

August.

+ 24 crossing the 4th In. line. Continuing on the line I found a half mile post standing - but no mound, the next section post we did not find nor any mound, the next 1/2 mile post was again standing but no mound, the section post was again missed. We were now getting amongst thorns & pricks & it was somewhat difficult to follow the line (It was run in '82) altho we saw its general direction towards a certain hill. Hitting a large slough & it being sundown I concluded to return without finding the intersection of the meridian with the telegraph line, at which point I went to the school. We had 14 miles to drive home & arrived kind & hungry at 10-30 P.M. I do not recollect ever having seen the blackflies worse than they were today.

Sunday 5

Cloudy

after. little rain

Busy writing & c., and reading papers lying about the postoffice - the only thing to signify or identify the room as the postoffice is the sign on the door & the seal or stamp lying on the table. Otherwise the room passes as H.B.Co. office - smoking & sitting room. - In the evening I take supper with Mr. McKay and enjoy some tender moose steak. - Later on Mr. McKay, Hall, McDonald Macane & I chat together when I regale them with Walker's Club. There is nothing with which one can open men's hearts in the Northwest more easily and more pleasantly than with that cheering cup.

Monday 6

morn. rain

after pleasant

The rain this morning delayed our departure, but by ten o'clock lumber & everything was loaded onto 3 teams & one cart; the scow I had dragged out of the water & beached. Mr. Macane & I drove ahead with a buckboard so that we could continue the meridian northward to the telegraph line, which after a little difficulty we did and a mile beyond. Several posts were found some lying in the grass others standing but none had any mounds. At the intersection of the Fourth Initial Merid. & the telegraph line falls into a wooded & marshy place & pitched camp several chains east thereof on a grassy slope. While my assistant & Charles were busy pitching camp I strolled to the agency 1 1/2 miles eastward, and upon invitation remained with Mr. Macane to tea. He & Mrs. M. related many incidents of their captivity by the Indians. The massacre at Frog Lake

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occurred at noon, by evening some advance Indian scouts arrived on this reserve and told of what had happened and that they were next going to murder Mr. Mann. Some friendly disposed Indians immediately thereupon hurried to inform Mr. M. thereof. They unceremoniously entered his house & told him to hurry & get away with his family. It was evening & the children were just undressing to go to bed. Mr. M. inclined to hurry, but the Indians urged him on, one even took up one of the children to carry out but as it was undressed Mr. M. stopped him & had it dressed first, when they came to hitch up one of the horses was already stolen or gone - so the other one was put into the back-board. Mr. M., wife & 3 children got in and leaving the lamps burning in the house hurried to Fort Pitt 13 miles distant, by a circuitous route. Arriving the post Capt. Dickson, who had 25 men under him, and the St. Bay people were surprised to hear of the massacre & naturally felt anxious about themselves. - It was fourteen days thereafter ^(April '85) that the post was surrendered - the mounted Police proceeding in a snow to Battlement, while the other whites 22 all told were made prisoners by the Indians & remained with them for nearly two months wandering through woods & muskegs while snow was still lying on the ground. All the clothes they had were on their backs. "Wesno" a headman, & who was one of the men who warned Mr. M. to flee kept him & his wife & children in his own tepee and provided cabins for them, but towards the end flour & bacon gave out & the provisioning became dependent upon the gun. Many a time Mr. M. would be known a rabbit to satisfy the hunger of his family. - His only fear and the strong one with his wife and children was that in the event of an encounter with the troops & the loss of Indian blood, white blood would have to atone therefore. Although the Indians had a man at Loon Lake and threatened to have the life of one of their captives yet it was not carried out. When his dead man was brought to camp Mr. Mann, W. J. Lee (H.B. Factor) and Quinn were ordered by the Indians to dig the grave, which of course they had to do. At Frenchman's Butte 4 or 5 more were lost. - By degrees differences arose between the different bands of Indian that composed this party & they separated, and later individual members went off, the prisoners remaining with the wood Cree who

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wandered northward to the Beaver river. They were released & let go just before the messenger arrived informing of the fall of Batoche & the collapse of the rebellion.

The amount of suffering & privation, especially at this season of the year April & May and the greater dread & frightful anxiety that especially the women underwent must have been appalling, and if a medal is due to any they should have been awarded one, but instead all volunteers got one, even those who were not under fire at all.

Of the four Indians who saved Mr. Meamin's life, one died the other three are imprisoned for life, two killed the crazy woman the other one shot Cowan. The first act had certainly very palliating circumstances, in fact when the matter was talked over with Mr. Lewis he advised or seconded their resolve to kill her rather than endanger the lives of any children, hence the punishment which was in the first instance hanging but commuted to life imprisonment is too severe.

Returning to camp Rev. Mr. Taylor accompanied me for a walk.

Tuesday 7

morn. rain

fine

Began the erection of the observatory, Mr. Meamin & I being our own carpenters and certainly did more than the ordinary mechanics would. By evening we had it under roof. The mosquitoes often nearly choked the life out of us.

Wednesday 8

morn. rain

cloudy

eve. rain

By noon our observatory was finished. In the afternoon I cut the telegraph wire and led it into the observatory, but this some defect somewhere it did not work. Later in the evening we worked over the line & found that the line had been down west of Humboldt. The transit was put up by the rain prevented by observing tonight. — I was satisfied with our two days labor - built the observatory & everything in readiness to work.

Thursday 9

rain

Writing etc. — Here we can get only a fortnightly mail. Today one arrives at Pitt but through the gross negligence of the postmaster at Calgary in not re-addressing our mail there as requested instead of letting it go on to Edmonton we can get none now before Aug 23, and then I'll get my letters from July 15 & since. For a man with family necessities