

JOHN JAMES AUDUBON

AUDUBON AND HIS
JOURNALS, VOLUME 2 (OF
2)

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THE MISSOURI RIVER JOURNALS

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Audubon and his Journals, Volume 2 (of 2)

THE MISSOURI RIVER JOURNALS 1843 (*Continued*)

June 4, Sunday. We have run pretty well, though the wind has been tolerably high; the country we have passed this day is somewhat better than what we saw yesterday, which, as I said, was the poorest we have seen. No occurrence of interest has taken place. We passed this morning the old Riccaree¹ Village,

¹ "We halted for dinner at a village which we suppose to have belonged to the Ricaras. It is situated in a low plain on the river, and consists of about eighty lodges of an octagon form, neatly covered with earth, placed as close to each other as possible, and picketed round." ("Lewis and Clark," ed. 1893.) "The village of the Rikaras, Arickaras, or Rikarees, for the name is variously written, is between the 46th and 47th parallels of north latitude, and 1,430 miles above the mouth of the Missouri... It was divided into two portions, about eighty yards apart, being inhabited by two distinct bands. The whole extended about three quarters of a mile along the river bank, and was composed of conical lodges, that looked like so many small hillocks, being wooden frames intertwined with osier, and covered with earth." ("Astoria," W. Irving.) "From the hills we had a fine prospect over the bend of the river, on which the villages of the

where General Ashley² was so completely beaten as to lose eighteen of his men, with the very weapons and ammunition that he had trafficked with the Indians of that village, against all the remonstrances of his friends and interpreters; yet he said that it proved fortunate for him, as he turned his steps towards some other spot, where he procured one hundred packs of Beaver skins for a mere song. We stopped to cut wood at an old house put up for winter quarters, and the wood being ash, and quite dry, was excellent. We are now fast for the night at an abandoned post, or fort, of the Company, where, luckily for us, a good deal of wood was found cut. We saw only one Wolf, and a few small gangs of Buffaloes. Bell shot a Bunting which resembles Henslow's, but we have no means of comparing it at present. We have collected a few plants during our landing. The steam is blowing off, and therefore our day's run is ended. When I went to bed last night it was raining smartly, and Alexis did not go off, as he did wish. By the way, I forgot to say that along with the three Prairie Marmots, he brought also four Spoon-billed Ducks, which we ate at dinner to-day, and found delicious. Bell saw many Lazuli Finches this

Arikkaras are situated. The two villages of this tribe are on the west bank, very near each other, but separated by a small stream. They consist of a great number of clay huts, round at top, with a square entrance in front, and the whole surrounded with a fence of stakes, which were much decayed and in many places thrown down." ("Travels in North America," p. 166, Maximilian, Prince of Wied.)

² "General Ashley of Missouri, a man whose courage and achievements in the prosecution of his enterprises had rendered him famous in the Far West in conjunction with Mr. [Andrew?] Henry, of the Missouri Trading Co., established a post on the banks of the Yellowstone River in 1822." ("Capt. Bonneville," W. Irving.)

morning. Notwithstanding the tremendous shaking of our boat, Sprague managed to draw four figures of the legs and feet of the Wolf shot by Bell yesterday, and my own pencil was not idle.

June 5, Monday. Alexis went off in the night sometime, and came on board about three o'clock this morning; he had seen nothing whatever, except the traces of Beavers and of Otters, on Beaver Creek, which, by the way, he had to cross on a raft. Speaking of rafts, I am told that one of these, made of two bundles of rushes, about the size of a man's body, and fastened together by a few sticks, is quite sufficient to take two men and two packs of Buffalo robes across this muddy river. In the course of the morning we passed Cannon Ball River,³ and the very remarkable bluffs about it, of which we cannot well speak until we have stopped there and examined their nature. We saw

³ "We reached the mouth of Le Boulet, or Cannon Ball River. This stream rises in the Black Mts. and falls into the Missouri; its channel is about 140 feet wide, though the water is now confined within 40; its name is derived from the numbers of perfectly round stones on the shore and in the bluffs just above." ("Lewis and Clark," ed. 1893.) "We came to an aperture in the chain of hills, from which this river, which was very high, issues. On the north side of the mouth there was a steep, yellow clay wall; and on the southern, a flat, covered with poplars and willows. This river has its name from the singular regular sandstone balls which are found in its banks, and in those of the Missouri in its vicinity. They are of various sizes, from that of a musket ball to that of a large bomb, and lie irregularly on the bank, or in the strata, from which they often project to half their thickness; when the river has washed away the earth they then fall down, and are found in great numbers on the bank. Many of them are rather elliptical, others are more flattened, others flat on one side and convex on the other. Of the *perfectly spherical* balls, I observed some two feet in diameter. A mile above the mouth of Cannon Ball River I saw no more of them." ("Travels in North America," p. 167, Maximilian, Prince of Wied.)

two Swans alighting on the prairie at a considerable distance. We stopped to take wood at Bowie's settlement, at which place his wife was killed by some of the Riccaree Indians, after some Gros Ventres had assured him that such would be the case if he suffered his wife to go out of the house. She went out, however, on the second day, and was shot with three rifle-balls. The Indians took parts of her hair and went off. She was duly buried; but the Gros Ventres returned some time afterwards, took up the body, and carried off the balance of her hair. They, however, reburied her; and it was not until several months had elapsed that the story came to the ears of Mr. Bowie. We have also passed Apple Creek,⁴ but the chief part is yet to be added. At one place where the bluffs were high, we saw five Buffaloes landing a few hundred yards above us on the western side; one of them cantered off immediately, and by some means did reach the top of the hills, and went out of our sight; the four others ran, waded, and swam at different places, always above us, trying to make their escape. At one spot they attempted to climb the bluff, having unconsciously passed the place where their leader had made good his way, and in their attempts to scramble up, tumbled down, and at last became so much affrighted that they took to the river for good, with the intention to swim to the shore they had left. Unfortunately for them, we had been gaining upon

⁴ Present name of the stream which falls into the Missouri from the east, about five miles below Fort Rice; Chewah or Fish River of Lewis and Clark; Shewash River of Maximilian. Audubon is now approaching Bismarck, the capital of North Dakota. — E. C.

them; we had all been anxiously watching them, and the moment they began to swim we were all about the boat with guns and rifles, awaiting the instant when they would be close under our bows. The moment came; I was on the lower deck among several of the people with guns, and the firing was soon heavy; but not one of the Buffaloes was stopped, although every one must have been severely hit and wounded. Bell shot a load of buckshot at the head of one, which disappeared entirely under the water for perhaps a minute. I sent a ball through the neck of the last of the four, but all ineffectually, and off they went, swimming to the opposite shore; one lagged behind the rest, but, having found footing on a sand-bar, it rested awhile, and again swam off to rejoin its companions. They all reached the shore, but were quite as badly off on that side as they had been on the other, and their difficulties must have been great indeed; however, in a short time we had passed them. Mr. Charles Primeau,⁵ who is a good shot, and who killed the young Buffalo bull the other day, assured me that it was his opinion the whole of these would die before sundown, but that Buffaloes swimming were a hundred times more difficult to kill than those on shore. I have been

⁵ Charles Primeau was born at St. Louis, Mo., entered the American Fur Company as clerk, and continued in that service many years. Later he helped to form an opposition company under the name of Harvey, Primeau, & Co., which did business for a few years, until, like most of the smaller concerns, it was absorbed by the American Fur Co. He then went back to his former employers, and afterward was engaged by the U.S. Government as Indian interpreter, long holding this position. In 1896 he was living in the vicinity of Fort Yates. – E. C.

told also, that a Buffalo shot by an Indian, in the presence of several whites, exhibited some marks on the inside of the skin that looked like old wounds, and that on close examination they found no less than six balls in its paunch. Sometimes they will run a mile after having been struck through the heart; whilst at other times they will fall dead without such desperate shot. Alexis told me that once he shot one through the thigh, and that it fell dead on the spot. We passed this afternoon a very curious conical mound of earth, about which Harris and I had some curiosity, by which I lost two pounds of snuff, as he was right, and I was wrong. We have seen Geese and Goslings, Ravens, Blue Herons, Bluebirds, Thrushes, Red-headed Woodpeckers and Red-shafted ditto, Martins, an immense number of Rough-winged Swallows about their holes, and Barn Swallows. We heard Killdeers last evening. Small Crested Flycatchers, Summer Yellow-birds, Maryland Yellow-throats, House Wrens are seen as we pass along our route; while the Spotted Sandpiper accompanies us all along the river. Sparrow Hawks, Turkey Buzzards, Arctic Towhee Buntings, Cat-birds, Mallards, Coots, Gadwalls, King-birds, Yellow-breasted Chats, Red Thrushes, all are noted as we pass. We have had a good day's run; it is now half-past ten. The wind has been cold, and this evening we have had a dash of rain. We have seen only one Wolf. We have heard some wonderful stories about Indians and white men, none of which I can well depend upon. We have stopped for the night a few miles above

where the "Assiniboin"⁶ steamer was burnt with all her cargo uninsured, in the year 1835. I heard that after she had run ashore, the men started to build a scow to unload the cargo; but that through some accident the vessel was set on fire, and that a man and a woman who alone had been left on board, walked off to the island, where they remained some days unable to reach shore.

June 6, Tuesday. This morning was quite cold, and we had a thick white frost on our upper deck. It was also extremely cloudy, the wind from the east, and all about us looked dismal enough. The hands on board seemed to have been busy the whole of the night, for I scarcely slept for the noise they made. We soon came to a very difficult part of the river, and had to stop full three hours. Meanwhile the yawl went off to seek and sound for a channel, whilst the wood-cutters and the carriers – who, by the way, are called "charrettes"⁷ – followed their work, and we gathered a good quantity of drift-wood, which burns like straw. Our hopes of reaching the Mandan Village were abandoned, but we at last proceeded on our way and passed the bar; it was nearly dinner-time. Harris and Bell had their guns, and brought two Arctic Towhee Buntings and a Black-billed Cuckoo. They saw two large flocks of Geese making their way westward. The

⁶ The "Assiniboin" was the steamer on which Maximilian, Prince of Wied, travelled down the Missouri in 1833.

⁷ This is an interesting note of the early French name on the Missouri of the persons about a boat whom we should call "stevedores," or "roustabouts." The French word *charette*, or *charrette*, occurs also as a personal name, and it will be remembered that there was a town of La Charette on the Lower Missouri. – E. C.

place where we landed showed many signs of Deer, Elk, and Buffaloes. I saw trees where the latter had rubbed their heavy bodies against the bark, till they had completely robbed the tree of its garment. We saw several Red-shafted Woodpeckers, and other birds named before. The Buffalo, when hunted on horseback, does *not* carry its tail erect, as has been represented in books, but close between the legs; but when you see a Buffalo bull work its tail sideways in a twisted rolling fashion, *then* take care of him, as it is a sure sign of his intention to rush against his pursuer's horse, which is very dangerous, both to hunter and steed. As we proceeded I saw two fine White-headed Eagles alighting on their nest, where perhaps they had young – and how remarkably late in the season this species does breed here! We also saw a young Sandhill Crane, and on an open prairie four Antelopes a few hundred yards off. Alexis tells me that at this season this is a rare occurrence, as the females are generally in the brushwood now; but in this instance the male and three females were on open prairie. We have passed what is called the Heart⁸ River, and the Square Hills, which, of course, are by no means square, but simply more level than the generality of those we have passed for upwards of three weeks. We now saw four barges belonging to our company, and came to, above them, as usual. A Mr. Kipp, one of the partners, came on board; and

⁸ Heart River, the stream which falls into the Missouri near the town of Mandan, about opposite Bismarck, N. Dak. Here the river is now bridged by the Northern Pacific Railroad, which crosses the Missouri from Bismarck, and follows up Heart River for some distance. – E. C.

Harris, Squires, and myself had time to write each a short letter to our friends at home. Mr. Kipp had a peculiar looking crew who appeared not much better than a set of bandits among the Pyrenees or the Alps; yet they seem to be the very best sort of men for trappers and boatmen. We exchanged four of our men for four of his, as the latter are wanted at the Yellowstone. The country appears to Harris and to myself as if we had outrun the progress of vegetation, as from the boat we observed oaks scarcely in leaflets, whilst two hundred miles below, and indeed at a much less distance, we saw the same timber in nearly full leaf; flowers are also scarce. A single Wolf was seen by some one on deck. Nothing can be possibly keener than the senses of hearing and sight, as well as of smell, in the Antelope. Not one was ever known to jump up close to a hunter; and the very motion of the grasses, as these are wafted by the wind, will keep them awake and on the alert. Immediately upon the breaking up of the ice about the Mandan Village, three Buffaloes were seen floating down on a large cake; they were seen by Mr. Primeau from his post, and again from Fort Pierre. How much further the poor beasts travelled, no one can tell. It happens not infrequently, when the river is entirely closed in with ice, that some hundreds of Buffaloes attempt to cross; their aggregate enormous weight forces the ice to break, and the whole of the gang are drowned, as it is impossible for these animals to climb over the surrounding sharp edges of the ice. We have seen not less than three nests of White-headed Eagles this day. We are fast ashore about sixteen

miles below the Mandan Villages, and will, in all probability, reach there to-morrow morning at an early hour. It is raining yet, and the day has been a most unpleasant one.

June 7, Wednesday. We had a vile night of rain, and wind from the northeast, which is still going on, and likely to continue the whole of this blessed day. Yesterday, when we had a white frost, ice was found in the kettles of Mr. Kipp's barges. We reached Fort Clark⁹ and the Mandan Villages at half-past seven this morning. Great guns were fired from the fort and from the "Omega," as our captain took the guns from the "Trapper" at Fort Pierre. The site of this fort appears a good one, though it is placed considerably below the Mandan Village. We saw some small spots cultivated, where corn, pumpkins, and beans are grown. The fort and village are situated on the high bank, rising somewhat to the elevation of a hill. The Mandan mud huts are very far from looking poetical, although Mr. Catlin has tried to render them so by placing them in regular rows, and all of the same size and form, which is by no means the case. But different travellers have different eyes! We saw more Indians than at any previous time since leaving St. Louis; and it is possible that there

⁹ "Fort Clark came in sight, with a background of the blue prairie hills, and with the gay American banner waving from the flag-staff... The fort is built on a smaller scale, on a plan similar to that of all the other trading posts or forts of the company. Immediately behind the fort there were, in the prairie, seventy leather tents of the Crows." (Prince of Wied, p. 171.) Fort Clark stood on the right bank of the Missouri, and thus across the river from the original Fort Mandan built by Lewis and Clark in the fall of 1804. Maximilian has much to say of it and of Mr. Kipp.

are a hundred huts, made of mud, all looking like so many potato winter-houses in the Eastern States. As soon as we were near the shore, every article that could conveniently be carried off was placed under lock and key, and our division door was made fast, as well as those of our own rooms. Even the axes and poles were put by. Our captain told us that last year they stole his cap and his shot-pouch and horn, and that it was through the interference of the first chief that he recovered his cap and horn; but that a squaw had his leather belt, and would not give it up. The appearance of these poor, miserable devils, as we approached the shore, was wretched enough. There they stood in the pelting rain and keen wind, covered with Buffalo robes, red blankets, and the like, some partially and most curiously besmeared with mud; and as they came on board, and we shook hands with each of them, I felt a clamminess that rendered the ceremony most repulsive. Their legs and naked feet were covered with mud. They looked at me with apparent curiosity, perhaps on account of my beard, which produced the same effect at Fort Pierre. They all looked very poor; and our captain says they are the *ne plus ultra* of thieves. It is said there are nearly three thousand men, women, and children that, during winter, cram themselves into these miserable hovels. Harris and I walked to the fort about nine o'clock. The walking was rascally, passing through mud and water the whole way. The yard of the fort itself was as bad. We entered Mr. Chardon's own room, crawled up a crazy ladder, and in a low garret I had the great pleasure of seeing alive the Swift or Kit Fox which he has

given to me. It ran swiftly from one corner to another, and, when approached, growled somewhat in the manner of a common Fox. Mr. Chardon told me that good care would be taken of it until our return, that it would be chained to render it more gentle, and that I would find it an easy matter to take it along. I sincerely hope so. Seeing a remarkably fine skin of a large Cross Fox¹⁰ which I wished to buy, it was handed over to me. After this, Mr. Chardon asked one of the Indians to take us into the village, and particularly to show us the "Medicine Lodge." We followed our guide through mud and mire, even into the Lodge. We found this to be, in general terms, like all the other lodges, only larger, measuring twenty-three yards in diameter, with a large squarish aperture in the centre of the roof, some six or seven feet long by about four wide. We had entered this curiosity shop by pushing aside a wet Elk skin stretched on four sticks. Looking around, I saw a number of calabashes, eight or ten Otter skulls, two very large Buffalo skulls with the horns on, evidently of great age, and some sticks and other magical implements with which none but a "Great Medicine Man" is acquainted. During my survey there sat, crouched down on his haunches, an Indian wrapped in a dirty blanket, with only his filthy head peeping out. Our guide spoke to him; but he stirred not. Again, at the foot of one of the posts that support the central portion of this great room, lay a parcel that I

¹⁰ This Fox was probably the cross variety of the Long-tailed Prairie Fox, *Vulpes macrourus* of Baird, Stansbury's Exped. Great Salt Lake, June, 1852, p. 309; *Vulpes utah* of Aud. and Bach. Quad. N. Am. iii., 1853, p. 255, pl. 151 (originally published by them in Proc. Acad. Philad., July, 1852, p. 114). – E. C.

took for a bundle of Buffalo robes; but it moved presently, and from beneath it half arose the emaciated body of a poor blind Indian, whose skin was quite shrivelled; and our guide made us signs that he was about to die. We all shook both hands with him; and he pressed our hands closely and with evident satisfaction. He had his pipe and tobacco pouch by him, and soon lay down again. We left this abode of mysteries, as I was anxious to see the interior of one of the common huts around; and again our guide led us through mud and mire to his own lodge, which we entered in the same way as we had done the other. All these lodges have a sort of portico that leads to the door, and on the tops of most of them I observed Buffalo skulls. This lodge contained the whole family of our guide – several women and children, and another man, perhaps a son-in-law or a brother. All these, except the man, were on the outer edge of the lodge, crouching on the ground, some suckling children; and at nearly equal distances apart were placed berths, raised about two feet above the ground, made of leather, and with square apertures for the sleepers or occupants to enter. The man of whom I have spoken was lying down in one of these, which was all open in front. I walked up to him, and, after disturbing his happy slumbers, shook hands with him; he made signs for me to sit down; and after Harris and I had done so, he rose, squatted himself near us, and, getting out a large spoon made of boiled Buffalo horn, handed it to a young girl, who brought a great rounded wooden bowl filled with pemmican, mixed with corn and some other stuff. I ate a mouthful or so

of it, and found it quite palatable; and Harris and the rest then ate of it also. Bell was absent; we had seen nothing of him since we left the boat. This lodge, as well as the other, was dirty with water and mud; but I am told that in dry weather they are kept cleaner, and much cleaning do they need, most truly. A round, shallow hole was dug in the centre for the fire; and from the roof descended over this a chain, by the aid of which they do their cooking, the utensil being attached to the chain when wanted. As we returned towards the fort, I gave our guide a piece of tobacco, and he appeared well pleased. He followed us on board, and as he peeped in my room, and saw the dried and stuffed specimens we have, he evinced a slight degree of curiosity. Our captain, Mr. Chardon, and our men have been busily engaged in putting ashore that portion of the cargo designed for this fort, which in general appearance might be called a poor miniature representation of Fort Pierre. The whole country around was overgrown with "Lamb's quarters" (*Chenopodium album*), which I have no doubt, if boiled, would take the place of spinach in this wild and, to my eyes, miserable country, the poetry of which lies in the imagination of those writers who have described the "velvety prairies" and "enchanted castles" (of mud), so common where we now are. We observed a considerable difference in the color of these Indians, who, by the way, are almost all Riccarees; many appeared, and in fact are, redder than others; they are lank, rather tall, and very alert, but, as I have said before, all look poor and dirty. After dinner we went up the muddy bank again to look

at the corn-fields, as the small patches that are meanly cultivated are called. We found poor, sickly looking corn about two inches high, that had been represented to us this morning as full six inches high. We followed the prairie, a very extensive one, to the hills, and there found a deep ravine, sufficiently impregnated with saline matter to answer the purpose of salt water for the Indians to boil their corn and pemmican, clear and clean; but they, as well as the whites at the fort, resort to the muddy Missouri for their drinking water, the only fresh water at hand. Not a drop of spirituous liquor has been brought to this place for the last two years; and there can be no doubt that on this account the Indians have become more peaceable than heretofore, though now and then a white man is murdered, and many horses are stolen. As we walked over the plain, we saw heaps of earth thrown up to cover the poor Mandans who died of the small-pox. These mounds in many instances appear to contain the remains of several bodies and, perched on the top, lies, pretty generally, the rotting skull of a Buffalo. Indeed, the skulls of the Buffaloes seem as if a kind of relation to these most absurdly superstitious and ignorant beings. I could not hear a word of the young Grizzly Bear of which Mr. Chardon had spoken to me. He gave me his Buffalo head-dress and other trifles – as he was pleased to call them; all of which will prove more or less interesting and curious to you when they reach Minniesland. He presented Squires with a good hunting shirt and a few other things, and to all of us,

presented moccasins. We collected a few round cacti;¹¹ and I saw several birds that looked much the worse for the cold and wet weather we have had these last few days. Our boat has been thronged with Indians ever since we have tied to the shore; and it is with considerable difficulty and care that we can stop them from intruding into our rooms when we are there. We found many portions of skulls lying on the ground, which, perhaps, did at one period form the circles of them spoken of by Catlin. All around the village is filthy beyond description. Our captain tells us that no matter what weather we may have to-morrow, he will start at daylight, even if he can only go across the river, to get rid of these wolfish-looking vagabonds of Indians. I sincerely hope that we may have a fair day and a long run, so that the air around us may once more be pure and fresh from the hand of Nature. After the Riccarees had taken possession of this Mandan Village, the remains of that once powerful tribe removed about three miles up the river, and there have now fifteen or twenty huts, containing, of course, only that number of families. During the worst periods of the epidemic which swept over this village with such fury, many became maniacs, rushed to the Missouri, leaped into its turbid waters, and were seen no more. Mr. Primeau, wife, and children, as well as another half-breed, have gone to the fort, and are to remain there till further orders. The fort is in a poor condition, roofs leaking, etc. Whilst at the fort this afternoon, I

¹¹ No doubt the *Mammillaria vivipara*, a small globose species, quite different from the common *Opuntia* or prickly pear of the Missouri region. – E. C.

was greatly surprised to see a tall, athletic Indian thrashing the dirty rascals about Mr. Chardon's door most severely; but I found on inquiry that he was called "the soldier,"¹² and that he had authority to do so whenever the Indians intruded or congregated in the manner this *canaille* had done. After a while the same tall fellow came on board with his long stick, and immediately began belaboring the fellows on the lower guards; the latter ran off over the planks, and scrambled up the muddy banks as if so many affrighted Buffaloes. Since then we have been comparatively quiet; but I hope they will all go off, as the captain is going to put the boat from the shore, to the full length of our spars. The wind has shifted to the northward, and the atmosphere has been so chilled that a House Swallow was caught, benumbed with cold, and brought to me by our captain. Harris, Bell, and I saw a Cliff Swallow take refuge on board; but this was not caught. We have seen Say's Flycatcher, the Ground Finch, Cow Buntings, and a few other birds. One of the agents arrived this afternoon from the Gros Ventre, or Minnetaree Village, about twelve miles above us. He is represented as a remarkably brave man, and he relates some strange adventures of his prowess. Several *great warriors* have condescended to shake me by the hand; their very touch is disgusting – it will indeed be a deliverance to get rid of all this "Indian poetry." We are, nevertheless, to take a few

¹² The individual so designated was an important functionary in these villages, whose authority corresponded with that of our "chief of police," and was seldom if ever disputed. – E. C.

to the Yellowstone. Alexis has his wife, who is, in fact, a good-looking young woman; an old patroon, Provost, takes one of his daughters along; and we have, besides, several red-skinned single gentlemen. We were assured that the northern parts of the hills, that form a complete curtain to the vast prairie on which we have walked this afternoon, are still adorned with patches of snow that fell there during last winter. It is now nine o'clock, but before I go to rest I cannot resist giving you a description of the curious exhibition that we have had on board, from a numerous lot of Indians of the first class, say some forty or fifty. They ranged themselves along the sides of the large cabin, squatting on the floor. Coffee had been prepared for the whole party, and hard sea-biscuit likewise. The coffee was first given to each of them, and afterwards the biscuits, and I had the honor of handing the latter to the row on one side of the boat; a box of tobacco was opened and laid on the table. The man who came from the Gros Ventres this afternoon proved to be an excellent interpreter; and after the captain had delivered his speech to him, he spoke loudly to the group, and explained the purport of the captain's speech. They grunted their approbation frequently, and were, no doubt, pleased. Two individuals (Indians) made their appearance highly decorated, with epaulets on the shoulders, red clay on blue uniforms, three cocks' plumes in their head-dress, rich moccasins, leggings, etc. These are men who, though in the employ of the Opposition company, act truly as friends; but who, meantime, being called "Braves," never grunted, bowed,

or shook hands with any of us. Supper over and the tobacco distributed, the whole body arose simultaneously, and each and every one of these dirty wretches we had all to shake by the hand. The two braves sat still until all the rest had gone ashore, and then retired as majestically as they had entered, not even shaking hands with our good-humored captain. I am told that this performance takes place once every year, on the passing of the Company's boats. I need not say that the coffee and the two biscuits apiece were gobbled down in less than no time. The tobacco, which averaged about two pounds to each man, was hid in their robes or blankets for future use. Two of the Indians, who must have been of the highest order, and who distributed the "rank weed," were nearly naked; one had on only a breech-clout and one legging, the other was in no better case. They are now all ashore except one or more who are going with us to the Yellowstone; and I will now go to my rest. Though I have said "Good-night," I have arisen almost immediately, and I must write on, for we have other scenes going on both among the trappers below and some of the people above. Many Indians, squaws as well as men, are bartering and trading, and keep up such a babble that Harris and I find sleep impossible; needless to say, the squaws who are on board are of the lowest grade of morality.

June 8, Thursday. This morning was fair and cold, as you see by the range of the thermometer, 37° to 56°. We started at a very early hour, and breakfasted before five, on account of the village

of Gros Ventres, where our captain had to stop. We passed a few lodges belonging to the tribe of the poor Mandans, about all that remained. I only counted eight, but am told there are twelve. The village of the Gros Ventres (Minnetarees) has been cut off from the bank of the river by an enormous sand-bar, now overgrown with willows and brush, and we could only see the American flag flying in the cool breeze. Two miles above this, however, we saw an increasing body of Indians, for the prairie was sprinkled with small parties, on horse and on foot. The first who arrived fired a salute of small guns, and we responded with our big gun. They had an abundance of dogs harnessed to take wood back to the village, and their yells and fighting were severe upon our ears. Some forty or more of the distinguished blackguards came on board; and we had to close our doors as we did yesterday. After a short period they were feasted as last evening; and speeches, coffee, and tobacco, as well as some gunpowder, were given them, which they took away in packs, to be divided afterward. We took one more passenger, and lost our interpreter, who is a trader with the Minnetarees. The latter are by no means as fine-looking a set of men as those we have seen before, and I observed none of that whiteness of skin among them. There were numbers of men, women, and children. We saw a crippled and evidently tame Wolf, and two Indians, following us on the top of the hills. We saw two Swans on a bar, and a female Elk, with her young fawn, for a few minutes. I wished that we had been ashore, as I know full well that the mother would not leave her

young; and the mother killed, the young one would have been easily caught alive. We are now stopping for the night, and our men are cutting wood. We have done this, I believe, four times to-day, and have run upward of sixty miles. At the last wood-cutting place, a young leveret was started by the men, and after a short race, the poor thing squatted, and was killed by the stroke of a stick. It proved to be the young of *Lepus townsendii* [*L. campestris*], large enough to have left the mother, and weighing rather more than a pound. It is a very beautiful specimen. The eyes are very large, and the iris pure amber color. Its hair is tightly, but beautifully curled. Its measurements are as follows [omitted]. Bell will make a fine skin of it to-morrow morning. We have had all sorts of stories related to us; but Mr. Kipp, who has been in the country for twenty-two years, is evidently a person of truth, and I expect a good deal of information from him. Our captain told us that on a previous voyage some Indians asked him if, "when the great Medicine" (meaning the steamer) "was tired, he gave it whiskey." Mr. Sire laughed, and told them he did. "How much?" was the query. "A barrellful, to be sure!" The poor wretches at first actually believed him, and went off contented, but were naturally angry at being undeceived on a later occasion. I have now some hope of finding a young of the Antelope alive at Fort Union, as Mr. Kipp left one there about ten days ago. I am now going to bed, though our axemen and "charettes" are still going; and I hope I may not be called up to-morrow morning, to be ready for breakfast at half-past four. Harris and Bell went off

with Alexis. Bell fired at a bird, and a large Wolf immediately made its appearance. This is always the case in this country; when you shoot an animal and hide yourself, you may see, in less than half an hour, from ten to thirty of these hungry rascals around the carcass, and have fine fun shooting at them. We have had a windy day, but a good run on the whole. I hope to-morrow may prove propitious, and that we shall reach Fort Union in five more days.

June 9, Friday. Thermometer 42°, 75°, 66°. We had a heavy white frost last night, but we have had a fine, pleasant day on the whole, and to me a most interesting one. We passed the Little Missouri¹³ (the real one) about ten this morning. It is a handsome stream, that runs all the way from the Black Hills, one of the main spurs of the mighty Rocky Mountains. We saw three Elks swimming across it, and the number of this fine species of Deer that are about us now is almost inconceivable. We have heard of burning springs, which we intend to examine on our way down. We started a Goose from the shore that had evidently young ones;

¹³ "It rises to the west of the Black Mts., across the northern extremity of which it finds a narrow, rapid passage along high perpendicular banks, then seeks the Missouri in a northeasterly direction, through a broken country with highlands bare of timber, and the low grounds particularly supplied with cottonwood, elm, small ash, box, alder, and an undergrowth of willow, red-wood, red-berry, and choke-cherry... It enters the Missouri with a bold current, and is 134 yards wide, but its greatest depth is two feet and a half, which, joined to its rapidity and its sand-bars, makes the navigation difficult except for canoes." ("Lewis and Clark," ed. 1893, pp. 267, 268.) "We came to a green spot at the mouth of the Little Missouri, which is reckoned to be 1670 miles from the mouth of the great Missouri. The chain of blue hills, with the same singular forms as we had seen before, appeared on the other side of this river." ("Travels in North America," Prince of Wied, p. 182.)

she swam off, beating the water with wings half extended, until nearly one hundred yards off. A shot from a rifle was fired at her, and happily missed the poor thing; she afterwards lowered her neck, sank her body, and with the tip of the bill only above water, kept swimming away from us till out of sight. Afterwards one of the trappers shot at two Geese with two young ones. We landed at four o'clock, and Harris and Bell shot some Bay-winged Buntings and *Emberiza pallida*, whilst Sprague and I went up to the top of the hills, bounding the beautiful prairie, by which we had stopped to repair something about the engine. We gathered some handsome lupines, of two different species, and many other curious plants. From this elevated spot we could see the wilderness to an immense distance; the Missouri looked as if only a brook, and our steamer a very small one indeed. At this juncture we saw two men running along the shore upwards, and I supposed they had seen an Elk or something else, of which they were in pursuit. Meantime, gazing around, we saw a large lake, where we are told that Ducks, Geese, and Swans breed in great numbers; this we intend also to visit when we come down. At this moment I heard the report of a gun from the point where the men had been seen, and when we reached the steamboat, we were told that a Buffalo had been killed. From the deck I saw a man swimming round the animal; he got on its side, and floated down the stream with it. The captain sent a parcel of men with a rope; the swimmer fastened this round the neck of the Buffalo, and with his assistance, for he now swam all the way,

the poor beast was brought alongside; and as the tackle had been previously fixed, it was hauled up on the fore deck. Sprague took its measurements with me, which are as follows: length from nose to root of tail, 8 feet; height of fore shoulder to hoof, 4 ft. 9½ in.; height at the rump to hoof, 4 ft. 2 in. The head was cut off, as well as one fore and one hind foot. The head is so full of symmetry, and so beautiful, that I shall have a drawing of it to-morrow, as well as careful ones of the feet. Whilst the butchers were at work, I was highly interested to see one of our Indians cutting out the milk-bag of the cow and eating it, quite fresh and raw, in pieces somewhat larger than a hen's egg. One of the stomachs was partially washed in a bucket of water, and an Indian swallowed a large portion of this. Mr. Chardon brought the remainder on the upper deck and ate it uncleaned. I had a piece well cleaned and tasted it; to my utter astonishment, it was very good, but the idea was repulsive to me; besides which, I am not a meat-eater, as you know, except when other provisions fail. The animal was in good condition; and the whole carcass was cut up and dispersed among the men below, reserving the nicer portions for the cabin. This was accomplished with great rapidity; the blood was washed away in a trice, and half an hour afterwards no one would have known that a Buffalo had been dressed on deck. We now met with a somewhat disagreeable accident; in starting and backing off the boat, our yawl was run beneath the boat; this strained it, and sprung one of the planks so much that, when we landed on the opposite side of the river, we had to haul

it on shore, and turn it over for examination; it was afterwards taken to the fore-castle to undergo repairs to-morrow, as it is often needed. Whilst cutting wood was going on, we went ashore. Bell shot at two Buffaloes out of eight, and killed both; he would also have shot a Wolf, had he had more bullets. Harris saw, and shot at, an Elk; but he knows little about still hunting, and thereby lost a good chance. A negro fire-tender went off with his rifle and shot two of Townsend's Hares. One was cut in two by his ball, and he left it on the ground; the other was shot near the rump, and I have it now hanging before me; and, let me tell you, that I never before saw so beautiful an animal of the same family. My drawing will be a good one; it is a fine specimen, an old male. I have been hearing much of the prevalence of scurvy, from living so constantly on dried flesh, also about the small-pox, which destroyed such numbers of the Indians. Among the Mandans, Riccarées, and Gros Ventres, hundreds died in 1837, only a few surviving; and the Assiniboins were nearly exterminated. Indeed it is said that in the various attacks of this scourge 52,000 Indians have perished. This last visitation of the dread disease has never before been related by a traveller,¹⁴ and I will write more of it when at Fort Union. It is now twenty minutes to midnight; and, with walking and excitement of one kind or another, I am ready for bed. Alexis and another hunter will be off in an hour on a hunt.

¹⁴ At this time the account of the Prince of Wied had not been published in English; that translation appeared December, 1843, two years after the German edition.

June 10, Saturday. I rose at half-past three this morning. It was clear and balmy; our men were cutting wood, and we went off shooting. We saw a female Elk that was loath to leave the neighborhood; and Bell shot a Sharp-tailed Grouse, which we ate at our supper and found pretty good, though sadly out of season. As we were returning to the boat, Alexis and his companion went off after Buffaloes that we saw grazing peaceably on the bank near the river. Whilst they were shooting at the Buffaloes, and almost simultaneously, the fawn of the female Elk was seen lying asleep under the bank. It rose as we approached, and Bell shot at it, but missed; and with its dam it went briskly off. It was quite small, looking almost red, and was beautifully spotted with light marks of the color of the Virginia Deer's fawn. I would have given five dollars for it, as I saw it skipping over the prairie. At this moment Alexis came running, and told the captain they had killed two Buffaloes; and almost all the men went off at once with ropes, to bring the poor animals on board, according to custom. One, however, had been already dressed. The other had its head cut off, and the men were tugging at the rope, hauling the beast along over the grass. Mr. Chardon was seated on it; until, when near the boat, the rope gave way, and the bull rolled over into a shallow ravine. It was soon on board, however, and quickly skinned and cut up. The two hunters had been absent three-quarters of an hour. At the report of the guns, two Wolves made their appearance, and no doubt fed at leisure on the offal left from the first Buffalo. Harris saw a gang of

Elks, consisting of between thirty and forty. We have passed a good number of Wild Geese with goslings; the Geese were shot at, notwithstanding my remonstrances on account of the young, but fortunately all escaped. We passed some beautiful scenery when about the middle of the "Bend," and almost opposite had the pleasure of seeing five Mountain Rams, or Bighorns, on the summit of a hill. I looked at them through the telescope; they stood perfectly still for some minutes, then went out of sight, and then again were in view. One of them had very large horns; the rest appeared somewhat smaller. Our captain told us that he had seen them at, or very near by, the same place last season, on his way up. We saw many very curious cliffs, but not one answering the drawings engraved for Catlin's work. We passed Knife River,¹⁵ *Rivière aux Couteaux*, and stopped for a short time to take in wood. Harris killed a Sparrow Hawk, and saw several Red-shafted Woodpeckers. Bell was then engaged in saving the head of the Buffalo cow, of which I made a drawing, and Sprague an outline, notwithstanding the horrible motion of our boat. We passed safely a dangerous chain of rocks extending across the river; we also passed White River;¹⁶ both the streams I have

¹⁵ This is the Little Knife, or Upper Knife River, to be carefully distinguished from that Knife River at the mouth of which were the Minnetaree villages. It falls into the Missouri from the north, in Mountrail Co., 55 miles above the mouth of the Little Missouri. This is probably the stream named Goat-pen Creek by Lewis and Clark: see p. 274 of the edition of 1893. – E. C.

¹⁶ Or White Earth River of some maps, a comparatively small stream, eighteen and one half miles above the mouth of Little Knife River. – E. C.

mentioned are insignificant. The weather was warm, and became cloudy, and it is now raining smartly. We have, however, a good quantity of excellent wood, and have made a good run, say sixty miles. We saw what we supposed to be three Grizzly Bears, but could not be sure. We saw on the prairie ahead of us some Indians, and as we neared them, found them to be Assiniboins. There were about ten altogether, men, squaws, and children. The boat was stopped, and a smart-looking, though small-statured man came on board. He had eight plugs of tobacco given him, and was asked to go off; but he talked a vast deal, and wanted powder and ball. He was finally got rid of. During his visit, our Gros Ventre chief and our Sioux were both in my own cabin. The first having killed three of that tribe and scalped them, and the Sioux having a similar record, they had no wish to meet. A few miles above this we stopped to cut wood. Bell and Harris went on shore; and we got a White Wolf, so old and so poor that we threw it overboard. Meantime a fawn Elk was observed crossing the river, coming toward our shore; it was shot at twice, but missed; it swam to the shore, but under such a steep bank that it could not get up. Alexis, who was told of this, ran down the river bank, reached it, and fastened his suspenders around its neck, but could not get it up the bank. Bell had returned, and went to his assistance, but all in vain; the little thing was very strong, and floundered and struggled till it broke the tie, and swam swiftly with the current down the river, and was lost. A slight rope would have secured it to us. This was almost the

same spot where the captain caught one alive last season with the yawl; and we could have performed the same feat easily, had not the yawl been on deck undergoing repairs. We pushed off, and very soon saw more Indians on the shore, also Assiniboins. They had crossed the "Bend" below us, and had brought some trifles to trade with us; but our captain passed on, and the poor wretches sat and looked at the "Great Medicine" in astonishment. Shortly after this, we saw a Wolf attempting to climb a very steep bank of clay; he fell down thrice, but at last reached the top and disappeared at once. On the opposite shore another Wolf was lying down on a sand-bar, like a dog, and might readily have been taken for one. We have stopped for the night at nine o'clock; and I now have done my day's putting-up of memoranda and sketches, intending to enlarge upon much after I return home. I forgot to say that last evening we saw a large herd of Buffaloes, with many calves among them; they were grazing quietly on a fine bit of prairie, and we were actually opposite to them and within two hundred yards before they appeared to notice us. They stared, and then started at a handsome canter, suddenly wheeled round, stopped, closed up their ranks, and then passed over a slight knoll, producing a beautiful picturesque view. Another thing I forgot to speak of is a place not far below the Little Missouri, where Mr. Kipp assured us we should find the remains of a petrified forest, which we hope to see later.

June 11, Sunday. This day has been tolerably fine, though windy. We have seen an abundance of game, a great number of

Elks, common Virginian Deer, Mountain Rams in two places, and a fine flock of Sharp-tailed Grouse, that, when they flew off from the ground near us, looked very much like large Meadow Larks. They were on a prairie bordering a large patch of Artemisia, which in the distance presents the appearance of acres of cabbages. We have seen many Wolves and some Buffaloes. One young bull stood on the brink of a bluff, looking at the boat steadfastly for full five minutes; and as we neared the spot, he waved his tail, and moved off briskly. On another occasion, a young bull that had just landed at the foot of a very steep bluff was slaughtered without difficulty; two shots were fired at it, and the poor thing was killed by a rifle bullet. I was sorry, for we did not stop for it, and its happy life was needlessly ended. I saw near that spot a large Hawk, and also a very small Tamias, or Ground Squirrel. Harris saw a Spermophile, of what species none of us could tell. We have seen many Elks swimming the river, and they look almost the size of a well-grown mule. They stared at us, were fired at, at an enormous distance, it is true, and yet stood still. These animals are abundant beyond belief hereabouts. We have seen much remarkably handsome scenery, but nothing at all comparing with Catlin's descriptions; his book must, after all, be altogether a humbug. Poor devil! I pity him from the bottom of my soul; had he studied, and kept up to the old French proverb that says, "Bon renommé vaut mieux que ceinture doré," he might have become an "honest man" – the quintessence of God's works. We did hope to have reached L'Eau Bourbeux (the

Muddy River¹⁷) this evening, but we are now fast ashore, about six miles below it, about the same distance that we have been told we were ever since shortly after dinner. We have had one event: our boat caught fire, and burned for a few moments near the stern, the effects of the large, hot cinders coming from the chimney; but it was almost immediately put out, thank God! Any inattention, with about 10,000 lbs. of powder on board, might have resulted in a sad accident. We have decided to write a short letter of thanks to our truly gentlemanly captain, and to present him with a handsome six-barrelled pistol, the only thing we have that may prove of service to him, although I hope he may never need it. Sprague drew four figures of the Buffalo's foot; and Bell and I have packed the whole of our skins. We ran to-day all round the compass, touching every point. The following is a copy of the letter to Captain Sire, signed by all of us.

*Fort Union, Mouth of Yellowstone,
Upper Missouri, June 11th, 1843.*

Dear Sir, – We cannot part with you previous to your return to St. Louis, without offering to you our best wishes, and our thanks for your great courtesy, assuring you how highly we appreciate, and feel grateful for, your uniform kindness and gentlemanly deportment to each and all of

¹⁷ Present name of the stream which flows into the Missouri from the north, in Buford Co. This is the last considerable affluent below the mouth of the Yellowstone, and the one which Lewis and Clark called White Earth River, by mistake. See last note. – E. C.

us. We are most happy to add that our passage to the Yellowstone River has been devoid of any material accident, which we can only attribute to the great regularity and constant care with which you have discharged your arduous duties in the difficult navigation of the river.

We regret that it is not in our power, at this moment, to offer you a suitable token of our esteem, but hope you will confer on us the favor of accepting at our hands a six-barrelled, silver-mounted pistol, which we sincerely hope and trust you may never have occasion to use in defence of your person. We beg you to consider us,

Your well-wishers and friends, etc.,

Fort Union, June 12, Monday. We had a cloudy and showery day, and a high wind besides. We saw many Wild Geese and Ducks with their young. We took in wood at two places, but shot nothing. I saw a Wolf giving chase, or driving away four Ravens from a sand-bar; but the finest sight of all took place shortly before we came to the mouth of the Yellowstone, and that was no less than twenty-two Mountain Rams and Ewes mixed, and amid them one young one only. We came in sight of the fort at five o'clock, and reached it at seven. We passed the Opposition fort three miles below this; their flags were hoisted, and ours also. We were saluted from Fort Union, and we fired guns in return, six in number. The moment we had arrived, the gentlemen of the fort came down on horseback, and appeared quite a cavalcade. I was introduced to Mr. Culbertson and others, and, of course, the introduction went the rounds. We walked to the fort and drank

some first-rate port wine, and returned to the boat at half-past nine o'clock. Our captain was pleased with the letter and the pistol. Our trip to this place has been the quickest on record, though our boat is the slowest that ever undertook to reach the Yellowstone. Including all stoppages and detentions, we have made the trip in forty-eight days and seven hours from St. Louis. We left St. Louis April 25th, at noon; reaching Fort Union June 12th, at seven in the evening.

June 13, Tuesday. We had a remarkably busy day on board and on shore, but spent much of our time writing letters. I wrote home at great length to John Bachman, N. Berthoud, and Gideon B. Smith. We walked to the fort once and back again, and dined on board with our captain and the gentlemen of the fort. We took a ride also in an old wagon, somewhat at the risk of our necks, for we travelled too fast for the nature of what I was told was the road. We slept on board the "Omega," probably for the last time.

We have been in a complete state of excitement unloading the boat, reloading her with a new cargo, and we were all packing and arranging our effects, as well as writing letters. After dinner our belongings were taken to the landing of the fort in a large keel-boat, with the last of the cargo. The room which we are to occupy during our stay at this place is rather small and low, with only one window, on the west side. However, we shall manage well enough, I dare say, for the few weeks we are to be here. This afternoon I had a good deal of conversation with Mr. Culbertson, and found him well disposed to do all he can for us; and no one

can ask for more politeness than is shown us. Our captain having invited us to remain with him to-night, we have done so, and will breakfast with him to-morrow morning. It is his intention to leave as early as he can settle his business here. All the trappers are gone to the fort, and in a few weeks will be dispersed over different and distant parts of the wilderness. The filth they had left below has been scraped and washed off, as well indeed as the whole boat, of which there was need enough. I have copied this journal and send it to St. Louis by our good captain; also one box of skins, one pair Elk horns, and one bundle of Wolf and other skins.

June 14, Wednesday. At six this morning all hands rose early; the residue of the cargo for St. Louis was placed on board. Our captain told us time was up, and we all started for the fort on foot, quite a short distance. Having deposited our guns there, Bell, Squires, and I walked off to the wooding-place, where our captain was to remain a good while, and it was there we should bid him adieu. We found this walk one of the worst, the very worst, upon which we ever trod; full of wild rose-bushes, tangled and matted with vines, burs, and thorns of all sorts, and encumbered by thousands of pieces of driftwood, some decayed, some sunk in the earth, while others were entangled with the innumerable roots exposed by floods and rains. We saw nothing but a few Ravens. When nearly half way, we heard the trampling of galloping horses, and loud hallooings, which we found to proceed from the wagon of which we have spoken,

which, loaded with men, passed us at a speed one would have thought impossible over such ground. Soon after we had a heavy shower of rain, but reached the boat in good order. Harris and Sprague, who had followed us, came afterwards. I was pretty hot, and rather tired. The boat took on wood for half an hour after we arrived; then the captain shook us all by the hand most heartily, and we bade him God speed. I parted from him really with sorrow, for I have found him all I could wish during the whole passage; and his position is no sinecure, to say naught of the rabble under his control. All the wood-cutters who remained walked off by the road; and we went back in the wagon over a bad piece of ground – much easier, however, than returning on foot. As we reached the prairies, we travelled faster, and passed by the late garden of the fort, which had been abandoned on account of the thieving of the men attached to the Opposition Company, at Fort Mortimer. Harris caught a handsome snake, now in spirits. We saw Lazuli Finches and several other sorts of small birds. Upon reaching the fort, from which many great guns were fired as salutes to the steamer, which were loudly returned, I was amused at the terror the firing occasioned to the squaws and their children, who had arrived in great numbers the previous evening; they howled, fell down on the earth, or ran in every direction. All the dogs started off, equally frightened, and made for the distant hills. Dinner not being ready, three of us took a walk, and saw a good number of *Tamias* holes, many cacti of two sorts, and some plants hitherto uncollected by us. We saw a few Arctic Ground

Finches and two Wolves. After dinner Mr. Culbertson told us that if a Wolf made its appearance on the prairie near the fort, he would give it chase on horseback, and bring it to us, alive or dead; and he was as good as his word. It was so handsomely executed, that I will relate the whole affair. When I saw the Wolf (a white one), it was about a quarter of a mile off, alternately standing and trotting; the horses were about one-half the distance off. A man was started to drive these in; and I thought the coursers never would reach the fort, much less become equipped so as to overhaul the Wolf. We were all standing on the platform of the fort, with our heads only above the palisades; and I was so fidgety that I ran down twice to tell the hunters that the Wolf was making off. Mr. Culbertson, however, told me he would see it did not make off; and in a few moments he rode out of the fort, gun in hand, dressed only in shirt and breeches. He threw his cap off within a few yards, and suddenly went off with the swiftness of a jockey bent on winning a race. The Wolf trotted on, and ever and anon stopped to gaze at the rider and the horse; till, finding out the meaning (too late, alas! for him), he galloped off with all his might; but the horse was too swift for the poor cur, as we saw the rider gaining ground rapidly. Mr. Culbertson fired his gun off as a signal, I was told, that the Wolf would be brought in; and the horse, one would think, must have been of the same opinion, for although the Wolf had now reached the hills, and turned into a small ravine, the moment it had entered it, the horse dashed after, the sound of the gun came on the ear, the Wolf was picked

up by Mr. Culbertson without dismounting, hardly slackening his pace, and thrown across the saddle. The rider returned as swiftly as he had gone, wet through with a smart shower that had fallen meantime; and the poor Wolf was placed at my disposal. The time taken from the start to the return in the yard did not exceed twenty minutes, possibly something less. Two other men who had started at the same time rode very swiftly also, and skirted the hills to prevent the Wolf's escape; and one of them brought in Mr. C.'s gun, which he had thrown on the ground as he picked up the Wolf to place it on the saddle. The beast was not quite dead when it arrived, and its jaws told of its dying agonies; it scratched one of Mr. C.'s fingers sorely; but we are assured that such things so often occur that nothing is thought of it.

And now a kind of sham Buffalo hunt was proposed, accompanied by a bet of a suit of clothes, to be given to the rider who would load and fire the greatest number of shots in a given distance. The horses were mounted as another Wolf was seen trotting off towards the hills, and Mr. Culbertson again told us he would bring it in. This time, however, he was mistaken; the Wolf was too far off to be overtaken, and it reached the hill-tops, made its way through a deep ravine full of large rocks, and was then given up. Mr. Culbertson was seen coming down without his quarry. He joined the riders, started with his gun empty, loaded in a trice, and fired the first shot; then the three riders came on at full speed, loading and firing first on one side, then on the other of the horse, as if after Buffaloes. Mr. C. fired eleven times

before he reached the fort, and within less than half a mile's run; the others fired once less, each. We were all delighted to see these feats. No one was thrown off, though the bridles hung loose, and the horses were under full gallop all the time. Mr. Culbertson's mare, which is of the full Blackfoot Indian breed, is about five years old, and could not be bought for four hundred dollars. I should like to see some of the best English hunting gentlemen hunt in the like manner. We are assured that after dusk, or as soon as the gates of the fort are shut, the Wolves come near enough to be killed from the platform, as these beasts oftentimes come to the trough where the hogs are fed daily. We have seen no less than eight this day from the fort, moving as leisurely as if a hundred miles off. A heavy shower put off running a race; but we are to have a regular Buffalo hunt, where I must act only as a spectator; for, alas! I am now too near seventy to run and load whilst going at full gallop. Two gentlemen arrived this evening from the Crow Indian Nation; they crossed to our side of the river, and were introduced at once. One is Mr. Chouteau, son of Auguste Chouteau, and the other a Scotchman, Mr. James Murray, at whose father's farm, on the Tweed, we all stopped on our return from the Highlands of Scotland. They told us that the snow and ice was yet three feet deep near the mountains, and an abundance over the whole of the mountains themselves. They say they have made a good collection of robes, but that Beavers are very scarce. This day has been spent altogether in talking, sight-seeing, and enjoyment. Our room was small, dark, and dirty, and crammed

with our effects. Mr. Culbertson saw this, and told me that tomorrow he would remove us to a larger, quieter, and better one. I was glad to hear this, as it would have been very difficult to draw, write, or work in; and yet it is the very room where the Prince de Neuwied resided for two months, with his secretary and bird-preserver. The evening was cloudy and cold; we had had several showers of rain since our bath in the bushes this morning, and I felt somewhat fatigued. Harris and I made our beds up; Squires fixed some Buffalo robes, of which nine had been given us, on a long old bedstead, never knowing it had been the couch of a foreign prince;¹⁸ Bell and Sprague settled themselves opposite to us on more Buffalo skins, and night closed in. But although we had lain down, it was impossible for us to sleep; for above us was a drunken man affected with a *goître*, and not only was his voice rough and loud, but his words were continuous. His oaths, both in French and English, were better fitted for the Five Points in New York, or St. Giles of London, than anywhere among Christians. He roared, laughed like a maniac, and damned himself and the whole creation. I thought that time would quiet him, but, no! for now clarionets, fiddles, and a drum were heard in the dining-room, where indeed they had been playing at different times during the afternoon, and our friend above began swearing at this as if quite fresh. We had retired for the night; but an invitation was sent us to join the party in the dining-room. Squires was up in a moment, and returned to say that a ball was on foot, and that "all

¹⁸ Maximilian, Prince of Wied.

the beauty and fashion" would be skipping about in less than no time. There was no alternative; we all got up, and in a short time were amid the *beau monde* of these parts. Several squaws, attired in their best, were present, with all the guests, *engagés*, clerks, etc. Mr. Culbertson played the fiddle very fairly; Mr. Guèpe the clarionet, and Mr. Chouteau the drum, as if brought up in the army of the great Napoleon. Cotillions and reels were danced with much energy and apparent enjoyment, and the company dispersed about one o'clock. We retired for the second time, and now occurred a dispute between the drunkard and another man; but, notwithstanding this, I was so wearied that I fell asleep.

June 15, Thursday. We all rose late, as one might expect; the weather was quite cool for the season, and it was cloudy besides. We did nothing else than move our effects to an upstairs room. The Mackinaw boats arrived at the fort about noon, and were unloaded in a precious short time; and all hands being called forth, the empty boats themselves were dragged to a ravine, turned over, and prepared for calking previous to their next voyage up or down, as the case might be. The gentlemen from these boats gave me a fine pair of Deer's horns; and to Mr. Culbertson a young Gray Wolf, and also a young Badger, which they had brought in. It snarled and snapped, and sometimes grunted not unlike a small pig, but did not bite. It moved somewhat slowly, and its body looked flattish all the time; the head has all the markings of an adult, though it is a young of the present spring. Bell and Harris hunted a good while, but procured

only a Lazuli Finch and a few other birds. Bell skinned the Wolf, and we put its hide in the barrel with the head of the Buffalo cow, etc. I showed the plates of the quadrupeds to many persons, and I hope with success, as they were pleased and promised me much. To-morrow morning a man called Black Harris is to go off after Antelopes for me; and the hunters for the men of the fort and themselves; and perhaps some of the young men may go with one or both parties. I heard many stories about Wolves; particularly I was interested in one told by Mr. Kipp, who assured us he had caught upwards of one hundred with baited fish-hooks. Many other tales were told us; but I shall not forget them, so will not write them down here, but wait till hereafter. After shooting at a mark with a bow made of Elk horn, Mr. Kipp presented it to me. We saw several Wolves, but none close to the fort. Both the common Crow and Raven are found here; Bell killed one of the former.

June 16, Friday. The weather was cool this morning, with the wind due east. I drew the young Gray Wolf, and Sprague made an outline of it. Bell, Provost, Alexis, and Black Harris went over the river to try to procure Antelopes; Bell and Alexis returned to dinner without any game, although they had seen dozens of the animals wanted, and also some Common Deer. The two others, who travelled much farther, returned at dusk with empty stomachs and a young fawn of the Common Deer. Harris and I took a long walk after my drawing was well towards completion, and shot a few birds. The Buffalo, old and young,

are fond of rolling on the ground in the manner of horses, and turn quite over; this is done not only to clean themselves, but also to rub off the loose old coat of hair and wool that hangs about their body like so many large, dirty rags. Those about the fort are gentle, but will not allow a person to touch their bodies, not even the young calves of the last spring. Our young Badger is quite fond of lying on his back, and then sleeps. His general appearance and gait remind me of certain species of Armadillo. There was a good deal of talking and jarring about the fort; some five or six men came from the Opposition Company, and would have been roughly handled had they not cleared off at the beginning of trouble. Arrangements were made for loading the Mackinaw barges, and it is intended that they shall depart for St. Louis, leaving on Sunday morning. We shall all be glad when these boats with their men are gone, as we are now full to the brim. Harris has a new batch of patients, and enjoys the work of physician.

June 17, Saturday. Warm and fair, with the river rising fast. The young fawn was hung up, and I drew it. By dinner-time Sprague had well prepared the Gray Wolf, and I put him to work at the fawn. Bell went shooting, and brought five or six good birds. The song of the Lazuli Finch so much resembles that of the Indigo Bird that it would be difficult to distinguish them by the note alone. They keep indifferently among the low bushes and high trees. He also brought a few specimens of *Spermophilus hoodii* of Richardson,¹⁹ of which the measurements were taken.

¹⁹ This is a synonym of *Spermophilus tridecem-lineatus*, the Thirteen-lined, or

Wolves often retreat into holes made by the sinking of the earth near ravines, burrowing in different directions at the bottoms of these. I sent Provost early this morning to the Opposition fort, to inquire whether Mr. Cutting had written letters about us, and also to see a fine Kit Fox, brought in one of their boats from the Yellowstone. Much has been done in the way of loading the Mackinaw boats. Bell has skinned the young Wolf, and Sprague will perhaps finish preparing the fawn. The hunters who went out yesterday morning have returned, and brought back a quantity of fresh Buffalo meat. Squires brought many fragments of a petrified tree. No Antelopes were shot, and I feel uneasy on this score. Provost returned and told me Mr. Cutting's men with the letters had not arrived, but that they were expected hourly. The Kit Fox had been suffocated to death by some dozens of bundles of Buffalo robes falling on it, while attached to a ladder, and had been thrown out and eaten by the Wolves or the dogs. This evening, quite late, I shot a fine large Gray Wolf. I sincerely hope to see some Antelopes to-morrow, as well as other animals.

June 18, Sunday. This day has been a beautiful, as well as a prosperous one to us. At daylight Provost and Alexis went off hunting across the river. Immediately after an early breakfast, Mr. Murray and three Mackinaw boats started for St. Louis. After the boats were fairly out of sight, and the six-pounders had been twice fired, and the great flag floated in the stiff

Federation Spherophile, the variety that is found about Fort Union being *S. t. pallidus*.
— E. C.

southwesterly breeze, four other hunters went off over the river, and Squires was one of them. I took a walk with Mr. Culbertson and Mr. Chardon, to look at some old, decaying, and simply constructed coffins, placed on trees about ten feet above ground, for the purpose of finding out in what manner, and when it would be best for us to take away the skulls, some six or seven in number, all Assiniboin Indians. It was decided that we would do so at dusk, or nearly at dark. My two companions assured me that they never had walked so far from the fort unarmed as on this occasion, and said that even a *single* Indian with a gun and a bow might have attacked us; but if several were together, they would pay no attention to us, as that might be construed to mean war. This is a good lesson, however, and one I shall not forget. About ten o'clock Alexis came to me and said that he had killed two male Antelopes, and Provost one Deer, and that he must have a cart to bring the whole in. This was arranged in a few minutes; and Harris and I went across the river on a ferry flat, taking with us a cart and a most excellent mule. Alexis' wife went across also to gather gooseberries. The cart being made ready, we mounted it, I sitting down, and Harris standing up. We took an old abandoned road, filled with fallen timber and bushes innumerable; but Alexis proved to be an excellent driver, and the mule the most active and the strongest I ever saw. We jogged on through thick and thin for about two miles, when we reached a prairie covered with large bushes of *Artemisia* (called here "Herbe Sainte"), and presently, cutting down a slope, came

to where lay our Antelope, a young male, and the skin of the Deer, while its carcass hung on a tree. These were placed in the cart, and we proceeded across the prairie for the other Antelope, which had been tied by the horns to a large bush of Artemisia, being alive when Alexis left it; but it was now dead and stiff. I looked at its eyes at once. This was a fine old male with its coat half shed. I was sorry enough it was dead. We placed it by its relation in the cart, jumped in, and off we went at a good round trot, not returning to the road, but across the prairie and immediately under the clay hills where the Antelope go after they have fed in the prairie below from early dawn until about eight o'clock; there are of course exceptions to the contrary. Part of the way we travelled between ponds made by the melting of the snows, and having on them a few Ducks and a Black Tern, all of which no doubt breed here. After we had passed the last pond, we saw three Antelopes several hundred yards to the lee of us; the moment they perceived us Alexis said they would be off; and so they were, scampering towards the hills until out of sight. We now entered the woods, and almost immediately Harris saw the head of a Deer about fifty yards distant. Alexis, who had only a rifle, would have shot him from the cart, had the mule stood still; but as this was not the case, Alexis jumped down, took a long, deliberate aim, the gun went off, and the Deer fell dead in its tracks. It proved to be a doe with very large milk-bags, and doubtless her fawn or fawns were in the vicinity; but Alexis could not find them in the dense bush. He and Harris dragged

her to the cart, where I stood holding the mule. We reached the ferry, where the boat had awaited our return, placed the cart on board without touching the game; and, on landing at the fort, the good mule pulled it up the steep bank into the yard. We now had two Antelopes and two Deer that had been killed before noon. Immediately after dinner, the head of the old male was cut off, and I went to work outlining it; first small, with the camera, and then by squares. Bell was engaged in skinning both the bodies; but I felt vexed that he had carelessly suffered the Gray Wolf to be thrown into the river. I spoke to him on the subject of never losing a specimen till we were quite sure it would not be needed; and I feel well assured he is so honest a man and so good a worker that what I said will last for all time. While looking at the Deer shot this day, Harris and I thought that their tails were very long, and that the animals themselves were very much larger than those we have to the eastward; and we all concluded to have more killed, and examine and measure closely, as this one may be an exception. It was unfortunate we did not speak of this an hour sooner, as two Deer had been killed on this side the river by a hunter belonging to the fort; but Mr. Culbertson assured me that we should have enough of them in a few days. I am told that the Rocky Mountain Rams lost most of their young during the hard frosts of the early spring; for, like those of the common sheep, the lambs are born as early as the 1st of March, and hence their comparative scarcity. Harris and Bell have shot a handsome White Wolf, a female, from the ramparts; having

both fired together, it is not known which shot was the fatal one. Bell wounded another in the leg, as there were several marauders about; but the rascal made off.

June 19, Monday. It began raining early this morning; by "early," I mean fully two hours before daylight. The first news I heard was from Mr. Chardon, who told me he had left a Wolf feeding out of the pig's trough, which is immediately under the side of the fort. The next was from Mr. Larpenteur,²⁰ who opens the gates when the bell rings at sunrise, who told us he saw seven Wolves within thirty yards, or less, of the fort. I have told him since, with Mr. Chardon's permission, to call upon us before he opens these mighty portals, whenever he espies Wolves from the gallery above, and I hope that to-morrow morning we may shoot one or more of these bold marauders. Sprague has been drawing all day, and I a good part of it; and it has been so chilly and cold that we have had fires in several parts of the fort. Bell and Harris have gone shooting this afternoon, and have not yet returned. Bell cleaned the Wolf shot last night, and the two Antelopes; old Provost boiled brine, and the whole of them are now in pickle. There are some notions that two kinds of Deer are found hereabouts, one quite small, the other quite large; but of this I have no proof at present. The weather was too bad for Alexis to go hunting. Young Mr. McKenzie and a companion went across the river, but returned soon afterwards, having seen nothing but one Grizzly Bear. The water is either at a stand, or falling a little.

²⁰ Charles Larpenteur, whose MS. autobiography I possess. – E. C.

—*Later*. Harris and Bell have returned, and, to my delight and utter astonishment, have brought two new birds: one a Lark,²¹ small and beautiful; the other like our common Golden-winged Woodpecker, but with a red mark instead of a black one along the lower mandible running backward.²² I am quite amazed at the differences of opinion respecting the shedding – or not shedding – of the horns of the Antelope;²³ and this must be looked to with the greatest severity, for if these animals *do* shed their horns, they are no longer *Antelopes*. We are about having quite a ball in honor of Mr. Chardon, who leaves shortly for the Blackfoot Fort.

June 20, Tuesday. It rained nearly all night; and though the ball was given, I saw nothing of it, and heard but little, for I

²¹ This is the first intimation we have of the discovery of the Missouri Titlark, which Audubon dedicated to Mr. Sprague under the name of *Alauda spragueii*, B. of Am. vii., 1844, p. 334, pl. 486. It is now well known as *Anthus (Neocorys) spraguei*. – E. C.

²² Here is the original indication of the curious Flicker of the Upper Missouri region, which Audubon named *Picus ayresii*, B. of Am. vii., 1844, p. 348, pl. 494, after W. O. Ayres. It is the *Colaptes hybridus* of Baird, and the *C. aurato-mexicanus* of Hartlaub; in which the specific characters of the Golden-winged and Red-shafted Flickers are mixed and obscured in every conceivable degree. We presently find Audubon puzzled by the curious birds, whose peculiarities have never been satisfactorily explained. – E. C.

²³ The fact that the *Antilocapra americana* does shed its horns was not satisfactorily established till several years after 1843. It was first brought to the notice of naturalists by Dr. C. A. Canfield of California, April 10, 1858, and soon afterward became generally known. (See Proc. Zoöl. Soc. Lond. 1865, p. 718, and 1866, p. 105.) Thereupon it became evident that, as Audubon says, these animals are not true Antelopes, and the family *Antilocapridæ* was established for their reception. On the whole subject see article in Encycl. Amer. i., 1883, pp. 237-242, figs. 1-5. – E. C.

went to bed and to sleep. Sprague finished the drawing of the old male Antelope, and I mine, taking besides the measurements, etc., which I give here... Bell has skinned the head and put it in pickle. The weather was bad, yet old Provost, Alexis, and Mr. Bonaventure, a good hunter and a first-rate shot, went over the river to hunt. They returned, however, without anything, though they saw three or four Deer, and a Wolf almost black, with very long hair, which Provost followed for more than a mile, but uselessly, as the rascal outwitted him after all. Harris and Bell are gone too, and I hope they will bring some more specimens of Sprague's Lark and the new Golden-winged Woodpecker.

To fill the time on this dreary day, I asked Mr. Chardon to come up to our room and give us an account of the small-pox among the Indians, especially among the Mandans and Riccarees, and he related as follows: Early in the month of July, 1837, the steamer "Assiniboin" arrived at Fort Clark with many cases of small-pox on board. Mr. Chardon, having a young son on the boat, went thirty miles to meet her, and took his son away. The pestilence, however, had many victims on the steamboat, and seemed destined to find many more among the helpless tribes of the wilderness. An Indian stole the blanket of one of the steamboat's watchmen (who lay at the point of death, if not already dead), wrapped himself in it, and carried it off, unaware of the disease that was to cost him his life, and that of many of his tribe – thousands, indeed. Mr. Chardon offered a reward immediately for the return of the blanket, as well as a new one in

its stead, and promised that no punishment should be inflicted. But the robber was a great chief; through shame, or some other motive, he never came forward, and, before many days, was a corpse. Most of the Riccarees and Mandans were some eighty miles in the prairies, hunting Buffaloes and saving meat for the winter. Mr. Chardon despatched an express to acquaint them all of the awful calamity, enjoining them to keep far off, for that death would await them in their villages. They sent word in return, that their corn was suffering for want of work, that they were not afraid, and would return; the danger to them, poor things, seemed fabulous, and doubtless they thought other reasons existed, for which this was an excuse. Mr. Chardon sent the man back again, and told them their crop of corn was nothing compared to their lives; but Indians are Indians, and, in spite of all entreaties, they moved *en masse*, to confront the awful catastrophe that was about to follow. When they reached the villages, they thought the whites had saved the Riccarees, and put the plague on them alone (they were Mandans). Moreover, they thought, and said, that the whites had a preventive medicine, which the whites would not give them. Again and again it was explained to them that this was not the case, but all to no purpose; the small-pox had taken such a hold upon the poor Indians, and in such malignant form, that they died oftentimes within the rising and setting of a day's sun. They died by hundreds daily; their bodies were thrown down beneath the high bluff, and soon produced a stench beyond description. Men shot their

wives and children, and afterwards, driving several balls in their guns, would place the muzzle in their mouths, and, touching the trigger with their feet, blow their brains out. About this time Mr. Chardon was informed that one of the young Mandan chiefs was bent on shooting him, believing he had brought the pestilence upon the Indians. One of Mr. Chardon's clerks heard of this plot, and begged him to remain in the store; at first Mr. Chardon did not place any faith in the tale, but later was compelled to do so, and followed his clerk's advice. The young chief, a short time afterwards, fell a victim to this fearful malady; but probably others would have taken his life had it not been for one of those strange incidents which come, we know not why, nor can we explain them. A number of the chiefs came that day to confer with Mr. Chardon, and while they were talking angrily with him, he sitting with his arms on a table between them, a Dove, being pursued by a Hawk, flew in through the open door, and sat panting and worn out on Mr. Chardon's arm for more than a minute, when it flew off. The Indians, who were quite numerous, clustered about him, and asked him what the bird came to him for? After a moment's thought, he told them that the bird had been sent by the white men, his friends, to see if it was true that the Mandans had killed him, and that it must return with the answer as soon as possible; he added he had told the Dove to say that the Mandans were his friends, and would never kill him, but would do all they could for him. The superstitious redmen believed this story implicitly; thenceforth they looked

on Mr. Chardon as one of the Great Spirit's sons, and believed he alone could help them. Little, however, could be done; the small-pox continued its fearful ravages, and the Indians grew fewer and fewer day by day. For a long time the Riccarees did not suffer; the Mandans became more and more astounded at this, and became exasperated against both whites and Indians. The disease was of the most virulent type, so that within a few hours after death the bodies were a mass of rotteness. Men killed themselves, to die a nobler death than that brought by the dreaded plague. One young warrior sent his wife to dig his grave; and she went, of course, for no Indian woman dares disobey her lord. The grave was dug, and the warrior, dressed in his most superb apparel, with lance and shield in hand, walked towards it singing his own death song, and, finding the grave finished, threw down all his garments and arms, and leaped into it, drawing his knife as he did so, and cutting his body almost asunder. This done, the earth was thrown over him, the grave filled up, and the woman returned to her lodge to live with her children, perhaps only another day. A great chief, who had been a constant friend to the whites, having caught the pest, and being almost at the last extremity, dressed himself in his fineries, mounted his war-steed, and, fevered and in agony, rode among the villages, speaking against the whites, urging the young warriors to charge upon them and destroy them all. The harangue over, he went home, and died not many hours afterward. The exposure and exertion brought on great pains, and one of the men from the

fort went to him with something that gave him temporary relief; before he died, he acknowledged his error in trying to create trouble between the whites and Indians, and it was his wish to be buried in front of the gate of the fort, with all his trophies around and above his body; the promise was given him that this should be done, and he died in the belief that the white man, as he trod on his grave, would see that he was humbled before him, and would forgive him. Two young men, just sickening with the disease, began to talk of the dreadful death that awaited them, and resolved not to wait for the natural close of the malady, the effects of which they had seen among their friends and relatives. One said the knife was the surest and swiftest weapon to carry into effect their proposed self-destruction; the other contended that placing an arrow in the throat and forcing it into the lungs was preferable. After a long debate they calmly rose, and each adopted his own method; in an instant the knife was driven into the heart of one, the arrow into the throat of the other, and they fell dead almost at the same instant. Another story was of an extremely handsome and powerful Indian who lost an only son, a beautiful boy, upon whom all his hopes and affections were placed. The loss proved too much for him; he called his wife, and, after telling her what a faithful husband he had been, said to her, "Why should we live? all we cared for is taken from us, and why not at once join our child in the land of the Great Spirit?" She consented; in an instant he shot her dead on the spot, reloaded his gun, put the muzzle in his mouth, touched the

trigger, and fell back dead. On the same day another curious incident occurred; a young man, covered with the eruption, and apparently on the eve of death, managed to get to a deep puddle of mire or mud, threw himself in it, and rolled over and over as a Buffalo is wont to do. The sun was scorching hot, and the poor fellow got out of the mire covered with a coating of clay fully half an inch thick and laid himself down; the sun's heat soon dried the clay, so as to render it like unburnt bricks, and as he walked or crawled along towards the village, the mud drying and falling from him, taking the skin with it, and leaving the flesh raw and bleeding, he was in agony, and besought those who passed to kill him; but, strange to say, after enduring tortures, the fever left him, he recovered, and is still living, though badly scarred. Many ran to the river, in the delirium of the burning fever, plunged in the stream, and rose no more. The whites in the fort, as well as the Riccarees, took the disease after all. The Indians, with few exceptions, died, and three of the whites. The latter had no food in the way of bread, flour, sugar, or coffee, and they had to go stealthily by night to steal small pumpkins, about the size of a man's fist, to subsist upon – and this amid a large number of wild, raving, mad Indians, who swore revenge against them all the while. This is a mere sketch of the terrible scourge which virtually annihilated two powerful tribes of Indians, and of the trials of the traders attached to the Fur Companies on these wild prairies, and I can tell you of many more equally strange. The mortality, as taken down by Major Mitchell, was

estimated by that gentleman at 150,000 Indians, including those from the tribes of the Riccarees, Mandans, Sioux, and Blackfeet. The small-pox was in the very fort from which I am now writing this account, and its ravages here were as awful as elsewhere. Mr. Chardon had the disease, and was left for dead; but one of his clerks saw signs of life, and forced him to drink a quantity of hot whiskey mixed with water and nutmeg; he fell into a sound sleep, and his recovery began from that hour. He says that with him the pains began in the small of the back, and on the back part of his head, and were intense. He concluded by assuring us all that the small-pox had never been known in the civilized world, as it had been among the poor Mandans and other Indians. Only *twenty-seven* Mandans were left to tell the tale; they have now augmented to ten or twelve lodges in the six years that have nearly elapsed since the pestilence.²⁴

²⁴ That the account given by Audubon is not exaggerated may be seen from the two accounts following; the first from Lewis and Clark, the second from the Prince of Wied:—"The ancient Maha village had once consisted of 300 cabins, but was burnt about four years ago (1800), soon after the small-pox had destroyed four hundred men, and a proportion of women and children... The accounts we have had of the effects of the small-pox are most distressing; ... when these warriors saw their strength wasting before a malady which they could not resist, their frenzy was extreme; they burnt their village, and many of them put to death their wives and children, to save them from so cruel an affliction, and that they might go together to some better country." New Orleans, June 6, 1838. We have from the trading posts on the western frontier of Missouri the most frightful accounts of the ravages of small-pox among the Indians... The number of victims within a few months is estimated at 30,000, and the pestilence is still spreading... The small-pox was communicated to the Indians by a person who was on board the steamboat which went last summer to the mouth of the Yellowstone,

Harris and Bell came back bringing several small birds, among which three or four proved to be a Blackbird²⁵ nearly allied to the Rusty Grackle, but with evidently a much shorter and straighter bill. Its measurements will be given, of course. The weather is still lowering and cold, and it rains at intervals. We are now out

to convey both the government presents for the Indians, and the goods for the barter trade of the fur-dealers... The officers gave notice of it to the Indians, and exerted themselves to the utmost to prevent any intercourse between them and the vessel; but this was a vain attempt... The disease first broke out about the 15th of June, 1837, in the village of the Mandans, from which it spread in all directions with unexampled fury... Among the remotest tribes of the Assiniboins from fifty to one hundred died daily... The ravages of the disorder were most frightful among the Mandans. That once powerful tribe was exterminated, with the exception of thirty persons. Their neighbors, the Gros Ventres and the Riccarees, were out on a hunting excursion at the time the disorder broke out, so that it did not reach them till a month later; yet half the tribe were destroyed by October 1. Very few of those who were attacked recovered... Many put an end to their lives with knives or muskets, or by precipitating themselves from the summit of the rock near the settlement. The prairie all around is a vast field of death, covered with unburied corpses. The Gros Ventres and the Riccarees, lately amounting to 4,000 souls, were reduced to less than one half. The Assiniboins, 9,000 in number, are nearly exterminated. They, as well as the Crows and Blackfeet, endeavored to fly in all directions; but the disease pursued them... The accounts of the Blackfeet are awful. The inmates of above 1,000 of their tents are already swept away. No language can picture the scene of desolation which the country presents. The above does not complete the terrible intelligence which we receive... According to the most recent accounts, the number of Indians who have been swept away by the small-pox, on the Western frontier of the United States, amounts to more than 60,000."

²⁵ *Quiscalus brewerii* of Audubon, B. of Am. vii., 1844, p. 345, pl. 492, now known as *Scolecophagus cyanocephalus*. It was new to our fauna when thus dedicated by Audubon to his friend Dr. Thomas M. Brewer of Boston, but had already been described by Wagler from Mexico as *Psarocolius cyanocephalus*. It is an abundant bird in the West, where it replaces its near ally, *Scolecophagus carolinus*. – E. C.

of specimens of quadrupeds to draw from. Our gentlemen seem to remember the ball of last night, and I doubt not will go early to bed, as I shall.

June 21, Wednesday. Cloudy and lowering weather; however, Provost went off over the river, before daylight, and shot a Deer, of what kind we do not know; he returned about noon, very hungry. The mud was dreadful in the bottoms. Bell and young McKenzie went off after breakfast, but brought nothing but a Sharp-tailed Grouse, though McKenzie shot two Wolves. The one Harris shot last night proved to be an old female not worth keeping; her companions had seamed her jaws, for in this part of the world Wolves feed upon Wolves, and no mistake. This evening I hauled the beast under the ramparts, cut her body open, and had a stake driven quite fast through it, to hold it as a bait. Harris and Bell are this moment on the lookout for the rascals. Wolves here not only eat their own kind, but are the most mischievous animals in the country; they eat the young Buffalo calves, the young Antelopes, and the young of the Bighorn on all occasions, besides Hares of different sorts, etc. Buffaloes never scrape the snow with their feet, but with their noses, notwithstanding all that has been said to the contrary, even by Mr. Catlin. Bell brought home the hind parts, the head, and one forefoot of a new species of small Hare.²⁶

²⁶ This is no doubt the *Lepus artemisia* of Bachman, Journ. Philad. Acad. viii., 1839, p. 94, later described and figured by Aud. and Bach., Quad. N. Am. ii., 1851, p. 272, pl. 88. It is now generally rated as a subspecies of the common Cottontail, *L. sylvaticus*. Compare also *L. nuttalli*, Aud. and Bach. ii., 1851, p. 300, pl. 94. – E. C.

We are told these Hares are very plentiful, and yet this is the first specimen we have seen, and sorry am I that it amounts to no specimen at all. Harris and I walked several miles, but killed nothing; we found the nest of a Sparrow-hawk, and Harris, assisted by my shoulders, reached the nest, and drew out two eggs. Sprague went across the hills eastward, and was fortunate enough to shoot a superb specimen of the Arctic Bluebird. This evening, Mr. Culbertson having told me the Rabbits, such as Bell had brought, were plentiful on the road to the steamboat landing, Harris, Bell, and I walked there; but although we were very cautious, we saw none, and only procured a Black-headed Grosbeak, which was shot whilst singing delightfully. To-morrow morning Mr. Chardon leaves us in the keel-boat for the Blackfoot Fort, and Mr. Kipp will leave for the Crows early next week.

June 22, Thursday. We rose very late this morning, with the exception of Provost, who went out shooting quite early; but he saw nothing fit for his rifle. All was bustle after breakfast, as Mr. Chardon's boat was loading, the rigging being put in order, the men moving their effects, etc., and a number of squaws, the wives of the men, were moving to and fro for hours before the ultimate departure of the boat, which is called the "Bee." The cargo being arranged, thirty men went on board, including the commander, friend Chardon, thirteen squaws, and a number of children, all more or less half-breeds. The flag of Fort Union was hoisted, the four-pounder run out of the front gate, and by eleven o'clock all was ready. The keel-boat had a brass swivel on her bows, and

fired first, then off went the larger gun, and many an Antelope and Deer were doubtless frightened at the report that echoed through the hills far and near. We bid adieu to our good friend Chardon; and his numerous and willing crew, taking the cordelle to their shoulders, moved the boat against a strong current in good style. Harris and Bell had gone shooting and returned with several birds, among which was a female Red-patched Woodpecker,²⁷ and a Lazuli Finch. Dinner over, I went off with young McKenzie after Hares; found none, but started a Grizzly Bear from her lair. Owen McKenzie followed the Bear and I continued after Hares; he saw no more of Bruin, and I not a Hare, and we both returned to the fort after a tramp of three hours. As I was walking over the prairie, I found an Indian's skull (an Assiniboin) and put it in my game pouch. Provost made a whistle to imitate the noise made by the fawns at this season, which is used to great advantage to decoy the female Deer; shortly afterward Mr. Bonaventure returned, and a cart was sent off at once to bring in a doe which he had killed below. This species of Deer is much larger than the one we have in Virginia, but perhaps no more so than those in Maine; and as yet we cannot tell whether it may, or may not, prove a distinct species. We took all its measurements, and Bell and Provost are now skinning it. Its gross weight is 140 lbs., which I think is heavier than any doe I have seen before. The animal is very poor and evidently has fawns in the woods. The little new

²⁷ This is the same hybrid Woodpecker which has been already noted on p. 14. — E. C.

Lark that I have named after Sprague has almost all the habits of the Skylark of Europe. Whilst looking anxiously after it, on the ground where we supposed it to be singing, we discovered it was high over our heads, and that sometimes it went too high for us to see it at all. We have not yet been able to discover its nest. Bell is of opinion that the Red-collared Ground Finch²⁸ has its nest in the deserted holes of the Ground Squirrel, and we intend to investigate this. He also believes that Say's Flycatcher builds in rocky caverns or fissures, as he found the nest of a bird in some such place, after having wounded one of this species, which retired into the fissures of the rock, which he examined in pursuit of the wounded bird. The nest had no eggs; we are going to pay it a visit. Bell was busy most of the day skinning birds, and Sprague drew a beautiful plant. I found a number of wild roses in bloom, quite sweet-scented, though single, and of a very pale rose-color.

June 23, Friday. We have had a fine, warm day. The hunters of Buffaloes started before daylight, and Squires accompanied them; they are not expected back till sometime to-morrow. Provost went across the river with them, and with the assistance of his bleating whistle, brought several does round him, and a good many Wolves. He killed two does, drew them to a tree, and

²⁸ That is, the Chestnut-collared Longspur, *Calcarius ornatus*, which Mr. Bell was mistaken in supposing to breed in holes of the Ground Squirrels, or Spermophiles, as it nests on the open ground, like Sprague's Lark, McCown's Longspur, and most other small birds of the Western plains. But the surmise regarding the nesting of Say's Flycatcher is correct. This is a near relative of the common Pewit Flycatcher, *S. phæbe*, and its nesting places are similar. — E. C.

hung his coat near them while he returned for help to bring them to the fort. The hunters have a belief that a garment hung near game freshly killed will keep the Wolves at bay for a time; but there are exceptions to all rules, as when he returned with the cart, a dozen hungry rascals of Wolves had completely devoured one doe and all but one ham of the other; this he brought to the fort. The does at this season, on hearing the "bleat," run to the spot, supposing, no doubt, that the Wolves have attacked their fawns, and in rushing to the rescue, run towards the hunter, who despatches them without much trouble, unless the woods are thickly overgrown with bushes and brush, when more difficulty is experienced in seeing them, although one may hear them close by; but it is a cruel, deceitful, and unsportsmanlike method, of which I can never avail myself, and which I try to discountenance. Bell was busy all day with skins, and Sprague with flowers, which he delineates finely. Mr. Kipp presented me with a complete dress of a Blackfoot warrior, ornamented with many tufts of Indian hair from scalps, and also with a saddle. After dinner, Harris, who felt poorly all morning, was better, and we went to pay a visit at the Opposition fort. We started in a wagon with an old horse called Peter, which stands fire like a stump. In going, we found we could approach the birds with comparative ease, and we had the good fortune to shoot three of the new Larks. I killed two, and Harris one. When this species starts from the ground, they fly in a succession of undulations, which renders aim at them quite difficult; after this, and in the same manner, they elevate

themselves to some considerable height, as if about to sing, and presently pitch towards the ground, where they run prettily, and at times stand still and quite erect for a few minutes; we hope to discover their nests soon. Young Meadow Larks, Red-shafted Woodpeckers, and the Red-cheeked ditto,²⁹ are abundant. We reached Fort Mortimer in due time; passed first between several sulky, half-starved looking Indians, and came to the gate, where we were received by the "bourgeois,"³⁰ a young man by the name of Collins, from Hopkinsville, Ky. We found the place in a most miserable condition, and about to be carried away by the falling in of the banks on account of the great rise of water in the Yellowstone, that has actually dammed the Missouri. The current ran directly across, and the banks gave way at such a rate that the men had been obliged already to tear up the front of the fort and remove it to the rear. To-morrow they are to remove the houses themselves, should they stand the coming night, which appeared to me somewhat dubious. We saw a large athletic man who has crossed the mountains twice to the Pacific; he is a Philadelphian, named Wallis, who had been a cook at Fort Union four years, but who had finally deserted, lived for a time with the Crows, and then joined the Opposition. These persons were very polite to us, and invited us to remain and take supper with them; but

²⁹ This passage shows that Audubon observed individuals of the hybrid Woodpecker which he considered identical with *Colaptes cafer*, and also others which he regarded as belonging to the supposed new species – his *C. ayresii*. – E. C.

³⁰ The usual title or designation of the chief trader or person in charge of any establishment of a fur company. – E. C.

as I knew they were short of provisions, I would not impose myself upon them, and so, with thanks for their hospitality, we excused ourselves and returned to Fort Union. As we were in search of birds, we saw a small, whitish-colored Wolf trotting across the prairie, which hereabouts is very extensive and looks well, though the soil is poor. We put Peter to a trot and gained on the Wolf, which did not see us until we were about one hundred yards off; he stopped suddenly, and then went off at a canter. Harris gave the whip to Peter, and off we went, evidently gaining rapidly on the beast, when it saw an Indian in its road; taking fright, it dashed to one side, and was soon lost in a ravine. We congratulated ourselves, on reaching the fort, that we had such good fortune as to be able to sup and sleep here, instead of at Fort Mortimer. Bell had taken a walk and brought in a few birds. The prairie is covered with cacti, and Harris and I suffered by them; my feet were badly pricked by the thorns, which penetrated my boots at the junction of the soles with the upper leathers. I have to-day heard several strange stories about Grizzly Bears, all of which I must have corroborated before I fully accept them. The Otters and Musk-rats of this part of the country are smaller than in the States; the first is the worst enemy that the Beaver has.

June 24, Saturday. Bell killed a small Wolf last night, and Harris wounded another. This morning Provost started at daylight, and Bell followed him; but they returned without game. After breakfast Harris went off on horseback, and brought in a Sharp-tailed Grouse. He saw only one Deer, species not

identified. Sprague and I went off last, but brought in nothing new. This afternoon I thought would be a fair opportunity to examine the manners of Sprague's Lark on the wing. Bell drove Peter for me, and I killed four Larks; we then watched the flight of several. The male rises by constant undulations to a great height, say one hundred yards or more; and whilst singing its sweet-sounding notes, beats its wings, poised in the air like a Hawk, without rising at this time; after which, and after each burst of singing, it sails in divers directions, forming three quarters of a circle or thereabouts, then rises again, and again sings; the intervals between the singing are longer than those which the song occupies, and at times the bird remains so long in the air as to render it quite fatiguing to follow it with the eye. Sprague thought one he watched yesterday remained in the air about one hour. Bell and Harris watched one for more than half an hour, and this afternoon I gazed upon one, whilst Bell timed it, for thirty-six minutes. We continued on to Fort Mortimer to see its condition, were received as kindly as yesterday, and saw the same persons. It was four o'clock, and the men were all at dinner, having been obliged to wait until this time because they had no meat in the fort, and their hunters had returned only one hour and a half before. We found that the river had fallen about fourteen inches since last evening, and the men would not remove for the present. On our way homeward Bell shot a fifth Lark, and when we reached the ravine I cut out of a tree-stump the nest of an Arctic Bluebird, with six eggs in it, of almost the

same size and color as those of the common Bluebird. Sprague had brought a female of his Lark, and her nest containing five eggs; the measurements of these two species I will write out tomorrow. Our Buffalo hunters are not yet returned, and I think that Squires will feel pretty well fatigued when he reaches the fort. Mr. Culbertson presented me with a pair of stirrups, and a most splendid Blackfoot crupper for my saddle. The day has been warm and clear. We caught seven catfish at the river near the fort, and most excellent eating they are, though quite small when compared with the monsters of this species on the Missouri below.

June 25, Sunday. This day has been warm and the wind high, at first from the south, but this afternoon from the north. Little or nothing has been done in the way of procuring birds or game, except that Harris and Mr. Denig brought in several Arkansas Flycatchers. Not a word from the hunters, and therefore they must have gone far before they met Buffaloes. A few more catfish have been caught, and they are truly excellent.

June 26, Monday. The hunters returned this afternoon about three o'clock; *i. e.*, Squires and McKenzie; but the carts did not reach the fort till after I had gone to bed. They have killed three Antelopes, three bull Buffaloes, and one Townsend's Hare, but the last was lost through carelessness, and I am sorry for it. The men had eaten one of the Antelopes, and the two others are fine males; Bell skinned one, and saved the head and the fore-legs of the other. One of them had the tips of the horns as much

crooked inwardly (backwards) as the horns of the European Chamois usually are. This afternoon early Provost brought in a Deer of the large kind, and this also was skinned. After this Harris and Bell went off and brought in several Lazuli Finches, and a black Prairie Lark Finch of the species brought from the Columbia by Townsend and Nuttall. We caught several catfish and a very curious sturgeon, of which Sprague took an outline with the camera, and I here give the measurements... It had run on the shore, and was caught by one of the men. I made a bargain this morning with the hunter Bonaventure Le Brun to procure me ten Bighorns, at \$10.00 apiece, or the same price for any number he may get. Mr. Culbertson lent him old Peter, the horse, and I wrote a *petit billet* to Mr. John Collins, to ask him to have them ferried across the river, as our boat was away on a wood-cutting expedition. As Le Brun did not return, of course he was taken across, and may, perhaps, come back this evening, or early to-morrow morning, with something worth having. At this moment Bell has shot a Wolf from the ramparts, and sadly crippled another, but it made off somehow.

June 27, Tuesday. This morning was quite cool, and the wind from the north. After breakfast Bell and Owen McKenzie went off on horseback on this side of the river, to see how far off the Buffaloes are, and they may probably bring home some game. Sprague and I have been drawing all day yesterday and most of to-day. Provost has been making whistles to call the Deer; later he, Harris, and I, walked to the hills to procure the black root

plant which is said to be the best antidote for the bite of the rattlesnake. We found the root and dug one up, but the plant is not yet in bloom. The leaves are long and narrow, and the flowers are said to resemble the dwarf sunflower. Harris shot two of what he calls the Small Shore Lark, male and female; but beyond the size being a little smaller than those found at Labrador, I cannot discover any specific difference. From the top of the hills we saw a grand panorama of a most extensive wilderness, with Fort Union beneath us and far away, as well as the Yellowstone River, and the lake across the river. The hills across the Missouri appeared quite low, and we could see the high prairie beyond, forming the background. Bell and McKenzie returned, having shot a Wolf in a curious manner. On reaching the top of a hill they found themselves close to the Wolf. Bell's horse ran quite past it, but young McKenzie shot and broke one fore-leg, and it fell. Bell then gave his horse to McKenzie, jumped off, ran to the Wolf, and took hold of it by the tail, pulling it towards the horses; but it got up and ran rapidly. Bell fired two shots in its back with a pistol without stopping it, then he ran as fast as he could, shot it in the side, and it fell. Bell says its tail was longer than usual, but it was not measured, and the Wolf was left on the prairie, as they had no means of bringing it in. They saw an Antelope, some Magpies, and a Swift Fox, but no Buffaloes, though they were fifteen miles from the fort. They ran a Long-tailed Deer, and describe its movements precisely as do Lewis and Clark.³¹

³¹ "The black-tailed deer never runs at full speed, but bounds with every foot from

Between every three or four short leaps came the long leap of fully twenty-five feet, if not more. The Kit or Swift Fox which they saw stood by a bunch of wormwood, and whilst looking at the hunters, was seen to brush off the flies with his paws.

I am now going to take this book to Lewis Squires and ask him to write in it his account of the Buffalo hunt.

(The following is in Mr. Squires' handwriting:)

"By Mr. Audubon's desire I will relate the adventures that befell me in my first Buffalo hunt, and I am in hopes that among the rubbish a trifle, at least, may be obtained which may be of use or interest to him. On the morning of Friday, the 23d, before daylight, I was up, and in a short time young McKenzie made his appearance. A few minutes sufficed to saddle our horses, and be in readiness for our contemplated hunt. We were accompanied by Mr. Bonaventure the younger, one of the hunters of the fort, and two carts to bring in whatever kind of meat might be procured. We were ferried across the river in a flatboat, and thence took our departure for the Buffalo country. We passed through a wooded bottom for about one mile, and then over a level prairie for about one mile and a half, when we commenced the ascent of the bluffs that bound the western side of the Missouri valley; our course then lay over an undulating prairie, quite rough, and steep hills with small ravines between, and over dry beds of streams that are made by the spring and fall freshets. Occasionally we were favored with a level prairie

the ground at the same time, like the mule-deer." ("Lewis and Clark," ed. 1893.)

never exceeding two miles in extent. When the carts overtook us, we exchanged our horses for them, and sat on Buffalo robes on the bottom, our horses following on behind us. As we neared the place where the Buffaloes had been killed on the previous hunt, Bonaventure rode alone to the top of a hill to discover, if possible, their whereabouts; but to our disappointment nothing living was to be seen. We continued on our way watching closely, ahead, right and left. Three o'clock came and as yet nothing had been killed; as none of us had eaten anything since the night before, our appetites admonished us that it was time to pay attention to them. McKenzie and Bonaventure began to look about for Antelopes; but before any were 'comeatable,' I fell asleep, and was awakened by the report of a gun. Before we, in the carts, arrived at the spot from whence this report proceeded, the hunters had killed, skinned, and nearly cleaned the game, which was a fine male Antelope. I regretted exceedingly I was not awake when it was killed, as I might have saved the skin for Mr. Audubon, as well as the head, but I was too late. It was now about five o'clock, and one may well imagine I was *somewhat* hungry. Owen McKenzie commenced eating the raw liver, and offered me a piece. What others can eat, I felt assured I could at least taste. I accordingly took it and ate quite a piece of it; to my utter astonishment, I found it not only palatable but very good; this experience goes far to convince me that our prejudices make things appear more disgusting than fact proves them to be. Our Antelope cut up and in the cart, we proceeded

on our 'winding way,' and scarcely had we left the spot where the entrails of the animal remained, before the Wolves and Ravens commenced coming from all quarters, and from places where a minute before there was not a sign of one. We had not proceeded three hundred yards at the utmost, before eight Wolves were about the spot, and others approaching. On our way, both going and returning, we saw a cactus of a conical shape, having a light straw-colored, double flower, differing materially from the flower of the flat cactus, which is quite common; had I had any means of bringing one in, I would most gladly have done so, but I could not depend on the carts, and as they are rather unpleasant companions, I preferred awaiting another opportunity, which I hope may come in a few days. We shot a young of Townsend's Hare, about seven or eight steps from us, with about a dozen shot; I took good care of it until I left the cart on my return to the fort, but when the carts arrived it had carelessly been lost. This I regretted very much, as Mr. Audubon wanted it. It was nearly sunset when Bonaventure discovered a Buffalo bull, so we concluded to encamp for the night, and run the Buffaloes in the morning. We accordingly selected a spot near a pond of water, which in spring and fall is quite a large lake, and near which there was abundance of good pasture; our horses were soon unsaddled and hobbled, a good fire blazing, and some of the Antelope meat roasting on sticks before it. As soon as a bit was done, we commenced operations, and it was soon gone 'the way of all flesh.' I never before ate meat without salt or pepper,

and until then never fully appreciated these two *luxuries*, as they now seemed, nor can any one, until deprived of them, and seated on a prairie as we were, or in some similar situation. On the opposite side of the lake we saw a Grizzly Bear, but he was unapproachable. After smoking our pipes we rolled ourselves in our robes, with our saddles for pillows, and were soon lost in a sound, sweet sleep. During the night I was awakened by a crunching sound; the fire had died down, and I sat up and looking about perceived a Wolf quietly feeding on the remains of our supper. One of the men awoke at the same time and fired at the Wolf, but without effect, and the fellow fled; we neither saw nor heard more of him during the night. By daylight we were all up, and as our horses had not wandered far, it was the work of a few minutes to catch and saddle them. We rode three or four miles before we discovered anything, but at last saw a group of three Buffaloes some miles from us. We pushed on, and soon neared them; before arriving at their feeding-ground, we saw, scattered about, immense quantities of pumice-stone, in detached pieces of all sizes; several of the hills appeared to be composed wholly of it. As we approached within two hundred yards of the Buffaloes they started, and away went the hunters after them. My first intention of being merely a looker-on continued up to this moment, but it was impossible to resist following; almost unconsciously I commenced urging my horse after them, and was soon rushing up hills and through ravines; but my horse gave out, and disappointment and anger followed,

as McKenzie and Bonaventure succeeded in killing two, and wounding a third, which escaped. As soon as they had finished them, they commenced skinning and cutting up one, which was soon in the cart, the offal and useless meat being left on the ground. Again the Wolves made their appearance as we were leaving; they seemed shy, but Owen McKenzie succeeded in killing one, which was old and useless. The other Buffalo was soon skinned and in the cart. In the meantime McKenzie and I started on horseback for water. The man who had charge of the keg had let it all run out, and most fortunately none of us had wanted water until now. We rode to a pond, the water of which was very salt and warm, but we had to drink this or none; we did so, filled our flasks for the rest of the party, and a few minutes afterward rejoined them. We started again for more meat to complete our load. I observed, as we approached the Buffaloes, that they stood gazing at us with their heads erect, lashing their sides with their tails; as soon as they discovered what we were at, with the quickness of thought they wheeled, and with the most surprising speed, for an animal apparently so clumsy and awkward, flew before us. I could hardly imagine that these enormous animals could move so quickly, or realize that their speed was as great as it proved to be; and I doubt if in this country one horse in ten can be found that will keep up with them. We rode five or six miles before we discovered any more. At last we saw a single bull, and while approaching him we started two others; slowly we wended our way towards them

until within a hundred yards, when away they went. I had now begun to enter into the spirit of the chase, and off I started, full speed, down a rough hill in swift pursuit; at the bottom of the hill was a ditch about eight feet wide; the horse cleared this safely. I continued, leading the others by some distance, and rapidly approaching the Buffaloes. At this prospect of success my feelings can better be imagined than described. I kept the lead of the others till within thirty or forty yards of the Buffaloes, when I began making preparations to fire as soon as I was sufficiently near; imagine, if possible, my disappointment when I discovered that now, when all my hopes of success were raised to the highest pitch, I was fated to meet a reverse as mortifying as success would have been gratifying. My horse failed, and slackened his pace, despite every effort of mine to urge him on; the other hunters rushed by me at full speed, and my horse stopped altogether. I saw the others fire; the animal swerved a little, but still kept on. After breathing my horse a while, I succeeded in starting him up again, followed after them, and came up in time to fire one shot ere the animal was brought down. I think that I never saw an eye so ferocious in expression as that of the wounded Buffalo; rolling wildly in its socket, inflamed as the eye was, it had the most frightful appearance that can be imagined; and in fact, the picture presented by the Buffalo as a whole is quite beyond my powers of description. The fierce eyes, blood streaming from his sides, mouth, and nostrils, he was the wildest, most unearthly-looking thing it ever fell to my lot to gaze upon. His sufferings

were short; he was soon cut up and placed in the cart, and we retraced our steps homeward. Whilst proceeding towards our camping-ground for the night, two Antelopes were killed, and placed on our carts. Whenever we approached these animals they were very curious to see what we were; they would run, first to the right, and then to the left, then suddenly run straight towards us until within gun-shot, or nearly so. The horse attracted their attention more than the rider, and if a slight elevation or bush was between us, they were easily killed. As soon as their curiosity was gratified they would turn and run, but it was not difficult to shoot before this occurred. When they turned they would fly over the prairie for about a mile, when they would again stop and look at us. During the day we suffered very much for want of water, and drank anything that had the appearance of it, and most of the water, in fact all of it, was either impregnated with salt, sulphur, or magnesia – most disgusting stuff at any other time, but drinkable now. The worst of all was some rain-water that we were obliged to drink, first placing our handkerchiefs over the cup to strain it, and keep the worms out of our mouths. I drank it, and right glad was I to get even this. We rode about five miles to where we encamped for the night, near a little pond of water. In a few minutes we had a good fire of Buffalo dung to drive away mosquitoes that were in clouds about us. The water had taken away our appetites completely, and we went to bed without eating any supper. Our horses and beds were arranged as on the previous evening. McKenzie and I intended starting for the fort

early in the morning. We saw a great many Magpies, Curlews, Plovers, Doves, and numbers of Antelopes. About daylight I awoke and roused McKenzie; a man had gone for the horses, but after a search of two hours returned without finding them; all the party now went off except one man and myself, and all returned without success except Bonaventure, who found an old horse that had been lost since April last. He was despatched on this to the fort to get other horses, as we had concluded that ours were either lost or stolen. As soon as he had gone, one of the men started again in search of the runaways, and in a short time returned with them. McKenzie and I soon rode off. We saw two Grizzly Bears at the lake again. Our homeward road we made much shorter by cutting off several turns; we overtook Bonaventure about four miles from our encampment, and passed him. We rode forty miles to the fort in a trifle over six hours. We had travelled in all about one hundred and twenty miles. Bonaventure arrived two hours after we did, and the carts came in the evening."

Wednesday, June 28. This is an account of Squires' Buffalo hunt, his first one, which he has kindly written in my journal and which I hope some day to publish. This morning was very cloudy, and we had some rain, but from ten o'clock until this moment the weather has been beautiful. Harris shot a handsome though rather small Wolf; I have made a large drawing, and Sprague a fine diminished one, of the rascal. The first news we had this morning was that the ferry flat had been stolen last night, probably by the deserters from the fort who have had the wish to

return to St. Louis. Some person outside of the fort threw a large stone at an Indian woman, and her husband fired in the dark, but no one could be found on searching. There is much trouble and discomfort to the managers of such an establishment as this. Provost went shooting, but saw nothing. Young McKenzie and another man were sent to find the scow, but in vain. On their return they said a hunter from Fort Mortimer had brought a Bighorn, and skinned it, and that he would let me have it if I wished. I sent Bell and Squires, and they brought the skin in. It proves to be that of an old female in the act of shedding her winter coat, and I found that she was covered with abundance of downy wool like the Antelopes under similar circumstances. Mr. Larpenteur caught five small catfish, which we ate at breakfast. After dinner Le Brun returned home, but brought only the skin of a young female of the White-tailed Deer, and I was surprised to see that it had the germ of a horn about one inch long; the skin was quite red, and it is saved. A young Elk was brought in good condition, as the hunters here know how to save skins properly; it was too young, however, to take measurements. The horns were in velvet about six inches long. When one sees the powerful bones and muscles of this young animal, one cannot fail to think of the great strength of the creature when mature, and its ability to bear with ease the enormous antlers with which its head is surmounted. The flesh of the Antelope is not comparable with that of the Deer, being dry and usually tough. It is very rarely indeed that a fat Antelope is killed. Bell has been very busy in

skinning small birds and animals. We procured a young Red-shafted Woodpecker, killed by an Indian boy with a bow and arrow. Mr. Kipp's "Mackinaw" was launched this evening, and sent across the river with men to relieve the charcoal-burners; she returned immediately and we expect that Mr. Kipp's crew will go off to-morrow about twelve. I was told a curious anecdote connected with a Grizzly Bear, that I will write down; it is as follows: One of the *engagés* of the Company was forced to run away, having killed an Indian woman, and made his way to the Crow Fort, three hundred miles up the Yellowstone River. When he arrived there he was in sad plight, having his own squaw and one or two children along, who had all suffered greatly with hunger, thirst, and exposure. They were received at the fort, but in a short time, less than a week afterwards, he again ran off with his family, and on foot. The discovery was soon made, and two men were sent after him; but he eluded their vigilance by keeping close in ravines, etc. The men returned, and two others with an Indian were despatched on a second search, and after much travel saw the man and his family on an island, where he had taken refuge from his pursuers. The Buffalo-hide canoe in which he had attempted to cross the river was upset, and it was with difficulty that he saved his wife and children. They were now unable to escape, and when talking as to the best way to secure their return to the fort, the soldiers saw him walk to the body of a dead Buffalo lying on the shore of the island, with the evident intention of procuring some of it for food. As he stooped to cut

off a portion, to his utter horror he saw a small Grizzly Bear crawl out from the carcass. It attacked him fiercely, and so suddenly that he was unable to defend himself; the Bear lacerated his face, arms, and the upper part of his body in a frightful manner, and would have killed him, had not the Indian raised his gun and fired at the Bear, wounding him severely, while a second shot killed him. The *engagé* was too much hurt to make further effort to escape, and one of the Company's boats passing soon after, he and his family were taken back to the fort, where he was kept to await his trial.

June 29, Thursday. It rained hard during the night, but at dawn Provost went shooting and returned to dinner, having shot a doe, which was skinned and the meat saved. He saw a Grouse within a few feet of him, but did not shoot, as he had only a rifle. Bell and I took a long walk, and shot several birds. We both were surprised to find a flock of Cliff Swallows endeavoring to build nests beneath the ledges of a clay bank. Watching the moment when several had alighted against the bank, I fired, and killed three. Previous to this, as I was walking along a ravine, a White Wolf ran past within fifteen or twenty paces of me, but I had only very small shot, and did not care to wound where I could not kill. The fellow went off at a limping gallop, and Bell after it, squatting whenever the Wolf stopped to look at him; but at last the rascal lost himself in a deep ravine, and a few minutes after we saw him emerge from the shrubs some distance off, and go across the prairie towards the river. Bell saw two others

afterwards, and if ever there was a country where Wolves are surpassingly abundant, it is the one we now are in. Wolves are in the habit of often lying down on the prairies, where they form quite a bed, working at bones the while. We found a nest of the Prairie Lark, with four eggs. We saw Arctic Bluebirds, Say's Flycatcher and Lazuli Finches. Say's Flycatcher has a note almost like the common Pewee. They fly over the prairies like Hawks, looking for grasshoppers, upon which they pounce, and if they lose sight of them, they try again at another place. We returned home to dinner, and after this a discussion arose connected with the Red-shafted Woodpecker. We determined to go and procure one of the young, and finding that these have pale-yellow shafts, instead of deep orange-red, such as the old birds have, the matter was tested and settled according to my statement. Harris and I went off after the doe killed this morning, and killed another, but as I have now skins enough, the measurements only were taken, and the head cut off, which I intend drawing to-morrow. Harris shot also a Grouse, and a Woodpecker that will prove a *Canadensis*; he killed the male also, but could not find it, and we found seven young Red-shafted Woodpeckers in one nest. I killed a female Meadow Lark, the first seen in this country by us. Provost told me (and he is a respectable man) that, during the breeding season of the Mountain Ram, the battering of the horns is often heard as far as a mile away, and that at such times they are approached with comparative ease; and there is no doubt that it is during such encounters that the horns are broken and twisted as

I have seen them, and not by leaping from high places and falling on their horns, as poetical travellers have asserted. The fact is that when these animals leap from any height they alight firmly on all their four feet. At this season the young are always very difficult to catch, and I have not yet seen one of them. Harris, Bell, and young McKenzie are going Bighorn hunting to-morrow, and I hope they will be successful; I, alas! am no longer young and alert enough for the expedition. We find the mosquitoes very troublesome, and very numerous.

June 30, Friday. The weather was dark, with the wind at the northwest, and looked so like rain that the hunters did not start as they had proposed. Sprague, Harris, and Bell went out, however, after small game. I began drawing at five this morning, and worked almost without cessation till after three, when, becoming fatigued for want of practice, I took a short walk, regretting I could no longer draw twelve or fourteen hours without a pause or thought of weariness. It is now raining quite hard. Mr. Larpenteur went after a large tree to make a ferry-boat, and the new skiff was begun this morning. I sent Provost to Fort Mortimer to see if any one had arrived from below; he found a man had done so last evening and brought letters to Mr. Collins, requesting him to do all he can for us. He also reported that a party of Sioux had had a battle with the Gros Ventres, and had killed three of the latter and a white man who lived with them as a blacksmith. The Gros Ventres, on the other hand, had killed eight of the Sioux and put them to flight. The blacksmith killed two Sioux,

and the enemies cut off one leg and one arm, scalped him, and left the mangled body behind them. It is said there is now no person living who can recollect the manner in which the bitter enmity of these two nations originated. The Yellowstone River is again rising fast, and Mr. Kipp will have tough times before he reaches Fort Alexander, which was built by Mr. Alexander Culbertson, our present host, and the Company had it honored by his name. When a herd of Buffaloes is chased, although the bulls themselves run very swiftly off, their speed is not to be compared to that of the cows and yearlings; for these latter are seen in a few minutes to leave the bulls behind them, and as cows and young Buffaloes are preferable to the old males, when the hunters are well mounted they pursue the cows and young ones invariably. Last winter Buffaloes were extremely abundant close to this fort, so much so that while the people were engaged in bringing hay in carts, the Buffaloes during the night came close in, and picked up every wisp that was dropped. An attempt to secure them alive was made by strewing hay in such a manner as to render the bait more and more plentiful near the old fort, which is distant about two hundred yards, and which was once the property of Mr. Sublette and Co.; but as the hogs and common cattle belonging to the fort are put up there regularly at sunset, the Buffaloes ate the hay to the very gates, but would not enter the enclosure, probably on account of the different smells issuing therefrom. At this period large herds slept in front of the fort, but just before dawn would remove across the hills about one

mile distant, and return towards night. An attempt was made to shoot them with a cannon – a four-pounder; three were killed and several wounded. Still the Buffaloes came to their sleeping ground at evening, and many were killed during the season. I saw the head of one Mr. Culbertson shot, and the animal must have been of unusual size.

July 1, Saturday. It was still raining when I got up, but a few minutes later the sun was shining through one of our windows, and the wind being at northwest we anticipated a fine day. The ground was extremely wet and muddy, but Harris and Bell went off on horseback, and returned a few minutes after noon. They brought some birds and had killed a rascally Wolf. Bell found the nest of the Arkansas Flycatcher. The nest and eggs, as well as the manners, of this bird resemble in many ways those of our King-bird. The nest was in an elm, twenty or twenty-five feet above the ground, and he saw another in a similar situation. Mr. Culbertson and I walked to the Pilot Knob with a spy-glass, to look at the present condition of Fort Mortimer. This afternoon Squires, Provost, and I walked there, and were kindly received as usual. We found all the people encamped two hundred yards from the river, as they had been obliged to move from the tumbling fort during the rain of last night. Whilst we were there a trapper came in with a horse and told us the following: This man and four others left that fort on the 1st of April last on an expedition after Beavers. They were captured by a party of about four hundred Sioux, who took them prisoners and kept him one day and a

half, after which he was released, but his companions were kept prisoners. He crossed the river and found a horse belonging to the Indians, stole it, and reached the fort at last. He looked miserable indeed, almost without a rag of clothing, long hair, filthy beyond description, and having only one very keen, bright eye, which looked as if he was both proud and brave. He had subsisted for the last eleven days on pomme blanche and the thick leaves of the cactus, which he roasted to get rid of the thorns or spines, and thus had fared most miserably; for, previous to the capture of himself and his companions, he had upset his bull canoe and lost his rifle, which to a trapper is, next to life, his dependence. When he was asked if he would have some dinner, he said that he had forgotten the word, but would try the taste of meat again. Mr. Collins was very polite to me, and promised me a hunter for the whole of next week, expressly to shoot Bighorns. I hope this promise may be better kept than that of Mr. Chardon, who told me that should he have one killed within forty miles he would send Alexis back with it at once. We heard some had been killed, but this may not be true; at any rate, men are men all over the world, and a broken promise is not unheard-of. This evening Mr. Culbertson presented me with a splendid dress, as well as one to Harris and one to Bell, and promised one to Sprague, which I have no doubt he will have. Harris and Sprague went off to procure Woodpeckers' nests, and brought the most curious set of five birds that I ever saw, and which I think will puzzle all the naturalists in the world. The first was found near the nest,

of which Sprague shot the female, a light-colored Red-shafted Woodpecker. It proved to be of the same color, but had the rudiments of black stripes on the cheeks. Next, Sprague shot an adult yellow-winged male, with the markings principally such as are found in the Eastern States. Harris then shot a young Red-shafted, just fledged, with a black stripe on the cheek. His next shot was a light-colored Red-shafted male, with black cheeks, and another still, a yellow Red-shafted with a red cheek.³² After all this Mr. Culbertson proposed to run a sham Buffalo hunt again. He, Harris, and Squires started on good horses, went about a mile, and returned full tilt, firing and cracking. Squires fired four times and missed once. Harris did not shoot at all; but Mr. Culbertson fired eleven times, starting at the onset with an empty gun, snapped three times, and reached the fort with his gun loaded. A more wonderful rider I never saw.

July 2, Sunday. The weather was cool and pleasant this morning, with no mosquitoes, which indeed – plentiful and troublesome as they are – Provost tells me are more scarce this season than he ever knew them thus far up the Missouri. Sprague finished his drawing of the doe's head about dinner-time, and it looks well. After dinner he went after the puzzling Woodpeckers, and brought three, all different from each other. Mr. Culbertson, his squaw wife, and I rode to Fort Mortimer,

³² The above is a very good example of the way these Woodpeckers vary in color, presenting a case which, as Audubon justly observes, is a "puzzle to all the naturalists in the world." See note, p. 14. – E. C.

accompanied by young McKenzie, and found Mr. Collins quite ill. We saw the hunters of that fort, and they promised to supply me with Bighorns, at ten dollars apiece in the flesh, and also some Black-tailed Deer, and perhaps a Grizzly Bear. This evening they came to the fort for old Peter and a mule, to bring in their game, and may success attend them! When we returned, Harris started off with Mr. Culbertson and his wife to see the condition of Mr. Collins, to whom he administered some remedies. Harris had an accident that was near being of a serious nature; as he was getting into the wagon, thinking that a man had hold of the reins, which was not the case, his foot was caught between the axle-tree and the wagon, he was thrown down on his arm and side, and hurt to some extent; fortunately he escaped without serious injury, and does not complain much this evening, as he has gone on the ramparts to shoot a Wolf. Sprague saw a Wolf in a hole a few yards from the fort, but said not a word of it till after dinner, when Bell and Harris went there and shot it through the head. It was a poor, miserable, crippled old beast, that could not get out of the hole, which is not more than three or four feet deep. After breakfast we had a hunt after Hares or Rabbits, and Harris saw two of them, but was so near he did not care to shoot at them. Whilst Harris and Mr. Culbertson went off to see Mr. Collins, Mr. Denig and I walked off with a bag and instruments, to take off the head of a three-years-dead Indian chief, called the White Cow. Mr. Denig got upon my shoulders and into the branches near the coffin, which stood about ten feet above ground. The

coffin was lowered, or rather tumbled, down, and the cover was soon hammered off; to my surprise, the feet were placed on the pillow, instead of the head, which lay at the foot of the coffin – if a long box may so be called. Worms innumerable were all about it; the feet were naked, shrunk, and dried up. The head had still the hair on, but was twisted off in a moment, under jaw and all. The body had been first wrapped up in a Buffalo skin without hair, and then in another robe with the hair on, as usual; after this the dead man had been enveloped in an American flag, and over this a superb scarlet blanket. We left all on the ground but the head. Squires, Mr. Denig and young Owen McKenzie went afterwards to try to replace the coffin and contents in the tree, but in vain; the whole affair fell to the ground, and there it lies; but I intend to-morrow to have it covered with earth. The history of this man is short, and I had it from Mr. Larpenteur, who was in the fort at the time of his decease, or self-committed death. He was a good friend to the whites, and knew how to procure many Buffalo robes for them; he was also a famous orator, and never failed to harangue his people on all occasions. He was, however, consumptive, and finding himself about to die, he sent his squaw for water, took an arrow from his quiver, and thrusting it into his heart, expired, and was found dead when his squaw returned to the lodge. He was "buried" in the above-mentioned tree by the orders of Mr. McKenzie, who then commanded this fort. Mr. Culbertson drove me so fast, and Harris so much faster, over this rough ground, that I feel quite stiff. I must not forget to say

that we had another sham Buffalo chase over the prairie in front of the fort, the riders being Squires, young McKenzie, and Mr. Culbertson; and I was glad and proud to see that Squires, though so inexperienced a hunter, managed to shoot five shots within the mile, McKenzie eleven, and Mr. Culbertson eight. Harris killed an old Wolf, which he thought was larger and fatter than any killed previously. It was very large, but on examination it was found to be poor and without teeth in the upper jaw.

July 3, Monday. We have had a warm night and day; after breakfast we all six crossed the river in the newly built skiff, and went off in divers directions. Provost and I looked thoroughly through the brushwood, and walked fully six miles from the fort; we saw three Deer, but so far were they that it was useless to shoot. Deer-shooting on the prairies is all hazard; sometimes the animals come tripping along within ten yards of you, and at other times not nearer can you get than one hundred and fifty yards, which was the case this day. The others killed nothing of note, and crossed the river back to the fort two hours at least before us; and we shot and bawled out for nearly an hour, before the skiff was sent for us. I took a swim, found the water very pleasant, and was refreshed by my bath. The Bighorn hunters returned this afternoon with a Bighorn, a female, and also a female Black-tailed Deer. I paid them \$15 for the two, and they are to start again to-morrow evening, or the next day.

July 4, Tuesday. Although we had some fireworks going on last evening, after I had laid myself down for the night, the

anniversary of the Independence of the United States has been almost the quietest I have ever spent, as far as my recollection goes. I was drawing the whole day, and Sprague was engaged in the same manner, painting a likeness of Mr. Culbertson. Harris and Bell went off to try and procure a buck of the Long White-tailed Deer, and returned after dinner much fatigued and hungry enough. Bell had shot at a Deer and wounded it very severely; the poor thing ran on, but soon lay down, for the blood and froth were gushing out of its mouth. Bell saw the buck lying down, and not being an experienced hunter, thought it was dead, and instead of shooting it again, went back to call Harris; when they returned, the Deer was gone, and although they saw it again and again, the Deer outwitted them, and, as I have said, they returned weary, with no Deer. After dinner I spoke to Mr. Culbertson on the subject, and he told me that the Deer could probably be found, but that most likely the Wolves would devour it. He prepared to send young McKenzie with both my friends; the horses were soon saddled, and the three were off at a gallop. The poor buck's carcass was found, but several Wolves and Turkey Buzzards had fared well upon it; the vertebræ only were left, with a few bits of skin and portions of the horns in velvet. These trophies were all that they brought home. It was a superb and very large animal, and I am very sorry for the loss of it, as I am anxious to draw the head of one of such a size as they represent this to have been. They ran after a Wolf, which gave them leg bail. Meanwhile Squires and Provost started with the skiff in a

cart to go up the river two miles, cross, and camp on the opposite shore. The weather became very gloomy and chill. In talking with Mr. Culbertson he told me that no wise man would ever follow a Buffalo bull immediately in his track, even in a hunt, and that no one well initiated would ever run after Buffaloes between the herd and another hunter, as the latter bears on the former ever and anon, and places him in imminent danger. Buffalo cows rarely, if ever, turn on the assailant, but bulls oftentimes will, and are so dangerous that many a fine hunter has been gored and killed, as well as his horse.

July 5, Wednesday. It rained the whole of last night and the weather has been bad all day. I am at the Bighorn's head, and Sprague at Mr. Culbertson. Provost and Squires returned drenched and hungry, before dinner. They had seen several Deer, and fresh tracks of a large Grizzly Bear. They had waded through mud and water enough for one day, and were well fatigued. Harris and Bell both shot at Wolves from the ramparts, and as these things are of such common occurrence I will say no more about them, unless we are in want of one of these beasts. Harris and I went over to see Mr. Collins, who is much better; his hunters had not returned. We found the men there mostly engaged in playing cards and backgammon. The large patches of rose bushes are now in full bloom, and they are so full of sweet fragrance that the air is perfumed by them. The weather looks clear towards the north, and I expect a fine to-morrow. Old Provost has been telling me much of interest about the Beavers, once so plentiful, but now

very scarce. It takes about seventy Beaver skins to make a pack of a hundred pounds; in a good market this pack is worth five hundred dollars, and in fortunate seasons a trapper sometimes made the large sum of four thousand dollars. Formerly, when Beavers were abundant, companies were sent with as many as thirty and forty men, each with from eight to a dozen traps, and two horses. When at a propitious spot, they erected a camp, and every man sought his own game; the skins alone were brought to the camp, where a certain number of men always remained to stretch and dry them.

July 6, Thursday. The weather has been pleasant, with the wind at northwest, and the prairies will dry a good deal. After breakfast Harris, Bell, and McKenzie went off on horseback. They saw a Red Fox of the country,³³ which is different from those of the States; they chased it, and though it ran slowly at first, the moment it saw the hunters at full gallop, it ran swiftly from them. McKenzie shot with a rifle and missed it. They saw fresh tracks of the small Hare, but not any of the animals themselves. After dinner I worked at Mr. Culbertson's head and dress, and by evening had the portrait nearly finished. At four o'clock Harris, Bell, and Sprague went across the river in the skiff; Sprague to take a view of the fort, the others to hunt. Harris and Bell shot twice at a buck, and killed it, though only

³³ *Vulpes utah* of Aud. and Bach., Quad. N. Am. iii., 1853, p. 255, pl. 151, or *V. macrourus* of Baird, as already noted. This is the Western variety of the common Red Fox, now usually called *Vulpes fulvus macrourus*. — E. C.

one buckshot entered the thigh. Whilst we were sitting at the back gate of the fort, we saw a parcel of Indians coming towards the place, yelling and singing what Mr. Culbertson told me was the song of the scalp dance; we saw through the telescope that they were fourteen in number, with their faces painted black, and that it was a detachment of a war party. When within a hundred yards they all stopped, as if awaiting an invitation; we did not hurry as to this, and they seated themselves on the ground and looked at us, while Mr. Culbertson sent Mr. Denig to ask them to come in by the front gate of the fort, and put them in the Indian house, a sort of camp for the fellows. They all looked miserably poor, filthy beyond description, and their black faces and foully smelling Buffalo robes made them appear to me like so many devils. The leader, who was well known to be a famous rascal, and was painted red, was a tall, well-formed man. The party had only three poor guns, and a few had coarse, common lances; every man had a knife, and the leader was armed with a stick in which were inserted three blades of butcher's-knives; a blow from this weapon would doubtless kill a man. Some of the squaws of the fort, having found that they were Assiniboins, went to meet them; they took one of these, and painted her face black, as a sign of friendship. Most of these mighty warriors had a lump of fresh Buffalo meat slung on his back, which was all traded for by Mr. Larpenteur, who gave them in exchange some dried meat, not worth the notice of Harris's dog, and some tobacco. The report of their expedition is as follows: Their party at first

consisted of nearly fifty; they travelled several hundred miles in search of Blackfeet, and having discovered a small troop of them, they hid till the next morning, when at daylight (this is always the time they prefer for an attack) they rushed upon the enemy, surprised them, killed one at the onset, and the rest took to flight, leaving guns, horses, shields, lances, etc., on the ground. The Assiniboins took several guns and seven horses, and the scalp of the dead Indian. It happened that the man they killed had some time ago killed the father of their chief, and he was full of joy. After eating and resting awhile, they followed the trail of the Blackfeet, hoping to again surprise them; but not seeing them, they separated into small parties, and it is one of these parties that is now with us. The chief, to show his pride and delight at killing his enemy, has borrowed a drum; and the company have nearly ever since been yelling, singing, and beating that beastly tambour. Boucherville came to me, and told me that if the swamp over the river was sufficiently dried by to-morrow morning, he would come early with a companion for two horses, and would go after Bighorns. He returned this afternoon from a Buffalo hunt and had killed six. These six animals, all bulls, will suffice for Fort Mortimer only three days. A rascally Indian had stolen his gun and Bighorn bow; the gun he said he could easily replace, but the loss of the bow he regretted exceedingly.

July 7, Friday. This morning the dirty Indians, who could have washed had they so minded, were beating the tambour and singing their miserable scalp song, until Mr. Culbertson ordered

the drum taken away, and gave them more tobacco and some vermilion to bedaub their faces. They were permitted to remain about the fort the remainder of the day, and the night coming they will again be sheltered; but they must depart to-morrow morning. After breakfast Sprague worked on the view of the fort. I went on with the portrait of Mr. Culbertson, who is about as bad a sitter as his wife, whose portrait is very successful, notwithstanding her extreme restlessness. After dinner Harris, Bell, and I started on foot, and walked about four miles from the fort; the day was hot, and horseflies and mosquitoes pretty abundant, but we trudged on, though we saw nothing; we had gone after Rabbits, the tracks of which had been seen previously. We walked immediately near the foot of the clay hills which run from about a mile from and above the fort to the Lord knows where. We first passed one ravine where we saw some very curious sandstone formations, coming straight out horizontally from the clay banks between which we were passing; others lay loose and detached; they had fallen down, or had been washed out some time or other. All were compressed in such a manner that the usual form was an oval somewhat depressed in the centre; but, to give you some idea of these formations, I will send you a rough sketch. Those in the banks extended from five to seven feet, and the largest one on the ground measured a little less than ten feet. Bell thought they would make good sharpening-stones, but I considered them too soft. They were all smooth, and the grain was alike in all. We passed two much depressed and very broken ravines, and at last

reached the Rabbit ground. Whilst looking at the wild scenery around, and the clay hills on the other side of the Missouri opposite the fort, I thought that if all these were granite, the formation and general appearance would resemble the country of Labrador, though the grandeur and sublimity of the latter far surpass anything that I have seen since I left them forever. I must not forget to say that on our way we passed through some grasses with bearded shafts, so sharp that they penetrated our moccasins and entered our feet and ankles, and in the shade of a stumpy ash-tree we took off our moccasins and drew the spines out. The Lazuli Finches and Arctic Bluebirds sang in our view; but though we beat all the clumps of low bushes where the Rabbits must go in, whether during night or day, we did not start one. We saw a Wolf which ran close by, reached the brow of the hill, and kept where he could watch our every motion; this they do on all possible occasions. We were all very warm, so we rested awhile, and ate some service-berries, which I found good; the gooseberries were small and green, and almost choked Harris with their sharp acidity. On our return, as we were descending the first deep ravine, a Raven flew off close by; it was so near Bell that he had no time to shoot. I followed it and although loaded with No. 6 shot, I drew my trigger and the bird fell dead; only one shot had touched it, but that had passed through the lungs. After we reached the prairie I shot a Meadow Lark, but lost it, as we had unfortunately not taken Bragg (Harris's dog). We saw a patch of wood called in these regions a "Point;" we walked towards it

for the purpose of shooting Deer. I was sent to the lower end, Bell took one side, and Harris the other, and the hound we had with us was sent in; no Deer there, however, and we made for the fort, which we reached hot and thirsty enough after our long walk. As soon as I was cooled I took a good swim. I think the Indians hereabouts poor swimmers; they beat the water with their arms, attempting to "nage à la brasse;" but, alas! it is too bad to mention. I am told, however, that there are no good specimens to judge from at the fort, so this is not much of an opinion. It is strange how very scarce snakes of every description are, as well as insects, except mosquitoes and horseflies. Young McKenzie had been sent to seek for the lost ferry-boat, but returned without success; the new one is expected to be put in the water to-morrow evening. Squires and Provost had the skiff carried overland three miles, and they crossed the river in it with the intention to remain hunting until Sunday night.

July 8, Saturday. Mr. Culbertson told me this morning that last spring early, during a snow-storm, he and Mr. Larpenteur were out in an Indian lodge close by the fort, when they heard the mares which had young colts making much noise; and that on going out they saw a single Wolf that had thrown down one of the colts, and was about doing the same with another. They both made towards the spot with their pistols; and, fearing that the Wolf might kill both the colts, fired before reaching the spot, when too far off to take aim. Master Wolf ran off, but both colts bear evidence of his teeth to this day. When I came down

this morning early, I was delighted to see the dirty and rascally Indians walking off to their lodge on the other side of the hills, and before many days they will be at their camp enjoying their merriment (rough and senseless as it seems to me), yelling out their scalp song, and dancing. Now this dance, to commemorate the death of an enemy, is a mere bending and slackening of the body, and patting of the ground with both feet at once, in very tolerable time with their music. Our squaws yesterday joined them in this exemplary ceremony; one was blackened, and all the others painted with vermilion. The art of painting in any color is to mix the color desired with grease of one sort or another; and when well done, it will stick on for a day or two, if not longer. Indians are not equal to the whites in the art of dyeing Porcupine quills; their ingredients are altogether too simple and natural to equal the knowledge of chemicals. Mr. Denig dyed a good quantity to-day for Mrs. Culbertson; he boiled water in a tin kettle with the quills put in when the water boiled, to remove the oil attached naturally to them; next they were thoroughly washed, and fresh water boiled, wherein he placed the color wanted, and boiled the whole for a few minutes, when he looked at them to judge of the color, and so continued until all were dyed. Red, yellow, green, and black quills were the result of his labors. A good deal of vegetable acid is necessary for this purpose, as minerals, so they say here, will not answer. I drew at Mr. Culbertson's portrait till he was tired enough; his wife – a pure Indian – is much interested in my work. Bell and Sprague, after

some long talk with Harris about geological matters, of which valuable science he knows a good deal, went off to seek a Wolf's hole that Sprague had seen some days before, but of which, with his usual reticence, he had not spoken. Sprague returned with a specimen of rattle-snake root, which he has already drawn. Bell saw a Wolf munching a bone, approached it and shot at it. The Wolf had been wounded before and ran off slowly, and Bell after it. Mr. Culbertson and I saw the race; Bell gained on the Wolf until within thirty steps when he fired again; the Wolf ran some distance further, and then fell; but Bell was now exhausted by the heat, which was intense, and left the animal where it lay without attempting to skin it. Squires and Provost returned this afternoon about three o'clock, but the first alone had killed a doe. It was the first one he had ever shot, and he placed seven buckshot in her body. Owen went off one way, and Harris and Bell another, but brought in nothing. Provost went off to the Opposition camp, and when he returned told me that a Porcupine was there, and would be kept until I saw it; so Harris drove me over, at the usual breakneck pace, and I bought the animal. Mr. Collins is yet poorly, their hunters have not returned, and they are destitute of everything, not having even a medicine chest. We told him to send a man back with us, which he did, and we sent him some medicine, rice, and two bottles of claret. The weather has been much cooler and pleasanter than yesterday.

July 9, Sunday. I drew at a Wolf's head, and Sprague worked at a view of the fort for Mr. Culbertson. I also worked on

Mr. Culbertson's portrait about an hour. I then worked at the Porcupine, which is an animal such as I never saw or Bell either. Its measurements are: from nose to anterior canthus of the eye, $15/8$ in., posterior ditto, $21/8$; conch of ear, $31/2$; distances from eyes posteriorly, $21/4$; fore feet stretched beyond nose, $31/2$; length of head around, $41/8$; nose to root of tail, $181/2$; length of tail vertebræ, $63/8$; to end of hair, $73/4$; hind claws when stretched equal to end of tail; greatest breadth of palm, $11/4$; of sole, $13/8$; outward width of tail at base, $35/8$; depth of ditto, $31/8$; length of palm, $11/2$; ditto of sole, $17/8$; height at shoulder, 11; at rump, $101/4$; longest hair on the back, $87/8$; breadth between ears, $21/4$; from nostril to split of upper lip, $3/4$; upper incisors, $5/8$; lower ditto, $3/4$; tongue quite smooth; weight 11 lbs. The habits of this animal are somewhat different from those of the Canadian Porcupine. The one of this country often goes in crevices or holes, and young McKenzie caught one in a Wolf's den, along with the old Wolf and seven young; they climb trees, however.

Provost tells me that Wolves are oftentimes destroyed by wild horses, which he has seen run at the Wolves head down, and when at a proper distance take them by the middle of the back with their teeth, and throw them several feet in the air, after which they stamp upon their bodies with the fore feet until quite dead. I have a bad blister on the heel of my right foot, and cannot walk without considerable pain.

July 10, Monday. Squires, Owen, McKenzie, and Provost, with a mule, a cart, and Peter the horse, went off at seven this

morning for Antelopes. Bell did not feel well enough to go with them, and was unable to eat his usual meal, but I made him some good gruel, and he is better now. This afternoon Harris went off on horseback after Rabbits, and he will, I hope, have success. The day has been fine, and cool compared with others. I took a walk, and made a drawing of the beautiful sugar-loaf cactus; it does not open its blossoms until after the middle of the day, and closes immediately on being placed in the shade.

July 11, Tuesday. Harris returned about ten o'clock last night, but saw no Hares; how we are to procure any is more than I can tell. Mr. Culbertson says that it was dangerous for Harris to go so far as he did alone up the country, and he must not try it again. The hunters returned this afternoon, but brought only one buck, which is, however, beautiful, and the horns in velvet so remarkable that I can hardly wait for daylight to begin drawing it. I have taken all the measurements of this perfect animal; it was shot by old Provost. Mr. Culbertson – whose portrait is nearly finished – his wife, and I took a ride to look at some grass for hay, and found it beautiful and plentiful. We saw two Wolves, a common one and a prairie one. Bell is better. Sprague has drawn another cactus; Provost and I have now skinned the buck, and it hangs in the ice-house; the head, however, is untouched.

July 12, Wednesday. I rose before three, and began at once to draw the buck's head. Bell assisted me to place it in the position I wanted, and as he felt somewhat better, while I drew, he finished the skin of the Porcupine; so that is saved. Sprague continued his

painting of the fort. Just after dinner a Wolf was seen leisurely walking within one hundred yards of the fort. Bell took the repeating rifle, went on the ramparts, fired, and missed it. Mr. Culbertson sent word to young Owen McKenzie to get a horse and give it chase. All was ready in a few minutes, and off went the young fellow after the beast. I left my drawing long enough to see the pursuit, and was surprised to see that the Wolf did not start off on a gallop till his pursuer was within one hundred yards or so of him, and who then gained rapidly. Suddenly the old sinner turned, and the horse went past him some little distance. As soon as he could be turned about McKenzie closed upon him, his gun flashed twice; but now he was almost *à bon touchant*, the gun went off – the Wolf was dead. I walked out to meet Owen with the beast; it was very poor, very old, and good for nothing as a specimen. Harris, who had shot at one last night in the late twilight, had killed it, but was not aware of it till I found the villain this morning. It had evidently been dragged at by its brothers, who, however, had not torn it. Provost went over to the other fort to find out where the Buffaloes are most abundant, and did not return till late, so did no hunting. A young dog of this country's breed ate up all the berries collected by Mrs. Culbertson, and her lord had it killed for our supper this evening. The poor thing was stuck with a knife in the throat, after which it was placed over a hot fire outside of the fort, singed, and the hair scraped off, as I myself have treated Raccoons and Opossums. Then the animal was boiled, and I intend to taste one mouthful

of it, for I cannot say that just now I should relish an entire meal from such peculiar fare. There are men, however, who much prefer the flesh to Buffalo meat, or even venison. An ox was broken to work this day, and worked far better than I expected. I finished at last Mr. Culbertson's portrait, and it now hangs in a frame. He and his wife are much pleased with it, and I am heartily glad they are, for in conscience I am not; however, it is all I could do, especially with a man who is never in the same position for one whole minute; so no more can be expected. The dog was duly cooked and brought into Mr. Culbertson's room; he served it out to Squires, Mr. Denig, and myself, and I was astonished when I tasted it. With great care and some repugnance I put a very small piece in my mouth; but no sooner had the taste touched my palate than I changed my dislike to liking, and found this victim of the canine order most excellent, and made a good meal, finding it fully equal to any meat I ever tasted. Old Provost had told me he preferred it to any meat, and his subsequent actions proved the truth of his words. We are having some music this evening, and Harris alone is absent, being at his favorite evening occupation, namely, shooting at Wolves from the ramparts.

July 13, Thursday. This has been a cloudy and a sultry day. Sprague finished his drawing and I mine. After dinner Mr. Culbertson, Squires, and myself went off nine miles over the prairies to look at the "meadows," as they are called, where Mr. Culbertson has heretofore cut his winter crop of hay, but we found it indifferent compared with that above the fort. We saw

Sharp-tailed Grouse, and what we thought a new species of Lark, which we shot at no less than ten times before it was killed by Mr. Culbertson, but not found. I caught one of its young, but it proved to be only the Shore Lark. Before we reached the meadows we saw a flock of fifteen or twenty Bob-o-link, *Emberiza orizivora*, and on our return shot one of them (a male) on the wing. It is the first seen since we left St. Louis. We reached the meadows at last, and tied our nag to a tree, with the privilege of feeding. Mr. Culbertson and Squires went in the "meadows," and I walked round the so-called patch. I shot seven Arkansas Flycatchers on the wing. After an hour's walking, my companions returned, but had seen nothing except the fresh tracks of a Grizzly Bear. I shot at one of the White-rumped Hawks, of which I have several times spoken, but although it dropped its quarry and flew very wildly afterwards, it went out of my sight. We found the beds of Elks and their fresh dung, but saw none of these animals. I have forgotten to say that immediately after breakfast this morning I drove with Squires to Fort Mortimer, and asked Mr. Collins to let me have his hunter, Boucherville, to go after Mountain Rams for me, which he promised to do. In the afternoon he sent a man over to ask for some flour, which Mr. Culbertson sent him. They are there in the utmost state of destitution, almost of starvation, awaiting the arrival of the hunters like so many famished Wolves. Harris and Bell went across the river and shot a Wolf under the river bank, and afterwards a Duck, but saw nothing else. But during their absence we have had a fine opportunity of

witnessing the agility and extreme strength of a year-old Buffalo bull belonging to the fort. Our cook, who is an old Spaniard, threw his lasso over the Buffalo's horns, and all the men in the fort at the time, hauled and pulled the beast about, trying to get him close to a post. He kicked, pulled, leaped sideways, and up and down, snorting and pawing until he broke loose, and ran, as if quite wild, about the enclosure. He was tied again and again, without any success, and at last got out of the fort, but was soon retaken, the rope being thrown round his horns, and he was brought to the main post of the Buffalo-robe press. There he was brought to a standstill, at the risk of breaking his neck, and the last remnant of his winter coat was removed by main strength, which was the object for which the poor animal had undergone all this trouble. After Harris returned to the fort he saw six Sharp-tailed Grouse. At this season this species have no particular spot where you may rely upon finding them, and at times they fly through the woods, and for a great distance, too, where they alight on trees; when, unless you accidentally see them, you pass by without their moving. After we passed Fort Mortimer on our return we saw coming from the banks of the river no less than eighteen Wolves, which altogether did not cover a space of more than three or four yards, they were so crowded. Among them were two Prairie Wolves. Had we had a good running horse some could have been shot; but old Peter is long past his running days. The Wolves had evidently been feeding on some carcass along the banks, and all moved very slowly. Mr. Culbertson gave me a

grand pair of leather breeches and a very handsome knife-case, all manufactured by the Blackfeet Indians.

July 14, Friday. Thermometer 70°-95°. Young McKenzie went off after Antelopes across the river alone, but saw only one, which he could not get near. After breakfast Harris, Squires, and I started after birds of all sorts, with the wagon, and proceeded about six miles on the road we had travelled yesterday. We met the hunter from Fort Mortimer going for Bighorns for me, and Mr. Culbertson lent him a horse and a mule. We caught two young of the Shore Lark, killed seven of Sprague's Lark, but by bad management lost two, either from the wagon, my hat, or Harris's pockets. The weather was exceedingly hot. We hunted for Grouse in the wormwood bushes, and after despairing of finding any, we started up three from the plain, and they flew not many yards to the river. We got out of the wagon and pushed for them; one rose, and Harris shot it, though it flew some yards before he picked it up. He started another, and just as he was about to fire, his gunlock caught on his coat, and off went Mr. Grouse, over and through the woods until out of sight, and we returned slowly home. We saw ten Wolves this morning. After dinner we had a curious sight. Squires put on my Indian dress. McKenzie put on one of Mr. Culbertson's, Mrs. Culbertson put on her own *superb* dress, and the cook's wife put on the one Mrs. Culbertson had given me. Squires and Owen were painted in an awful manner by Mrs. Culbertson, the *Ladies* had their hair loose, and flying in the breeze, and then

all mounted on horses with Indian saddles and trappings. Mrs. Culbertson and her maid rode astride like men, and all rode a furious race, under whip the whole way, for more than one mile on the prairie; and how amazed would have been any European lady, or some of our modern belles who boast their equestrian skill, at seeing the magnificent riding of this Indian princess – for that is Mrs. Culbertson's rank – and her servant. Mr. Culbertson rode with them, the horses running as if wild, with these extraordinary Indian riders, Mrs. Culbertson's magnificent black hair floating like a banner behind her. As to the men (for two others had joined Squires and McKenzie), I cannot compare them to anything in the whole creation. They ran like wild creatures of unearthly compound. Hither and thither they dashed, and when the whole party had crossed the ravine below, they saw a fine Wolf and gave the whip to their horses, and though the Wolf cut to right and left Owen shot at him with an arrow and missed, but Mr. Culbertson gave it chase, overtook it, his gun flashed, and the Wolf lay dead. They then ascended the hills and away they went, with our princess and her faithful attendant in the van, and by and by the group returned to the camp, running full speed till they entered the fort, and all this in the intense heat of this July afternoon. Mrs. Culbertson, herself a wonderful rider, possessed of both strength and grace in a marked degree, assured me that Squires was equal to any man in the country as a rider, and I saw for myself that he managed his horse as well as any of the party, and I was pleased to see him

in his dress, ornaments, etc., looking, however, I must confess, after Mrs. Culbertson's painting his face, like a being from the infernal regions. Mr. Culbertson presented Harris with a superb dress of the Blackfoot Indians, and also with a Buffalo bull's head, for which Harris had in turn presented him with a gun-barrel of the short kind, and well fitted to shoot Buffaloes. Harris shot a very young one of Townsend's Hare, Mr. Denig gave Bell a Mouse, which, although it resembles *Mus leucopus* greatly, is much larger, and has a short, thick, round tail, somewhat blunted.

July 15, Saturday. We were all up pretty early, for we propose going up the Yellowstone with a wagon, and the skiff on a cart, should we wish to cross. After breakfast all of us except Sprague, who did not wish to go, were ready, and along with two extra men, the wagon, and the cart, we crossed the Missouri at the fort, and at nine were fairly under way – Harris, Bell, Mr. Culbertson, and myself in the wagon, Squires, Provost, and Owen on horseback. We travelled rather slowly, until we had crossed the point, and headed the ponds on the prairie that run at the foot of the hills opposite. We saw one Grouse, but it could not be started, though Harris searched for it. We ran the wagon into a rut, but got out unhurt; however, I decided to walk for a while, and did so for about two miles, to the turning point of the hills. The wheels of our vehicle were very shackling, and had to be somewhat repaired, and though I expected they would fall to pieces, in some manner or other we proceeded on. We saw several Antelopes, some on the prairie which we now travelled

on, and many more on the tops of the hills, bounding westward. We stopped to water the horses at a saline spring, where I saw that Buffaloes, Antelopes, and other animals come to allay their thirst, and repose on the grassy margin. The water was too hot for us to drink, and we awaited the arrival of the cart, when we all took a good drink of the river water we had brought with us. After waiting for nearly an hour to allow the horses to bait and cool themselves, for it was very warm, we proceeded on, until we came to another watering-place, a river, in fact, which during spring overflows its banks, but now has only pools of water here and there. We soaked our wheels again, and again drank ourselves. Squires, Provost, and Owen had left sometime before us, but were not out of our sight, when we started, and as we had been, and were yet, travelling a good track, we soon caught up with them. We shot a common Red-winged Starling, and heard the notes of what was supposed to be a new bird by my companions, but which to my ears was nothing more than the Short-billed Marsh Wren of Nuttall. We reached our camping-place, say perhaps twenty miles' distance, by four o'clock, and all things were unloaded, the horses put to grass, and two or three of the party went in "the point" above, to shoot something for supper. I was hungry myself, and taking the Red-wing and the fishing-line, I went to the river close by, and had the good fortune to catch four fine catfish, when, my bait giving out, I was obliged to desist, as I found that these catfish will not take parts of their own kind as food. Provost had taken a bath, and rowed

the skiff (which we had brought this whole distance on the cart, dragged by a mule) along with two men, across the river to seek for game on the point opposite our encampment. They returned, however, without having shot anything, and my four catfish were all the fresh provisions that we had, and ten of us partook of them with biscuit, coffee, and claret. Dusk coming on, the tent was pitched, and preparations to rest made. Some chose one spot and some another, and after a while we were settled. Mr. Culbertson and I lay together on the outside of the tent, and all the party were more or less drowsy. About this time we saw a large black cloud rising in the west; it was heavy and lowering, and about ten o'clock, when most of us were pretty nearly sound asleep, the distant thunder was heard, the wind rose to a gale, and the rain began falling in torrents. All were on foot in a few moments, and considerable confusion ensued. Our guns, all loaded with balls, were hurriedly placed under the tent, our beds also, and we all crawled in, in the space of a very few minutes. The wind blew so hard that Harris was obliged to hold the flappers of the tent with both hands, and sat in the water a considerable time to do this. Old Provost alone did not come in, he sat under the shelving bank of the river, and kept dry. After the gale was over, he calmly lay down in front of the tent on the saturated ground, and was soon asleep. During the gale, our fire, which we had built to keep off the myriads of mosquitoes, blew in every direction, and we had to watch the embers to keep them from burning the tent. After all was over, we snuggled ourselves the best way we could in our

small tent and under the wagon, and slept soundly till daylight. Mr. Culbertson had fixed himself pretty well, but on arising at daylight to smoke his pipe, Squires immediately crept into his comfortable corner, and snored there till the day was well begun. Mr. Culbertson had my knees for a pillow, and also my hat, I believe, for in the morning, although the first were not hurt, the latter was sadly out of shape in all parts. We had nothing for our breakfast except some vile coffee, and about three quarters of a sea-biscuit, which was soon settled among us. The men, poor fellows, had nothing at all. Provost had seen two Deer, but had had no shot, so of course we were in a quandary, but it is now —

July 16, Sunday. The weather pleasant with a fine breeze from the westward, and all eyes were bent upon the hills and prairie, which is here of great breadth, to spy if possible some object that might be killed and eaten. Presently a Wolf was seen, and Owen went after it, and it was not until he had disappeared below the first low range of hills, and Owen also, that the latter came within shot of the rascal, which dodged in all sorts of manners; but Owen would not give up, and after shooting more than once, he killed the beast. A man had followed him to help bring in the Wolf, and when near the river he saw a Buffalo, about two miles off, grazing peaceably, as he perhaps thought, safe in his own dominions; but, alas! white hunters had fixed their eyes upon him, and from that moment his doom was pronounced. Mr. Culbertson threw down his hat, bound his head with a handkerchief, his saddle was on his mare, he was mounted and

off and away at a swift gallop, more quickly than I can describe, not towards the Buffalo, but towards the place where Owen had killed the Wolf. The man brought the Wolf on old Peter, and Owen, who was returning to the camp, heard the signal gun fired by Mr. Culbertson, and at once altered his course; his mare was evidently a little heated and blown by the Wolf chase, but both hunters went after the Buffalo, slowly at first, to rest Owen's steed, but soon, when getting within running distance, they gave whip, overhauled the Bison, and shot at it twice with balls; this halted the animal; the hunters had no more balls, and now loaded with pebbles, with which the poor beast was finally killed. The wagon had been sent from the camp. Harris, Bell, and Squires mounted on horseback, and travelled to the scene of action. They met Mr. Culbertson returning to camp, and he told Bell the Buffalo was a superb one, and had better be skinned. A man was sent to assist in the skinning who had been preparing the Wolf which was now cooking, as we had expected to dine upon its flesh; but when Mr. Culbertson returned, covered with blood and looking like a wild Indian, it was decided to throw it away; so I cut out the liver, and old Provost and I went fishing and caught eighteen catfish. I hooked two tortoises, but put them back in the river. I took a good swim, which refreshed me much, and I came to dinner with a fine appetite. This meal consisted wholly of fish, and we were all fairly satisfied. Before long the flesh of the Buffalo reached the camp, as well as the hide. The animal was very fat, and we have meat for some days. It was

now decided that Squires, Provost, and Basil (one of the men) should proceed down the river to the Charbonneau, and there try their luck at Otters and Beavers, and the rest of us, with the cart, would make our way back to the fort. All was arranged, and at half-past three this afternoon we were travelling towards Fort Union. But hours previous to this, and before our scanty dinner, Owen had seen another bull, and Harris and Bell joined us in the hunt. The bull was shot at by McKenzie, who stopped its career, but as friend Harris pursued it with two of the hunters and finished it I was about to return, and thought sport over for the day. However, at this stage of the proceedings Owen discovered another bull making his way slowly over the prairie towards us. I was the only one who had balls, and would gladly have claimed the privilege of running him, but fearing I might make out badly on my slower steed, and so lose meat which we really needed, I handed my gun and balls to Owen McKenzie, and Bell and I went to an eminence to view the chase. Owen approached the bull, which continued to advance, and was now less than a quarter of a mile distant; either it did not see, or did not heed him, and they came directly towards each other, until they were about seventy or eighty yards apart, when the Buffalo started at a good run, and Owen's mare, which had already had two hard runs this morning, had great difficulty in preserving her distance. Owen, perceiving this, breathed her a minute, and then applying the whip was soon within shooting distance, and fired a shot which visibly checked the progress of the bull, and enabled Owen to soon be alongside

of him, when the contents of the second barrel were discharged into the lungs, passing through the shoulder blade. This brought him to a stand. Bell and I now started at full speed, and as soon as we were within speaking distance, called to Owen not to shoot again. The bull did not appear to be much exhausted, but he was so stiffened by the shot on the shoulder that he could not turn quickly, and taking advantage of this we approached him; as we came near he worked himself slowly round to face us, and then made a lunge at us; we then stopped on one side and commenced discharging our pistols with little or no effect, except to increase his fury with every shot. His appearance was now one to inspire terror had we not felt satisfied of our ability to avoid him. However, even so, I came very near being overtaken by him. Through my own imprudence, I placed myself directly in front of him, and as he advanced I fired at his head, and then ran *ahead* of him, instead of veering to one side, not supposing that he was able to overtake me; but turning my head over my shoulder, I saw to my horror, Mr. Bull within three feet of me, prepared to give me a taste of his horns. The next instant I turned sharply off, and the Buffalo being unable to turn quickly enough to follow me, Bell took the gun from Owen and shot him directly behind the shoulder blade. He tottered for a moment, with an increased jet of blood from the mouth and nostrils, fell forward on his horns, then rolled over on his side, and was dead. He was a very old animal, in poor case, and only part of him was worth taking to the fort. Provost, Squires, and Basil were left at

the camp preparing for their departure after Otter and Beaver as decided. We left them eight or nine catfish and a quantity of meat, of which they took care to secure the best, namely the boss or hump. On our homeward way we saw several Antelopes, some quite in the prairie, others far away on the hills, but all of them on the alert. Owen tried unsuccessfully to approach several of them at different times. At one place where two were seen he dismounted, and went round a small hill (for these animals when startled or suddenly alarmed always make to these places), and we hoped would have had a shot; but alas! no! One of the Antelopes ran off to the top of another hill, and the other stood looking at him, and us perhaps, till Owen (who had been remounted) galloped off towards us. My surprise was great when I saw the other Antelope following him at a good pace (but not by bounds or leaps, as I had been told by a former traveller they sometimes did), until it either smelt him, or found out he was no friend, and turning round galloped speedily off to join the one on the lookout. We saw seven or eight Grouse, and Bell killed one on the ground. We saw a Sand-hill Crane about two years old, looking quite majestic in a grassy bottom, but it flew away before we were near enough to get a shot. We passed a fine pond or small lake, but no bird was there. We saw several parcels of Ducks in sundry places, all of which no doubt had young near. When we turned the corner of the great prairie we found Owen's mare close by us. She had run away while he was after Antelopes. We tied her to a log to be ready for him when he should reach the spot.

He had to walk about three miles before he did this. However, to one as young and alert as Owen, such things are nothing. Once they were not to me. We saw more Antelope at a distance, here called "Cabris," and after a while we reached the wood near the river, and finding abundance of service-berries, we all got out to break branches of these plants, Mr. Culbertson alone remaining in the wagon; he pushed on for the landing. We walked after him munching our berries, which we found very good, and reached the landing as the sun was going down behind the hills. Young McKenzie was already there, having cut across the point. We decided on crossing the river ourselves, and leaving all behind us except our guns. We took to the ferry-boat, cordelled it up the river for a while, then took to the nearest sand-bar, and leaping into the mud and water, hauled the heavy boat, Bell and Harris steering and poling the while. I had pulled off my shoes and socks, and when we reached the shore walked up to the fort barefooted, and made my feet quite sore again; but we have had a rest and a good supper, and I am writing in Mr. Culbertson's room, thinking over all God's blessings on this delightful day.

July 17, Monday. A beautiful day, with a west wind. Sprague, who is very industrious at all times, drew some flowers, and I have been busy both writing and drawing. In the afternoon Bell went after Rabbits, but saw one only, which he could not get, and Sprague walked to the hills about two miles off, but could not see any portion of the Yellowstone River, which Mr. Catlin has given in his view, as if he had been in a balloon some thousands of feet

above the earth. Two men arrived last evening by land from Fort Pierre, and brought a letter, but no news of any importance; one is a cook as well as a hunter, the other named Wolff, a German, and a tinsmith by trade, though now a trapper.

July 18, Tuesday. When I went to bed last night the mosquitoes were so numerous downstairs that I took my bed under my arm and went to a room above, where I slept well. On going down this morning, I found two other persons from Fort Pierre, and Mr. Culbertson very busy reading and writing letters. Immediately after breakfast young McKenzie and another man were despatched on mules, with a letter for Mr. Kipp, and Owen expects to overtake the boat in three or four days. An Indian arrived with a stolen squaw, both Assiniboins; and I am told such things are of frequent occurrence among these sons of nature. Mr. Culbertson proposed that we should take a ride to see the mowers, and Harris and I joined him. We found the men at work, among them one called Bernard Adams, of Charleston, S.C., who knew the Bachmans quite well, and who had read the whole of the "Biographies of Birds." Leaving the men, we entered a ravine in search of plants, etc., and having started an Owl, which I took for the barred one, I left my horse and went in search of it, but could not see it, and hearing a new note soon saw a bird not to be mistaken, and killed it, when it proved, as I expected, to be the Rock Wren; then I shot another sitting by the mouth of a hole. The bird did not fly off; Mr. Culbertson watched it closely, but when the hole was demolished no bird was to be found. Harris

saw a Shrike, but of what species he could not tell, and he also found some Rock Wrens in another ravine. We returned to the fort and promised to visit the place this afternoon, which we have done, and procured three more Wrens, and killed the Owl, which proves to be precisely the resemblance of the Northern specimen of the Great Horned Owl, which we published under another name. The Rock Wren, which might as well be called the Ground Wren, builds its nest in holes, and now the young are well able to fly, and we procured one in the act. In two instances we saw these birds enter a hole here, and an investigation showed a passage or communication, and on my pointing out a hole to Bell where one had entered, he pushed his arm in and touched the little fellow, but it escaped by running up his arm and away it flew. Black clouds now arose in the west, and we moved homewards. Harris and Bell went to the mowers to get a drink of water, and we reached home without getting wet, though it rained violently for some time, and the weather is much cooler. Not a word yet from Provost and Squires.

July 19, Wednesday. Squires and Provost returned early this morning, and again I give the former my journal that I may have the account of the hunt in his own words. "As Mr. Audubon has said, he left Provost, Basil, and myself making ready for our voyage down the Yellowstone. The party for the fort were far in the blue distance ere we bid adieu to our camping-ground. We had wished the return party a pleasant ride and safe arrival at the fort as they left us, looking forward to a good supper, and what

I *now* call a comfortable bed. We seated ourselves around some boiled Buffalo hump, which, as has been before said, we took good care to appropriate to ourselves according to the established rule of this country, which is, 'When you can, take the best,' and we had done so in this case, more to our satisfaction than to that of the hunters. Our meal finished, we packed everything we had in the skiff, and were soon on our way down the Yellowstone, happy as could be; Provost acting pilot, Basil oarsman, and your humble servant seated on a Buffalo robe, quietly smoking, and looking on the things around. We found the general appearance of the Yellowstone much like the Missouri, but with a stronger current, and the water more muddy. After a voyage of two hours Charbonneau River made its appearance, issuing from a clump of willows; the mouth of this river we found to be about ten feet wide, and so shallow that we were obliged to push our boat over the slippery mud for about forty feet. This passed, we entered a pond formed by the contraction of the mouth and the collection of mud and sticks thereabouts, the pond so formed being six or eight feet deep, and about fifty feet wide, extending about a mile up the river, which is very crooked indeed. For about half a mile from the Yellowstone the shore is lined with willows, beyond which is a level prairie, and on the shores of the stream just beyond the willows are a few scattered trees. About a quarter of a mile from the mouth of the river, we discovered what we were in search of, the Beaver lodge. To measure it was impossible, as it was not perfect, in the first place, in the next it was so

muddy that we could not get ashore, but as well as I can I will describe it. The lodge is what is called the summer lodge; it was comprised wholly of brush, willow chiefly, with a single hole for the entrance and exit of the Beaver. The pile resembled, as much as anything to which I can compare it, a brush heap about six feet high, and about ten or fifteen feet base, and standing seven or eight feet from the water. There were a few Beaver tracks about, which gave us some encouragement. We proceeded to our camping-ground on the edge of the prairie; here we landed all our baggage; while Basil made a fire, Provost and I started to set our traps – the two extremes of hunters, the skilful old one, and the ignorant pupil; but I was soon initiated in the art of setting Beaver traps, and to the uninitiated let me say, '*First*, find your game, *then* catch it,' if you can. The first we did, the latter we tried to do. We proceeded to the place where the greatest number of tracks were seen, and commenced operations. At the place where the path enters the water, and about four inches beneath the surface, a level place is made in the mud, upon which the trap is placed, the chain is then fastened to a stake which is firmly driven in the ground under water. The end of a willow twig is then chewed and dipped in the 'Medicine Horn,' which contains the bait; this consists of castoreum mixed with spices; a quantity is collected on the chewed end of the twig, the stick is then placed or stuck in the mud on the edge of the water, leaving the part with the bait about two inches above the surface and in front of the trap; on each side the bait and about six inches from it, two

dried twigs are placed in the ground; this done, all's done, and we are ready for the visit of Monsieur Castor. We set two traps, and returned to our camp, where we had supper, then pitched our tent and soon were sound asleep, but before we were asleep we heard a Beaver dive, and slap his tail, which sounded like the falling of a round stone in the water; here was encouragement again. In the morning (Monday) we examined our traps and found – nothing. We did not therefore disturb the traps, but examined farther up the river, where we discovered other tracks and resolved to set our traps there, as Provost concluded that there was but one Beaver, and that a male. We returned to camp and made a good breakfast on Buffalo meat and coffee, *sans* salt, *sans* pepper, *sans* sugar, *sans* anything else of any kind. After breakfast Provost shot a doe. In the afternoon we removed one trap, Basil and I gathered some wild-gooseberries which I stewed for supper, and made a sauce, which, though *rather acid*, was very good with our meat. The next morning, after again examining our traps and finding nothing, we decided to raise camp, which was accordingly done; everything was packed in the skiff, and we proceeded to the mouth of the river. The water had fallen so much since we had entered, as to oblige us to strip, jump in the mud, and haul the skiff over; rich and rare was the job; the mud was about half thigh deep, and a kind of greasy, sticky, black stuff, with a something about it so very peculiar as to be *rather* unpleasant; however, we did not mind much, and at last got into the Yellowstone, scraped and washed the

mud off, and encamped on a prairie about one hundred yards below the Charbonneau. It was near sunset; Provost commenced fishing; we joined him, and in half an hour we caught sixteen catfish, quite large ones. During the day Provost started to the Mauvaises Terres to hunt Bighorns, but returned unsuccessful. He baited his traps for the last time. During his absence thunder clouds were observed rising all around us; we stretched our tent, removed everything inside it, ate our supper of meat and coffee, and then went to bed. It rained some part of the night, but not enough to wet through the tent. The next morning (Tuesday) at daylight, Provost started to examine his traps, while we at the camp put everything in the boat, and sat down to await his return, when we proceeded on our voyage down the Yellowstone to Fort Mortimer, and from thence by land to Fort Union. Nothing of any interest occurred except that we saw two does, one young and one buck of the Bighorns; I fired at the buck which was on a high cliff about a hundred and fifty yards from us; I fired above it to allow for the falling of the ball, but the gun shot so well as to carry where I aimed. The animal was a very large buck; Provost says one of the largest he had seen. As soon as I fired he started and ran along the side of the hill which looked almost perpendicular, and I was much astonished, not only at the feat, but at the surprising quickness with which he moved along, with no apparent foothold. We reached Fort Mortimer about seven o'clock; I left Basil and Provost with the skiff, and I started for Fort Union on foot to send a cart for them. On my way I met

Mr. Audubon about to pay a visit to Fort Mortimer; I found all well, despatched the cart, changed my clothes, and feel none the worse for my five days' camping, and quite ready for a dance I hear we are to have to-night."

This morning as I walked to Fort Mortimer, meeting Squires as he has said, well and happy as a Lark, I was surprised to see a good number of horses saddled, and packed in different ways, and I hastened on to find what might be the matter. When I entered the miserable house in which Mr. Collins sleeps and spends his time when not occupied out of doors, he told me thirteen men and seven squaws were about to start for the lakes, thirty-five miles off, to kill Buffaloes and dry their meat, as the last his hunters brought in was already putrid. I saw the cavalcade depart in an E.N.E. direction, remained a while, and then walked back. Mr. Collins promised me half a dozen balls from young animals. Provost was discomfited and crestfallen at the failure of the Beaver hunt; he brought half a doe and about a dozen fine catfish. Mr. Culbertson and I are going to see the mowers, and to-morrow we start on a grand Buffalo hunt, and hope for Antelopes, Wolves, and Foxes.

July 20, Thursday. We were up early, and had our breakfast shortly after four o'clock, and before eight had left the landing of the fort, and were fairly under way for the prairies. Our equipment was much the same as before, except that we had two carts this time. Mr. C. drove Harris, Bell, and myself, and the others rode on the carts and led the hunting horses, or runners,

as they are called here. I observed a Rabbit running across the road, and saw some flowers different from any I had ever seen. After we had crossed a bottom prairie, we ascended between the high and rough ravines until we were on the rolling grounds of the plains. The fort showed well from this point, and we also saw a good number of Antelopes, and some young ones. These small things run even faster than the old ones. As we neared the Fox River some one espied four Buffaloes, and Mr. C., taking the telescope, showed them to me, lying on the ground. Our heads and carts were soon turned towards them, and we travelled within half a mile of them, concealed by a ridge or hill which separated them from us. The wind was favorable, and we moved on slowly round the hill, the hunters being now mounted. Harris and Bell had their hats on, but Owen and Mr. Culbertson had their heads bound with handkerchiefs. With the rest of the party I crawled on the ridge, and saw the bulls running away, but in a direction favorable for us to see the chase. On the word of command the horses were let loose, and away went the hunters, who soon were seen to gain on the game; two bulls ran together and Mr. C. and Bell followed after them, and presently one after another of the hunters followed them. Mr. C. shot first, and his bull stopped at the fire, walked towards where I was, and halted about sixty yards from me. His nose was within a few inches of the ground; the blood poured from his mouth, nose, and side, his tail hung down, but his legs looked as firm as ever, but in less than two minutes the poor beast fell on his side, and lay quite dead. Bell

and Mr. Culbertson went after the second. Harris took the third, and Squires the fourth. Bell's shot took effect in the buttock, and Mr. Culbertson shot, placing his ball a few inches above or below Bell's; after this Mr. Culbertson ran no more. At this moment Squires's horse threw him over his head, fully ten feet; he fell on his powder-horn and was severely bruised; he cried to Harris to catch his horse, and was on his legs at once, but felt sick for a few minutes. Harris, who was as cool as a cucumber, neared his bull, shot it through the lungs, and it fell dead on the spot. Bell was now seen in full pursuit of his game, and Harris joined Squires, and followed the fourth, which, however, was soon out of my sight. I saw Bell shooting two or three times, and I heard the firing of Squires and perhaps Harris, but the weather was hot, and being afraid of injuring their horses, they let the fourth bull make his escape. Bell's bull fell on his knees, got up again, and rushed on Bell, and was shot again. The animal stood a minute with his tail partially elevated, and then fell dead; through some mishap Bell had no knife with him, so did not bring the tongue, as is customary. Mr. Culbertson walked towards the first bull and I joined him. It was a fine animal about seven years old; Harris's and Bell's were younger. The first was fat, and was soon skinned and cut up for meat. Mr. Culbertson insisted on calling it my bull, so I cut off the brush of the tail and placed it in my hat-band. We then walked towards Harris, who was seated on his bull, and the same ceremony took place, and while they were cutting the animal up for meat, Bell, who said he thought his bull

was about three quarters of a mile distant, went off with me to see it; we walked at least a mile and a half, and at last came to it. It was a poor one, and the tongue and tail were all we took away, and we rejoined the party, who had already started the cart with Mr. Pike, who was told to fall to the rear, and reach the fort before sundown; this he could do readily, as we were not more than six miles distant. Mr. Culbertson broke open the head of "my" bull, and ate part of the brains raw, and yet warm, and so did many of the others, even Squires. The very sight of this turned my stomach, but I am told that were I to hunt Buffalo one year, I should like it "even better than dog meat." Mr. Pike did not reach the fort till the next morning about ten, I will say *en passant*. We continued our route, passing over the same road on which we had come, and about midway between the Missouri and Yellowstone Rivers. We saw more Antelopes, but not one Wolf; these rascals are never abundant where game is scarce, but where game is, there too are the Wolves. When we had travelled about ten miles further we saw seven Buffaloes grazing on a hill, but as the sun was about one hour high, we drove to one side of the road where there was a pond of water, and there stopped for the night; while the hunters were soon mounted, and with Squires they went off, leaving the men to arrange the camp. I crossed the pond, and having ascended the opposite bank, saw the bulls grazing as leisurely as usual. The hunters near them, they started down the hill, and the chase immediately began. One broke from the rest and was followed by Mr. C. who shot it, and then abandoned the

hunt, his horse being much fatigued. I now counted ten shots, but all was out of my sight, and I seated myself near a Fox hole, longing for him. The hunters returned in time; Bell and Harris had killed one, but Squires had no luck, owing to his being unable to continue the chase on account of the injury he had received from his fall. We had a good supper, having brought abundance of eatables and drinkables. The tent was pitched; I put up my mosquito-bar under the wagon, and there slept very soundly till sunrise. Harris and Bell wedged together under another bar, Mr. C. went into the tent, and Squires, who is tough and likes to rough it with the hunters, slept on a Buffalo hide somewhere with Moncrévier, one of the most skilful of the hunters. The horses were all hopped and turned to grass; they, however, went off too far, and had to be sent after, but I heard nothing of all this. As there is no wood on the prairies proper, our fire was made of Buffalo dung, which is so abundant that one meets these deposits at every few feet and in all directions.

July 21, Friday. We were up at sunrise, and had our coffee, after which Lafleur a mulatto, Harris, and Bell went off after Antelopes, for we cared no more about bulls; where the cows are, we cannot tell. Cows run faster than bulls, yearlings faster than cows, and calves faster than any of these. Squires felt sore, and his side was very black, so we took our guns and went after Black-breasted Lark Buntings, of which we saw many, but could not near them. I found a nest of them, however, with five eggs. The nest is planted in the ground, deep enough to sink the edges

of it. It is formed of dried fine grasses and roots, without any lining of hair or wool. By and by we saw Harris sitting on a high hill about one mile off, and joined him; he said the bulls they had killed last evening were close by, and I offered to go and see the bones, for I expected that the Wolves had devoured it during the night. We travelled on, and Squires returned to the camp. After about two miles of walking against a delightful strong breeze, we reached the animals; Ravens or Buzzards had worked at the eyes, but only one Wolf, apparently, had been there. They were bloated, and smelt quite unpleasant. We returned to the camp and saw a Wolf cross our path, and an Antelope looking at us. We determined to stop and try to bring him to us; I lay on my back and threw my legs up, kicking first one and then the other foot, and sure enough the Antelope walked towards us, slowly and carefully, however. In about twenty minutes he had come two or three hundred yards; he was a superb male, and I looked at him for some minutes; when about sixty yards off I could see his eyes, and being loaded with buck-shot pulled the trigger without rising from my awkward position. Off he went; Harris fired, but he only ran the faster for some hundred yards, when he turned, looked at us again, and was off. When we reached camp we found Bell there; he had shot three times at Antelopes without killing; Lafleur had also returned, and had broken the foreleg of one, but an Antelope can run fast enough with three legs, and he saw no more of it. We now broke camp, arranged the horses and turned our heads towards the Missouri, and in four and three-quarter

hours reached the landing. On entering the wood we again broke branches of service-berries, and carried a great quantity over the river. I much enjoyed the trip; we had our supper, and soon to bed in our hot room, where Sprague says the thermometer has been at 99° most of the day. I noticed it was warm when walking. I must not forget to notice some things which happened on our return. First, as we came near Fox River, we thought of the horns of our bulls, and Mr. Culbertson, who knows the country like a book, drove us first to Bell's, who knocked the horns off, then to Harris's, which was served in the same manner; this bull had been eaten entirely except the head, and a good portion of mine had been devoured also; it lay immediately under "Audubon's Bluff" (the name Mr. Culbertson gave the ridge on which I stood to see the chase), and we could see it when nearly a mile distant. Bell's horns were the handsomest and largest, mine next best, and Harris's the smallest, but we are all contented. Mr. Culbertson tells me that Harris and Bell have done wonders, for persons who have never shot at Buffaloes from on horseback. Harris had a fall too, during his second chase, and was bruised in the manner of Squires, but not so badly. I have but little doubt that Squires killed his bull, as he says he shot it three times, and Mr. Culbertson's must have died also. What a terrible destruction of life, as it were for nothing, or next to it, as the tongues only were brought in, and the flesh of these fine animals was left to beasts and birds of prey, or to rot on the spots where they fell. The prairies are literally *covered* with the skulls of the victims, and the roads the

Buffalo make in crossing the prairies have all the appearance of heavy wagon tracks. We saw young Golden Eagles, Ravens, and Buzzards. I found the Short-billed Marsh Wren quite abundant, and in such localities as it is found eastward. The Black-breasted Prairie-bunting flies much like a Lark, hovering while singing, and sweeping round and round, over and above its female while she sits on the eggs on the prairie below. I saw only one Gadwall Duck; these birds are found in abundance on the plains where water and rushes are to be found. Alas! alas! eighteen Assiniboins have reached the fort this evening in two groups; they are better-looking than those previously seen by us.

July 22, Saturday. Thermometer 99°-102°. This day has been the hottest of the season, and we all felt the influence of this densely oppressive atmosphere, not a breath of air stirring. Immediately after breakfast Provost and Lafleur went across the river in search of Antelopes, and we remained looking at the Indians, all Assiniboins, and very dirty. When and where Mr. Catlin saw these Indians as he has represented them, dressed in magnificent attire, with all sorts of extravagant accoutrements, is more than I can divine, or Mr. Culbertson tell me. The evening was so hot and sultry that Mr. C. and I went into the river, which is now very low, and remained in the water over an hour. A dozen catfish were caught in the main channel, and we have had a good supper from part of them. Finding the weather so warm I have had my bed brought out on the gallery below, and so has Squires. The Indians are, as usual, shut *out* of the fort, all the horses, young

Buffaloes, etc., shut *in*; and much refreshed by my bath, I say God bless you, and good-night.

July 23, Sunday. Thermometer 84°. I had a very pleasant night, and no mosquitoes, as the breeze rose a little before I lay down; and I anticipated a heavy thunder storm, but we had only a few drops of rain. About one o'clock Harris was called to see one of the Indians, who was bleeding at the nose profusely, and I too went to see the poor devil. He had bled quite enough, and Harris stopped his nostrils with cotton, put cold water on his neck and head – God knows when they had felt it before – and the bleeding stopped. These dirty fellows had made a large fire between the walls of the fort, but outside the inner gates, and it was a wonder that the whole establishment was not destroyed by fire. Before sunrise they were pounding at the gate to be allowed to enter, but, of course, this was not permitted. When the sun had fairly risen, some one came and told me the hill-tops were covered with Indians, probably Blackfeet. I walked to the back gate, and the number had dwindled, or the account been greatly exaggerated, for there seemed only fifty or sixty, and when, later, they were counted, there were found to be exactly seventy. They remained a long time on the hill, and sent a youth to ask for whiskey. But whiskey there is none for them, and very little for any one. By and by they came down the hill leading four horses, and armed principally with bows and arrows, spears, tomahawks, and a few guns. They have proved to be a party of Crees from the British dominions on the Saskatchewan River, and have been fifteen

days in travelling here. They had seen few Buffaloes, and were hungry and thirsty enough. They assured Mr. Culbertson that the Hudson's Bay Company supplied them all with abundance of spirituous liquors, and as the white traders on the Missouri had none for them, they would hereafter travel with the English. Now ought not this subject to be brought before the press in our country and forwarded to England? If our Congress will not allow our traders to sell whiskey or rum to the Indians, why should not the British follow the same rule? Surely the British, who are so anxious about the emancipation of the blacks, might as well take care of the souls and bodies of the redskins. After a long talk and smoking of pipes, tobacco, flints, powder, gun-screws and vermilion were placed before their great chief (who is tattooed and has a most rascally look), who examined everything minutely, counting over the packets of vermilion; more tobacco was added, a file, and a piece of white cotton with which to adorn his head; then he walked off, followed by his son, and the whole posse left the fort. They passed by the garden, pulled up a few squash vines and some turnips, and tore down a few of the pickets on their way elsewhere. We all turned to, and picked a quantity of peas, which with a fine roast pig, made us a capital dinner. After this, seeing the Assiniboins loitering about the fort, we had some tobacco put up as a target, and many arrows were sent to enter the prize, but I never saw Indians – usually so skilful with their bows – shoot worse in my life. Presently some one cried there were Buffaloes on the hill, and going to see we found that four bulls

were on the highest ridge standing still. The horses being got in the yard, the guns were gathered, saddles placed, and the riders mounted, Mr. C., Harris, and Bell; Squires declined going, not having recovered from his fall, Mr. C. led his followers round the hills by the ravines, and approached the bulls quite near, when the affrighted cattle ran down the hills and over the broken grounds, out of our sight, followed by the hunters. When I see game chased by Mr. Culbertson, I feel confident of its being killed, and in less than one hour he had killed two bulls, Harris and Bell each one. Thus these poor animals which two hours before were tranquilly feeding are now dead; short work this. Harris and Bell remained on the hills to watch the Wolves, and carts being ordered, Mr. C. and I went off on horseback to the second one he had killed. We found it entire, and I began to operate upon it at once; after making what measurements and investigations I desired, I saved the head, the tail, and a large piece of the silky skin from the rump. The meat of three of the bulls was brought to the fort, the fourth was left to rot on the ground. Mr. C. cut his finger severely, but paid no attention to that; I, however, tore a strip off my shirt and bound it up for him. It is so hot I am going to sleep on the gallery again; the thermometer this evening is 89° .

July 24, Monday. I had a fine sleep last night, and this morning early a slight sprinkling of rain somewhat refreshed the earth. After breakfast we talked of going to see if Mr. Culbertson's bull had been injured by the Wolves. Mr. C., Harris, and I went off to the spot by a roundabout way, and when we reached

the animal it was somewhat swollen, but untouched, but we made up our minds to have it weighed, *coute qui coute*. Harris proposed to remain and watch it, looking for Hares meantime, but saw none. The Wolves must be migratory at this season, or so starved out that they have gone elsewhere, as we now see but few. We returned first to the fort, and mustered three men and Bell, for Sprague would not go, being busy drawing a plant, and finding the heat almost insupportable. We carried all the necessary implements, and found Harris quite ready to drink some claret and water which we took for him. To cut up so large a bull, and one now with so dreadful an odor, was no joke; but with the will follows the success, and in about one hour the poor beast had been measured and weighed, and we were once more *en route* for the fort. This bull measured as follows: from end of nose to root of tail, 131 inches; height at shoulder, 67 inches; at rump, 57 inches; tail vertebræ, 15½ inches, hair in length beyond it 11 inches. We weighed the whole animal by cutting it in parts and then by addition found that this Buffalo, which was an old bull, weighed 1777 lbs. avoirdupois. The flesh was all tainted, and was therefore left for the beasts of prey. Our road was over high hills, and presented to our searching eyes a great extent of broken ground, and here and there groups of Buffaloes grazing. This afternoon we are going to bring in the skeleton of Mr. Culbertson's second bull. I lost the head of my first bull because I forgot to tell Mrs. Culbertson that I wished to save it, and the princess had its skull broken open

to enjoy its brains. Handsome, and really courteous and refined in many ways, I cannot reconcile to myself the fact that she partakes of raw animal food with such evident relish. Before our departure, in came six half-breeds, belonging, or attached to Fort Mortimer; and understanding that they were first-rate hunters, I offered them ten dollars in goods for each Bighorn up to eight or ten in number. They have promised to go tomorrow, but, alas! the half-breeds are so uncertain I cannot tell whether they will move a step or not. Mrs. Culbertson, who has great pride in her pure Indian blood, told me with scorn that "all such no-color fellows are lazy." We were delayed in starting by a very heavy gale of wind and hard rain, which cooled the weather considerably; but we finally got off in the wagon, the cart with three mules following, to bring in the skeleton of the Buffalo which Mr. Culbertson had killed; but we were defeated, for some Wolves had been to it, dragged it about twenty-five feet, and gnawed the ends of the ribs and the backbone. The head of Harris's bull was brought in, but it was smaller; the horns alone were pretty good, and they were given to Sprague. On our return Mrs. Culbertson was good enough to give me six young Mallards, which she had caught by swimming after them in the Missouri; she is a most expert and graceful swimmer, besides being capable of remaining under water a long time; all the Blackfoot Indians excel in swimming and take great pride in the accomplishment. We found three of the Assiniboins had remained, one of whom wanted to carry off a squaw, and probably a couple of horses too.

He strutted about the fort in such a manner that we watched him pretty closely. Mr. Culbertson took his gun, and a six-barrelled pistol in his pocket; I, my double-barrelled gun, and we stood at the back gate. The fellow had a spear made of a cut-and-thrust sword, planted in a good stick covered with red cloth, and this he never put down at any time; but no more, indeed, do any Indians, who carry all their goods and chattels forever about their persons. The three gentlemen, however, went off about dusk, and took the road to Fort Mortimer, where six half-breeds from the Northeast brought to Fort Mortimer eleven head of cattle, and came to pay a visit to their friends here. All these men know Provost, and have inquired for him. I feel somewhat uneasy about Provost and La Fleur, who have now been gone four full days. The prairie is wet and damp, so I must sleep indoors. The bull we cut up was not a fat one; I think in good condition it would have weighed 2000 lbs.

July 25, Tuesday. We were all rather lazy this morning, but about dinner-time Owen and his man arrived, and told us they had reached Mr. Kipp and his boat at the crossings within about half a mile of Fort Alexander; that his men were all broken down with drawing the cordelle through mud and water, and that they had lost a white horse, which, however, Owen saw on his way, and on the morning of his start from this fort. About the same time he shot a large Porcupine, and killed four bulls and one cow to feed upon, as well as three rattlesnakes. They saw a large number of Buffalo cows, and we are going after them tomorrow morning bright and early. About two hours later Provost

and La Fleur, about whom I had felt some uneasiness, came to the landing, and brought the heads and skins attached to two female Antelopes. Both had been killed by one shot from La Fleur, and his ball broke the leg of a third. Provost was made quite sick by the salt water he had drunk; he killed one doe, on which they fed as well as on the flesh of the "Cabris." Whilst following the Mauvaises Terres (broken lands), they saw about twenty Bighorns, and had not the horse on which Provost rode been frightened at the sight of a monstrous buck of these animals, he would have shot it down within twenty yards. They saw from fifteen to twenty Buffalo cows, and we hope some of the hunters will come up with them to-morrow. I have been drawing the head of one of these beautiful female Antelopes; but their horns puzzle me, and all of us; they seem to me as if they were *new* horns, soft and short; time, however, will prove whether they shed them or not. Our preparations are already made for preserving the skins of the Antelopes, and Sprague is making an outline which I hope will be finished before the muscles of the head begin to soften. Not a word from the six hunters who promised to go after Bighorns on the Yellowstone.

July 26, Wednesday. We were all on foot before daybreak and had our breakfast by an early hour, and left on our trip for Buffalo cows. The wagon was sent across by hauling it through the east channel, which is now quite low, and across the sand-bars, which now reach seven-eighths of the distance across the river. We crossed in the skiff, and walked to the ferry-boat –

I barefooted, as well as Mr. Culbertson; others wore boots or moccasins, but my feet have been tender of late, and this is the best cure. Whilst looking about for sticks to support our mosquito bars, I saw a Rabbit standing before me, within a few steps, but I was loaded with balls, and should have torn the poor thing so badly that it would have been useless as a specimen, so let it live. We left the ferry before six, and went on as usual. We saw two Antelopes on entering the bottom prairie, but they had the wind of us, and scampered off to the hills. We saw two Grouse, one of which Bell killed, and we found it very good this evening for our supper. Twelve bulls were seen, but we paid no attention to them. We saw a fine large Hawk, apparently the size of a Red-tailed Hawk, but with the whole head white. It had alighted on a clay hill or bank, but, on being approached, flew off to another, was pursued and again flew away, so that we could not procure it, but I have no doubt that it is a species not yet described. We now crossed Blackfoot River, and saw great numbers of Antelopes. Their play and tricks are curious; I watched many of the groups a long time, and will not soon forget them. At last, seeing we should have no meat for supper, and being a party of nine, it was determined that the first animal seen should be run down and killed. We soon saw a bull, and all agreed to give every chance possible to Squires. Mr. C., Owen, and Squires started, and Harris followed without a gun, to see the chase. The bull was wounded twice by Squires, but no blood came from the mouth, and now all three shot at it, but the bull was not apparently hurt

seriously; he became more and more furious, and began charging upon them. Unfortunately, Squires ran between the bull and a ravine quite close to the animal, and it suddenly turned on him; his horse became frightened and jumped into the ravine, the bull followed, and now Squires lost his balance; however, he threw his gun down, and fortunately clung to the mane of his horse and recovered his seat. The horse got away and saved his life, for, from what Mr. C. told me, had he fallen, the bull would have killed him in a few minutes, and no assistance could be afforded him, as Mr. C. and Owen had, at that moment, empty guns. Squires told us all; he had never been so bewildered and terrified before. The bull kept on running, and was shot at perhaps twenty times, for when he fell he had *twelve balls* in his side, and had been shot twice in the head. Another bull was now seen close by us, and Owen killed it after four shots. Whilst we were cutting up this one, La Fleur and some one else went to the other, which was found to be very poor, and, at this season smelling very rank and disagreeable. A few of the best pieces were cut away, and, as usual, the hunters ate the liver and fat quite raw, like Wolves, and we were now on the move again. Presently we saw seven animals coming towards us, and with the glass discovered there were six bulls and one cow. The hunters mounted in quick time, and away after the cow, which Owen killed very soon. To my surprise the bulls did not leave her, but stood about one hundred yards from the hunters, who were cutting her in pieces; the best parts were taken for dried meat. Had we not been so many, the

bulls would, in all probability, have charged upon the butchers, but after a time they went off at a slow canter. At this moment Harris and I were going towards the party thus engaged, when a Swift Fox started from a hole under the feet of Harris' horse. I was loaded with balls, and he also; he gave chase and gained upon the beautiful animal with remarkable quickness. Bell saw this, and joined Harris, whilst I walked towards the butchering party. The Fox was overtaken by Harris, who took aim at it several times, but could not get sight on him, and the little fellow doubled and cut about in such a manner that it escaped into a ravine, and was seen no more. Now who will tell me that no animal can compete with this Fox in speed, when Harris, mounted on an Indian horse, overtook it in a few minutes? We were now in sight of a large band of cows and bulls, but the sun was low, and we left them to make our way to the camping-place, which we reached just before the setting of the sun. We found plenty of water, and a delightful spot, where we were all soon at work unsaddling our horses and mules, bringing wood for fires, and picking service-berries, which we found in great quantities and very good. We were thirty miles from Fort Union, close to the three Mamelles, but must have travelled near fifty, searching for and running down the game. All slept well, some outside and others inside the tent, after our good supper. We had a clear, bright day, with the wind from the westward.

July 27, Thursday. This morning was beautiful, the birds singing all around us, and after our early breakfast, Harris, with

La Fleur and Mr. Culbertson, walked to the top of the highest of the three Mamelles; Bell went to skinning the birds shot yesterday,³⁴ among which was a large Titmouse of the Eastern States, while I walked off a short distance, and made a sketch of the camp and the three Mamelles. I hope to see a fair picture from this, painted by Victor, this next winter, God willing. During the night the bulls were heard bellowing, and the Wolves howling, all around us. Bell had seen evidences of Grizzly Bears close by, but we saw none of the animals. An Antelope was heard snorting early this morning, and seen for a while, but La Fleur could not get it. The snorting of the Antelope is more like a whistling, sneezing sound, than like the long, clear snorting of our common Deer, and it is also very frequently repeated, say every few minutes, when in sight of an object of which the animal does not yet know the nature; for the moment it is assured of danger, it bounds three or four times like a sheep, and then either trots

³⁴ Among the "birds shot yesterday," July 26, when Audubon was too full of his Buffalo hunt to notice them in his Journal, were two, a male and a female, killed by Mr. Bell, which turned out to be new to science. For these were no other than Baird's Bunting, *Emberiza bairdii* of Audubon, B. Amer, vii., 1844, p. 359, pl. 500. Audubon there says it was "during one of our Buffalo hunts, on the 26th July, 1843," and adds: "I have named this species after my young friend Spencer F. Baird, of Carlisle, Pennsylvania." Special interest attaches to this case; for the bird was not only the first one ever dedicated to Baird, but the last one ever named, described, and figured by Audubon; and the plate of it completes the series of exactly 500 plates which the octavo edition of the "Birds of America" contains. This bird became the *Centronyx bairdii* of Baird, the *Passerculus bairdi* of Coues, and the *Ammodramus bairdi* of some other ornithologists. See "Birds of the Colorado Valley," i., 1878, p. 630. One of Audubon's specimens shot this day is catalogued in Baird's Birds of N. Am., 1858, p. 441. — E. C.

off or gallops like a horse. On the return of the gentlemen from the eminence, from which they had seen nothing but a Hawk, and heard the notes of the Rock Wren, the horses were gathered, and preparations made to go in search of cows. I took my gun and walked off ahead, and on ascending the first hill saw an Antelope, which, at first sight, I thought was an Indian. It stood still, gazing at me about five hundred yards off; I never stirred, and presently it walked towards me; I lay down and lowered my rifle; the animal could not now see my body; I showed it my feet a few times, at intervals. Presently I saw it coming full trot towards me; I cocked my gun, loaded with buck-shot in one barrel and ball in the other. He came within thirty yards of me and stopped suddenly, then turned broadside towards me. I could see his very eyes, his beautiful form, and his fine horns, for it was a buck. I pulled one trigger – it snapped, the animal moved not; I pulled the other, snapped again, and away the Antelope bounded, and ran swiftly from me. I put on fresh caps, and saw it stop after going a few hundred yards, and presently it came towards me again, but not within one hundred and fifty yards, when seeing that it would not come nearer I pulled the trigger with the ball; off it went, and so did the Antelope, which this time went quite out of my sight. I returned to camp and found all ready for a move. Owen went up a hill to reconnoitre for Antelopes and cows; seeing one of the former he crept after it. Bell followed, and at this moment a Hare leaped from the path before us, and stopped within twenty paces. Harris was not

loaded with shot, and I only with buck-shot; however, I fired and killed it; it proved to be a large female, and after measuring, we skinned it, and I put on a label "Townsend's Hare, killed a few miles from the three Mamelles, July 27, 1843." After travelling for a good while, Owen, who kept ahead of us, made signs from the top of a high hill that Buffaloes were in sight. This signal is made by walking the rider's horse backwards and forwards several times. We hurried on towards him, and when we reached the place, he pointed to the spot where he had seen them, and said they were travelling fast, being a band of both cows and bulls. The hunters were mounted at once, and on account of Squires' soreness I begged him not to run; so he drove me in the wagon as fast as possible over hills, through plains and ravines of all descriptions, at a pace beyond belief. From time to time we saw the hunters, and once or twice the Buffaloes, which were going towards the fort. At last we reached an eminence from which we saw both the game and the hunters approaching the cattle, preparatory to beginning the chase. It seems there is no etiquette among Buffalo hunters, and this proved a great disappointment to friend Harris, who was as anxious to kill a cow, as he had been to kill a bull. Off went the whole group, but the country was not as advantageous to the pursuers, as to the pursued. The cows separated from the bulls, the latter making their way towards us, and six of them passed within one hundred yards of where I stood; we let them pass, knowing well how savage they are at these times, and turned our eyes again to the hunters. I saw Mr.

C. pursuing one cow, Owen another, and Bell a third. Owen shot one and mortally wounded it; it walked up on a hill and stood there for some minutes before falling. Owen killed a second close by the one Mr. C. had now killed, Bell's dropped dead in quite another direction, nearly one mile off. Two bulls we saw coming directly towards us, so La Fleur and I went under cover of the hill to await their approach, and they came within sixty yards of us. I gave La Fleur the choice of shooting first, as he had a rifle; he shot and missed; they turned and ran in an opposite direction, so that I, who had gone some little distance beyond La Fleur, had no chance, and I was sorry enough for my politeness. Owen had shot a third cow, which went part way up a hill, fell, and kicked violently; she, however, rose and again fell, and kept kicking with all her legs in the air. Squires now drove to her, and I walked, followed by Moncrévier, a hunter; seeing Mr. C. and Harris on the bottom below we made signs for them to come up, and they fortunately did, and by galloping to Squires probably saved that young man from more danger; for though I cried to him at the top of my voice, the wind prevented him from hearing me; he now stopped, however, not far from a badly broken piece of ground over which had he driven at his usual speed, which I doubt not he would have attempted, some accident must have befallen him. Harris and Mr. C. rode up to the cow, which expired at that moment. The cow Mr. C. had killed was much the largest, and we left a cart and two men to cut up this, and the first two Owen had killed, and went to the place where the first lay, to have it

skinned for me. Bell joined us soon, bringing a tongue with him, and he immediately began operations on the cow, which proved a fine one, and I have the measurements as follows: "Buffalo Cow, killed by Mr. Alexander Culbertson, July 27, 1843. Nose to root of tail, 96 inches. Height at shoulder, 60; at rump, 55 1/2. Length of tail vertebræ, 13; to end of hair, 25; from brisket to bottom of feet, 21 1/2; nose to anterior canthus, 10 1/2; between horns at root, 11 3/8; between tops of ditto, 17 1/8; between nostrils, 2 1/4; length of ditto, 2 1/2; height of nose, 3 1/8; nose to opening of ear, 20; ear from opening to tip, 5; longest hair on head, 14 inches; from angle of mouth to end of under lip, 3 1/2." Whilst we were at this, Owen and Pike were hacking at their cow. After awhile all was ready for departure, and we made for the "coupe" at two o'clock, and expected to have found water to enable us to water our horses, for we had yet some gallons of the Missouri water for our own use. We found the road to the "coupe," which was seen for many, many miles. The same general appearance of country shows throughout the whole of these dreary prairies; up one hill and down on the other side, then across a plain with ravines of more or less depth. About two miles west of the "coupe," Owen and others went in search of water, but in vain; and we have had to cross the "coupe" and travel fully two miles east of it, when we came to a mere puddle, sufficient however, for the night, and we stopped. The carts with the meat, and our effects, arrived after a while; the meat was spread on the grass, the horses and mules hopped and let go, to drink and feed. All hands collected

Buffalo dung for fuel, for not a bush was in sight, and we soon had a large fire. In the winter season this prairie fuel is too wet to burn, and oftentimes the hunters have to eat their meat raw, or go without their supper. Ours was cooked however; I made mine chiefly from the liver, as did Harris; others ate boiled or roasted meat as they preferred. The tent was pitched, and I made a bed for Mr. C. and myself, and guns, etc., were all under cover; the evening was cool, the wind fresh, and no mosquitoes. We had seen plenty of Antelopes; I shot at one twenty yards from the wagon with small shot. Harris killed a Wolf, but we have seen very few, and now I will wish you all good-night; God bless you!

July 28, Friday. This morning was cold enough for a frost, but we all slept soundly until daylight, and about half-past three we were called for breakfast. The horses had all gone but four, and, as usual, Owen was despatched for them. The horses were brought back, our coffee swallowed, and we were off, Mr. C. and I, in the wagon. We saw few Antelopes, no Buffalo, and reached the ferry opposite the fort at half-past seven. We found all well, and about eleven Assiniboins, all young men, headed by the son of a great chief called "Le mangeur d'hommes" (the man-eater). The poor wretched Indian whom Harris had worked over, died yesterday morning, and was buried at once. I had actually felt chilly riding in the wagon, and much enjoyed a breakfast Mrs. Culbertson had kindly provided for me. We had passed over some very rough roads, and at breakneck speed, but I did not feel stiff as I expected, though somewhat sore, and a good

night's rest is all I need. This afternoon the cow's skin and head, and the Hare arrived, and have been preserved. A half-breed well known to Provost has been here to make a bargain with me about Bighorns, Grizzly Bear, etc., and will see what he and his two sons can do; but I have little or no confidence in these gentry. I was told this afternoon that at Mouse River, about two hundred miles north of this, there are eight hundred carts in one gang, and four hundred in another, with an adequate number of half-breeds and Indians, killing Buffalo and drying their meat for winter provisions, and that the animals are there in millions. When Buffalo bulls are shot from a distance of sixty or seventy yards, they rarely charge on the hunter, and Mr. Culbertson has killed as many as nine bulls from the same spot, when unseen by these terrible beasts. Beavers, when shot swimming, and killed, sink at once to the bottom, but their bodies rise again in from twenty to thirty minutes. Hunters, who frequently shoot and kill them by moonlight, return in the morning from their camping-places, and find them on the margins of the shores where they had shot. Otters do the same, but remain under water for an hour or more.

July 29, Saturday. Cool and pleasant. About one hour after daylight Harris, Bell, and two others, crossed the river, and went in search of Rabbits, but all returned without success. Harris, after breakfast, went off on this side, saw none, but killed a young Raven. During the course of the forenoon he and Bell went off again, and brought home an old and young of the Sharp-tailed

Grouse. This afternoon they brought in a Loggerhead Shrike and two Rock Wrens. Bell skinned all these. Sprague made a handsome sketch of the five young Buffaloes belonging to the fort. This evening Moncrévier and Owen went on the other side of the river, but saw nothing. We collected berries of the dwarf cherries of this part, and I bottled some service-berries to carry home.

July 30, Sunday. Weather cool and pleasant. After breakfast we despatched La Fleur and Provost after Antelopes and Bighorns. We then went off and had a battue for Rabbits, and although we were nine in number, and all beat the rose bushes and willows for several hundred yards, not one did we see, although their traces were apparent in several places. We saw tracks of a young Grizzly Bear near the river shore. After a good dinner of Buffalo meat, green peas, and a pudding, Mr. C., Owen, Mr. Pike, and I went off to Fort Mortimer. We had an arrival of five squaws, half-breeds, and a gentleman of the same order, who came to see our fort and our ladies. The princess went out to meet them covered with a fine shawl, and the visitors followed her to her own room. These ladies spoke both the French and Cree languages. At Fort Mortimer we found the hunters from the north, who had returned last evening and told me they had seen nothing. I fear that all my former opinions of the half-breeds are likely to be realized, and that they are all more *au fait* at telling lies, than anything else; and I expect now that we shall have to make a regular turn-out ourselves, to kill both Grizzly Bears and

Bighorns. As we were riding along not far from this fort, Mr. Culbertson fired off the gun given him by Harris, and it blew off the stock, lock, and breech, and it was a wonder it did not kill him, or me, as I was sitting by his side. After we had been at home about one hour, we were all called out of a sudden by the news that the *Horse Guards* were coming, full gallop, driving the whole of their charge before them. We saw the horses, and the cloud of dust that they raised on the prairies, and presently, when the Guards reached the gates, they told us that they had seen a party of Indians, which occasioned their hurried return. It is now more than one hour since I wrote this, and the Indians are now in sight, and we think they were frightened by three or four squaws who had left the fort in search of "pommes blanches." Sprague has collected a few seeds, but I intend to have some time devoted to this purpose before we leave on our passage downwards. This evening five Indians arrived, among whom is the brother of the man who died a few days ago; he brought a horse, and an Elk skin, which I bought, and he now considers himself a rich man. He reported Buffaloes very near, and to-morrow morning the hunters will be after them. When Buffaloes are about to lie down, they draw all their four feet together slowly, and balancing the body for a moment, bend their fore legs, and fall on their knees first, and the hind ones follow. In young animals, some of which we have here, the effect produced on their tender skin is directly seen, as callous round patches without hair are found; after the animal is about one year old, these are seen no more. I am told

that Wolves have not been known to attack men and horses in these parts, but they do attack mules and colts, always making choice of the fattest. We scarcely see one now-a-days about the fort, and yet two miles from here, at Fort Mortimer, Mr. Collins tells me it is impossible to sleep, on account of their howlings at night. When Assiniboin Indians lose a relative by death, they go and cry under the box which contains the body, which is placed in a tree, cut their legs and different parts of the body, and moan miserably for hours at a time. This performance has been gone through with by the brother of the Indian who died here.

July 31, Monday. Weather rather warmer. Mr. Larpeur went after Rabbits, saw none, but found a horse, which was brought home this afternoon. Mr. C., Harris, Bell, and Owen went after Buffaloes over the hills, saw none, so that all this day has been disappointment to us. Owen caught a *Spermophilus hoodii*. The brother of the dead Indian, who gashed his legs fearfully this morning, went off with his wife and children and six others, who had come here to beg. One of them had for a *letter of recommendation* one of the advertisements of the steamer "Trapper," which will be kept by his chief for time immemorial to serve as a pass for begging. He received from us ammunition and tobacco. Sprague collected seeds this morning, and this afternoon copied my sketch of the three Mamelles. Towards sunset I intend to go myself after Rabbits, along the margins of the bushes and the shore. We have returned from my search after Rabbits; Harris and I each shot one. We saw five Wild Geese.

Harris lost his snuff-box, which he valued, and which I fear will never be found. Squires to-day proposed to me to let him remain here this winter to procure birds and quadrupeds, and I would have said "yes" at once, did he understand either or both these subjects, or could draw; but as he does not, it would be useless.

August 1, Tuesday. The weather fine, and warmer than yesterday. We sent off four Indians after Rabbits, but as we foolishly gave them powder and shot, they returned without any very soon, having, of course, hidden the ammunition. After breakfast Mr. C. had a horse put in the cart, and three squaws went off after "pommes blanches," and Sprague and I followed in the wagon, driven by Owen. These women carried sticks pointed at one end, and blunt at the other, and I was perfectly astonished at the dexterity and rapidity with which they worked. They place the pointed end within six inches of the plant, where the stem enters the earth, and bear down upon the other end with all their weight and move about to the right and left of the plant until the point of the stick is thrust in the ground to the depth of about seven inches, when acting upon it in the manner of a lever, the plant is fairly thrown out, and the root procured. Sprague and I, who had taken with us an instrument resembling a very narrow hoe, and a spade, having rather despised the simple instruments of the squaws, soon found out that these damsels could dig six or seven, and in some cases a dozen, to our *one*. We collected some seeds of these plants as well as those of some others, and walked fully six miles, which has rendered my feet quite tender

again. Owen told me that he had seen, on his late journey up the Yellowstone, Grouse, both old and young, with a black breast and with a broad tail; they were usually near the margin of a wood. What they are I cannot tell, but he and Bell are going after them to-morrow morning. Just after dinner Provost and La Fleur returned with two male Antelopes, skinned, one of them a remarkably large buck, the other less in size, both skins in capital order. We have taken the measurements of the head of the larger. The timber for our boat has been hauling across the sand-bar ever since daylight, and of course the work will proceed pretty fast. The weather is delightful, and at night, indeed, quite cool enough. I spoke to Sprague last night about remaining here next winter, as he had mentioned his wish to do so to Bell some time ago, but he was very undecided. My regrets that I promised you all so faithfully that I would return this fall are beyond description. I am, as years go, an old man, but I do not feel old, and there is so much of interest here that I forget oftentimes that I am not as young as Owen.

August 2, Wednesday. Bell and Owen started on their tour up the Yellowstone³⁵ after Cocks of the Plain [Sage Grouse, *Centrocercus urophasianus*]. Provost and Moncrévier went in the timber below after Deer, but saw none. We had an arrival of six Chippeway Indians, and afterwards about a dozen Assiniboins. Both these parties were better dressed, and looked better off than any previous groups that we have seen at this fort. They

³⁵ See Bell's account of the trip, page [176](#).

brought some few robes to barter, and the traffic was carried on by Mr. Larpenteur in his little shop, through a wicket. On the arrival of the Assiniboins, who were headed by an old man, one of the Chippeways discovered a horse, which he at once not only claimed, but tied; he threw down his new blanket on the ground, and was leading off the horse, when the other Indian caught hold of it, and said that he had fairly bought it, etc. The Chippeway now gave him his gun, powder, and ball, as well as his *looking-glass*, the most prized of all his possessions, and the Assiniboin, now apparently satisfied, gave up the horse, which was led away by the new (or old) owner. We thought the matter was ended, but Mr. Culbertson told us that either the horse or the Chippeway would be caught and brought back. The latter had mounted a fine horse which he had brought with him, and was leading the other away, when presently a gun was heard out of the fort, and Mr. C. ran to tell us that the horse of the Chippeway had been shot, and that the rider was running as fast as he could to Fort Mortimer. Upon going out we found the horse standing still, and the man running; we went to the poor animal, and found that the ball had passed through the thigh, and entered the belly. The poor horse was trembling like an aspen; he at last moved, walked about, and went to the river, where he died. Now it is curious that it was not the same Assiniboin who had sold the horse that had shot, but another of their party; and we understand that it was on account of an old grudge against the Chippeway, who, by the way, was a surly-looking rascal. The Assiniboins brought eight or ten horses

and colts, and a number of dogs. One of the colts had a necklace of "pommes blanches," at the end of which hung a handful of Buffalo calves' hoofs, not more than $\frac{3}{4}$ inch long, and taken from the calves before birth, when the mothers had been killed. Harris and I took a ride in the wagon over the Mauvaises Terres above the fort, in search of petrified wood, but though we found many specimens, they were of such indifferent quality that we brought home but one. On returning we followed a Wolf path, of which there are hundreds through the surrounding hills, all leading to the fort. It is curious to see how well they understand the best and shortest roads. From what had happened, we anticipated a row among the Indians, but all seemed quiet. Mr. C. gave us a good account of Fort McKenzie. I have been examining the fawn of the Long-tailed Deer of this country, belonging to old Baptiste; the man feeds it regularly, and the fawn follows him everywhere. It will race backwards and forwards over the prairie back of the fort, for a mile or more, running at the very top of its speed; suddenly it will make for the gate, rush through and overwhelm Baptiste with caresses, as if it had actually lost him for some time. If Baptiste lies on the ground pretending to sleep, the fawn pushes with its nose, and licks his face as a dog would, till he awakens.

August 3, Thursday. We observed yesterday that the atmosphere was thick, and indicated the first appearance of the close of summer, which here is brief. The nights and mornings have already become cool, and summer clothes will not be

needed much longer, except occasionally. Harris and Sprague went to the hills so much encrusted with shells. We have had some talk about going to meet Bell and Owen, but the distance is too great, and Mr. C. told me he was not acquainted with the road beyond the first twenty-five or thirty miles. We have had a slight shower, and Mr. C. and I walked across the bar to see the progress of the boat. The horse that died near the river was hauled across to the sand-bar, and will make good catfish bate for our fishers. This morning we had another visitation of Indians, seven in number; they were very dirty, wrapped in disgusting Buffalo robes, and were not allowed inside the inner gate, on account of their filthy condition.

August 4, Friday. We were all under way this morning at half-past five, on a Buffalo hunt, that is to say, the residue of us, Harris and I, for Bell was away with Owen, and Squires with Provost after Bighorns, and Sprague at Fort Mortimer. Tobacco and matches had been forgotten, and that detained us for half an hour; but at last we started in good order, with only one cart following us, which carried Pike and Moncrévier. We saw, after we had travelled ten miles, some Buffalo bulls; some alone, others in groups of four or five, a few Antelopes, but more shy than ever before. I was surprised to see how careless the bulls were of us, as some actually gave us chances to approach them within a hundred yards, looking steadfastly, as if not caring a bit for us. At last we saw one lying down immediately in our road, and determined to give him a chance for his life. Mr. C.

had a white horse, a runaway, in which he placed a good deal of confidence; he mounted it, and we looked after him. The bull did not start till Mr. C. was within a hundred yards, and then at a gentle and slow gallop. The horse galloped too, but only at the same rate. Mr. C. thrashed him until his hands were sore, for he had no whip, the bull went off without even a shot being fired, and the horse is now looked upon as forever disgraced. About two miles farther another bull was observed lying down in our way, and it was concluded to run him with the white horse, accompanied, however, by Harris. The chase took place, and the bull was killed by Harris, but the white horse is now scorned by every one. A few pieces of meat, the tongue, tail, and head, were all that was taken from this very large bull. We soon saw that the weather was becoming cloudy, and we were anxious to reach a camping-place; but we continued to cross ranges of hills, and hoped to see a large herd of Buffaloes. The weather was hot "out of mind," and we continued till, reaching a fine hill, we saw in a beautiful valley below us seventy to eighty head, feeding peacefully in groups and singly, as might happen. The bulls were mixed in with the cows, and we saw one or two calves. Many bulls were at various distances from the main group, but as we advanced towards them they galloped off and joined the others. When the chase began it was curious to see how much swifter the cows were than the bulls, and how soon they divided themselves into parties of seven or eight, exerting themselves to escape from their murderous pursuers. All in vain, however;

off went the guns and down went the cows, or stood bleeding through the nose, mouth, or bullet holes. Mr. C. killed three, and Harris one in about half an hour. We had quite enough, and the slaughter was ended. We had driven up to the nearest fallen cow, and approached close to her, and found that she was not dead, but trying to rise to her feet. I cannot bear to see an animal suffer unnecessarily, so begged one of the men to take my knife and stab her to the heart, which was done. The animals were cut up and skinned, with considerable fatigue. To skin bulls and cows and cut up their bodies is no joke, even to such as are constantly in the habit of doing it. Whilst Mr. Culbertson and the rest had gone to cut up another at some distance, I remained on guard to save the meat from the Wolves, but none came before my companions returned. We found the last cow quite dead. As we were busy about her the rain fell in torrents, and I found my blanket *capote* of great service. It was now nearly sundown, and we made up our minds to camp close by, although there was no water for our horses, neither any wood. Harris and I began collecting Buffalo-dung from all around, whilst the others attended to various other affairs. The meat was all unloaded and spread on the ground, the horses made fast, the fire burned freely, pieces of liver were soon cooked and devoured, coffee drunk in abundance, and we went to rest.

August 5, Saturday. It rained in the night; but this morning the weather was cool, wind at northwest, and cloudy, but not menacing rain. We made through the road we had come

yesterday, and on our way Harris shot a young of the Swift Fox, which we could have caught alive had we not been afraid of running into some hole. We saw only a few bulls and Antelopes, and some Wolves. The white horse, which had gone out as a *hunter*, returned as a *pack-horse*, loaded with the entire flesh of a Buffalo cow; and our two mules drew three more and the heads of all four. This morning at daylight, when we were called to drink our coffee, there was a Buffalo feeding within twenty steps of our tent, and it moved slowly towards the hills as we busied ourselves making preparations for our departure. We reached the fort at noon; Squires, Provost, and La Fleur had returned; they had wounded a Bighorn, but had lost it. Owen and Bell returned this afternoon; they had seen no Cocks of the plains, but brought the skin of a female Elk, a Porcupine, and a young White-headed Eagle. Provost tells me that Buffaloes become so very poor during hard winters, when the snows cover the ground to the depth of two or three feet, that they lose their hair, become covered with scabs, on which the Magpies feed, and the poor beasts die by hundreds. One can hardly conceive how it happens, notwithstanding these many deaths and the immense numbers that are murdered almost daily on these boundless wastes called prairies, besides the hosts that are drowned in the freshets, and the hundreds of young calves who die in early spring, so many are yet to be found. Daily we see so many that we hardly notice them more than the cattle in our pastures about our homes. But this cannot last; even now there is a perceptible difference in the size

of the herds, and before many years the Buffalo, like the Great Auk, will have disappeared; surely this should not be permitted. Bell has been relating his adventures, our boat is going on, and I wish I had a couple of Bighorns. God bless you all.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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