

July

The headquarters of the mounted police for this district, some 30 or 40 men under Capt. Giesbrecht being stationed here. Together with several other log houses inhabited by half-breeds and a deserted saw-mill make up the hamlet. Occasionally we pass some made log huts where occupants have deserted it. The sight of this adds to the loneliness of the scene. The few inhabited cabins that we see are occupied by half-breeds - people born in the country and who have little idea of civilization and the comforts of life, which if they did would greatly improve their lot and be a real benefit to the country. - The woods are nearly exclusively poplar, but stand like white-washed skeletons watching the course of nature. Besides these there are some rough-cut poplar or cottonwoods, some spruce & some birch and the all pervading gray willows. - Southern hares were hunted today without stopping. On the river we are not troubled with mosquitoes but the moment we land thousands are ready to greet us and eat us. They believe in the adage that "the beauty of the pudding is the eating of it."

Sunday 29
via
Cott

A little after 8 a.m. found us continuing our journey. We had scarcely left when it began to rain so that Charles had some difficulty in making breakfast. Being cold & raining I enjoyed the more the fat bacon & beans & cup of hot & strong black tea - the best of all beverages. After two hours of rain we were fairly wet, seeing a house on the bank I stopped to go there for shelter. When I got there the woman was just starting a fire, later the man and children put in their appearance. They were English half-breeds - Lincain - being one of that widely spread family. - I will here note a peculiarity of the half breed & Indian, and that is that in summer they will live in a tent even when they have a house. For instance Lincain's house is a well built log house 15' x 20' being one large room containing beside the iron cooking stove two home made bedsteads, yet beside the house is pitched a small cotton tent 7' x 9' and therein he, his wife, his mother and two children sleep, using the house only for eating. - Around the place I saw quite a number of cattle, belonging as I was informed to themselves and relatives close by. The woman speaking English well I asked her numerous questions, her husband spoke nothing but Cree. On the stove there was a pot of moose meat of the previous day, under the stove was a pan with a chunk of the same meat at which pussy was feasting itself until discovered & driven

away; an invalid tea pot kept company with the tin pot. A
 half hour fire prepared the breakfast, this is warmed up the
 previous night's supper. A muslin, stool & a box, called
 mother & daughter sat, served as seats, but the boy had no share
 to his meal. The Methodist mission at Victoria had taught him
 to say grace at table and it was in Gaelic. Cold beer was served the
 purpose of bread. Altho' they had knives & forks, the boy saw no use for
 the latter but took his chunk of meat in one hand & sawed off a piece
 with the knife in the other. In fact the others had little use for a fork either.
 Breakfast over the man filled his pipe & the woman began washing dishes -
 she first putting the kettle on the stove for hot water, so she poured cold water
 into the dishes, wiped or squeezed them with a rag, her mother-in-law wiping
 them dry, when finished they looked tidy altho' they must have been
 greasy. - Then the woman & her little girl went out to milk their two
 cows, it raining continuously. After she brought the milk in, she opened a
 trap door in the floor and climbed into the cellar - a depth of 8 ft. There being
 neither ladder nor steps down, there she skimmed yesterday's milk
 and then passed up the milk pans to her mother-in-law. These pans were
 made of birch bark, a somewhat scarce material in this country. - I
 should have mentioned that before breakfast all washed and of course wiped
 themselves on the same towel which was washed & stored its previous
 encounters with them. - The milk being taken care of the morning
 work was done. A broom I did not see. The woman made an effort
 in wiping up to some extent her own footprints as she was bare-
 foot and walking in & out from the rain had left numerous footprints
 on the floor. - It being Sunday the good clothes were now donned. The
 girl sat herself beside her mother in a box (trunk) then the mother
 put some rancid - fat smelt it - grease on her hair - presumably
 more grease, a broken comb did the rest duty winding up with five
 strands closely plaited to the head. - The old dress was then removed
 at the waist revealing under it only an unbleached cotton chemise, then
 the bright colored pink calico dress was slipped over the head & then
 with added pink "pina" the Sunday girl was complete. Shoes
 she had none nor stockings, but for the latter wore the tops
 of a pair as leggings. The mother repeated on herself this
 dressing room scene. - The little boy had shoes and for socks
 he had rags of gummy cloth, and he spent fully half an

hour getting his feet with the thick & lumpy quarry cloth into his shoes. - After remaining here four hours the rain ceased altho' still threatening & we again started, but soon the rain fell again & continued to fall, but we drifted on thoroughly drenched. At 4 P.M. we reached Victoria where we camped. After camp was pitched went to the first house encountered - Mr. Gillivray's - where I remained for 1/2 hour drying myself. Then I called on the H.B.C. - in charge of Frank Wilson. Here I met Père Duperré on his way to Lac la Biche & Lac des Haies. Mrs. Wilson is very pleasant. It is sad that her face is so disfigured and her nose almost gone. I had tea with them & spent the evening. Going to camp Mr. Wilson came along to see the Gov. of North Carolina. Victoria consists of the H.B.C. post, a telegraph office a Methodist mission & a few half breed houses. The country about is mostly wooded and abounds in moose & black bear beside containing all other kind of northern game. Mr. Wilson has a perfect head with antlers of the red deer or elk. It has 12 horns and as uniformly & evenly distributed as if cut from a mould. He refused \$200 - from an English tourist for it. - The head is a beauty but \$200 are more beautiful to one who is not overburdened with this world's goods. - It is rather too subject to frost here to raise grain successfully (latitude 54°)

Monday 30
June

It was cheerful to awake & find a bright morning & more so, to see the sun rise with unobscured face. At that time we were already on the water. The nature of the country passed is similar to that of the past two days only we see no houses with one or two exceptions. - The current was good today, we passed over a number of rapids but the high water made them not so welcome as there was no danger & increased our transit. - Along the clay banks we meet numbers of colonies of swallows, that have their nests made of clay stuck to the wall. Other swallows burrow into the bank.

Stopping for a few minutes I examined one of these colonies & found that some were with animals, wolf or