

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



September

pass us on their way home. Two gentlemen again -  
 traces were with them. - It is quite an undertaking for a  
 lady to drive 200 miles across a totally uninhabited territory.  
 Shortly after two o'clock we are off again & when six miles  
 from the river - Saskatchewan - we begin the descent by  
 long slopes. The south shore that faces us is very  
 broken by sharp hills & ravines, & all at some dis-  
 tance has the appearance of a bird's-eye view of the  
 Rocky Mts. - The descent to the river is by easy grades  
 & good. Two trips of the cable ferry land the outfit  
 on the south shore. The ferryman has a log hut with  
 an imposing canvas sign before it - "The Russell  
 House - meals at all hours - Beer - cider - cigars  
 - Oats - hay - & stabling." Fortunately we did not require  
 any of his hospitalities. He has a garden & in it I  
 saw potatoes - turnips - carrots - beets - beans - pump-  
 kins - squash - water & musk melons - all in good con-  
 dition. Some ripe tomatoes I saw in the windows till -  
 The I saw standing in the back I find straw burning  
 brata and cupice destined for saddle lake for the In-  
 dian Department. It seems a waste of money to give  
 the Indians such fine machinery - the separator we  
 passed this morning, - the freight on these over the  
 plains is \$800. - The ascent from the river to  
 the prairie above is very picturesque; the narrow  
 road winding through deep ravines partially lined  
 with brush & some trees which now have on their  
 prettiest coat of the ravines shades of green  
 yellow & red. Having gained the summit  
 after an hour's pull we continue over rolling  
 prairie bearing better grasses or rather more than  
 is found on the immediate north side of the river.  
 We pass Mounted Police who are conveying \$10,000 - "Red  
 Money" for the Indians at Battleford. - For night  
 we camp at the first water - a partially dried up  
 lake about nine miles from the river. After supper  
 we sit around the camp fire being very cool



September

night in camp, relating adventures in the plains, myself saying little preferring to listen to Charles & Sam. Ballendine. - Charles is undoubtedly a character and very amusing; a certain zest being given to his stories by his French-Canadian accent & imperfect English. - I shot a badger today in his hole but as we had no spade we failed to dig him out altho' we made an effort with the axe but when we found that his hole extended six feet along & under ground we gave it up.

heavy frost at night

Sunday 23  
fine

The journey is continued through rolling prairie with good grass although somewhat thin. We pass the burnt ground of a long prairie fire drifting eastward by the wind. An antelope or caribou is startled by us and scampers nimbly off. I halt and slowly wave my handkerchief knowing that this would attract its curiosity. It stopped - would gaze intently - give a peculiar utterance similar to that of the night-hawk we call white-pole, advance towards us, run off again, showing the peculiar white patch on its rump like a white patch in the seat of a pair of trousers. Thus it moved about in an arc of 90 degrees and within about 150 yards from us for nearly half an hour till the caribou came along for which I waited as the Indian had a rifle. But their approach was also a signal to it for its fleet & graceful departure. I would not wait for the Indian to pursue it. -

At noon we arrived at Swift Current on the C.P. Railway, and I felt the realization that home is now apparently near. - I dispose of the greater part of my camp outfit as it was not worth the transport, storage & use for another season. - Charles I instructs how to behave on railway as tomorrow morning I send him to Calgary, thence to find his way home some 200 miles. - As before stated this will be his first trip in 30 years & as good as if he had never made one before. -

I examine the quadruplex & other telegraph instruments under the charge of Mr. Draper, the A. station agent. At R. Denton I find very pleasant. - At 18-10 the train arrives and I speed eastward from the place that from which in the spring of 1884 I set out for my long journey to Hudson's Bay. Changes - and extreme ones have been so common with me for many years that no