

Engraved by E. H. Hilden.

Drawn by Lieut. Beck, July 16, 1872.

VIEW OF THE CLEARWATER RIVER FROM THE MOUNTAIN PORTAGE.

PERCENT 1000 TEXT LENGTH OF THE VIEW IN MILES.

178. C. 20

NARRATIVE OF A SECOND EXPEDITION
TO THE SHORES OF
THE POLAR SEA,

IN THE YEARS
1825, 1826, AND 1827,

98c.20

BY
JOHN FRANKLIN, CAPTAIN R.N., F.R.S., &c.
AND COMMANDER OF THE EXPEDITION.

INCLUDING AN ACCOUNT OF THE PROGRESS OF A DETACHMENT
TO THE EASTWARD,

BY
JOHN RICHARDSON, M.D., F.R.S., F.L.S., &c.
SURGEON AND NATURALIST TO THE EXPEDITION.

ILLUSTRATED BY NUMEROUS PLATES AND MAPS.

*PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR COLONIAL AFFAIRS.*

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TO
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE EARL BATHURST, K. G.,
LORD PRESIDENT OF HIS MAJESTY'S COUNCIL,
&c. &c. &c.

THE FOLLOWING
NARRATIVE OF A SECOND JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY ALONG
THE NORTHERN COAST OF AMERICA,

UNDERTAKEN BY ORDER AND UNDER THE AUSPICES OF
HIS LORDSHIP,

IS, BY PERMISSION, INSCRIBED,

WITH GREAT RESPECT AND GRATITUDE,

BY
THE AUTHOR.

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INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

HIS Majesty's Government having, towards the close of the year 1823, determined upon another attempt to effect a northern passage by sea between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and Captain Parry, the highly distinguished Commander of the two preceding Expeditions, having been again entrusted with its execution, success, as far as ability, enterprise, and experience could ensure it, appeared likely to be the result. Yet, as the object was one for which Great Britain had thought proper to contend for upwards of three centuries, it seemed to me that it might be desirable to pursue it by more ways than one; I therefore ventured to lay before His Majesty's Government a plan for an Expedition overland to the mouth of the Mackenzie River, and thence, by sea, to the north-western extremity of America, with the combined object, also, of surveying the coast between the Mackenzie and Coppermine Rivers.

I was well aware of the sympathy excited in the British public by the sufferings of those engaged in the former overland Expedition to the mouth of the Coppermine River, and

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

of the humane repugnance of His Majesty's Government to expose others to a like fate; but I was enabled to show satisfactorily that, in the proposed course, similar dangers were not to be apprehended, while the objects to be attained were important at once to the naval character, scientific reputation, and commercial interests of Great Britain; and I received directions from the Right Honourable Earl Bathurst to make the necessary preparations for the equipment of the Expedition, to the command of which I had the honour to be nominated.

My much valued friend, Dr. Richardson, offered his services as Naturalist and Surgeon, and also volunteered to undertake the survey of the coast between the Mackenzie and Coppermine Rivers, while I should be occupied in endeavouring to reach Icy Cape.

Lieutenant Bushnan, who had served under Captains Ross and Parry on their voyages of discovery, was also appointed to accompany me; but, long before the party was to leave England, I had to lament the premature death of that excellent young officer, who was eminently qualified for the situation, by his skill in astronomical observations, surveying, and drawing. Many naval officers, distinguished for their talent and ability, were desirous of filling the vacancy; but my friend and former companion, Lieutenant Back, having returned from the West Indies, the appointment was offered to him, and accepted with his wonted zeal.

Mr. E. N. Kendall, Admiralty Mate, and recently Assistant

Surveyor with Captain Lyon, was appointed to accompany Dr. Richardson in his voyage to the eastward, and to do the duty of Assistant-Surveyor to the Expedition at large, whilst it continued united. Lastly, Mr. Thomas Drummond, of Forfar, was appointed Assistant Naturalist, on the recommendation of Professor Hooker and other eminent scientific men.

A residence in the northern parts of America, where the party must necessarily depend for subsistence on the daily supply of fish, or on the still more precarious success of Indian hunters, involves many duties which require the superintendence of a person of long experience in the management of the fisheries, and in the arrangement of the Canadian voyagers and Indians: we had many opportunities, during the former voyage, of being acquainted with the qualifications of Mr. Peter Warren Dease, Chief Trader of the Hudson's Bay Company, for these services, and I therefore procured the sanction of His Majesty's Government for his being employed on the Expedition.

As soon as I had authority from Earl Bathurst, I entered into a correspondence with the Governor and Directors of the Hudson's Bay Company; and these Gentlemen, taking the most lively interest in the objects of the Expedition, promised their utmost support to it, and forthwith sent injunctions to their officers in the Fur Countries to provide the necessary depôts of provision at the places which I pointed out, and to give every other aid in their power. I also wrote to the different Chief Factors and Chief Traders of the Company, who

resided on the route of the Expedition, explaining its objects, and requesting their co-operation.

Pemmican, the principal article of provision used in travelling, being made during the winter and spring, the orders for providing the extra quantity required for the Expedition, though sent out from England by the earliest conveyance, so as to reach the provision posts in the summer of 1824, could not be put into effect sooner than the spring of 1825; hence, it was not proper that the main body of the Expedition should reach the Fur Countries before the latter period. Some stores were forwarded from England, by way of New York, in March 1824, under charge of Mr. Robert M'Vicar, Chief Trader, for the purpose of relieving the Expedition as much as possible from the incumbrance of heavy baggage, and thus enabling it, by marching quickly, to reach its intended winter-quarters at Great Bear Lake, as well as to provide for its more comfortable reception at that place. These stores, with the addition of other articles obtained in Canada, sufficed to load three north canoes, manned by eighteen voyagers; and they were delivered by Mr. M'Vicar, before the winter set in, to Mr. Dease, at the Athabasca Lake. Mr. Dease was instructed to support his party by fishing at Great Slave Lake, during the winter of 1824-25; and, early in the spring of 1825, to proceed to Great Bear Lake, and commence the necessary buildings for the reception of the Expedition. I may here cursorily remark that, in selecting Great Bear Lake as our winter residence, I was influenced by the information I had obtained of its being the place nearest

to the mouth of the Mackenzie, known to the traders, where a sufficient supply of fish could be procured for the support of so large a party.

Three light boats, which I shall soon more particularly describe, were also sent out to York Factory, in June 1824, in the annual Hudson's Bay ship, together with a further supply of stores, two carpenters, and a party of men, with a view of their reaching Cumberland House, on the Saskatchewan River, the same season; and, starting from thence as soon as the navigation opened in the following spring, that they might be as far as possible advanced on their way to Bear Lake before they were overtaken by the Officers of the Expedition. The latter, proceeding by way of New York and Canada, would have the advantage of an earlier spring in travelling through the more southern districts; and, further to expedite their progress, I directed two *large* canoes (*canôts de maître*), with the necessary equipments and stores, to be deposited at Penetanguishene, the naval depôt of Lake Huron, in the autumn of 1824, to await our arrival in the following spring; having been informed that, in ordinary seasons, we should, by commencing our voyage at that place, arrive in the north-west country ten days earlier than by the usual way of proceeding up the Utawas River from Montreal.

The return of the Hudson's Bay ship towards the close of the year 1824, brought me satisfactory intelligence of the progress of the above-mentioned parties, together with the most pleasing assurances from the Gentlemen of the Company

to whom I had written, of their zeal in our cause; and here I must express the deep sense I have of the kindness of the late Honourable William M'Gillivray, of Montreal, whose experience enabled him to give me many valuable suggestions relating to the clothing and subsistence of the party, and to the supplies proper for the Indians.

In connexion with the above sketch of the preparatory steps taken in the course of the year 1824, it may be proper to give, in this place, a short account of the general equipments of the Expedition.

And first, with regard to the vessels intended for the navigation of the Arctic Sea: birch-bark canoes, uniting lightness and facility of repair with speed, are certainly well adapted for navigating the rivers of America, but they are much too slight to bear the concussion of waves in a rough sea, and they are still less fitted, from the tenderness of the bark, for coming in contact with ice. I therefore requested of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that *three* boats might be constructed under my superintendence; and they were immediately ordered and promptly finished under the directions of the Commissioners of the Navy. To fit them for the ascent and descent of the many rapids between York Factory and Mackenzie River; and to render their transport over the numerous portages more easy, it was necessary to have them as small, and of as light a construction as possible; and, in fact, as much like a north canoe as was consistent with the stability and capacity required for their voyage at sea. They were built of mahogany, with

timbers of ash, both ends exactly alike, and fitted to be steered either with a sweep-oar or a rudder. The largest, twenty-six feet long, and five feet four inches broad, was adapted for six rowers, a steersman, and an officer; it could be borne on the shoulders of six men, and was found, on trial, to be capable of carrying three tons weight in addition to the crew. The two others were each twenty-four feet long, four feet ten inches broad, and were capable of receiving a crew of five men, a steersman, and an officer, with an additional weight of two and a half tons. The greatest care was paid to their construction by Mr. Cow, boat-builder of Woolwich Yard; and, as I could not often be present, my friend Captain Buchan, R.N., kindly undertook to report their progress; and I am further indebted to him for many valuable suggestions which were acted upon.

When the boats were finished, they were tried at Woolwich, in the presence of many naval and military officers, as to their qualities of sailing, rowing, and paddling, and found to answer fully the expectations that had been formed of them. At the same time we tried another little vessel belonging to the Expedition, named the Walnut-Shell, the invention and construction of which I owe to my friend Lieutenant-Colonel Pasley, of the Royal Engineers. Its length was nine feet, its breadth four feet four inches, and it was framed of well-seasoned ash, fastened with thongs, covered with Mr. Mackintosh's prepared canvas, and shaped like one valve of a walnut-shell, whence its appellation. It weighed only eighty-five pounds, could, when taken to pieces, be made up in five or six parcels, and was capable of

being put together in less than twenty minutes. So secure was this little vessel, that several ladies, who had honoured the trial of the boats with their presence, fearlessly embarked in it, and were paddled across the Thames in a fresh breeze. It was intended to provide against a similar detention in crossing rivers to that which proved so fatal to our party on the former journey; and it was also thought, that this little bark would be found useful in procuring water-fowl on the small lakes, to which the boats could not be conveyed.

In the choice of astronomical instruments I was necessarily guided by their portability. Our stock consisted of two small sextants, two artificial horizons, two altitude instruments, a repeating circle for lunar observations, and a small transit telescope for ascertaining the rates of the chronometers. We had a dipping-needle mounted on Meyer's plan, a plain needle very delicately fitted for observing the diurnal variation; two of Kater's azimuth compasses, and a pocket compass for each officer. The atmospherical instruments were two electrometers, two of Daniel's hygrometers, Leslie's photometer and hygrometer, besides a good supply of mercurial and spirit thermometers of different sizes. The magnetic instruments were examined in concert with my friend Captain Sabine, previous to my departure from London; and the observations that were obtained for dip and intensity, served as points of comparison for our future results.

The stores consisted of bedding and clothing, including two suits of water-proof dresses for each person, prepared by Mr.

Mackintosh, of Glasgow; our guns had the same bore with the fowling-pieces, supplied by the Hudson's Bay Company to the Indian hunters, that is, twenty-eight balls to the pound; their locks were tempered to withstand the cold of the winter; and a broad Indian dagger, which could also be used as a knife, was fitted to them, like a bayonet. Ammunition of the best quality was provided by the Ordnance, the powder being secured in small field or boat magazines. A quantity of wheaten-flour, arrow-root, macaroni, portable-soup, chocolate, essence of coffee, sugar, and tea, calculated to last two years, was also supplied, made up into packages of eighty-five pounds, and covered with three layers of prepared waterproof canvas, of which material coverings for the cargo of each boat were also made.

There was likewise an ample stock of tobacco, a small quantity of wine and spirits, marquees and tents for the men and officers, some books, writing and drawing paper, a considerable quantity of cartridge-paper, to be used in preserving specimens of plants; nets, twine, fishing-lines and hooks, together with many articles to be used at winter-quarters, for the service of the post, and for the supply of our Indian hunters, such as cloth, blankets, shirts, coloured belts, chiefs' dresses, combs, looking-glasses, beads, tapes, gartering, knives, guns and daggers, hatchets, awls, gun-worms, flints, fire-steels, files, whip and hand saws, ice-chisels and trenching-irons, the latter to break open the beaver lodges.

As the mode of travelling through the Hudson's Bay territories, with all its difficulties and hazards, is now well known to the

public, I think it better to give in this Introductory Chapter a slight outline of our route through the United States, Upper Canada, and Southern part of the Fur Countries, and to commence the detailed Narrative of the proceedings of the Expedition with its arrival in Methye River, where the officers joined the boats that had been sent out from England in the preceding year.

On the 16th of February, 1825, I embarked with Lieutenant Back, Dr. Richardson, Mr. Kendall, Mr. Drummond, and four marines, at Liverpool, on board the American packet-ship, Columbia, Captain Lee; and, on quitting the pier, we were honoured by a salute of three animating cheers, from a crowd of the principal inhabitants, who had assembled to witness our departure. The passage across the Atlantic was favourable and pleasant, and our reception at New York kind in the extreme. We landed at that city on the 15th of March, and our baggage and stores were instantly passed through the Custom-House without inspection. Cards of admission to the Public Scientific Institutions were forwarded to us the same evening; and, during our stay every other mark of attention was shown by the civil and naval authorities, as well as by private individuals, indicating the lively interest which they took in our enterprise.

James Buchanan, Esq., the British Consul, in addition to many other attentions, kindly undertook to accommodate a journey he had to make to Upper Canada, so as to accompany us through the State of New York. After a stay of eight days in the city, for the purpose of obtaining the rates of the

chronometers, and for making some other observations with Meyer's dipping needle, we embarked, under the Consul's guidance, in the steam-boat Olive Branch, and ascended the Hudson River, to Albany, where we experienced similar civilities to those we had received at New York. Every body seemed to desire our success, and a fervent prayer for our preservation and welfare was offered up by the Reverend Dr. Christie, the minister of the church that we attended. The Honourable De Witt Clinton, the Governor of the State, assured me, that had we not been accompanied by a gentleman so conversant in the different routes and modes of travelling as Mr. Buchanan, he would have sent his son with us, or would himself have conducted us to the confines of the State.

From Albany, we travelled through Utica, Rochester, and Geneva, to Leweston, in coaches, with more or less rapidity, according to the condition of the roads; and, crossing the river Niagara, entered Canada, and visited the Falls so justly celebrated as the first in the world for grandeur. We next crossed Lake Ontario in a sailing boat, and came to York, the capital of Upper Canada, where we were kindly received by the Lieutenant-Governor Sir Peregrine Maitland, and by Colonel Cockburn and the Commissioners then employed on an inquiry respecting the value of the Crown Lands. From York we passed on to Lake Simcoe, in carts and other conveyances, halting for a night at the hospitable house of Mr. Robinson of Newmarket. We crossed Lake Simcoe in canoes and boats, and landed near the upper part of Kempenfeldt Bay, but not without being

obliged to break our way through the ice for a short distance. A journey of nine miles, performed on foot, brought us to the River Nattawassaga, which we descended in a boat; and passing through a part of Lake Huron, arrived at Penetanguishene. At this place, we were hospitably entertained by Lieutenant, now Captain Douglass, during eight days that we waited for the arrival of our Canadian voyagers from Montreal.

We left Penetanguishene on^d St. George's day (23d April) in the two large canoes, which had been deposited at that place in the preceding autumn, our party, by the accession of the voyagers, now amounting to thirty-three; and after a few days, detention by ice, and bad weather, we reached Sault de St. Marie on the 1st of May, being ten days or a fortnight earlier than the oldest resident remembered a canoe from Canada to have arrived. From the Sault de St. Marie, we coasted the northern shore of Lake Superior to Fort William, formerly the great dépôt of the N.W. Company, where we arrived on the 10th of May. We now exchanged our two *canôts de maître* for four small north canoes, in one of which, more lightly laden, Dr. Richardson and I embarked, with the view of proceeding as rapidly as possible to arrange supplies of provision at the different posts, while Lieutenant Back was left to bring up the three remaining and more deeply laden canoes.

We proceeded by the route delineated in the maps through Rainy Lake, the Lake of the Woods, Lake Winnipeg, and the Saskatchewan River to Cumberland House, where we arrived on the 15th of June, and learned that our boats had left that place

on the 2d of the same month. We found, also, with deep regret, that Thomas Mathews, the principal carpenter, who had accompanied the boats from England, had had the misfortune to break his leg the evening before their departure. But, fortunately, an officer of the Hudson's Bay Company then present, had sufficient skill to set it, and Dr. Richardson now pronounced that in two months he would be able to come on in one of the Company's canoes, and join us at the Bear Lake, which he was very desirous of doing. I therefore made arrangements to this effect, and also concerning supplies for Mr. Drummond the Assistant Naturalist, who was to be employed, during our stay in the north, in making collections in the vicinity of the Rocky Mountains.

Having remained one night at Cumberland House, we resumed our voyage, and passing through Pine Island Lake, Beaver Lake, crossing the Frog Portage, and ascending the English River, with its dilatations, named Bear Island, Sandfly, Serpent, Primeau, and Isle à la Crosse Lakes, we came to the post situated on, and named from the latter sheet of water, at four P.M. on the 25th June. In the course of this voyage, we met the Gentlemen of the Hudson's Bay Company proceeding from the interior with various brigades of canoes, carrying the returns of trade for the year to York Factory, and I had not only the satisfaction of hearing frequent news of the progress of our boats, but that the deposits of provisions I had requested, and the other arrangements I had made, were all punctually carried into effect. Mr. Spencer, the gentleman in charge at

Isle à la Crosse, informed us, that the boats had gone off a few hours previous to our arrival, with the addition of a *batteau* laden with pemmican, under the charge of Mr. Fraser, a clerk of the Hudson's Bay Company.

I waited at this establishment one night, to obtain astronomical observations, and to bespeak an additional quantity of provisions, &c., which being satisfactorily done, we resumed our voyage on the 27th, and, passing through Deep River, Clear and Buffalo Lakes, overtook the boats in Methye River, at sunrise on the 29th of June.

Having brought this preliminary sketch up to the date at which the ensuing Narrative of the proceedings of the Expedition commences, I turn to the pleasing duty of rendering my best thanks to the many gentlemen who have assisted me in forwarding its progress. To the Right Honourable Earl Bathurst, I am greatly indebted for the readiness with which he attended to every suggestion I had to make regarding the equipment of the Expedition, and to the Right Honourable Wilmot Horton, the Under Colonial Secretary, for his kindness and promptitude in facilitating all my views. Nor can I feel less grateful to Lord Viscount Melville, and to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty for their patronage and support, as well as to Sir Byam Martin, the Comptroller, and to the Commissioners of the Navy and Victualling Offices, for the arrangements depending on their boards. Mr. Pelly, the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, and Mr. Garry, the Deputy-Governor, as well as every Member of its Com-

mittee, claim my most sincere thanks for their unremitting endeavours to promote the welfare of the Expedition through its whole progress ; and I feel truly obliged to Mr. Simpson, the Governor in the Fur Countries ; to Mr. M'Tavish, Mr. Haldane, Mr. M'Donald, Mr. Leith, Mr. Stuart, and Messrs. James and George Keith, Chief Factors, who, acting in the spirit of their instructions, were very assiduous in collecting provisions and stores for the use of my party, and in forwarding all our supplies. There were other gentlemen resident in the more northern parts of the country, to whom I am no less obliged for advice and assistance ; but the brevity requisite in this place necessarily compels me to refer to the Narrative, where their names, and the services they rendered, are mentioned.

I cannot, however, close this Introductory Chapter, without expressing the deepest obligation to those kind friends and excellent officers with whom I had the happiness of being associated, who constantly aided me by their most cordial co-operation, and whose best efforts were devotedly applied to every pursuit which could be interesting to science. Nor can I omit to mention the gratitude I owe to each of the seamen, marines, British and Canadian voyagers who composed our party at the winter-quarters, for their steady obedience and truly good conduct, whether in the days of relaxation during the winter, or in the more arduous exertions of our summer occupations.

The Views with which the ensuing Narrative is illustrated, have been chosen from a large collection of drawings, made by Captain Back and Lieutenant Kendall. Of the interesting nature of the scenes which have been selected, the reader will be the best judge ; but for their fidelity, I pledge myself in the most unreserved manner.

OFFICIAL INSTRUCTIONS.

Downing-street, 31st Jan., 1825.

SIR,

His Majesty's Government having decided that an Expedition should be set forth, for the purpose of exploring the Northern Coast of America, between the Mouth of Mackenzie's River, and the Strait of Behring; and confiding in your zeal and experience for the due execution of this service, I have recommended you as a proper person to be charged with the same. You are, therefore, to proceed with your party (a list of whom is annexed) by the Packet from Liverpool to New York, and from thence make the best of your way to Lake Huron, where the stores necessary for your journey have already been sent. Embarking in Canoes, you are from thence to follow the water communication to the western side of the Great Bear Lake, where you are to establish your winter-quarters; and having so done, your first care should be to endeavour to open a friendly communication with the Esquimaux.

Early in the Spring of 1826, you are to proceed down the Mackenzie River with all the necessary stores and provisions, in order to be prepared to take advantage of the first opening of

the ice on the Polar Sea, so as to enable you to prosecute your voyage along the coast to Icy Cape, round which you are to proceed to Kotzebue's Inlet, where you may expect to find His Majesty's Ship, Blossom, which the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty will order to proceed to that rendezvous, in the Summer of 1826. But if, on your arrival at Icy Cape, or the northern point of Behring's Strait, you should be of opinion that you could, with safety, return the same season to the established winter-quarters, you are at liberty to do so, instead of proceeding to join the Blossom. You will, therefore, without loss of time, settle with Captain Beechey, her commander, such a plan as may appear to you, both, best adapted for ensuring your meeting together, and establish a code of signals, or devise such other means as may tend to give you information, if possible, previous to your reaching the longitude of Icy Cape.

On your arrival at the mouth of Mackenzie River, you are to despatch Dr. Richardson with Mr. Kendall and five or six men, in one of the boats, to examine the intermediate coast between the Mackenzie and Coppermine Rivers; but if you should find that the stores and provisions you have been able to accumulate are not sufficient for your own and Dr. Richardson's party, you are, in that case, to direct Dr. Richardson to employ himself and party on shore, in examining the country contiguous to the Mackenzie River, the Rocky Mountains, the shores of the Great Bear Lake, the Copper Mountains, and as far round as he can with safety, collecting specimens of the animals, plants

and minerals, and also laying in a stock of provisions sufficient for both parties, if, by any unforeseen accident, you should find yourself compelled to return without reaching the Blossom.

If, in proceeding westerly towards Icy Cape, you should make but slow progress, and find yourself impeded by ice or land jutting out to the northward farther than is calculated upon, or from accidents to the boats, or any other unforeseen circumstance, so that it remains doubtful whether you will be able to reach the neighbourhood of Kotzebue's Inlet the same season, you are not to consider yourself authorized to risk yourself and party to the chance of being obliged to winter on the coast, but commence your return about the 15th or 20th of August to the established winter-quarters on Bear Lake, unless you should be satisfied that yourself and party could pass the winter with safety among the Esquimaux, and that there was afforded a certainty of your reaching Behring's Strait the following Season when the Blossom will again proceed to the appointed rendezvous.

In the event of your reaching Kotzebue's Inlet the first season, Captain Beechey will be instructed to convey you and your party in the Blossom to the Sandwich Islands or Canton, as may seem most advisable to you, from whence you will be able to take a passage to England in one of the Company's Ships or Private Traders; and you will leave such instructions with Dr. Richardson for his guidance, in the event of your being able to accomplish this point, as you may deem fit and proper for his return to England.

In the event of your death, or any accident which may prevent your proceeding, the command of the Expedition must necessarily devolve on Lieutenant Back, who is to follow these Instructions; but he is not to alter any arrangement with regard to Dr. Richardson's proceedings which you may have settled for him to pursue, the principal object of Dr. Richardson's accompanying you, being that of completing, as far as can be done, our knowledge of the Natural History of North America. Lieutenant Back will, therefore, in the event above-mentioned, act in concert with Dr. Richardson, but not direct him and his party from any plan of operations which he and you may previously have settled.

You will take care to inform me from time to time, as opportunities may occur, of your proceedings, and the progress made in the Expedition, with the direction of which you are hereby entrusted.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

BATHURST

To Captain Franklin, R.N.,

&c. &c. &c.

IX X 28

SECOND JOURNEY TO THE SHORES

OF

THE POLAR SEA.

CHAPTER I.

Join the Boats in the Methye River—Cross the Long Portage—Arrival at Fort Chipewyan
—Departure from thence with the whole party for Mackenzie River—Arrangements at
Fort Norman—Descent to the Sea—Return to the Winter Quarters at Great Bear Lake.

THE boats of the Expedition had advanced from Hudson's Bay into the interior, twelve hundred miles, before they were joined by the officers; whilst the latter, from taking a more circuitous route by New York and Canada, as shewn in the introductory chapter, travelled two thousand and eight hundred miles, to reach the same point.

1825.

This junction took place early in the morning of the 29th of June, 1825, in the Methye River, latitude $56^{\circ} 10' N.$, longitude $108^{\circ} 55' W.$, which is almost at the head of the waters that flow from the north into Hudson's Bay.

June 29.

In no part of the journey was the presence of the officers more requisite to animate and encourage the crews, because the river itself, beside being obstructed by three impassable rapids, is usually so shallow, through its whole course of forty miles, as scarcely to admit of a flat-bottomed bateau floating with half its

1825.
June.

cargo, much less our boats, which drew, when loaded, from eighteen to twenty inches. This river and its impediments being surmounted, the Methye Portage, ten miles and three quarters long, was at no great distance, which is always held up to the inexperienced voyager as the most laborious part of the journey. But whatever apprehensions the men might have entertained on this subject, seemed to vanish on our landing amongst them; and Dr. Richardson and myself were received by all with cheerful, delighted countenances, and by none more warmly than by our excellent friend and former interpreter Augustus the Esquimaux, and Ooligbuck, whom he had brought from Churchill, as his companion. A breakfast was quickly prepared by Mr. Fraser, a clerk of the Hudson's-Bay Company, under whose charge the boats had been, since their departure from Cumberland House; and I then inspected the boats and stores, which I was rejoiced to find were in good order. We had brought letters from the relatives of several of the party, and another hour was allowed to read them.

At ten A.M. we began to ascend the stream, but very soon found that it was necessary for the whole party to walk in the water, and drag the boats through the mud. Nor could we long advance even by this mode, but were compelled either to carry some of the cargo along the shore, where walking was at all practicable, or else to take half the lading in a boat to a part where the river was deeper, and then return for the remainder. From thus travelling the distance twice over, it was the fifth day before we reached the lake from whence its waters flow.

Thursday,
June 30.

On the evening of the 30th of June, we witnessed one of those violent but momentary gusts of wind which occur not unfrequently in the spring and autumn, and which prove so destructive to the forests in this country. It was preceded by calm and very sultry weather, with loud thunder and vivid lightning. In an instant

the tents were overthrown, and even very large trees were bent by its force into a horizontal position ; indeed, for a few seconds, the scene around us appeared one of almost entire devastation. When the violence of the squall was past, we had great reason to be pleased at its occurrence, for the strong steady breeze and heavy rain that succeeded, carried away the myriads of musquitoes by which we had been tormented the whole day.

1825.
June.

Having crossed the Methye Lake, we arrived at the portage of that name. Here it was necessary to make an equal division of the cargoes, and to devise means for the conveyance of the boats. The packages amounted to one hundred and sixteen, weighing from seventy to ninety pounds each, exclusive of the three boats and the men's personal luggage ; and there were nineteen men of the boats' crews, two Canadians, and two boys, to carry these burdens. At first the packages were equally distributed among this party ; but several of the men, who had been reduced by their previous exertions, became lame : among these were the Esquimaux, and we were, therefore, compelled to make other arrangements, and ultimately to employ the crew of my canoe, though the great fatigue they had suffered in our rapid journey from Penetanguishene, made me desirous of sparing them for the present.

Monday,
July 4.

The boats were the heaviest and most difficult articles to transport. One of the small boats was carried on the shoulders of eight men, of whom Mr. Fraser undertook to be one, as an example to the rest. Another of the same size was dragged by other eight men ; and the largest was conveyed on a truck made for the purpose on the spot, to which service the lame were attached.

Each day's journey, and also the intermediate stages, were determined by the places where water could be procured, and our mode of travelling was as follows :—Rising at three A.M., the

1825.
July.

Monday,
11th.

men carried a part of their burden to the first stage, and continued to go backwards and forwards till the whole was deposited. They then slept for a few hours, and in the cool of the evening the boats were brought up. By these means every thing was ready at the western end of the portage early on Monday, the 11th of July. The slight injuries which the boats had received, principally from exposure to the sun, were soon repaired; they were put into the water to tighten, and the whole party were allowed to rest.

With reference to the Methye Portage I may remark, that, except the steep hill at its western extremity, the road is good and tolerably level, and it appeared to us that much fatigue and suffering might have been spared by using trucks. Accordingly two were made by our carpenters at Fort Chipewyan, in 1827, for the return of the Expedition, and they answered extremely well. I mention this circumstance, in the hope that some such expedient will be adopted by the Traders for the relief of their voyagers, who have twice in every year to pass over this ridge of hills.

The annexed accurate drawing, taken by Lieutenant Back, from the highest part of this Portage, gives a beautiful delineation of one of the most picturesque scenes in the northern parts of America.

Tuesday,
12th.

Being now in a fair way to reach the Athabasca Lake, Dr. Richardson and I embarked, on the 12th, in the canoe, to proceed to Fort Chipewyan, for the purpose of preparing the gentleman in charge for the reception of the party.

By noon we got over the four Portages on Clear-Water river, and descended, with some trouble, the series of rapids that follow them. Once below these, the passage to the lake is generally considered as free from fatigue; but we did not find it so, far, owing to the shallowness of the water, the men had to get out

and drag the canoe in several places. The difference between the depth of water now and in other years at the same period, was attributed to the snow having fallen in the preceding autumn before the frost was sufficiently intense to harden the ground, and, consequently, much of the moisture had penetrated the earth, which, under other circumstances, would have remained in a frozen state, for the supply of the river at the spring thaw.

1825.
July.

In the course of the night we were under some alarm for one of our men, who having incautiously lain down to sleep under a wet sail, while the rain was pouring heavily, was seized with a cramp in the stomach, and violent pain in the head. Having been brought into the tent and covered with blankets, he became better before morning, but not sufficiently strong to allow of our setting off at the usual hour. We entered the Elk, or Athabasca River, at three P.M., on the 13th, and were carried swiftly down by its current to the Hudson-Bay Company's post named Berens House, where we stayed the night. Here we received a supply of dried meat.

Wednesday,
13th.

We safely arrived in the Athabasca Lake on the 15th, by the channel of the "Riviere des Eaux remuées;" but in the subsequent traverse between Bustard Island and Fort Chipewyan the canoe was in danger of foundering in a sudden gale. Two large waves broke with full force into it, and obliged us to bear away and steer for the nearest shore; but the men having soon rested, and being now sheltered by islands, we pushed on to Fort Chipewyan. Our arrival there caused great surprise to its inmates, when they learned that we had come from England to that advanced post so early in the season, being only two days later than the time at which Dr. Richardson and Mr. Hood had arrived in 1819, though they had passed the winter at Cumberland House.

Friday,
15th.

The stores at Fort Chipewyan being well furnished with warm

1825.
July.

clothing, and other articles, which we required for the use of the men and Indians at winter-quarters, I availed myself of the permission which the chief factor of this department, Mr. James Keith, had given me to complete our stock of cloth, blankets, nets, and twine, to a quantity sufficient for two years' consumption. A supply of twine was indispensable, because, by a letter from Mr. Dease, I had learned that the meshes of the nets made in England, of the size generally required for fishing throughout this country, were too large for the smaller fish that frequent that part of Bear Lake where our house was to be constructed. Mr. Campbell, the clerk in charge, cheerfully gave me the benefit of his experience in making out lists of such things as we were likely to want, and in assorting and packing them.

Monday,
18th.

The boats rejoined on the 18th, and the crews were allowed the following day to recruit themselves. A party of Indians came very opportunely with fresh meat, which is always an agreeable change to the voyager, who has generally to live on dried provision. The Indians, as well as the women and children of the fort, spent the greater part of the day by the side of our boats, admiring their whole equipment, but more especially the gay figures painted on them. Many of these were different from any animals or representations they had seen, and, judging from the bursts of laughter, some curious remarks were made on them.

Wednesday,
20th.

It being necessary that I should await the arrival of Lieutenant Back's canoes, Dr. Richardson undertook to proceed with the boats towards Slave Lake. Their lading was now increased by the bales already mentioned, as well as by several bags of pemmican, which Mr. Keith had stored up for our use. The crews, however, were reduced by the discharge of three Englishmen, at their own desire, who thought themselves unequal to the fatigue of the service.

I had the happiness, on the 23rd, of welcoming my friends, Lieutenant Back and Mr. Kendall, on their arrival with three canoes. Their journey from Fort William had been expeditious, notwithstanding the detention of eighteen days, by bad weather, on the road. A serious misfortune had happened at the very outset of the journey, through the unskilfulness of one of the bowmen, in allowing his canoe to turn round and get before the current, while attempting to ascend the Barrier Rapid, by which it was driven against a stone with such force, as to be upset and broken. The stores were fortunately saved, though completely drenched; but many of the delicate atmospheric instruments were broken. Mr. Kendall was despatched to Fort William for another canoe while the things were drying.

1825.
July.
Saturday,
23rd.

On a subsequent occasion, in the Winipeg River, the same man placed his canoe in such a situation, as to endanger its being hurried down a steep fall, and had it not been for the coolness of a man, named Lavallé, who jumped into the water and held the canoe, while the rest of its crew arranged themselves so as to drag it into a place of safety, every life must have been sacrificed. The success, indeed the safety, of this kind of river navigation, among currents and rapids, depend on the skill of the bowman; and after these proofs of his incapacity, Lieutenant Back very properly engaged a substitute at the first fort to which he came.

At another time, in the Sturgeon-weir River, the canoe in which Mr. Kendall was embarked, having been accidentally driven before the current, she was only saved from destruction by his own powerful exertion and activity.

These short details will convey an idea of the anxiety and trouble these officers experienced in their journey to Chipewyan.

The party and the stores having now passed the more difficult

1825.
July.

part of the road, I discharged as many of the Canadians as could be spared, and furnished them with a canoe to take them home. Some went to Montreal; and they were the first persons who had ever gone from that place to Chipewyan, and returned in the same season.

Monday,
25th.

The greater part of the 25th was employed in obtaining astronomical observations, the results of which, we were delighted to find, placed Fort Chipewyan within a few seconds of longitude of the position in which it had been laid down on the former Expedition. Our present azimuth compasses showed an increase in variation, since 1820, of $2^{\circ} 16'$ E. The dip was observed $81^{\circ} 26' 47''$.

Fort Chipewyan was this summer visited, for the first time, by a large flight of swallows, resembling the house-martins of England. They came in a body on the 25th of June, and immediately began to construct their earthy nests under the ledge of the south-front of the house. Some barn or forked-tail swallows also arrived on the 15th of June, and took possession of the store-houses and garrets, as they had in former years done. Some of the young of the last-mentioned birds were sporting on the tops of the houses as early as the 17th of July.

At sunset we embarked in four canoes, one having been procured here. The descent to Slave Lake occupied four days, and was unattended with any circumstance deserving mention, except that two of the canoes were broken in consequence of the guide mistaking the proper channel in a rapid; fortunately, these bark vessels are soon repaired, and we had only to regret the delay the accident occasioned.

We halted at the Salt River to take in salt, as we found, by a note left here, Dr. Richardson had done. The geese were moulting at this time, and unable to fly; they afforded us much sport in their chase, and an excellent supper every night.

A body of Indians were waiting near the entrance of the lake to welcome our arrival; they were so numerous, that we were forced to omit our general custom of giving a small present to each native, and thus incurred the charge of stinginess, which the loud vociferations they raised on our setting sail, were probably meant to convey.

1825.
July.

At six, on the evening of the 29th, we reached Fort Resolution, the only establishment now at Slave Lake, and we felt happy in being once more under the roof of our hospitable friend, Mr. Robert M'Vicar, to whom I am much indebted for the excellent order in which he had brought up our supplies from Canada in the preceding year. Dr. Richardson, after a halt of two days, had gone forward with the boats.

Friday,
29th.

All the portages on the road to Bear Lake being now passed, the Canadians made a request, that we would allow them to commemorate the event by a dance. It met with a ready compliance; and though they had been paddling for thirty-six out of the thirty-nine preceding hours, they kept up their favourite amusement until daylight, to the music of bagpipes, relieved occasionally by the Jews' harp.

We rejoiced to find at this post our worthy old Copper-Indian friends, Keskarrah and Humpy, the brother of Akaitcho, who had been waiting two months for the express purpose of seeing us.* These excellent men showed that their gratification equalled ours, by repeatedly seizing our hands and pressing them against their hearts, and exclaiming, "How much we regret that we cannot tell what we feel for you here!" Akaitcho had left the fort about two months on a hunting excursion, hoping to return, with plenty of provision for our use, by the middle of August, which was as early as he thought we should arrive. Keskarrah confirmed the melancholy report we had

1825.
July.

heard in the more southern districts, that most of the hunters who had been in our service at Fort Enterprise, had been treacherously murdered, with many others of the tribe, by the Dog-ribs, with which nation we also learned the Copper-Indians had been at war, since the year of our departure from them, till the last spring. The peace had been effected through the mediation of Messrs. Dease and M'Vicar, and we were gratified to find that Akaitcho and his tribe had been principally induced to make this reconciliation, by a desire that no impediment might be placed in the way of our present expedition. "We have too much esteem," said Akaitcho, "for our father, and for the service in which he is about to be again engaged, to impede its success by our wars, and, therefore, they shall cease;" and on being asked by Mr. Dease whether he and some of his young men would go to hunt for the party at our winter quarters, he replied, "Our hearts will be with them, but we will not go to those parts where the bones of our murdered brethren lie, for fear our bad passions should be aroused at the sight of their graves, and that we should be tempted to renew the war by the recollection of the manner of their death. Let the Dog-ribs who live in the neighbourhood of Bear Lake furnish them with meat, though they are our enemies." Such sentiments would do honour to any state of civilization, and show that the most refined feelings may animate the most untutored people. Happily we were now so circumstanced as to be able to reward the friendship of these good men by allotting from our stores a liberal present to the principal persons. On the delivery of the articles to Keskarrah and Humpy, I desired them to communicate to Akaitcho, and the whole tribe, the necessity of their strictly adhering to the terms of peace, and assured them that I should not fail to urge the same obligations on the Dog-ribs. A silver royal medal, such as is given to the Indian chiefs in Upper Canada, was likewise

left with Mr. M'Vicar, to be presented to Akaitcho, as a further mark of our regard for his former services and present good wishes.

1825
July.

The party was detained at Fort Resolution until this morning by a strong south-west gale; and even when we embarked, the wind and waves were still high, but time was too precious to allow of our waiting when there was a prospect of making any advance. As our future course inclined to the westward, we now quitted the track of the former journey to Fort Enterprise, along which we had been travelling from Lake Winnipeg. We first steered for the Buffalo River, and then along the south shore of Slave Lake, obtained the latitude $61^{\circ} 1' N.$ at noon, and afterwards the longitude $114^{\circ} 18\frac{1}{2}' W.$ at the Isle of the Dead. The islands and shores of this part of the lake are composed of horizontal beds of limestone, containing pitch and shells.

Sunday,
31st.

A small party of Chipewyan Indians, with their principal chief, joined us at the encampment, from whom we learned that they had supplied Dr. Richardson with dried meat the preceding noon, at Hay River. The chief was very importunate for rum, but I steadily adhered to the determination I had formed this time, on my entering the Fur Country, of not giving spirits to any Indian. A share of our supper and tea, and some tobacco, were offered to him, and accepted, though with a bad grace. The Fur Company ceased the following season to bring any rum to this quarter, and I learned that this man was one of the few natives who were highly displeased at this judicious change.

We coasted this day along the low shore of the lake, steering from point to point to avoid the sinuosities of several deep bays, and passed the mouth of the Sandy and Hay Rivers, where positions we settled by astronomical observations. The results of these, and the subsequent observations, appear in a

Monday.
August 1st.

1825.
August.
Tuesday,
2nd.

table in the Appendix, and, therefore, will not be inserted, except at particular points.

On the 2nd we came to the narrow part between the Big Island of Mackenzie, and the main shore, and perceived that a gentle current was setting towards the Mackenzie River. The water in this strait is very shallow, and also in many places near the south shore, though we know, from trial, on the former Expedition, that the depth of the east end of the lake, at a distance from the land, exceeds sixty and seventy fathoms. The beach, both of the north and south shores of the strait, is strewed with drift timber. In clear weather the north shore is visible from the point of the south shore nearest Big Island.

Below this *detroit* the shores recede so as to form a small shallow lake, about twenty-four miles long, by from four to twelve miles broad, near the north-west end of which we encamped, in latitude $61^{\circ} 15' N.$, longitude $117^{\circ} 6' W.$ This spot may be considered as the commencement of Mackenzie River. The ground is very swampy, and nourishes willows only; but inland, at a short distance from the beach, grow plenty of the spruce-fir, poplar, aspen, and birch trees; and among the underwood, numerous shrubs and berry-bearing plants.

Wednesday,
3rd.

On the 3rd we travelled to another contraction of the river about one mile broad, through which the current sets between high banks with such force as to form strong eddies. There are likewise in this part many sandy islands, and through the channels between them the current rushed with no less rapidity than in that we descended. For distinction's sake, these islands have been named the "Isles of the Rapid:" below them occurs another expansion, which is called by the voyagers "The Little Lake;" and Sandy Point, at its northwest end, is considered by them as the commencement of the Mackenzie River.

When abreast of this point, a favouring breeze enabled us to use the sail as well as the paddles, and with the assistance of the current great progress was made. We had occasional glimpses of the Horn and Rein-Deer Mountains as we passed along ; but, until we were some some way below the rapids, our view was very limited, owing to the woods being on fire in almost every direction. This I should have mentioned to have been the case in many parts between Isle à la Crosse and the Mackenzie. The cause of these extensive conflagrations I could not learn ; some attributed them to voluntary acts of the Indians, and others to their negligence in leaving their fires burning.

1825.
August.

We put up at sunset on a beach of gravel under a well-wooded bank of moderate height, and the party regaled themselves with raspberries and other indigenous fruits.

At half past two A.M., on the 4th, the canoes were again on the water, and being driven by sail and current, made good way. We stopped at the Trout River, which flows in from the southward, and ascertained its longitude $119^{\circ} 47' W$. The breadth of the Mackenzie is here about two miles, and its banks are composed of a muddy clay : the stones on the beach mostly limestone, with some boulders of primitive rocks. The trees are of the kinds we had seen north of the Athabasca Lake : they are here of a smaller size. Five miles below this part, the Mackenzie is divided into several channels by islands, and the current runs with increased swiftness, and strong eddies.

Thursday,
4th.

The latitude $61^{\circ} 26' 30'' N$. was obtained at noon ; it was the same as on the preceding day ; so that our course, in the interval, had been due west.

The banks now were higher, and for the next forty miles the breadth of the stream did not exceed one mile, nor was less than half a mile ; its course inclined more to the north. We passed

1825.
August.

the site of the first establishment that the North-West Company had made in these parts, which was erected by Mr. Livingstone, one of the partners, who, with the whole of the crew of his canoe, except one individual, were massacred by the Esquimaux on the first attempt to open a trade with them.

At three P.M. a picturesque view opened upon us of a distant range of mountains running east and west, and nearly at right angles to the course of the river. The current being considerably increased by the contribution of some streams near this place, we descended very swiftly. Six miles below Pine Island, there is a strong but not a dangerous rapid; and about fifteen miles farther is Fort Simpson, the principal depôt of the Hudson-Bay Company for this department, at which we arrived by eight P.M., and thus escaped a very wet, comfortless night. Dr. Richardson had departed for Fort Norman the preceding day.

This establishment, three hundred and thirty-eight miles from Fort Resolution on Slave Lake, is situated at the confluence of the River of the Mountains and the Mackenzie. The former is the channel of communication with a fur post not far distant from the Rocky Mountain Range, from whence the residents here procure much of their provision, including a tolerable supply of potatoes, which have been recently introduced from the southern parts. Mr. Smith, the chief factor of the district, was fortunately at Fort Simpson, so that I had the opportunity of arranging with him as to supplies of provision or stores that my party might require during its residence at Bear Lake. He cheerfully acceded to every suggestion that was made, and likewise furnished me with a letter of instruction to the same effect, addressed to the gentlemen in charge of the lower posts.

I learned from Mr. Smith that, as yet, a few only of the Indians

who live nearest the mouth of the river, and none of the Esquimaux, had been apprized of our intended visit, the traders at the lower posts having considered that it would be better to defer this communication until we should arrive in the river, for fear of disappointing these people, which might have been attended with unpleasant results.

There were two Canadians here belonging to the Expedition, whom Mr. Dease had sent to serve as guides to Bear Lake. By letters which they brought, I was informed that Indian hunters were engaged, and the necessary buildings in course of preparation for our reception. As Fort Simpson had been short of ammunition during the summer from some accidental cause, I was glad to find that Mr. Dease had been enabled to lend from our stores a barrel of powder, and a bag of balls, and I now increased the loan, so as to meet the probable demands of the Indians, until the Company's supplies should arrive, when they would return to Fort Norman the whole of what we had lent. Cloudy weather limited our astronomical observations at this place to the dip of the needle, which was observed $81^{\circ} 54'$.

We quitted the fort on the 5th, soon after noon, whence the river preserving nearly a straight course for fifteen miles, gradually extends itself to nearly two miles in breadth: in its channel there are three islands. At two P.M. we obtained the first glimpse of the Rocky Mountains, and kept them in view until we encamped, which was early, as the canoes required gumming. The outline of the mountains was very peaked, and at their easternmost part was a cone-shaped hill, higher than the rest, whose summit was veiled by clouds. The general appearance of the range somewhat reminded me of the east end of Jamaica.

The morning of the 6th was beautifully fine: we embarked at 2^h 30' A.M., and by seven came within six or seven miles of the

1825.
August

Friday,
5th.

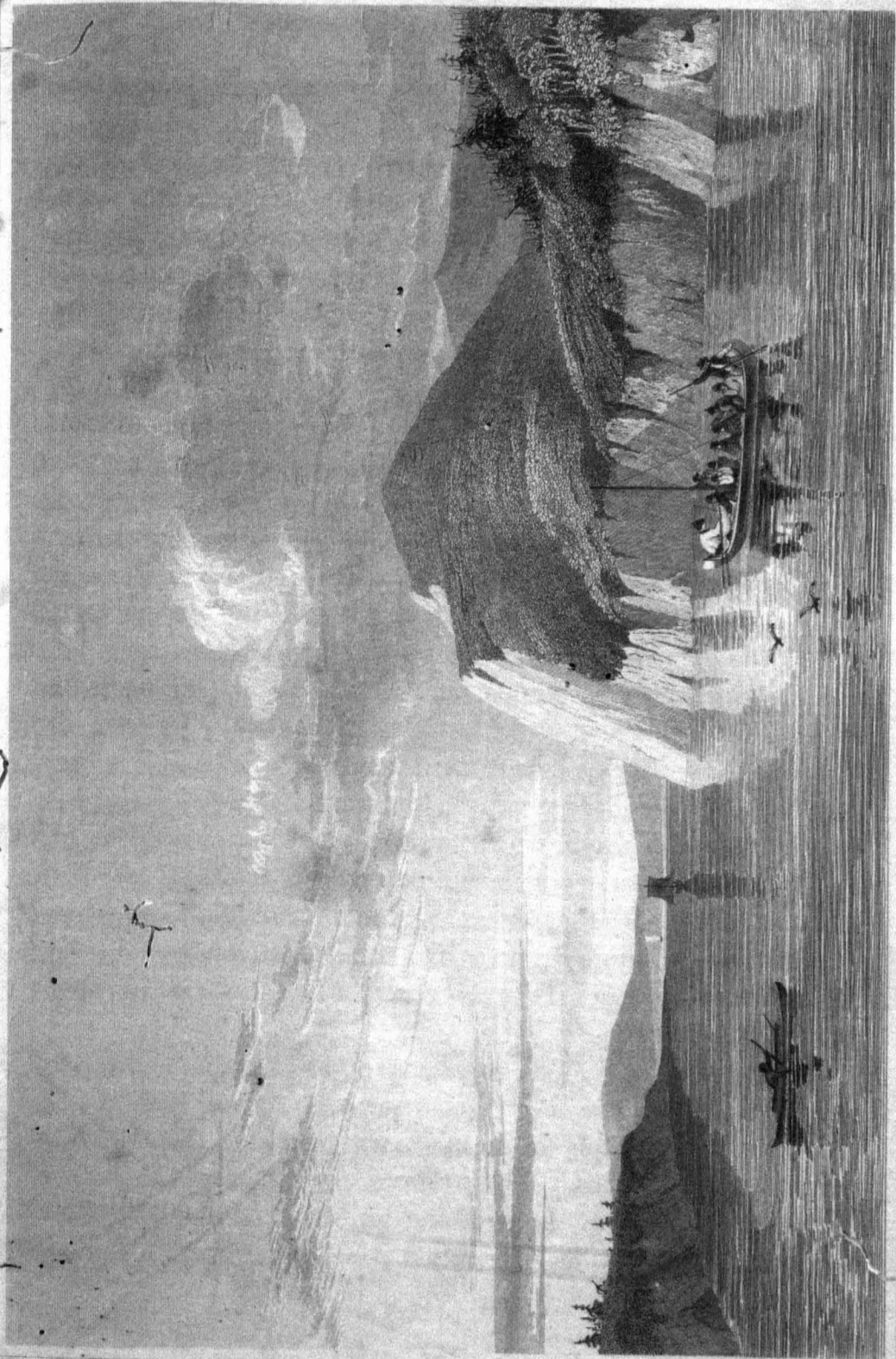
1825.
August.

mountain range, where the river suddenly changes its course from W.b.N. to north, in longitude $123^{\circ} 31' W.$

A distinct stratification was perceptible on the face of the nearest mountain: on one side of a nearly perpendicular ravine the strata dip to the southward at an angle of 25° ; whilst on the other they are nearly horizontal. There was a large accumulation of debris at its base: every part of the hill was destitute of vegetation. Its altitude was guessed at one thousand two hundred feet.

At noon, in latitude $62^{\circ} 49' N.$, we saw a chain of mountains, on the eastern side of the river, similar in their outline and general character to those hitherto seen only on the opposite bank. Between these ranges the river flowed in a channel two miles broad; but as we advanced we receded from those on the western side, their direction being W.N.W. In the brilliancy of the sunshine, the surfaces of some of the eastern hills, which were entirely bare, appeared white as marble, and for some time we fancied them to be covered with snow. By four P.M. we reached the Rocky Island mentioned by Mackenzie, where, from the river being contracted, the current flowed with great rapidity, and soon brought us opposite to the remarkable hill close by the river side, which that persevering traveller ascended in July, 1789. His account, and the annexed detailed engraving, from an accurate drawing by Mr. Kendall, render a description of it unnecessary. It is composed of limestone, and is about four hundred feet high.

We continued a N.b.W. course for eight miles, and encamped at sunset, having travelled this day one hundred and twenty miles. A small supply of fresh deer's meat was obtained from some Dog-Rib Indians. Their canoes were made of the bark of the pine-tree, sewn at the ends and top with the fibrous parts of the root of that tree, leaving only a space sufficient for the legs of the sitter.



Engraved by E. Fisher.

THE GREAT BRITISH EMERALD, AUGUST 6, 1865.

We pursued our course at dawn of day, and at the end of a few miles came to a more winding part of the river, where the stream is interrupted by numerous sand banks and shoals, which we had some trouble to get round. Mr. Kendall, in his Journal, remarks of this part, "That bubbles of air continually rose to the surface with a hissing noise resembling the effervescence produced by pouring water on quick lime."

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August.
Sunday,
7th.

We arrived at Fort Norman at ten, A.M., distant two hundred and thirty-six miles from Fort Simpson, and five hundred and seventy-four from Fort Resolution.

Being now only four days' journey from Bear Lake, and there remaining yet five or six weeks of open season, I resolved on following up a plan of a voyage to the sea, which I had cherished ever since leaving England, without imparting it to my companions, until our departure from Fort Chipewyan, because I was apprehensive that some unforeseen accident might occur in the course of the very intricate and dangerous river navigation between Fort William and the Athabasca Lake, which might delay our arrival here to too late a period of the year. It was arranged, *first*, that I should go down to the sea, accompanied by Mr. Kendall, and collect whatever information could be obtained, either from actual observation, or from the intelligence of the Loucheux Indians, or the Esquimaux, respecting the general state of the ice in the summer and autumn; the direction of the coast, east and west of the Mackenzie; and whether we might calculate upon any supply of provision. *Secondly*, Dr. Richardson, on his own suggestion, was to proceed in a boat along the northern shore of Bear Lake, to the part where it approached nearest to the Coppermine River, and there fix upon a spot to which he might bring the party the following year, on its return from the mouth of that river. And, *thirdly*, that these undertakings might not interfere

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with the important operations necessary for the comfortable residence and subsistence of the Expedition during the following winter, Lieutenant Back was to superintend them during my absence, with the assistance of Mr. Dease, chief trader of the Hudson Bay Company, whose suggestions, relative to the proper distribution of the Indian hunters, and the station of the fishermen, he was to follow. Accordingly, Dr. Richardson, on his quitting this place two days previous to our arrival, had left the largest of the boats, the *Lion*, for my use, and a well-selected crew of six Englishmen, and Augustus the Esquimaux.

Lieutenant Back was directed to take the canoes forward to Bear Lake, laden with such supplies as would be required for the winter, and was further instructed to furnish Dr. Richardson with one of the boats, and a good crew. The services of the Canadians who had brought the canoes from Penetanguishene, being no longer required, I desired Lieutenant Back to discharge them, and also all the voyagers of Mr. Dease's party who could be spared. They were sent in canoes to Slave Lake, where I had arranged with Mr. M'Vicar for their being supplied with the means of gaining subsistence by fishing, during the winter; and the following spring, they were to be forwarded to Canada, at the expense of Government, according to the terms of their agreement.

Fort Norman being situated in our way to the sea, the pemican and other stores, intended for the voyage along the coast next season, were deposited here, by permission of Mr. Smith, under the care of Mr. Brisbois, the clerk in charge. Our observations place this establishment in latitude $64^{\circ} 40' 30''$ N and longitude $124^{\circ} 53' 22''$ W.

Monday,
5th.

The above matters being satisfactorily settled, and a few articles packed up as presents to the Indians and Esquimaux,

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Mr. Kendall and I embarked on the 8th, at noon, taking, in addition to our crew, a voyager, who was reported to be able to guide us through the proper channels to Fort Good Hope, of which, however, we found him altogether ignorant. We were accompanied by Lieutenant Back, with the three canoes, each manned by five men. The crews of the canoes imagining they could easily pass our English boat, were much surprised, on putting it to the proof, to find the boat take and maintain the lead, both under sail and with oars.

A few miles above the Bear Lake River, and near its mouth, the banks of the Mackenzie contain much wood coal, which was on fire at the time we passed, as it had been observed to be by Mackenzie in his voyage to the sea. Its smell was very disagreeable. On a subsequent trial of this coal at our winter quarters, we found that it emitted little heat, and was unfit for the blacksmith's use. The banks likewise contain layers of a kind of unctuous mud, similar, perhaps, to that found on the borders of the Orinoco, which the Indians, in this neighbourhood, use occasionally as food during seasons of famine, and even, at other times, chew as an amusement. It has a milky taste, and the flavour is not disagreeable. We used it for whitening the walls of our dwellings; for which purpose it is well-adapted.

The entrance of the Bear Lake River is distinguished by a very remarkable mountain, whose summit displays a variety of insulated peaks, crowded in the most irregular manner. It is composed of limestone; and from the lower cliffs, which front the river, a dark, bituminous liquid oozes and discolours the rock. There are likewise two streams of sulphureous water that flow from its base into the Mackenzie. At this place we parted from our friend, Lieutenant Back, who entered the clear and beautiful stream that flows from Bear Lake, of whose pure

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waters we had also the benefit, till they were overpowered by the muddy current of the Mackenzie. The day was fine, the wind fair, the current swift, and every circumstance concurred to put the party in high glee. There was little in the scenery to attract our attention, now that we had become familiar with the general appearance of the Mackenzie, and we passed island after island, of the same alluvial mud, without further regard than the delineation of them in the survey book. At length, however, a most picturesque view of the rocky mountain range opened before us, and excited general admiration, and we had also some portions of the mountain range on the eastern side of the river, in view for the remainder of the day's journey. The outline of these mountains is very irregular, the highest parts being peaked hills. The general direction of the ranges is between N.W. and N.W.b.W.

Tuesday,
9th.

Being unwilling to lose the advantage of the wind, we only put ashore to sup, and after two hours' delay, resumed our voyage under easy sail. When the sun rose, the oars were used; and then, as the current set at the rate of two miles and a half per hour, the boat travelled swiftly down the stream. The eastern bank of the river, along which we were passing, is about one hundred and twenty feet high, almost perpendicular, and is composed of thin strata of bituminous shale. Amongst the fragments of shale which strewed the beach, we found many pieces of brown wood-coal. A reach, eighteen miles in length, followed. It is bounded on both sides by high cliffs of sandstone. We landed to breakfast, and to obtain the longitude, $128^{\circ} 23' W$.

From the reach here described, are seen two hills, named by me the East and West Mountains of the rapid, which seem to present a barrier to the further progress of the stream; but the river, bending suddenly between them to the north, dilates into

a kind of basin, and, by so doing, opens by far the most interesting view of the Rocky Mountains which the Mackenzie affords. The river, too, makes its nearest approach to those mountains at this spot, and, probably, the easiest communication with them would be by ascending a small stream that flows in here on the western side. Here too are found the first rapids mentioned by Mackenzie, which continue in succession for two miles, when the water is low. The centre of the basin is occupied by low sandy islands; and the channel on the western side is the deepest. The beauty of this scene furnished employment for the able pencil of Lieutenant Back, on a subsequent occasion. As the Mackenzie, in its further descent, continues to hold a northerly course, and the range of mountains runs N.W.b.N., we did not obtain any other view of them till we approached the sea.

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At one P.M. we saw a party of Indians encamped on the beach of a small stream, whom we invited to come off to us. They hesitated at first, being doubtful who we were, from our boat being different in shape from any they had seen, and carrying two sails; but after some time they launched their canoes, and brought us a good supply of fresh deer's meat. The sight of our boats seemed to delight them as much as the ammunition and tobacco which they received. These were Hare Indians, the tribe that follows next to the Dog-Ribs, in the line of country below Bear Lake; and, like them, they speak a dialect of the Chipewyan language. We admired the shape and appearance of their canoes, which were larger than those used by the Chipewyans, and had the fore part covered with bark, to fit them for the navigation of this broad river, where the waves are often high.

The river varied from two to four miles in breadth, and its course was interrupted by several small islands and sand-banks. At six P.M. we came to an open space, bounded by lofty walls of