, and fifty animals. The good pack saddles were all left in store at Benton, and simpler, and lighter ones used. Getting our animals together, and giving Mullens animals a rest, delayed us until the 4th

18th

of August, a very late date to start across the mountains. I forgot to mention a hunt I had with Carlton, and two of the Fur Company's employes on the Marias River. We had rather poor luck, and started back early for Benton. After travelling two hours, we found that we were lost. One of the Fur Company's employes was leading, we stopped for consultation, when we found that the two who ought to have known the way, were really lost. I offered to lead them back by the shortest cut. My offer was accepted, and before long we struck a good trail. It turned out that I had taken the exact direction for the Fort. My early training on the prairie had given me an instinct for direction. When we got almost in sight of Benton, we met a large party of Indians. They made signs for us to stop. We stopped, and they came all around us. Although we did not know their disposition, we appeared friendly, and when they asked for our guns, we handed them over. They took them, cocked them, and aimed them at us. We treated it all as a joke: but I can't say that I liked it. Probably it was fortunate we so treated it, and thus got away with our scalps. The first day's march from Benton was twenty miles to the nearest water. The men were unaccustomed to march, and the day becoming very warm, we had the worst straggled command I ever saw. We learned afterwards, that we might have made one march up the river, and the other across, and thus made the thirty miles in two days. To encourage the men the officers walked. The Commissary cattle had been allowed to proceed us, and when we came to the small springs, where we expected to take lunch, get water, and rest, we found the animals had been allowed to trample all through them, and the water was unfit for use. That hot alkali plain was most indelibly impressed on my brain. Fortunately, in this elevated region, the nights are at all times, very cold. We had a full supply of tents, which were pitched every night. On this day, as well as all future days, Major Blake rode ahead to the camp we were to occupy, his mule team following him, he pitched his tent near, but without regard to the command, and usually he got in by noon. We generally got in between two, and four. Our marches averaged thirteen, and a half miles a day, and we usually laid over every other Sunday, or at one day in two weeks. Since we got into Camp some hours before dark every day, and always had the finest water in the world to drink, and almost every day had good trout fishing, and good hunting, the weather being perfect. We had as agreeable a time as men ever had in a six weeks march.

1871.

Our route took us ^{up} the west bank of the Missouri, across the small streams flowing in from that side, near their heads, so that we saw the river near at hand seldom, but saw it often in the distance. As we approached the Rocky Mountains, "Bird Tail Rock" was in view for three days. The day we camped at its base, Max Upham, and I taking our guns, ascended it. The rock proper rises above a steep mound which is three, or four hundred feet above the surrounding country. The rock which covers the whole top, is of basaltic formation, with vertical sides, two, or three hundred feet in height. The ascent of the rock can only be made through very narrow crevices which occur at intervals. As we were ascending one of the crevices, on a ledge, just wide enough for a single person to move, a deep gully being on one side; we met a herd of mountain sheep descending. The leaders hesitated a moment as if to turn, when instinct, I suppose, telling them that to turn would precipitate the entire band below, they made a rush, and scrambled along the perpendicular rock on our right, and went racing over our heads. It was a wonderful sight, and one to take away our breath. A mis-step of a single goat would have been fatal to us. As soon as we got our breath, and the goats came into view, which which seemed but a moment, yet the herd was several hundred yards away, we shot, but were not successful. The view from the top of this rock is very extensive, and beautiful. It takes in many miles of the Missouri, the Rocky Mountains, and the plain, as far back as the eye can reach. Mullans road carried us along the Little Prickley Pear for several days march, the road being hilly, and rough; but plenty of good water, and wood. We crossed to the head waters of the Little Blackfoot river, head of Clark's fork of the Columbia. The springs of this stream were only a stone's throw from those of the streams entering into the Missouri. We followed the Little Blackfoot to the Deer Lodge. The Blackfoot was frequently dammed by the Beaver. The Deer Lodge coming in from the south is a fine broad stream, flowing through Deer Lodge prairie. From our camp on Deer Lodge prairie, to the mouth of Hell Gate river, our march was a gala one. There is a gentle descent through alternate forest, and prairie all the distance. We remarked that nature had here provided a natural rail road route, as it has certainly left a most perfect pass at Hell Gate itself. Our camp on Gold Creek was very pleasant. We caught many fine brook trout. The water was very cold, and the black sand in the bottom indicated that the stream was properly named. We made a three days stop in Bitter Root valley, now called Missoula as we

called the valley that lies at the junction of the St. Maury's, and Hell Gate rivers. The river formed by this junction, was called the Bitter Root, & it is Clark's fork of the Columbia. In this valley Mullen had wintered his stock on the native grass, and shrubs. The ~~present~~ winter was a severe one, yet the snow fall in this valley was so light, that the cattle grew fat, living upon what they could pick up. The surrounding mountains are from five to seven thousand feet high. Small particles of snow still hung in shady places on their sides, from which ice was brought to us whilst camped here. The Indian agent, Mr. Owens, from the St. Maury's reservation, brought us some very fine potatoes, and other vegetables. Our route carried us down the north bank of the Bitter Root river, for about three days, we then crossed, and began the ascent of the Bitter Root mountains. We ascended the St. Regis, it is a very crooked stream, which we crossed about every hundred yards, for three, or more days march. The road had been hastily built over a most difficult, ^{place} but we had no great difficulty in making the ascent. It did not appear to us a good route for a railroad. On the descent towards Coeur de Lene, ~~which~~ which is far more gentle than the ascent of the St. Regis, we saw at times, blazes on trees way out of reach of a man on horseback. We were informed that the blazes were made by Mullan's party, when moving towards the Bitter Root valley, in November past, whilst dragging their sleds by hand. That they were made at the usual height above the snow, about three feet. If this were true, and there was no reason to doubt it, our friend, Dr. Cooper had miscalculated the snow fall about ten, to twelve feet. We had a good deal of sport out the Doctor, bringing him all sorts of common bugs, and weeds to be properly named. In this region Mullan had made his cache, for ~~which~~ not only the officers, but the men were on the out look. The latter being the most numerous, were apt to find them first, and unfortunately, not only find them, but make use of their contents. Captain Lendrum's Company, with which I was on duty, had charge one day, of the train. The duty consisted usually, helping stalled teams out of the mud, or up a steep hill. On this occasion, the Captain, with the greater part of the Company, was with the advance. I had a few men in the rear. There had been more or less drunkenness among the men for several days, so that I watched my detachment closely. Unfortunately, for the Captain, he was not so vigilant, and night came, many of the teamsters, and all of his detachment of soldiers, were very much under the weather.

The road was muddy, and the train had become so scattered, that a regular camp could not be made, and we remained with the wagons. Early in the morning I got my men up, and started the rear of the train, which soon overhauled the advance portion, which was irregularly parked. A few teamsters, and one, or two non commissioned officers were up, and trying to get things going, but most of the men would not be awakened at all. Of course a whisky "cache" had been found the day before, and the unaccustomed stimulant had been too much for all hands. It was my first, and last experience, of the total defeat of a command, by "John Barley_Corn". That Major Blake was mad, and for cause, and what he expressed himself in vigorous English, one can readily imagine. About fifty miles from Coeur de Lene Mission, we passed through one of the great red wood forests. Every tree would measure five feet in diameter, and seemed over three hundred feet high. I am sure the sun had not thrown his rays under them for a century. I have never appreciated real grandeur of forest scenery before. Our arrival at the Mission was welcomed by the good Jesuit fathers, and their then very docile Indian wards, with fruits, and vegetables. We were most noisily welcomed by the wolf dogs, half wolf, and half cur, whose yelp is nearer the wolf howl, than the dog's bark. They seemed to make up in numbers for the lack of other domesticated animals. One is not surprised, that the Indians in this region have feasted on dog, since the days of Benneville. These dogs were known to steal a hare from under the cook's head, whilst he slept in a tent. We sent back a portion of our pack_train from the Bitter Root Valley, and as provisions would only carry us to the Coeur de Lene Mission, a messenger was sent ahead to Ft. Walla_Walla requesting that a train be hurried forward to meet us at Coeur de Lene. The train met us. It was fortunate for it, that it had no further to go. For of all the sore backed animals, that I have ever seen, these had the sorest! It appeared that this train of 150 animals, had just returned from near old Ft. Hall, when our messenger arrived, and fearing an early, and severe winter, such as Mullen had encountered, the year before, this train was hurried off to us. Its arrival was a great relief; but we had moved so much faster than had been expected, that we were not badly off. The lake, and surroundings of the Mission are very beautiful, though I could not say much for the cleanliness of the Mission itself. Our Command was divided here. The greater portion going south, to Ft. Walla_Walla, whilst about 150 men,

with Lt. Kautz in command, Upham, Dr. Cooper, and myself, left with a pack train for Ft. Colville. By this time our men had learnt to march, so that it required care to keep them down to three, and a quarter miles an hour. Our pack train was small, some of the animals had bad backs, and our marches were regulated by the powers of the pack train. We ^{averaged} arranged about eighteen miles a day. The country was mostly open timber, and the trail very good, though at times steep, so that sharp Zig Zags were necessary, in ascending, and descending many of the hills. We passed over no high range, and the hills scarcely rose to the dignity of mountains. At one point on the trail, in order to save a days march through a marshy bottom, we passed along a very narrow ledge, in which the frequently passing mules, and ponies, had cut round holes, the spaces between the holes rising to a sharp edge. The ledge was so narrow, and the precipice so great below, that some of us would have preferred to walk over; but found it impossible, on account of the peculiar state of the ledge. But a mule, as well as an Indian pony, is as sure footed as a man. We passed near the Spokane Falls. The river is about a hundred feet wide, and falls thirty feet, which Fall millions of salmon leap every season. We camped a short distance above the Falls, on the river, the banks of which were lined with dead, and dying salmon. The Indians from all parts of the country had assembled here, to dry these sore backed salmon, for their winter food. The principal Chief here, had been educated in the States, it was said in ^{Union} ~~Winona~~ College. He was very polite, and attentive, we had no presents to give him, which did not please him. The next morning, our horses had strayed far from Camp. Two of them, mine being one, were never found. We considered that we had made rather valuable presents to these rotten fish eating aborigines. This old Chief had a very bad name, denied that he spoke English, and was a deceptive old rogue. After we left Ft. Benton, we had very little rum in the Command, what we had was used for the sick, and for men on fatigue. When we left Coeur de Lene, we noticed that Kautz, brought along a small two gallon keg which had often attracted attention, but of whose contents all were ignorant. The first evening out, Kautz tapped the keg, which contained prune brandy, of first rate quality, and every after making Camp he brought out this keg, and we had our "^{my} Tusca^{at}buggy". I am sure, I never ~~enjoyed~~ enjoyed the contents of jug, barrel, or bottle, as I did my share of the little

little two gallon keg! There was just enough to go round the last camp we made, before our arrival at Ft. Colville. This Post was then the center of a mining region, Captain Pinkney Lujenbeel was commanding. Billy Hughes was Quarter Master. We had a most delightful short visit, and were entertained by the officers, and their families. I remember there was a billiard table at the Sutlers, and as the only transportation was by mule back, I wondered how the table got there. But I remembered, that one of our mules, was loaded at Benton, amongst other things, with a folded table, and that he had carried it safely to Coeur de Lene. In many parts of the trail, he could not move squarely along without ~~striking the table~~ striking the table: he would calculate the tree, or side of precipice, as well as any man, and lean away so as to preserve his pack intact. On one occasion, he approached two trees near together, the trail leading between them. He went along carefully, tried first to go squarely through. His table hitting, he waited for the packer to unload him. I think the movements of a pack train are always interesting, and if one has patience, and keeps ones temper, he can enjoy the comedy of packing up, in the morning, for it is certainly one of the most comical sights in the world! Every individual mule has his peculiar method of worrying the packer. At first when you see the packer blind fold the mule, and pressing his knee against the animals side, pull on the sinche, until the creature groans, as though his ribs were being broken, your entire sympathy is with the mule. but when he turned loose, and the blinders with drawn, the mule gives a vicious side kick at the packer, who is of course on his guard, and rushes for the nearest tree, you lose all sympathy with him then, and forever. We remained about three days in Collville, visited Lt Hughes fine wheat farm and then applying for transportation to Ft. Walla_Walla, got our animals, and left. We each had a riding horse of the favorite kind here, half American, and half Indian pony. and two pack animals, one to carry the mess kit, the other our bedding, and extra under clothes. We moved out early, and had a pleasant day, except that I noticed after being out about two hours, that my horse worried some what. I thought there might be something uneven under the saddle, and got down, and took it off. To my disgust I found that the horse had a saddle boil of the worst kind! We could not turn back then, and I did not care to walk. So I concluded to try my hand at rolling two saddle blankets, so as to raise the saddle entirely free of the boil. I found I could do this, and sinching the saddle very tight, getting down every two

hours ,and drawing it fresh,I rode that horse all the way to Walla_Walla, and when we got there,I had the best horse in the party.The boil had burst and healed on the trip.Since then I have considered myself a fair veterinary surgeon!Towards evening of the first day out,we met a large party of Spokan Indians on horse back.They were very rude,abd inclined to make trouble. Kautz,who led off,seeing at once our danger,addressed them politely,and ~~dr~~ drew out of the read to let them pass.We followed his example,till it came to Dr.Cooper,who rode straight on.The Indians rushed their horses against him,and threw him off.Kautz,insisted upon our moving on,without our resenting the insult.We did so,and this probably saved our scalps.We were inclined to believe,that some of these Indians followed us,and therefore we ~~at~~ started very early the next morning,and took other precautions for safety We made as good time as possible to Walla_Walla,crossing the great desert of the Columbia,about as quickly as it was ever done,except by pony express Water,and wood are very scarce on these plains.For that reason,I suppose, every rock,and ridge in the distance resembles a clump of trees,or a lake. Nature,makes up in delusions,what she lacks in reality.our ride from ~~Colville~~ Colville to Walla_Walla was rather hasty.We were just three days,and a half on the raad.When we arrived,troops,and a train were just starting to endeavor to save those who remained of a train of emigrants,which had been attacked near old Ft.Hall,and most if them,men,women,and children massacred,by ~~the~~ the treacherous Snake Indians.^{or warriors} So many pack trains had been sent out from Walla_Walla this season,all the trained pack animals had been used up,and this one was made up of green mules,and ponies.The packers were at work all day,and started just before night.The troops had gone ahead,and camped ~~at~~ about eleven miles from Ft. ~~Base~~ ^{the} Reno.Captain Reno had charge of this pack train With the assistance of pretty nearly every one at the Post,Reno got his ~~ex~~ train started,~~and~~ and we thought that they were off for the expedition but the next morning when we got out for breakfast,this train was again ~~be~~ being collected for a new start.It appeared,that after they had gotten ~~far~~ fairly started,and just after dark,the entire train stampeded,and returned to the Post,of course bringing their packs with them.I have no doubt that a mule would carry a pack for a week,without wishing it unpacked,if he thought he could worry the packers that way!Quarters being scarce in Walla_Walla ^{our camp} was in camp.About half of the soldiers were assigned to companies ~~be~~ here.This Post was the head quarters for expeditions against the Indians in

the north west, there were both cavalry and infantry: Ferguson, Sol. Williams, Fitz_Hee, and others whom I knew as Cadets, besides Reno, and Bob Anderson. I took my meals with Anderson, and was invited to stay, and dine with some of young Cavalry officers. I found that they had only iron bed steads, and other hospital furniture, and the first meal was a cold meal of crackers, ~~cheese~~ and whisky at the Sutlers. I learned then to visit my Infantry friends in preference to Cavalry, whenever there was a question of food, and comfort! We were soon tired of Walla_Walla. The surrounding country was beginning to be settled up with cattle ranches, and farms. All of the officers, and a few of the men, ^{at our command} left the first of September for old Walla_Walla. We took a small stern wheel boat. This boat rushed down this magnificent river, which is over a mile wide, the current more rapid than that of the Mississippi, and the water perfectly clear. Where the water was shallow large rocks could be seen in the bottom, to avoid which, and to hold her stern straight ahead, our boat put on all steam, and went at rail road speed, as high as thirty five miles an hour. We landed fifteen miles from Ft. Dallas, and rode on mules to the ~~Kan~~ Fort. Soon after leaving Walla_Walla, we had a view of Mt. Hood. It appears to rise straight out of the plain. As seen from Dallas, it is the grandest snow peak in the world. We wound up our expedition here, leaving all the men. Whilst ^{at} Dallas, we staid in the old wooden barracks, which the soldiers ~~ku~~ built, when they first came here. It was said that the only two brick buildings at the Post, cost their weight in silver. Over four hundred thousand dollars, had been expended on this Post, and these two dwellings were all ~~in~~ there was to show for it! We remained only a day, or two, when we left by boat for Ft. Vancouver. We enjoyed the grand view of Mt. Hood, as we passed under its base, noticed the large pine trees growing in the water, had a fine day day at the Cascades, and arrived safely at Vancouver, where all the officers were diverted to their respective posts. I got a leave, and visited Puget Sound, and Victoria, then a thriving city of 30.000 inhabitants, due to ~~the~~ the mines on Fraser's river. Visited Colonel Casey's family at Steilcoom to see his beautiful daughter, and then returned by steam boat to Ft. Vancouver.

FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES ONLY

This copy furnished for research use of the purchaser only. Not for reproduction, sale, or release to other persons or institutions. Original in the library of the CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY.