

September trails. It appears that Middleton thought he believed in the Democratic (U.S.) maxim "To the victor belongs the spoils." This refers to the furs captured. A cache which Balcanine found at Long Lake contained beaver, foxes &c of these Middleton took the pick of 27 beaver & 14 foxes. Major Boston took in one instance 40 Lynx. Major Reed now Indian Commissioner & other head officers getting their full quota, in some cases bales of furs. —

Travelling we see very little game a few ducks, some geese going south, an occasional fox (kit I think) & Sawbill cranes. Of the last we saw about 50 feeding not far off, & I first took them to be cattle or horses, so large they appeared, most of them were white or grayish the rest darker black. They are very wary & difficult to shoot. —

Thursday 20  
fine

A drive of a mile took us out of the wood brush & we pass over rolling country with good grass but scarce in water. 25 miles brings us to Eagle Hill Creek on the south side of a valley about six miles wide. The water in the creek is mostly a succession of deep pools with but little current. The whole valley bottom is semi-alkaline. Immediately to the south & southwest lies the Bad Hills, named so by the Creeks as when there they generally have had weather - wind & rain. — We continue thro' the treeless & dry plains 15 miles, after dinner & camp for the night at a patch dried up marsh which however was very welcome. —

Friday 21  
pleasant

Onward & southward with the rising sun through this uninteresting country. We find it today more rolling than yesterday & somewhat steeper, but the dry short grass as it is enjoyed very much by the



Horses, preferring it to the green grass around the sloughs. Some alkaline ponds, nearly dry, with thin glistening white borders were seen. - We drove 20 miles to the first water - the iron springs - I saw no indication of iron, it was simply a boggy slough, altho' the rising of the water is from springs & there was a slight current at the outlet. - Up hill, down hill, several hills bounding the circular horizon, yet many of the hills seem as a ridge and the horizon disappears as we approach, & crosses them. - At other point station almost got fractured shack without an occupant we water the horses at a mere thread of water running from a ravine & continue about six miles beyond where we camp. The ground here is parched & cracked by deep crevasses, the vegetation scant amongst which is the pad-leaved cactus a sign of rather arid soil. - We have no water for the horses for ourselves we brought three small Kegs full along from this morning's springs. -

The first prairie fire of the season we see tonight in the southern horizon, showing brightly although at least fifty miles away.

Saturday  
 Thursday 22  
 cloudy

After an early breakfast we were on our journey passing over dry & gently sloping country. - Chute calls the cactus in the plains - crapsud vest. - We pass a freighter with 20 carts (carrows the freight) forming a string half a mile long. With the iron-banded carts we do not hear that requiring peculiar to the old Red River carts without a particle of iron about them, & solely used prior to 1880. - A 14 mile drive brings us to a nice little stream issuing from springs in a ravine a mile or two to the east. - Here we rest for dinner altho' early but to give the horses a good feed with water. While here Mrs Smart other sister from Battledore