3-29-1905

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THE ESTABLISHMENT OF OVERLAND CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE REGION EAST
OF THE
SIPPI AND RED RIVERS AND THE TERRITORY LYING WESTWARD TO THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS
MAY 30, 1915.

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO DAKOTA TERRITORY.

A THESIS
PRESENTED IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

BY

WILLIAM CHARLES WHITFORD.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA
1915.
This thesis, offered by Mr. William Charles Whitford as a portion of the work required for the degree of Master of Arts, is hereby approved by the committee under which he has carried on his work:

Chairman

University of North Dakota.
June 30, 1915.
INTRODUCTION

The establishment of overland connections between the Mississippi and the Red River Valleys and later across the plains country to the Rocky Mountains has a prominent place in the history of Dakota Territory. This is especially true for that period before 1871 when the first railroad crossed the Red River. In general there were two means which were employed in penetrating this region—the water route by way of the Missouri River or the Red River from Winnipeg, and second, the overland route. Many of the voyages by the first route have been carefully chronicled and their story told. The second has so far had but a partial and fragmentary treatment.

To make an adequate study of the development of overland connections in this state, one should have a knowledge of the old Red River cart trails, the Indian war-roads and trading routes as well as those they employed in hunting the buffalo. These facts are but slightly recorded and for the most part quite inaccessible. A second source, scarcely less important than the first, is a detailed record of the lives of the men who acted as guides and scouts in the various expeditions which are described in the present paper. And lastly, there must be taken into account that information which might be gained from diaries and letters or from personal recollections of those who made journeys either to the gold mines of Montana and Idaho or those who went as land seekers. These are some of the more obvious sources of information which must be made accessible before an adequate treatment of the whole subject can be made. In the discussion of this subject it was found necessary, therefore, to limit its scope to those expeditions of which either maps, reports, or other documents were available.
The expeditions fall quite naturally into six groups. In the first division are described the expeditions of Lieutenant Zebulon M. Pike, General Lewis Cass and H.R. Schoolcraft, the expedition of Major Stephen H. Long and Beltrami, and lastly the expedition of Nicollet to the sources of the Mississippi and the Minnesota rivers. The second division comprises the expedition of Nicollet to Devils Lake from Fort Pierre and his return to Fort Snelling. In the third group are discussed the military expedition of Major S. Woods and Captain John Pope to Pembina in 1849 and the expedition of Governor Alexander Ramsey to the same place in 1851, as chronicled by J.W. Bond. The fourth part covers the survey conducted by Governor I.I. Stevens of Washington Territory in 1853 for the purpose of selecting a route for the projected Pacific railroad. In the fifth division there is described the discovery of gold in Idaho, Montana, and British Columbia, and the consequent rush of gold seekers into these localities as shown by the Fisk overland expeditions of 1862, 1863, 1864, and 1866. The last division, which includes the military expeditions which crossed the territory of Dakota between the years 1856 and 1864, completes the discussion.

Lieutenant Pike, by his advocacy of a military post at Fort Snelling and the firm stand he took in regard to the British fur-traders of the North West Company, at Red Cedar lake and Sandy lake, made actual the formal occupation of this territory by the United States. Schoolcraft and Cass fifteen years later reaffirmed the stand of Pike and gained an increased hold upon the Indians of the region. Major Long and Beltrami three years later were the pioneers in establishing regular connections between Fort Snelling and Pembina. Major Long's connection with the selection of the site of Fort Snelling is also important since the erection of that fort in the following year marks the first visible evidence of the extension of the frontier into this region.
The journey of Nicollet from Fort Pierre to Devils Lake in the next decade established the connection between the Missouri River and the Sheyenne branch of the Red River and was especially important on account of the map of the region intermediate between the Mississippi and the Red rivers and the Missouri River. This expedition is important also in that he gave the earliest known published account of the Devils Lake region and the Sheyenne river valley.

The third part, treating of the expeditions of Major Woods and Governor Ramsey to Pembina in 1849 and 1851 respectively, was important since it laid down a well established trail between Fort Snelling and Pembina. From a military standpoint the expedition of Major Wood was more especially significant, since he made the selection of a site for a military post where later was erected Fort Abercrombie.

The Stevens survey in 1853 was the first overland expedition which crossed the Dakota Territory. Its route became well known and was followed by emigrant trains on at least two later occasions. The thoroughness with which the survey was conducted gave an abundance of information concerning a region of which at that time comparatively little was known.

The discovery of gold in Montana, Idaho, and British Columbia in the late fifties gave a tremendous impetus to the westward movement of the population, especially in the border states. It resulted directly in several overland expeditions and a proposal to construct a permanent wagon road across Dakota Territory to Montana and Idaho. These overland expeditions and the increased steam-boat traffic on the Missouri River were not without their effects upon the Indians of the region. By checking the free migration of the great buffalo herds, some of the Indian tribes were compelled to seek other sources of food. Indirectly this caused the general hostility of the Sioux tribe which called forth the numerous military expeditions, of which those of 1863 and 1864 are described in this paper. The importance
of these two expeditions was two fold. They took the military forces into the hitherto unexplored regions beyond the Missouri river and in the second place they broke the power of the Sioux east of the Missouri river and made settlement possible in that entire region. The establishment of military posts was also one of the direct results of these military expeditions and thus provision was made for the safety of the rapidly growing settlements. The rapidity with which these communities grew, especially after the close of the Civil War, made possible the extension of the railroads, the building of telegraph lines and a rapid advance toward a well-established industrial system.
CHAPTER I

Early Explorations in the Upper Mississippi Valley
and in the Red River Valley

The early explorations into this region were made under orders issued by President Thomas Jefferson and later by Secretary of War, John C. Calhoun.

By the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, the United States had come into possession of the lands drained by the western tributaries of the Mississippi river and of the Missouri river. The English since 1763 had regarded these regions as proper places for exploitation by their fur traders, and hence it was imperative that one of the purposes of the Pike expeditions was to give warning to these fur traders that they must evacuate the region or submit to the authority of the United States government. During the War of 1812 the British fur traders were suspected of inciting the Indians on the northwestern frontier to make war upon the United States. At the close of the war by the treaty of Ghent in 1814, the United States once more made plain her position upon these infringements on the part of the British fur traders. The first expedition to carry out this aggressive policy was that of Long in 1817. He was ordered to select a site for a military post at or near the junction of the Minnesota and Mississippi rivers. The expedition of Cass in 1820 and Major Long in 1823 gave an added emphasis to the policy and put an end to infringements upon the territory of the United States by the fur traders of the Hudson's Bay and Northwest Companies.
Pike's Expedition

The expedition of Zebulon Montgomery Pike to the headwaters of the Mississippi river in 1805-6 is surpassed in its importance for the North west only by the better known of Lewis and Clarke, which crossed the continent in 1803-4.

The instructions issued to Pike were as follows:

"Having completed your equipments, you are to proceed up the Mississippi with all possible diligence, taking the following instructions for your general government, which are to yield to your discretion in all cases of exigency.

1. You will please to take the course of the river, and calculate distances by time, noting rivers, creeks, highlands, prairies, islands, rapids, shoals, mines, quarries, timber, water, soil, Indian villages, and settlements, in a diary, to comprehend reflections on the winds and weather.

Zebulon M. Pike was born at Lambertown, New Jersey, a suburb of Trenton, January 5, 1779. While a child, his parents moved to Pennsylvania. In 1794 he entered his father's regiment which at that time was stationed in the territory of Indiana. In 1805, while a first lieutenant of the 1st infantry, Pike was detailed to the command of the expeditions for exploring the Mississippi to its sources. In 1806 he was ordered to restore to their homes 50 Osage Indians who had been redeemed by the United States Government from the Pétawabami Indians. After this duty was performed, he was to explore the country. He left St. Louis on the 1st of July and went north along the Missouri and the Osage into what is now the state of Kansas. Early in October, turning south, he marched to the Arkansas River and up which he went to the Royal Gorge, having discovered the mountain called Pikes Peak. In searching for the Red river, he came to South Platte, marched through South Park, struck across to the Arkansas and thinking it was the Red river, went south and southwest until he came to the Rio Grande. There on February 25, he and his men were taken prisoners by the Spanish authorities. The Spanish sent him first to San Fe, then to Chihuahua and by a roundabout way back to the American frontier, where he was released on July 1, 1807. His promotion came rapidly, he was appointed Colonel in 1812, and military agent in New Orleans in 1809-13. He took an active part in the war of 1812 as adjutant and inspector-general in the campaign against Toronto. He was killed on the 27th of April, 1813 in the campaign against York, from the explosion of a powder magazine.
It is interesting to government to be informed of the population and residence of the several Indian nations, of the quantity and species of skins and furs they barter per annum, and their relative price to goods, of the tracts of country on which they generally make their hunts, and the people with whom they trade.

"You will be pleased to examine strictly for an intermediate point, between this place and the Prairie des Chiens, suitable for a military post, and also on the Quiscousing, near its mouth, for a similar establishment; and will obtain the consent of the Indians for their erection, informing them that they are intended to increase their trade and ameliorate their condition."

"You will proceed to ascend the main branch of the river until you reach the source of it, or the season may forbid your further progress without endangering your return before the waters are frozen up."

"You will endeavor to ascertain the latitude of the most remarkable places in your route, with the extent of the navigation and the direction of the different rivers which fall into the Mississippi, and you will not fail to procure specimens of whatever you may find curious in the mineral, vegetable, or animal kingdoms, to be rendered at this place."

"In your course you are to spare no pains to conciliate the Indians and to attach them to the United States, and you may invite the great chiefs of such distant nations as have not been at this place to pay me a visit."

"Your own good sense will regulate the consumption of your provisions, and direct the distribution of the trifling presents which you may carry with you, particularly your flag."

"I wish you a speedy, pleasant, and safe tour, and am, Sir, with sentiments of respect and esteem, Your obedient servant; (signed) James Wilkinson."

(P.S. In addition to the preceding orders, you will be pleased to obtain permission from the Indians who claim the ground for the erection of military posts and trading-houses at the mouth of the river St. Pierre, the falls of St. Anthony, and every other critical point which may fall under your observation; these permissions to be granted in formal and regular proceedings, regularly recorded, and the ground marked off.)

(Lieutenant Z.M. Pike, 1st Regt. Infantry"

The expedition left St. Louis on Friday, August 9, 1805. It consisted of one sergeant, two corporals, and seventeen privates. The means of transportation was a keel boat 70 feet long. Provisions were taken sufficient for four months. By September 5 they had reached Prairie du Chien, which

1Coles, The Expedition of Zebulon M. Pike, New York, 1835, IL, 842-44.
at that time represented the extreme frontier in our new northwest.

The company had made fair progress in their journey up the river, encountering but few difficulties. The expedition stopped three days at Prairie du Chien in order to take the latitude of the mouth of the Wisconsin River and to select a suitable site for the erection of a fort. Pike also changed his method of traveling. Under his entry of September 8, he says:

"Embarked at half-past eleven o'clock in two batteaux. The wind fair and fresh. I found myself much embarrassed and cramped in my new boats with provisions and baggage. I embarked two interpreters, one to perform the whole voyage, whose name was Pierre Rosseau (Rousseau); and the other named Joseph Reinville (Renville), paid by Mr. Frazer to accompany me as high as the falls of St. Anthony. Mr. Frazer is a young gentleman, clerk to Mr. Blakely of Montreal; he was born in Vermont, but has latterly resided in Canada. To the attention of this gentleman I am much indebted; he procured for me everything in his power that I stood in need of, dispatched his bark canoes, and remained himself to go on with me. His design was to winter with some of the Sioux bands.

We sailed well, came 18 miles, and encamped on the west bank."  

At a short distance above Prairie du Chien Pike held his first council with the Sioux and on the 12th of September he came within the borders of the present state of Minnesota. On the 16th he was some 7½ miles below Lake Pepin which was one of the battle grounds between the Sioux and the Chippewas. The same day he began the ascent of the lake, accompanied by a small band of Sioux, who offered to go as far as the Minnesota river with him. By September 19 he had reached the St. Croix river and on the 22nd he reached a spot near the site of the present city of St. Paul, making

1. Afterward this fort was called Fort Crawford.
2. Joseph Reinville was one of the most famous of the half-breed guides and hunters in the northwest. In 1822, he with several other experienced trappers, established the Columbia Fur Company. In 1823 he also served as guide to Major Long's expedition. See Minnesota Historical Collections, I.
making his encampment on the northeastern point of Pike's Island, opposite to the later site of Fort Snelling. The next few days were spent in preparing for the Council with Petit Corbeau. The object of the Council was the securing of a grant of land from the Sioux for the purpose of erecting a fort and making peace between the Sioux and the Chippewas. The grant comprised a strip of land nine miles square at the mouth of the St. Croix, and also another strip from below the confluence of the Mississippi to the Falls of St. Anthony, extending nine miles on each side of the river. Pike gave the Indians presents to the value of some $200 and whiskey to the extent of some 60 gallons.

The signers of the treaty were Pike himself, La Petit Corbeau, and Wey-Ago-Enagee.

While no military establishment was built upon this land, it was an exceedingly important transaction in that it gave us a tract of land and an ideal situation for the location of a fort. This fort later became one of the pivotal points in the north west and is especially important from the standpoint of overland connections since it served as a starting point for these expeditions as well as the head of navigation for the larger vessels on the Mississippi.

On September 26, Pike was engaged in portaging the falls of St. Anthony. After leaving the rapids he began to meet difficulties in passing shoals and over-rapids. By October 4 he had reached the mouth of the Crow river.

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2. Id., II, 231.
3. Ibid.
present city of St. Cloud. On October 16 snow fell and he determined to reach Crow Wing river if possible and make his winter quarters there. However, because of the sickness of some of his men and the difficulties of travel, he was compelled to make his winter camp near the present city of Little Falls. Here he immediately began the construction of houses and canoes. For some weeks he was occupied by this work and in laying in his winter supply of meat. On December 9 he prepared to embark for Leech Lake in order to prevent an attack of the Yanktons and Sissetons upon the Chippewas, which he heard was impending. His means of travel was by sleds and piroques. Extreme difficulty was encountered because the snow was melted off the prairie in spots. On December 21 he had reached the Crow Wing river and ten days later he passed the Pine river. On January 2 four Chippewas, one Englishman (Grant), and a Frenchman of the North-West Company presented themselves. Grant had just come from Sandy Lake where his company had a very important post. The next day Pike returned with Red Cedar Grant to his post on Lower Lake. He remained with Grant until the following day when they set out for Sandy Lake, where they arrived on January 8, after encountering severe difficulties because of the excessive cold. Pike remained at Sandy Lake until January 20, when he set out for

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1. For a discussion of the location of this camp see Coues, Expeditions of Pike, I., 105.
2. Coues, Expeditions of Pike, I., 133. Coues suggests that this may have been Cuthbert Grant, a very prominent figure in north west history.
Sandy Lake was one of the important trading posts of the North West Fur Company in this region. David Thompson visited there in 1798 and it was an important point even in 1763. The house where Pike was entertained stood on the west shore of the lake next to the Mississippi.
3. A small lake not far from the town of Aitkin, Aitkin Co., Minn.
Leech Lake. He traveled overland for the greater part of the journey. The route taken, in the main, was one following the Mississippi, and on February 1 he arrived at Leech Lake which he crossed to the west side in order to reach the quarters of the North-West Company. He remained there until February 12, when he journeyed across the lake to the trading house on Cass Lake. He returned to Leech Lake on February 14 and on the 16th he held a conference with the Indians of Leech Lake. At this conference he attempted to have them make peace with the Sioux, deliver up their British medals and flags and to get the consent of some of the chiefs to accompany him to St. Louis. In the main he was quite successful save that the Sioux-Chippewa conflict was waged intermittently for half a century. On February 18 Pike set out for Lower Red Cedar Lake, taking a much more direct route than the circuitous one by the Mississippi river and arrived at his winter post on March 5. From this date until April 7 he was employed in hunting, in preparing for the trip down the river, and in holding councils with the Indians. On April 7 the company embarked and on the 10th they arrived at the Falls of St. Anthony, and on the 30th reached St. Louis after an absence of eight months and twenty-two days.

The next expedition which is important for our purposes is that made under the command of Governor Lewis Cass of Michigan Territory in the year
1820, between the months of May and August. The expedition was unquestionably a part of Calhoun's program for securing the settlements in the far west against Indian aggression by building a cordon of military posts. The expedition was to set out from Detroit, which it is interesting to note was the central point and point of government for this vast territory, which had been added to Michigan Territory by the admission of Illinois into the Union as a state in 1818. Territory comprised all that part of north-west territory lying west of Lake Michigan and north of Illinois. Cass had been appointed Governor

1. General Lewis Cass was born at Exeter, New Hampshire, on October 9, 1872. Educated at Phillips Exeter Academy, he moved to Ohio in 1799 and studied law. In 1803 he became a member of the Ohio legislature. During the war of 1812 he served under General Hull and Harrison. In 1813 he was appointed Governor of Michigan Territory and remained in this position for eighteen years. In 1831 he was called to President Jackson's cabinet as Secretary of War. In 1836 Cass was appointed minister to France. In 1845 he was elected to the U.S. Senate from Michigan serving there until 1837. In 1848 he received the Democratic nomination for the presidency but was defeated by Zachary Taylor. In 1857 he was made Secretary of State by President Buchanan but in 1860 he resigned. He died in 1866 at Detroit, Michigan.

2. Calhoun's service as Secretary of War covered the years 1817-1824. During that period he upheld the policy of Federal Construction of a system of roads and canals, the improvement of harbors and coast defenses, and a saner policy towards the Indians. The following quotation gives a good resume of his aims and methods in this realm of his activity:

"In addition to the ordinary duties of the department he made many and able reports on the subject of our Indian affairs, on the reduction of the army, on internal improvements, and others. He revived the Military Academy, which he found in a very disordered state, and left it in great perfection; he caused a minute and accurate survey to be made of the military frontier, inland and maritime, and projected, through an able board of engineers, a plan for their defense. In conformity with this plan he commenced a system of fortifications, and made great progress in its execution, and he established a cordon of military posts from the lakes around our north-western and south-western frontiers to the Gulf of Mexico." Jenkins, Life of Calhoun, Buffalo, 1850, 147.

In the Minnesota Historical Collection, I., 123, Schoolcraft gives Calhoun the credit for this expedition as being one of the parts of his policy.

of Michigan Territory in 1813 and may well have been awakened to its possibilities by 1819. In a letter of November 13, 1819 to Secretary of War Calhoun, he lays down the following reasons why a trip into the regions between Lake Superior and the Mississippi would be of great benefit to the Government and bring about especially the consummation of the following political objects:

1. A personal examination of the different Indian tribes who occupy the country; of their moral and social condition; of their feelings towards the United States; of their numerical strength; and of the various objects connected with them, of which humanity and sound policy require that the Government should possess an intimate knowledge.

2. To procure the extinction of the Indian titles to the land in the vicinity of the Straits of St. Mary's, Prairie du Chien, Green Bay, and upon the Communication between the two latter places.

3. The examination of the body of copper in the vicinity of Lake Superior.

4. To ascertain the views of the Indians in the vicinity of Chicago, respecting the removal of the Six Nations to that district of country.

5. To explain to the Indians the views of the Government respecting their intercourse at Malden and distinctly to announce to them that their visits must be discontinued.

6. To ascertain the state of the British fur trade within that part of our jurisdiction.

The final instructions given to Cass were largely the same as those suggested by him with the exception of that relating to making a treaty with the Indians for land cessions. In addition to the political objects which would be attained by the expedition, there would be the increased

1. Schoolcraft, Discovery of the Sources of the Mississippi, Philadelphia, 1835, 23.
knowledge of the territory which at that time was known only by the fur trader. In order to successfully carry out his plans, Cass asked for a small appropriation of $1000-$1500, an officer of the department of engineers, and a mineralogist.

Calhoun's letter of January 14, 1820, authorizing the expedition accedes to all of Cass's suggestions with the exception of those relating to the making of Indian treaties. He also appointed H.R. Schoolcraft to accompany the expedition as mineralogist. It is to Schoolcraft that we owe the records of the expedition and one of the most accurate of the early scientific accounts of the region.

The expedition left Detroit on May 26, 1820. The journey was made in canoes with voyageurs as canoemen. After passing through the straits, the party skirted the southern side of Lake Superior, reaching the head of the lake on July 6. They then entered the mouth of the St. Louis river and ascended this until they reached the Savannah portage, a portage of some six miles. Having made this they descended a small stream which flows into Sandy Lake, where the expedition arrived on July 15. On July

1. Schoolcraft, Discovery of the Sources of the Mississippi, 31.

2. Henry Rowe Schoolcraft was born on March 28, 1793 in New York, and died at Washington on December 10, 1864. After studying Chemistry and Mineralogy in Union College, he had several years' experience of their application at a glass factory of which his father was a manager. In 1818 he collected geological and mineralogical specimens in Missouri and Arkansas, and in 1819 he published a book on the lead mines of the Missouri. In 1823 he was appointed Indian agent for the Lake Superior country. More than 16,000,000 acres were ceded by the Indians to the United States by treaties which he negotiated. He married the grand-daughter of an Indian chief, and during several years official work near Lake Superior and later under authorization of an act of Congress passed in 1847 he acquired much information as to the institutions, etc., of the American Indians. In 1831 he was a member of the Michigan legislature. In 1832 he discovered the true source of the Mississippi.
A small party determined to ascend the Mississippi in order to locate its sources. The explorers reached the mouth of Turtle river on the 21st of July, and beheld the stream of which Schoolcraft says:

"Turtle river, which cuts its way through this slope and plain, constitutes the direct line of intercourse for the Indian trade, through Turtle and Red lakes, to the Red River Valley of Hudson's Bay. In inquiry, we learned that this river had constituted the ancient Indian line of communication by canoes and portage from time immemorial, with that valley, the distance to the extreme plateau or summit being about sixty miles."1

Having reached what was called Upper Red Cedar Lake and deemed to be the source of the Mississippi, the lake was called Cassina or Cass and schoolcraft, the expedition returned to Sandy Lake which was reached on the afternoon of July 24. The whole company re-embarked on July 25 for the descent of the Mississippi. On July 27 they reached the Crow Wing river, on the 30th reached the falls of St. Anthony. On August 4 the expedition passed through Lake Pepin and on the 5th reached Prairie du Chien. While at Prairie du Chien, Schoolcraft visited the famous Dubuque lead mines for the purpose of ascertaining their geological structure and their extent. On August 9 the expedition began its ascent of the Wisconsin and on August 15 arrived at the portage to the Fox river. Schoolcraft mentions the fact that the portage is of the distance of a mile and a half that in the time of freshets the Indian canoes can be pushed through marshy ridges. The party immediately began the descent of the river on August 21 reached Fort Howard at the mouth of the Fox river. From Fort Howard an expedition was fitted out to trace the west shore of Lake Michigan southerly to Chicago, where the party arrived on the last of August. At Fort Dearborn the expedition separated, Governor Cass Schoolcraft, The Discovery of the Sources of the Mississippi, 132.
and his party on horseback taking an old Indian trail to Detroit, while Schoolcraft and a captain Douglass with two canoes completed the navigation of the lakes, reaching Detroit on the 23rd of September.

The second expedition which Schoolcraft made into this region was made in the year 1831. In the month of August, 1830, instructions were received by him to proceed to the Upper Mississippi to endeavor to terminate the renewed hostilities existing between the Chippewa and Sioux tribes. These instructions did not reach him at the remote post of Sault Ste. Marie in season to permit the object to be executed that year. On reporting the fact that the tribes would be dispersed to their hunting grounds before the scene could be reached and that cold weather would result in the freezing of the streams and preventing the return of the expedition, the plan was abandoned until the following year. Renewed instructions were issued in the month of April, 1831, and an expedition was immediately organized. The force consisted of twenty-seven men, including a botanist and geologist, and a small military party, left St. Marys in the month of June. While on the way through Lake Superior the company met the brigade of boats of William Aitkin, from the Upper Mississippi waters, with the annual return of furs from that region. While he urged the necessity of an official visit to that section of the country, he represented that the waters were too low in the streams at the sources of the Mississippi to render exploration practicable. As a result of these statements the expedition was deflected; entering the Bois Brule river he ascended it and portaged it to the St. Croix river.

1. William Aitkin was one of the most prominent fur traders in this particular region. He was connected with the American Fur Company and was there before 1826.
which he descended to the Mississippi and returned by the Fox and Wisconsin route. In his report of the Secretary of War, Schoolcraft suggested a further expedition into the region to make peace among the Indians.

The Secretary of War having approved the same, on May 3, 1832 an expedition

led by Major Schoolcraft left Fort Snelling on July 30, 1832, having received the

guidance that he was to proceed to the Illinois country and make peace among the

Indian tribes. The expedition was accompanied by Doctor Douglass Houghton

who acted as a botanist and geologist, and Rev. Wm. J. Boutwell, who was sent as

an agent of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to care for the wants of the Indian tribes in the region.

The expedition left the Sault de Ste. Marie on June 7, 1832, taking the

same route as in the expedition of 1830. At his camp at Sandy Lake

it was found that a general council of the Indian tribes was summoned for July 20, at the mouth of the Crow Wing river. The party sailed up the Mississippi river and arrived at the mouth of the river on July 24. On their return from Sandy Lake and entered Cass Lake on July 10. Some three days later

Lake Itasca was reached, which was found to be the true source of the

Mississippi river near the headwaters of the Crow Wing river. The

party then proceeded down to Leech Lake by a series of small lakes and portages. Schoolcraft struck the Crow Wing river and reached the mouth of the river in sufficient time for the

general council which had been set for July 20. Following the council the expedition returned. On the following day he held a council with the Sioux at the Agency

house there. The following day he reached the mouth of the St. Croix river, and began to ascend it, and portaging from it for two miles to the Bois Brule river, and then up the Mississippi river and St. Croix river for the purposes of astronomical and geographical observation. On July 25 he held a council with the Sioux at the Agency house and Bemidji, and then proceeded up the Mississippi river and St. Croix river for the purposes of astronomical and geographical observation. On July 30 he reached the mouth of the Bois Brule river, and then proceeded up the river and portaging from it for two miles to Lake Superior. On the 4th of August the party

Boutwell was one of the earliest Protestant Missionaries in Minnesota. His mission was opened in 1833 and continued until 1839. For his account of the Schoolcraft expedition of 1832, see Minn. Hist. Coll., I., 153.
reached the waters of Lake Superior, and returning thence to the Sault de St. Marie. Under his guide Brunoville, while at Leech Lake he was captured by the Chippewa Indians for his failure to bring presents. He had the assistance of a friendly chief and a friendly Indian, who was his guide and protector. Jean N. Nicollet left Fort Snelling on July 26, 1835, bivouacing that night at the Falls of St. Anthony where he was robbed by the Sioux Indians of his canoes and provisions. Major Taliaferro fitted him out for his trip and he was again on his way by July 29. His guide was Francis Brunet, a man six feet tall and of tremendous strength and according to Nicollet a "natural geographer". He ascended the Mississippi as far as the Crow Wing river. He ascended as far as the mouth of the river, then to Gull Lake, thence up Pine river and White Fish Lake. Descending Little Boy river and a succession of lakes he came to Peace Lake. He remained there

1. Jean N. Nicollet was born of poor parentage in Savoy in 1790. He was apprenticed to a watch maker with whom he remained until 1808 when he moved to Cambray. There he studied mathematics and later taught in his home town, at the same time studying Latin and the modern languages. Soon after he removed to Paris where he was admitted to the Ecole Normale, later becoming a professor in the college of Louis Le Grand. He commenced astronomical studies in 1819 and his proficiency in them placed him in an honorable position in the Bureau des Longitudes. He embarked on certain financial ventures as an agent for friends and met with severe reverses. These lost him many friends and that coupled with his failure of election to membership to the Academy of Sciences caused him to leave France in 1832 never to return. Coming to America he visited in the eastern part of the United States, the Gulf of Mexico, ascended the Red, Arkansas, and Missouri rivers for the purposes of astronomical and geographic observations. Due to his proficiency in these matters, the attention of the Board of Topographical Engineers was called to him and he was chosen to construct a topographical map of the sources of the Mississippi river and Red river of the North. This work was done in the years 1836-1837. In 1839 he made the journey to Devils Lake which is described in this paper. He died in 1843 in Washington, D.C. See Minn. Hist. Coll., I., 183 and Brawar, the Mississippi river and its Sources, Minneapolis, 1893, 155.

The source of this account of Nicollet's expedition is the Report Intended to Illustrate a Map of the Hydrographic Basin of the Upper Mississippi made by J.W. Nicollet while under the Bureau of the Corps of Topographical Engineers, Washington D.C., 1843.

2. Major Lawrence Taliaferro, Indian Agent at Fort Snelling from 1819-1840 was born in Virginia in 1794. He was a descendant from an Italian family; that came to this country in 1837. He enlisted in the army in 1812 and in 1819 was appointed Indian Agent by President Monroe. He retired from active service in 1883 and died in 1871.
or a week, his tent being located on what Nicollet called otter-tail point and the home of his guide Brunet. While at Leech Lake he was annoyed by the Chippewa Indians for his failure to bring presents. He escaped this difficulty, however, through the kindly assistance of Boutwell. From Leech Lake in company with his two guides, Fronchet and Brunet, he started to Fort Snelling, thence to Lake Itasca and a Chippewa Indian named Keg-wed-zis-sag, he left for Lake Itasca. His route lay through Kabekonka Lake, a portage to La Place river ascending southwestward to Assawa lake and again a portage of some six miles to Lake Itasca. He remained on the boundary between the United States and the Chippewas for three weeks, taking the shores of the lake, measured the various elevations, stream depths, etc. His return journey was never been fully explained.

From Leech Lake in company with his two guides, Fronchet and Brunet, and a Chippewa Indian named Keg-wed-zis-sag, he left for Lake Itasca. His route lay through Kabekonka Lake, a portage to La Place river ascending southwestward to Assawa lake and again a portage of some six miles to Lake Itasca.

The Minnesota and Red Rivers

Major-Long’s Expedition

The success of General Cass’s expedition to the headwaters of the Mississippi in 1820 and the equally successful expedition of Major Long, which gave much information regarding the Rocky mountains in 1819-20, which gave much information regarding Missouri and its tributaries which had hitherto been unexplored.
orders for the expedition were issued on April 25, 1823, and the following is an extract of them in explaining the acceptance of this line:"The route of the expedition will be as follows:— Commencing at Philadelphia, thence proceeding to Wheeling in Virginia, thence to Chicago via Fort Wayne, thence to Fort Armstrong or Dubuque's Lead Mines, thence up the Mississippi to Fort Snelling, thence to the source of the St. Peters river, thence to the point of intersection between the Red river and the forty-ninth degree of north latitude, thence along the northern boundary of the United States to Lake Superior, and thence homeward by the Lakes."The reasons for the selection of the forty-ninth degree of north latitude as the boundary between the United States and the Dominion of Canada, have never been fully explained.

The treaty of 1818 fixed the boundary between the north-western corner of Lake of the Woods and the Rocky Mountains as being the forty-ninth parallel of north latitude. Rush and Gallatin, the negotiators of...

1. Stephen Harriman Long was born in New Hampshire in 1784 and died in 1864. He was graduated from Dartmouth College in 1809. In 1814 he entered the army as a lieutenant of engineers, serving until his promotion to brevet major of topographical engineers in 1816, as an assistant professor of mathematics at West Point. In 1817 Long was sent out by the War Department to examine sites on the Wisconsin and Upper Mississippi for the location of military posts and also to make detailed plats of Fort Crawford, Fort Armstrong on the Rock Island of the Mississippi, and Fort Edwards, three miles below the Des Moines rapids. He ascended the Wisconsin river as far as the portage to the Fox river and returned to the Mississippi. On July 16 the party breakfasted at Carver's Cave and arrived on the same day at the mouth of the Minnesota river, camping that evening about three quarters of a mile below the Falls of St. Anthony. The expedition selected a site for a military post which later was known as Fort Snelling. (Minn. Hist. Coll., St. Paul, 1855.)

In the years 1819-1820 Long made an expedition to the Rocky Mountains. Leaving Pittsburgh he descended the Ohio to its confluence with the Mississippi to St. Louis. Ascending the Platte river, the party wintered near Council Bluffs. The Rockies were reached in the early part of July and the return made by way of the Arkansas and Red Rivers.
the treaty, have very little to say upon it. The treaty of Ghent in 1814
was merely a reaffirmation of the treaty of 1783. Rush, however, does
give us a clue which may aid in explaining the acceptance of that line.

He says:

"The treaty of Utrecht (1713) had fixed the forty-ninth degree of
latitude as the line between the possessions of Britain and France
including Louisiana, since ceded to the United States."1

The only provision of the treaty of Utrecht bearing out this statement
is the clause:

"But it is agreed on both sides, to determine within a year, by
commissaries to be forthwith named by each party, the limits which are
to be fixed between the said Bay of Hudson and the places appertaining to
the French."2

The object of the expedition was to make a general survey of the
country along the route with a topographical description, to ascertain the
latitude and longitude of selected points, to examine and describe the
productions, and secure information on the character and customs of the
Indians.

Keating also suggests that the extent of the fur trade carried on
by the British and American fur companies, and an inquiry into the real
nature of the soil and country which lay in the Red river valley and upon
which contradictory reports were circulated by the two rival British
Companies, were part of the purpose for the formation of the expedition.3

The expedition left Philadelphia on the 30th of April, 1823, the
party consisting of Stephen H. Long, Major United States Topographical Engin-
ers, in command, Thomas Say, zoologist and antiquary, William H. Keating,4

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3 William H. Keating, Narrative of an Expedition to the Source of St. Peter's
4 William Hypolitus Keating was born in Delaware in 1799 and died in London in 1840.
He was graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1816 and afterward studied
in polytechnic and mining schools of France and Switzerland. Upon his return to
Philadelphia in 1822 he took the chair of Mineralogy and Chemistry, as applied to
the arts. This position he occupied until 1828. He was influential in founding the
Franklin Institute of Philadelphia and served as a Professor of Chemistry in it.
He also read law and was admitted to the bar. He died in England while
negotiating a loan for the Reading railroad company.
mineralogist and geologist, and Samuel Seymour, landscape painter and designer. Say and Keating were the recorders of the expedition and intrusted with the collection of the information concerning the Indians. The part traveled at first by light carriages from Philadelphia to Wheeling where they purchased horses. On June 19 the party arrived overland at Fort Crawford from Chicago. The part waited five days, waiting for an escort to accompany them up the Minnesota. This escort having been provided, consisted of a corporal and nine men under the command of Lieutenant Martin Scott of the 5th regiment of the United States Infantry. Major Long also secured the services of Augustin Roque, a half-breed interpreter.

Upon leaving Prairie du Chien Major Long divided the company, part going by water and part by land. In the main the party which traveled by land followed the course of the Mississippi, seldom exceeding five or six miles from the valley. On July 21, the expedition reached Fort Snelling. The garrison at that time consisted of five companies of the 5th infantry under the command of Colonel Snelling. A week later the expedition left Fort Snelling. The escort of soldiers from Fort Crawford was returned while a new escort consisting of a sergeant, two corporals, and eighteen soldiers from the command of Colonel Snelling was substituted. The party also hired Joseph Renville, a half-breed Sioux, to act as guide and interpreter. Joseph Snelling, the son of Colonel Snelling, also accompanied the expedition as an

1 "Colonel Josiah Snelling was born in Massachusetts in 1782. He entered the army in 1803 as a first lieutenant and a year later was promoted to captain. He served with credit at the battle of Tippecanoe in 1811, and during the War of 1812 was quite distinguished. In 1813 he was made lieutenant-colonel and in the following year became colonel of the Fifth U.S. Infantry. He completed the post at the St. Peter's which was named for him in 1824 by General Scott. In the summer of 1827 Colonel Snelling and his regiment were ordered from Fort Snelling to St. Louis, and in August of that year, while temporarily in Washington, died of brain fever," Minnesota in Three Centuries Mankato, 1903, II., 47, footnote 1."
assistant guide and interpreter. The party was divided into two groups, one going by water and the other by land. The course followed was that of the valley of the St. Peters of Minnesota river. On July 13, because of several unfortunate accidents in which considerable amounts of ammunition and food supplies were lost and because of the unfavorable progress of the canoes from the shallowing of the river, the expedition abandoned the canoes and sent back nine soldiers to Fort Snelling. The location of this camp was probably not far from the city of St. Peters, Minnesota. The camp of July 15 was in the vicinity of Swan Lake. On the 17th the party again struck the Minnesota river and crossed it. The expedition followed the general course of the river, avoiding its bends and frequently taking to the prairie. On July 20 the expedition reached the camp of July 16 and spent half a day in its vicinity, and on the 22nd reached Big Stone Lake. After leaving Big Stone Lake, the party crossed the Minnesota river, a stream now less than seven yards wide. From this point his words:

"we continued our route in what appeared to have been an old water-course, and, within three miles of the Big Stone Lake, found ourselves on the banks of Lake Traverse, which discharges its waters by means of Swan or Sioux river into the Red river of Lake Winnipeck, whose waters is well known flow towards Hudson's Bay. The space between Lake Traverse and Big Stone is but very little elevated above the level of both these lakes; and the water has been known, in times of flood, to rise and cover the intermediate ground, so as to unite the two lakes. In fact, both these bodies of water are in the same valley; and it is within the recollection of some persons, now in the country, that a boat once floated from Lake Traverse into the St. Peter."

While at Big Stone Lake Major Long held a council with the Sioux called Keating the Wahkpatoan. On the afternoon of the same day (July 23), the party reached the trading post of the Columbia Fur Company, under the charge of Moore. This post was located about half way up the lake and on the Minnesota side.
On leaving Lake Traverse the party was strengthened by the addition of Jeffries, one of the partners of the Columbia Fur Company, who agreed to act as guide to Pembina. Four Frenchmen from the same place who were returning were also hired with four of their carts to carry baggage and provisions. The four Frenchmen had been employed to carry the families and baggage of several Swiss emigrants from the British settlements to Fort Snelling. The site of the first encampment after leaving Lake Traverse was on Lake Bois de Sioux called at that time by both Indians and traders Buffalo Lake, the camp being on the Minnesota side. The following day the party crossed the Bois des Sioux river, which was dry at the time, the encampment for the evening being near a grove called the Bois des Sioux. On the following day (July 28), the party reached the Otter Tail river and forded it. Concerning the fording of the river, Keating says: "We forded Red river, it was about twenty-five yards wide, and two and a half feet deep. Its current was very rapid; the color of its waters was white owing to the muddy nature of the banks."

According to Keating the Bois des Sioux at that time was the northernmost limit of the undisputed property of the Sioux on Red river,—"Beyond this place and the Wild Rice to the east, and Turtle river to the west of Red river, form a sort of debatable land, which both Chippewas and Dacotahs claim, and upon which both frequently hunt, but always in a state of preparation for hostilities."2 After crossing the Ottertail river the expedition does not touch North Dakota territory until reaching Pembina. By July 20 the company had crossed Buffalo river, which because

1. Keating, II., 10. By the Red river is meant the Otter Tail river.
2. Id., II., 19.
of the muddiness of its banks, caused some little difficulty, the stream being some eight yards wide. In the afternoon of the same day the party crossed the Wild Rice river of Minnesota, fording some nine miles above its mouth. At that place the river was some twelve yards wide and three feet deep. On July 31 the company crossed the Marsh and Sand Hill rivers, a principal landmark of the place. While there Major Long located these two streams were very low, in the former there being only a few inches of water and in the latter a stake upon that line. The stagnant pools. The camp of that evening was some eight miles from this place was called Fort Profane in honor of the President placed lake river, which was reached on the morning of August 1. On the cross-

gate. The plan of the expedition to complete the exploration of this river, Keating says, "this branch was forty yards wide where its rapidity was such that its current very impossible. As a result the expedition took to canoes at the river, which was reached on the morning of August 1. On the cross-
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and Snake river, that of August 3, midway between Snake river and Two Rivers and that of August 4, on the north side of the northern branch of Two Rivers and on August 5, reached Pembina.

The expedition crossed the river on a barge furnished by Nolen, the principal inhabitant of the place. While there, Major Long located the 49th parallel of latitude and set up a stake upon that line. The camp at this place was called Camp Monroe in honor of the President of the United States. The plan of the expedition to complete the exploration of the territory eastward along the 49th parallel of latitude, was abandoned by reason of the character of the country, making progress either by horse or canoe impossible. As a result, the expedition took to canoes at Pembina, voyaged down the Red as far as Forts Garry and Douglass. From this point they took the old canoe route of the fur traders of the North West Company, by way of Winnipeg river, Lake of the Woods, Rainy river, and Rainy Lake to Fort William on Lake Superior. The party left Pembina on August 8 and arrived in Fort Garry on the 10th and remained there until the 15th. On September 30 the party had arrived at the Sault de Sta. Marie, and on October 26 they arrived in Philadelphia having made the trip from Mackinaw to Detroit by the revenue cutter Dallas and from Detroit to Buffalo by means of steamer. From Rochester the party journeyed to Niagara Falls, by land to Rochester, then by the Erie Canal to Albany and from Albany to Philadelphia. The importance of this expedition for the study of the development of overland communication lies in the fact that it is our first government expedition into this territory which utilized a land route. It is also noteworthy that as an expedition it attracted attention to the soil and resources of the Red river valley and it laid down the lines upon which succeeding expeditions were to be based.
It is also important in that it marks the beginning of the future importance of Fort Snelling and later St. Paul, as the headquarters of the fur trade for the whole of the Northwest. Already commerce between the Red river settlements and Fort Snelling had begun, and the traffic between these two regions was to give rise later to at least three well defined land routes or combined land and water routes. It is of importance from a historical viewpoint since it is the first of a considerable number of government surveys and expeditions which were carried on in this region. Lastly it gives and accurate account concerning the settlement at Pembina, which was then in its infancy. At this point we cross the Red river, now a great stream. We crossed the St. Peter, now a mere stream. At this point also the canoe stop and usual basin for merchandising; it is transported either across a prairie of six miles to the north, where we arrived on the Beltrami's Expedition, or made by some Scotchmen who have deserted the English Northwest.

The chief importance of Beltrami in the study of the development of overland communications lies in the corroboration of the route of Major Long and in his route overland from Pembina to Red Lake. He joins the expedition of Major Long at Fort Snelling, having previously made the trip that far by steam boat from St. Louis. The steam boat in which Beltrami travelled was the Virginia, which he described as being 118 feet long, 22 feet wide; drawing some 6 feet of water and of 2000 tons burden, and Captain Perston was in charge. He had left St. Louis on the 2nd of May and arrived at Fort Snelling on May 20. His description makes in order to renew his position and the nation to Europe.

Beltrami was born in Bergamo, Italy, in 1779. He was educated for the profession of law and numerous positions such as chancellor and judge. In 1821 he was exiled on an accusation of being interested in plots to establish an Italian republic. After trading in France, Germany, and England, Beltrami came to this country. After his travels in the United States he visited Mexico and returned to Europe in 1827. He remained in exile until 1850, living in various cities of France, Germany, and Austria. In 1850, however, he returned to his old home and lived there until he died in 1855. Minnesota in Three Centuries, I., 360.
of the expedition is as follows:

"the expedition consists of Major Long as chief, an astronomer, a mineralogist, a physician, a zoologist, an artist, Mr. Renville interpreter for the Sioux, a young Canadian interpreter for the Algonquin languages, 28 men, one officer, and Mr. Snelling son of the Colonel. It was divided into two bodies, one of which went by land with 22 horses and mules, the other embarked on the river St. Peter in five Indian canoes."1

His description of the arrival at Big Stone Lake and Lake Traverse is as follows: "on the evening of the 17th we stopped at the middle of the lake, just where it takes a northern direction, where a magnificent wood and a miserable little trader's settlement are crossed by the river of the white Herons or Hokazamte-Watpa which falls into the lake on the southern side. Three miles above the end of the lake, still keeping on to the northward, we crossed the St. Peter, now a mere ditch. At this point all the canoes stop and unload their merchandise; it is transported hither across a prairie of six miles to the N.N.W., where we arrived on the 18th. We landed at the only hut; it is an establishment formed by some Scotchmen who have deserted the English Northwest and Hudson's Bay Companies. Mr. Renville is one of the partners."2

Beltrami locates the crossing of the Red Lake river by Major Long's expedition as being fifteen miles above its junction with the Red river.

The remainder of the narrative of the journey to Pembina confirms the Keating narrative. While at Pembina, Beltrami determined to reach the sources of the Mississippi river by traveling to the south east. According to him no one knew the way to Red Lake and everyone represented the difficulties of the journey as very great. He finally found two Chippewas, who having lost one of their companions on the Shayeene river, were going to Red Lake in order to rouse his relatives and the nation to avenge themselves on the Sioux. A half-breed also offered to accompany him to the Chief river with his train of dogs and to transport the provisions.

The three men were engaged by Beltrami and on August 9 they left Pembina.

1. Beltrami, A Pilgrimage in Europe and America Leading to the Discovery of the Sources of the Mississippi and Bloody River, London, 1828, II., 304
2. Ib., II., 322.
of the route which they pursued Beltrami gives us little clue except to state that they followed the lead of the two Indians. The region traversed was difficult for traveling because of marshes and woods.

On the fifth day the party arrived at Thief river, some two or three miles above its junction with the Red Lake river. At this point, Beltrami's two Indians had concealed their canoes. His half-breed guide was left behind with the mule and dog train. After traveling some five or six miles up the Red Lake river the party stopped for a meal and were fired on by a small party of Sioux. The following day the two Indians deserted him and Beltrami was left to his own resources. Falling in with a party of Indians he persuaded one of the band to accompany him. On the following day Beltrami reached Red Lake, "at the marshy spot whence a river springs, and about a mile from an Indian encampment." Having letter of introduction to one of the half-breeds at the lake, Beltrami sired to see him and arrived at his hut on August 21. A few days later Beltrami set out for the portage dividing the waters of the Mississippi and Red rivers arriving there on the 28th. He crossed the portage and found himself on the waters of Lake Julia, which he thought to be the source of the Mississippi. From these waters Beltrami went down to Cass Lake, sited Leech Lake, returned to the Mississippi arriving at Sandy Lake on September 17. About the last of September he reached Fort Snelling on October 3 he left for St. Louis in a double decked keel-boat, and he arrived on October 20.

Beltrami, II., 392.
Nicollet's Expedition

Nicollet's trip to the sources of the Minnesota river was performed in the year 1837. He ascended the river as far as the Traverse des Sioux. Leaving this point, he went to the mouth of the Cottonwood river or as the French call it, the Riviere aux Liards. From that spot he proceeded to what he called the Coteau des Prairies, pitching his camp about a group of lakes called by him the Pelican lakes. He then went on to a region called by him the Great Oasis and from there he went to the Red Pipestone region, camping at the famous quarry of that name.

From there he went to the Undine region or the region of the sources of the Blue Earth, Mankato, and La Montau or Cannon river. He also visited the Des Moines, Iowa, and Red Cedar rivers, then returning to Fort Snelling.

A party consisted of some nineteen men, one of whom, John T. Jorn, afterwards became famous in the exploration of the Rockies. On his trip to Devils Lake Nicollet was accompanied by a young man (Pallister), who was going to his home at Peoria.

The expedition started on one day of July and spent the first two days in crossing the Mississippi. After crossing the Mississippi, he proceeded in the direction of a river called by him the Jess Medicine-Knell or Weden.

He is credited with the discovery of a small lake, called by others the junction of two small lakes called by
CHAPTER II

Nicollet's Expedition to Devil's Lake

The third journey of Nicollet was for our purposes the most important of all. It was the first government expedition into any part of our state outside of the Red river valley, and it set up some very useful landmarks for succeeding expeditions to be guided by. This expedition by Nicollet was performed in the year 1839. He ascended the Missouri river by the steam boat Antelope to Fort St. Pierre, at that time a trading post of the American Fur Company. This steamer belonged to the American Fur Company and was used for transporting its freight. He left St. Louis on April 4 and arrived at Fort St. Pierre on June 12. He was accompanied as far as Fort St. Pierre by W. Laidlow and Kipp, one of whom was going to the fort on the Yellowstone and the other to the fort on the Marias.

The principal agents at the factory at Fort St. Pierre were P.D. Papin and Jacob Halsey.

Nicollet's party consisted of some nineteen men, one of whom was John C. Fremont, afterwards became famous in the exploration of the Rocky Mountains. On his trip to Devil's Lake Nicollet was accompanied by a young man (a half-breed), who was going to his home at Pembina.

The expedition started on the 1st of July and spent the first two days in crossing the Missouri. After crossing the Missouri, he proceeded in the direction of a river called by him the East Medicine Knoll river.

He travelled along the northern side of this river and continued almost in a straight line to the southern extremity of a small lake called by...
him the Small Scattered Wood Lake. From here he still continued in a direct line until he came to the Oakwood Settlement on the James river, the site of an abandoned trading post. From this point his route lay along the west bank of the James river until he came to a prominent landmark called the Butte aux Os or Bone Hill Butte, which is located not far from a creek called Bone Hill Creek. At this point, Nicollet crossed the James river and continued in a northeasterly direction until he reached the Sheyennes. He first reached the Sheyenne river not far from the southern edge of Barnes county and near the present village of Kathryn. From this point he travelled along the valley of the Sheyenne, passing First Bald Hillock river and Bald Hillock Creek and turning to the northwest at a point called by him Butte Micheaux, passing between Lake Jessie and Lake Norway. His crossing of the Sheyenne was near the western edge of Nelson County not far from the small creek called by him Beaver Lodge Creek, lying to the west of him. From this point his route lay between Lake, called by him Free Peoples Lake, and Lake Chicot. He then passed to the northward until he reached the southern edge of Devils Lake. He reached Devils Lake on July 29 and his camp there was located not far from a camp of half-breeds from Pembina, some eight hundred in number. Nicollet spent a week exploring Devils Lake and taking the altitude of the various eminences there. The altitude of Charles Hill, located near the southern edge of the lake, he determined as 1766 feet. On the trip back, Nicollet passed down the eastern side of the lake and on the western side of Lake Wamduška (Stump Lake). He located the outlet of Devils Lake into the Sheyenne in times of high water. He followed the Sheyenne for a short time and then turned southeastward until he struck the Manitoba escarpment near the sources of the middle fork of
Goose river. Following this escarpment, more familiarly known as the Coteau des Prairies, he crossed the Sheyenne in a line almost due north from a butte which he called Dead Colt Hillock. After passing the Sheyenne, Nicollet marched directly for this butte, and from that point he directed his course for the lake region at the head of the Minnesota river, where he called Coteau des Prairies, his course from this point lay in a general way along the Minnesota river, and he reached Fort Snelling on September 22, 1839.  

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The Buffalo Expedition of 1849

Majors Samuel_vector and Captain John Pope

His expedition was performed in 1849 between the months of June and October. The purpose was the selection of a site on the Red river for the location of a military post, the establishment of an earlier fort, and the appointment of a district agent to the Red river tribes.
CHAPTER III.

The Expeditions to Pembina

In the interval between the expedition of Major Long in 1823 and those of 1849 and 1851 there had grown up a considerable trade between the settlements at Pembina and Fort Garry and St. Paul. This trade was in large measure illegal since it was contrary to the orders of the Hudson's Bay Company, whose will was law on the north side of the boundary line. The repressive measures meant for the inhabitants on the south side of the line were frequently applied in our territories and this made it imperative that there be an investigation at Pembina by the military authorities. In 1845 the half-breeds living north of the boundary line were warned by Captain E.V. Summer to not to hunt south of the line. This notice had special significance for this population since from the buffalo meat was made the pemmican, which was the staple article of food among the half-breeds, and the principal buffalo herds were found on the south side of the international boundary. This doubly complicated situation called for a show of force either in the form of a military expedition or the erection of a military post. The expeditions described below furnished a partial solution to the difficulty.

The Pembina Expedition of 1849

Major Samuel Woods and Captain John Pope

This expedition was performed in 1849 between the months of June and October. Its purposes were the selection of a site on the Red river for the location of a military post, the extension of the survey as far north as the boundary line and an inquiry into the state of the Indian tribes and the influences exerted upon them by the Hudson's Bay Company. The

1. For a discussion of the Hudson's Bay Company and the Red River trade see North Dakota Historical Collections, IV., 235.
2. lb., 292, footnote 1.
command of the expedition was given to Brevet Major Samuel Woods, Captain of the 6th Infantry at Fort Snelling, and to him were assigned a medical officer and an officer of the Topographical Engineers, Brevet Captain John Pope. He left St. Louis on May 16 and arrived at Fort Snelling on the afternoon of the 22nd. The expedition, however, did not set out from Fort Snelling until June 6, 1849 because of the lack of prairie grass for wagon horses, it being a late season.

The route of the expedition from Fort Snelling lay along the east side of the Mississippi to Sauk Rapids and from there along the "middle route" to the Red river. The Mississippi was crossed at a short distance

1. Major Samuel Woods was in command of Fort Snelling in 1849 but the following year he received orders to take three companies of men from Fort Snelling and proceed to Iowa for the purpose of removing the Potawatomies, Sacs, and Foxes across the Missouri river. His later service was in Kansas and in California. Stevens, *Personal Recollections of Minnesota and its People*, Minneapolis, 1890, pp. 25, 26, 74.

2. Captain John Pope was born in Kentucky in 1822. He graduated from the U.S. Military Academy in 1842 and assigned to the engineers. He served in the Mexican War, and subsequently served in engineering and exploring work, mainly in connection with the survey of a route for a Pacific railroad. Early in the Civil War he was assigned to the district of Missouri, to reduce the guerrilla bands and civil population to order. In 1862 he obtained a considerable success on the Mississippi, when in conjunction with a gun boat flotilla he captured Island No.10. He was placed in the command of the Army of Virginia but was defeated in the battle of Bull Run. He resigned his command and did not again take part in the Civil War. He was later placed in command of the Department of the Northwest where he dealt skilfully and vigorously with the Indian risings. He was placed in charge of various military districts until his retirement in 1886. He died in Ohio in 1892.

3. Pope in his report to the Secretary of War, says: "There are three routes at present known by which to reach the valley of the Red river of the North from the Mississippi, and which, until the expedition of the past summer, were only known to the traders and trappers who made their yearly pilgrimages to St. Peter's and the Upper Mississippi with their furs and peltries.

"The most southern follows the valley of the St. Peter's and descends into the plains of the Red river near Lake Traverse.

"The middle route leaves the Mississippi at Sauk Rapids, seventy-six miles above the mouth of the St. Peter's, and intersects the Red river near its most southern point. This is the route pursued by the expedition.

"The northern route follows for some distance the valley of the Crow Wing river, and turning the northern extremity of Ottertail Lake, descends into the valley of the Red river near the mouth of the Buffalo river." Thirty-first Cong., 1 Sess., S. Ex. Doc., 42, 3.
above the Falls of St. Anthony by means of a ferry. The route lay along the
east side of the Mississippi; the various streams being forded or crossed
by means of a ferry. At that time the east bank of the Mississippi was
fairly well settled. At Sauk Rapids the expedition was joined by a
company of dragoons from Fort Gaines. The party was compelled to wait
three days on the west side of the Mississippi in order that the ground
might be fit to travel upon, being very soft from excessive rains. The
journey was resumed on June 16. The route for the first few miles
followed the narrow strip of prairie between the timber along the banks
of the Sauk and the Wataub rivers. The Sauk was ferried at a point about
twenty-one miles above its mouth, and the party reached a small lake
drained by the Sauk river. Due to incessant rains the party remained at
that lake until June 26, and on the 27th reached "two lakes very near
each other and tributary also to the Crow river." There the party was
held until July 3 by almost constant rains. The camp of that evening was
on Hite Bear Lake, and the command stayed there until July 6 for addi-
tional wagons and supplies. That evening found the expedition at a small
lake called by Pope, Pike Lake, and on June 9 they were at a small lake
called Elk Lake, and on the following day reached Elbow Lake. On June 11
the party crossed the Rabbit river and after passing over a highly rolling
prairie of about twelve miles, the banks of the Red River were reached.
About the middle of the same day the party met one of the regular Red river
trains coming from Pembina with the annual supply of furs and pemmican bound
for Fort Snelling. One of the members of this party was Norman W. Kittson,
who kindly offered the military expedition the use of his house at Pembina
and sent back one of his employees to see that the expedition should be
equipped with all necessities from his place.1

Pope's description of the place of crossing is as follows:

"We crossed the Red river of the North near the point where it commences to make a long stretch to the southward to received the waters of the Sioux Wood river (Bois des Sioux), before it takes up the northern direction, which it maintains, with little variation, to its entrance into Lake Winnipeg. At our first point of crossing, the river was about sixty yards wide, and about three feet deep; but where we crossed the second time, below the mouth of Sioux Wood river, it had become broader and deeper."2

Major Wood says of these same crossings:

"Going ten miles farther, (from the point of meeting with Kittson) we came upon Otter Tail Lake river (as it is called in this country), or Red river of the maps where it has a direction a little south of west. It runs through the open prairies, with no timber to be seen in any direction, save some small scattering shrubbery growing immediately on its banks. At the ford it has a rocky bottom and good banks, is from two to three feet deep and some fifty yards wide; we forded it easily and camped on the right bank. Mr. Kittson returned to our camp and remained with us for the night and gave us much information of the country we were on route for.

"From our first crossing of Red river, we travelled nearly north west, about twenty-two miles, and struck Red river again, ten or fifteen miles below the mouth of the 'Bois-des-Sioux' river, where it is a much larger and finer stream. After crossing it by pretty deep fording, we followed it down about four miles and made our camp, with the view of examining this point for the establishment of a military post."3

1. Norman Wolfred Kittson was born at Sorel, Ontario, March 5, 1814. He was a grandson of Alexander Henry the celebrated fur trader and explorer, and at the age of 16 he came to Wisconsin as an employe of the American Fur Company. Two years later he made a trip to the headwaters of the Minnesota river and from thence went to the Red Cedar river in Iowa. He came to Minnesota in 1834 and was employed for four years at the military post of Fort Snelling. In 1839 Kittson became a sub-trader under Sibley and in 1843 he became a special partner in the American Fur Company, being given charge of the affairs of the company on the Upper Minnesota and at the boundary-line of the British possessions. He made his headquarters at Pembina and had a depot there from which he shipped his furs in Red river carts to the Company's headquarters at Manitoba. Kittson acquired property in St. Paul and moved there in 1844 to look after his interests. In 1851, while at Pembina, he was elected to the Territorial Council and served there during four sessions. In 1858 Kittson was elected mayor of St. Paul. He was one of the promoters of the Red River Transportation Company and was associated with James J. Hill in the organization of the St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Manitoba Railroad. He died on a train while returning to Minnesota on May 11, 1883. Minnesota in Three Centuries, II., 101.


One of the chief purposes of this expedition as has been stated above
was the selection of a suitable site for a military post on or near the Red
River of the North and at a distance from Fort Gaines not exceeding 200
miles. Major Woods' description of the site chosen for the fort is as follows:

"The position of our camp, and which I selected for that of a post,
is on the left bank of the Red river, where it runs a little west of North.

"The prairie comes up to the waters edge, and extends as far as the
eye can reach north, west, and south, with the exception of heavy strips
of timber, with openings showing the prairie beyond, along Wild Rice
river, which is about three miles to the west, running north. Red river
makes a bend in our front, forming almost an islet on the right bank,
this heavily timbered and the bends to the right and left of us on the
left bank are well timbered. I have carefully examined with reference
to the wants of a military post, and think there is a sufficiency of timber
within five miles for all purposes it might be wished for any number of
years. The forest consists chiefly of elm, oak, ash, hickory, cotton
wood, and some maple, and a variety of small growth I am not familiar
with. The oak and ash are of dimensions to be made good lumber. It is to
be regretted that there is no stone in the country of any description.
I have seen no stratified rock since I left the Mississippi river. There
is an admirable clay for brick and sand can be had by digging for it,
but lime, I presume, cannot be had short of the Mississippi.

"The prairie is very fertile, and if there is any objection to it,
it is that there is not a sufficiency of sand to give it warmth. The
grass is very luxuriant and will be inexhaustible for hay. The water is
the river water. The Assistant Surgeon reports it a healthful position.

"The immediate vicinity of Red river from our first point of crossing
to this place is low and in wet weather, marshy. Here the banks are
about 25 feet high, and out of all danger from high waters, and the prairie
dry, even in the wet season. It is the prettiest location in the country,
but this is not high commendation. We set up on this site a post about
two feet in diameter, and eight feet above the ground, hewn square, and
put on it in deep letters 153 miles to Sauk Rapids, July 14, 1849."

This location is quite probably that occupied at a later time by
Fort Abercrombie, a well known military post in Dakota Territory.

On July 15, the party crossed the Wild Rice river, pursuing a general
northwest direction, the crossing being muddy in the extreme. After eleven
miles of road over low marshy prairie the party reached the Sheyenne
river.
"This river was much swollen, and had to be ferried. A raft that Kittson had constructed for his passage, we thought would answer for ours, with some repairs. We hoped to be able to put the wagon with its load on it and save the trouble of unloading; but the raft was badly constructed and would carry but little, and gave us more trouble than we should have had, if we had commenced with our wagon-beds."

On June 17, the expedition reached Maple river, which Kittson had bridged, but the bridge had disappeared because of the high water. The river having been ferried, the route from this point lay over marshy land to Elm river which was also ferried. About twenty miles from Elm river the expedition reached a cluster of hills which were ascended. The party continued on to the north west and on July 23 the camp was made at a small salt lake not far from the southern tributary of Goose river. On the following day the party reached the main branch of the Goose river and on July 23 arrived at the Turtle river. The camp of July 26 was on the southwestern edge of the "Poplar islands". After leaving the "Poplar islands" the course of the expedition lay along the Tongue river, this river being followed down nearly to its confluence with the Pembina river. Pembina was reached on August 1. While there, Major Woods and Captain Pope were occupied in determining the location of the 49th parallel of north latitude, in an inquiry into the difficulties existing between the American and British fur-traders; and in making a census of the inhabitants of Pembina.
The Ramsey Expedition in 1851

This expedition was organized for the purpose of forming a treaty with the Red Lake and Pembina bands of Chippewa Indians for the purchase of their country lying in the valley of the Red river of the North. Governor Alexander Ramsey was the commissioner appointed for negotiating the treaty and Dr. Thomas Foster the secretary. The party consisted of Governor Ramsey, Hugh Tyler, Dr. Foster, the Rev. John Black of Montreal, J.M. Lord, F. Brown, Pierre Bottinau, Joseph Couliserole, and J. Wesley Bond, who later prepared the narrative of the expedition. A military escort of twenty-five dragoons from

1. Alexander Ramsey came of Scotch and German parentage and was born in Pennsylvania in 1815. He was a student at Lafayette College in Pennsylvania, studied law in 1837 at Harrisburg and in 1839 he was admitted to practice. In 1841 he was elected Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives in Pennsylvania and two years later was elected to Congress, serving there until 1847. As chairman of the Whig State Committee in 1848, he contributed largely to the election of General Zachary Taylor to the presidency. President Taylor, when appointing officers of Minnesota Territory, tendered the Governor to Ramsey who accepted it. He removed to Minnesota in 1849 and soon took early measures to secure the extinguishment of Indian titles to the land. In 1851 he made treaties at Mendota, at the Traverse des Sioux, and at Pembina. Probably 40,000,000 acres of land were thrown open to settlement by these treaties. His term of governor expired in 1853 but two years later he was elected mayor of St. Paul for a term of one year. In 1857 he was nominated for the position of governor but was defeated. Two years later he was elected governor and was re-elected in 1861. In 1863 he was elected United States Senator and held that office for twelve years. He was one of the supporters of the Northern Pacific Railroad. In 1880 he was Secretary of War in President Hayes's cabinet, and during the years 1882-1886 he was chairman of the Utah Commission. Soon after this he retired from public life and died in 1902. Williams, A History of Saint Paul and of the County of Ramsey, Minnesota, Saint Paul, 1876, 216.
rt. Snelling under the command of Lieutenant Corley accompanied the party.

For carrying the equipment and necessities of the expedition, six two-horse

gage wagons and Red river carts were employed with eight French-Canadian

half-breed drivers.

The expedition left St. Anthony on Monday August 13, 1851, part going by

eamer and part by land to Sauk Rapids which was reached by the 20th. The

issippi was crossed above the rapids and on August 21 the party began its

ourney to Pembina. The route taken by the expedition was almost identical with

on taken by the expedition under Major Woods and Captain Pope in 1849. The party

crossed the Bois des Sioux river and on August 28, at a point four miles above

mouth where it was described as being about fifty yards in width and four

half feet deep. From this point the route taken lay in a north west direct-

for about eight miles over a flat and marshy prairie. The crossing of the

old Rice river was made on a "rustic bridge of logs" some three miles from

Red river.

We are now three or four miles down on the Red river, below the mouth of the

Sioux Wood, above which it takes the name of Otter tail river. Our de-

distance from Red river, to the west, is some three miles; the woods bordering
its banks being visible during our ride this afternoon. Our whole journey
to-day has not exceeded ten miles; tomorrow, we have a march of twenty-five
miles to the Shyenne, which we cross thirty miles above its mouth; and
I am told that we will not see Red river until our arrival at Pembina, as
our road skirts along the high ground on the western slope of the valley,
distant on the average some thirty to forty miles. This detour is necessary
to avoid the marshes, swamps, and bad places along the bed of the Valley and
nearer to the river."

On the following day the route lay over a flat and marshy prairie; the

yenne was reached that evening, and a crossing was effected on a rough log

idge. On September 1 the expedition crossed Maple river on a rough log bridge,

ning that evening in a small ravine. The following day the party forded

river, about forty miles from Red river. On September 3 the route lay
over a ridge of rolling land running east and west with no timber. The next
day a branch of Goose river (probably the southern branch) was forded as
there was a hard and sandy bottom. The camp of September 6 and 7 (Sunday)
was located on a small branch of Salt river. On September 8, after a march
of four miles, the expedition came to a stream supposed to be the Big Salt
river (Forest River).

"A range of cone-like hills extended from the left of the road,
resembling a line of mounds.---Some of the boulders in the beds of the
streams, and especially on the ridges, were quite large. Some of the
latter were painted in red stripes, and on one I noticed a blood-red hand,
and four horse-shoes of a yellow color."

The noon camp was located on the north branch of the Forest river,
while that of the evening was on the north side of a stream called the
Cart river (Park river). On the entry for September 9 we find the follow­
ing record:

"Fine farms could be located in the country we are now passing over,
and for grazing purposes it can scarcely be equalled. Small lakes are
abundant and vegetation good.

"This afternoon we proceeded about five miles and halted early on an
elevated ridge of timbered land, above a wide prairie above us, bounded
on the far side to the north east by the Poplar Isles, just dimly visible
in the distance. These islands are groves of young poplars, thickly col­
togther for miles over the low, flat prairie, like the wooded isles
of ocean."

On September 10, after a journey of ten miles, the party reached
Tongue river, being at that time about thirty miles distant from Pembina.
On the afternoon of that day, the route lay through the Poplar islands.
On September 11, after a ride of 11 miles, the party reached Bottineau point,
which was located not far from Duck Lake. From this lake to the Pembina
settlements the route lay over a swampy prairie. The trading post of Kittson
was located at the junction of the Red and Pembina rivers. While at
Pembina the chief men of the expedition were stationed in Kittson's house

2. Ibid., 272.
which had been placed at their disposal, and they were met with the welcome
of a sumptuous dinner, in which hot corn and potatoes, onions, etc., as big as pint tin-cups, formed the principal item in the vegetable line. These were grown in the gardens here, and are the only production of the soil now cultivated at this place, no farming whatever being done, on account of the annual floods in the Valley of the Red river for three years past.

The small village of St. Joseph's, located near the present town of Walhalla, had just been started and the following reason is given for its establishment. In the spring of 1851 Kittson had lost some six thousand rails by the spring flood, and in order to prevent a similar occurrence he and Father Belcourt had laid out a settlement there and intended to make an attempt at agriculture.

While at Pembina, Bond in company with the Rev. John Black made a trip down the Red river to Fort Garry. The treaty with the Indians which had furnished the object of the expedition was discussed on September 15, the interpreters of the expedition being the Rev. Mr. Black and James Nolen.
Its provisions according to Bond were as follows:

"The Chippewas cede all their land from the line north, to the Goose and Buffalo rivers, and thirty miles each side of the Red river—say a strip sixty miles in width by about one hundred long—and they are to receive thirty thousand dollars cash on the ratification of it by the senate, eight thousand dollars thereafter cash, and two thousand dollars for schools annually for twenty years; the whole amounting to two hundred and thirty thousand dollars."1

On September 27 the Red Lake Indians, who had been at Pembina in connection with the treaty, left for their homes. The missionaries stationed there, Rev. J.P. Bardwell and Rev. S.G. Wright, had left for Red Lake on September 22, taking with them some cattle which they had purchased at Fort Garry. On October 2 the expedition set out on the return trip. Governors Ramsey, Tyler, Dr. Foster, Pierre Bottineau, N.W. Kittson, and Charles Cavilier left for St. Joseph's where they expected to meet the assembled half-breeds, who were about to start on the fall buffalo-hunt.2 They expected to rejoin the expedition on Tongue river. Two new members joined the expedition, W. Lecombe, a young Catholic priest, an assistant of Father Belcourt, who was on his way to Montreal via St. Paul, and George Morrison, a half-breed on his way to Crow Wing. On October 25, the party arrived at St. Paul.

1. Bond, Minnesota and Its Resources, 1855, 327.
2. Charles Cavilier was born in Springfield, Ohio, March 6, 1813, and came to Pembina, August 16, 1851. He was assistant postmaster 1851-3, at Pembina, and in 1853 was in partnership with Forbes and Kittson in the Indian trade. In 1854, he moved to St. Joseph and started a trading post there, and in 1857 moved to St. Boniface, Manitoba. He returned to Pembina in 1863, and died there July 27, 1902. North Dakota Historical Collections, I., 359.
CHAPTER IV

The Stevens Survey for a Pacific Railroad

The earliest advocate for a Pacific Railroad was Dr. Samuel Bancroft Barlow, a practicing physician living in Massachusetts. About 1834 he began to write articles for the Intelligence, a small weekly published in Westfield, Massachusetts, in favor of a plan for the construction of a railroad from New York city to the mouth of the Columbia. The route taken was in general along the 46th parallel of north latitude, following the valley of the Missouri and Columbia rivers, and the approximate cost was to be about $10,000 per mile. The expense was to be borne by the government by appropriation from the public treasury.

The next project for a railroad to the Pacific coast came from Asa Whitney. Whitney in 1844 returned to New York from China where he had lived a number of years. He was familiar with the trade with the Orient and found by computation that a route across the United States by rail to Puget Sound and from there to the Orient was much shorter than the route around the Cape of Good Hope. In 1845, in company with several other young men, he made a trip of some 1500 miles up the Missouri. Upon his return in December, he appeared in Washington with a scheme for a railroad from Lake Michigan to the Pacific coast. The cost of the railroad was to be borne by the proceeds of a grant of thirty miles on each side of the track. At first his plans met with little but ridicule, but in 1847 he received a favorable report from the Senate Committee on public lands. He immediately began a campaign for public sentiment in support of his proposition and the gaining of endorsements from the various state legislatures. In the years 1847 and 1848 he gained favorable resolutions from one or both houses of the legislatures in the states of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois,
Michigan, Tennessee, Alabama, and Georgia.\(^1\) In the latter year Whitney was successful in getting select committees in both houses of Congress favorable to his scheme. The Senate committee reported favorably upon Whitney's bill, but the bill was lost by a vote of 27-21 due in part at least to the opposition of Benton.\(^2\) In 1849 he made a final effort but the result was a failure due to the premature nature of the scheme and the growing importance of the question of the expansion of slavery. Whitney's estimate that such a railroad constructed it would mean a slow in the estimate of the length of the road was some 2,030 miles, and the cost of construction $40,600,000 with an additional $20,000,000 for repairs and operating expenses. He estimated the land grant at 77,952,000 acres. The route which he indicated to Congress lay along a line drawn from St. Joseph, Michigan, to Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, and from thence straight across the country to Lewis and Clarke's Pass, in the Rocky Mountains; thence down the Clearwater and Snake rivers to Walla Walla and the Columbia river, and finally across the Cascade mountains to Puget Sound. While this plan of Whitney met with failure, it had several important results. It brought prominently to the attention of the public the importance of a railroad to the Pacific coast and the feasibility of a northern route for such a railroad, by the labors of Edwin F. Johnson.\(^3\) He was an engineer and appreciated the practical difficulties to be overcome in constructing such a railroad.

Further weight was given to the feasibility of the northern route by the labors of Edwin F. Johnson.\(^3\) He was an engineer and appreciated the practical difficulties to be overcome in constructing such a railroad.

2. Ib., 57.
3. Ib., 69.
articles in Poor's Railway Journal in favor of a road to the Pacific by way of the valleys of the Missouri and the Columbia rivers. Robert J. Walker, ex-Senator from Mississippi and former Secretary of the Treasury, interested also in the projected railroad, showed several of these articles reprinted in pamphlet form to Jefferson Davis, Secretary of War. Impressed by the practicability of the northern route after reading Johnson's article and fearing that were such a railroad constructed it would mean a blow to the interests of the South, Davis used his influence in getting the adoption by Congress of a provision in the Army bill of 1853 which gave to the War Department the full control of the surveys to be made for such a purpose.\footnote{Smalley, History of the Northern Pacific Railroad, 72.}

This act was approved March 1, 1853, and provision was made for such explorations as the War Department might deem advisable in order to ascertain the most practicable and economical route for a railroad from the Mississippi river to the Pacific Ocean.\footnote{Ib., 79.} The number of expeditions was not specified, although it was the general understanding that no route which was feasible was to be neglected. Davis accordingly put five separate expeditions into the field the same spring. The first expedition was to cover the belt of country along the 32nd parallel of latitude, the second near the 35th, the third near the 39th and 39th, the fourth between the 41st and 42nd, and the fifth between the 47th and 49th. Of these surveys the only one which concerns Dakota Territory is the last, which was placed in the hands of Isaac I. Stevens, Governor of Washington Territory, an experienced army officer who had served in the Mexican War and who held the position previous to this appointment of territorial governor. Stevens decided that the expedition should be conducted in two divisions, one operating from the Mississippi and the other from Puget Sound. Captain George B. McClellan
was placed in charge of the western division and it fell to that division to explore the passes of the Cascade, from the Columbia river to the 49th parallel and as far east as the Rocky Mountains, if possible, Stevens was in charge of the eastern division himself and associated with him were F.W. Lander, Lieutenant John Mullan, Lieutenant Cuvier Grover, and Lieutenant A.J. Donelson, who were to survey the Missouri river from St. Louis as far as Fort Union and the country in the vicinity of that fort from the White Earth to the Porcupine rivers.

Stevens arrived in St. Paul on the evening of May 27, having left Galena, Illinois on the steamer Nominee.¹ He had been preceded by several under officers who made the arrangements for the expedition. Due to the fact that out of some 172 mules only about one half were broken, the expedition was delayed for several days. Incessant rains also served to add to the delay.

On May 31, Stevens dispatched two civil engineers, Lander and Tinkham, to begin the survey of the railroad route. On June 3 a second company was sent out to establish a camp west of the Mississippi and near Sauk Rapids.

On June 6, part of the remainder of the party embarked on a steamer above the Falls of St. Anthony and part went by land to go to Sauk Rapids.

Stevens himself waited until the following day for the purpose of securing the services of several voyageurs; "and particularly of Pierre Boutineau, in addition to the others of the first set for that service."

¹ Report of explorations for a route for the Pacific railroad near the fort seventh and forty ninth parallels of north latitude from Saint Paul to Puget Sound by I.I. Stevens, Governor of Washington Territory, Washington, 1855, 1.
the great guide, and Menoc, the great hunter, in which I was successful.

The whole of the expedition had arrived at Sauk Rapids by June 9 and crossed the Mississippi. Since it was determined by the expedition to follow the Red river trail from Sauk Rapids to the Red river, a detailed account of this particular division need not detain us. On June 12, Stevens dispatched Lieutenant Grover with a picked party of fifteen men, with instructions to reconnoitre carefully the country north and in the vicinity of White Bear lake with the view of ascertaining the point where the expedition should leave the Red river trail. At the camp near Pike Lake on June 24, Stevens instructed Lieutenant Grover to select a party of twenty picked men, twenty-six mules, three horses and twenty-five days provisions including an ox, with which to go forward on the Dead Colt Hillock line, to continue to the north of the Yellowstone and to connect up with the survey of Lieutenant Donelson of the Missouri "at some eligible point as at Fort Berthold". The purpose of this side expedition was to survey the land south of the route taken by the main party in order to get


Pierre Bottineau was one of the most notable characters in the northwest. He was born about 1812 in the Red River settlement, his father being a French-Canadian, and his mother a Chippewa. He came to Fort Snelling in 1837, where he was in the employ of Captain Sibley as a guide and interpreter. He lived in Saint Paul and at the Falls of St. Anthony, which he subsequently made an addition to the city. He was also the first settler at Maple Grove or "Bottineau's Prairie", in Hennepin county. He spoke nearly every Indian language in the region and he was well acquainted with every foot of its territory. His services were in great demand as guide and interpreter. He was a guide in the Ramsey expedition in 1851, in the Stevens expedition in 1853, in Col. Noble's wagon road expedition to Fraser river in 1859, in Captain Fisk's Idaho expeditions of 1862 and 1866, in General Sibley's expedition to the Missouri river in 1853 and in the expedition of Governor Terry to Devils Lake in 1867. (Williams, History of St. Paul and Ramsey County, Saint Paul, 1876, 109.) "Pierre Bottineau, who contracted to take our goods and provisions from Sauk Rapids through to Pembina, is a half-breed Chippewa; of a highly nervous temperament, with Indian features strongly marked, very swarthy, dark hair, tall, muscular, and active, and is about thirty-seven years of age. He is an excellent hunter and voyageur, was born in, and has spent his whole life in wandering and exploring this territory and adjacent country. He has along eight carts, each loaded with about five hundred pounds of freight, and six Canadian French boys as drivers; also two half-breeds of the Chippewa tribe— one his own brother." Bond, Minnesota and its Resources, 269.
a definite idea of its practicability as a route for a railroad. The main party continued on the Red river trail passing Elbow Lake and reaching the Bois des Sioux on July 29. This stream was crossed not far from its confluence with the Otter Tail river. After crossing the river the train continued on its way to the Wild river.

"The ford, very good for a small train, became very muddy towards the last, and though we unloaded all the wagons and carried over the loads in boats, the wagons and animals were badly stalled at the edges and on the soft and steep banks of the river. The country from the Bois des Sioux to the Wild Rice river is a broad level prairie, covered with luxuriant grass eighteen inches high. The distance on our trail was eleven miles, with occasional sloughs."

The forenoon of June 30 was occupied in currying and washing the animals in catching fish, and in making a bridge across the Wild Rice. The bridge was made of heavy logs filled with cut willow brush and grass. The journey of the afternoon was over a low marshy ground, the camp being for the evening on a small branch of the Wild Rice river. On the following day, Stevens determined to push on to the Sheyenne river and if found necessary to have it bridged. A thunderstorm occurred during the morning which lasted an hour and wet the travellers thoroughly. Under the entry for this day Stevens records the following which is interesting in connection with the early history of our state.

"At 11 a.m. we met the train of the Red river traders in charge of Mr. Kittson and visited their camp six miles distant, in company with Dr. Suckley, Messrs. Stanley, Osgood, Boutinou, Menoc, and others. We were very hospitably received; purchased some pemmican, common moccasin, and articles of dress worked with porcupine quills. Bought also some oxen, being very deficient in transportation.

"The main train only proceeded 13 miles and I returned to them about 3 p.m. accompanied by Kittson, Father Delacour, Roullet, and Cavili. Kittson and Roullet were members of the territorial legislature from Pembina; Cavilier, the collector of customs; and Delacour is a very shrewd priest. They are on their annual trip to St. Paul with robes, skins, pemmican, and dried meat of the buffalo, collected by trading with half-breeds of the Red river settlements. We found that they had bridged the Sheyenne, saving us considerable delay. Their company proved very
agreeable and we were glad that a heavy thunder storm coming on obliged them to be our guests for the night."

On the following morning the expedition bade farewell to its new friends and set out for the Sheyenne. The river was safely crossed by noon and the party encamped on the other side of the river. Stevens called this camp Camp McClelland, which according to the map of the expedition is at the point of the intersection of the 97th parallel of West Longitude with the Sheyenne river. Stevens remained there July 2 and 3 and dispatched Lander and Tinkham to reconnoitre up and down the river. On the 3rd they returned having been as far south as Dead Colt Hillock.

Stevens sent Lander with a company of five

"to examine the Sheyenne river and the country south and west of its great bend, so as to cover the whole ground between our route and Lieutenant Grover's. He was expected to rejoin us in six or eight days, south of Minnewaukan lake.

"Got off about 10 and followed the Red river trail some twelve miles when we left it altogether. Crossed Maple river and camped on its banks about half a mile from our crossing."

\[2\] Joseph Rolette was born at Prairie du Chien, Wis., in 1800, and died at Pembina, N.D., in 1871. As early as 1840, he was employed by the American Fur Co., at Pembina. In 1843, he assisted Kittson in establishing a line of Red River carts connecting Pembina with St. Paul to compete with the Hudson's Bay Co. In 1847, he attacked the Hudson's Bay Co. post at Pembina, drove the traders away, and burned their buildings. He was a member of the Minnesota territorial assembly 1853-55, and of the council 1855-7.

\[3\] North Dakota Historical Collections, I., 378.

\[4\] The map of the route pursued by the expedition is found in Reports of Explorations and Surveys to ascertain the most practicable and economical route for a railroad from the Mississippi river to the Pacific Ocean. Washington, 1861, XI. These maps were compiled by Lieut. G.K. Warren of the Topographical Engineers.

\[5\] Dead Colt Hillock is a prominent land mark located south of the Sheyenne river and near the northern boundary of Sargent County. The small stream of the same name takes its rise near it.

On July 5 the party was encamped on a small branch of Rush river and on the 6th after a journey of 20 miles the party encamped on the prairie. After a journey of about six miles the expedition reached the Sheyenne. The party then journeyed northward keeping the river on their left. The camp for that evening was about a mile and a half from the river on the banks of a fine lake. On July 8 the expedition, after a march of about fifteen miles, arrived at the spot selected for crossing the Sheyenne.

"Buttes in considerable number are seen ahead among which the Horse Butte and Butte Micheau are plainly visible. Einkham, Paul (Boilleau) and Henry (Boilleau) were out again today making a reconnaissance on the Sheyenne. They came in early having made a very satisfactory examination. --Boutinou found a very good ford some half mile from our camp, which needed but little levelling of the steep side banks to make it entirely practicable for our wagons."

Stevens called this camp Camp Guthrie in honor of the Secretary of Treasury. This camp was located a short distance above the mouth of Bald Hillock Creek.

On July 10, after the crossing of the Sheyenne the party made its way towards Lake Jessie which was reached that afternoon. The party encamped on the southeast shore of the lake which is described by Stevens as being a bluff and about sixty feet above the level of the lake. Stevens and Henry Boilleau succeeded in locating a spring of good fresh water distant about three quarters of a mile from the camping place. Stevens in his entry for July 10 says: "This is the last point on the trail in which our work will connect with Nicollet's survey, and tonight our camp is pitched upon the same spot where he encamped some sixteen years ago." On the following day the party resumed their journey, coming to a severe slough, distant about four miles from their camp, which they crossed in the track of an old buffalo trail. The day's march amounted to some ten miles, the spot
being surrounded by high hills. On July 12 the route followed in general the plateau, which represents the dividing ridge between the Sheyenne and James rivers. The direction according to the compass was N 85° W. Sixteen miles from the camp of July 12, the party struck the James river with a good crossing. Since the course of the river was in general the course of the expedition, the party followed it. The camp of July 13 was near the upper sources of the James river. The route of the following day was in part over level plateau and prairie which in places was covered with brush. The camp of that evening was located eight miles from the Sheyenne. The following day the party were informed of an encampment of Sioux (which later proved to be Red river hunters) numbering about 1000. This encampment was located three miles beyond the Sheyenne. The train consisted of 824 carts, about 1200 animals and 1300 persons, men, women and children. The hunting expedition was under the command of "Governor" Wilkie. Stevens engaged the services of Alexis le Bombard, who was a member of the hunting expedition, to act as a guide to the Yellowstone from which region he had recently come. Stevens suggested to Governor Wilkie the possibility of establishing a post at Devils Lake. The governor replied that the people of the Red river settlement would remove and settle near it and cultivate sufficient land to keep the post supplied with vegetables and provisions. So far as known this was the first suggestion ever made for the making of a settlement in Dakota territory outside of the bounds of the Red river valley. Needless to say no post was established for many years.

1. For Steven's account of these hunters see Appendix 1.
After leaving the Red river hunters, Stevens' party followed their trail for some miles. On July 18, still following the trail of the Red river train, the party crossed a branch of the Sheyenne flowing through a deep valley with an extended plateau bounded on both sides by the high coteau. On the same day the party passed by a narrow lake some three miles in length, lying at the foot of a hill called by Stevens the "Butte de Morale", where according to him had occurred an engagement between some half-breeds and Sioux in which one of the former by the name of Morale had been killed. The camp of that day is described by Stevens as follows: "Our camp is beautifully located on a range of hills nearly surrounded with salt lakes. An excellent spring nearby furnishes us an abundant supply of cold fresh water. These lakes are called the White Wood lakes." On July 19 the route of the expedition lay over a level country over which were scattered numerous small sloughs and camping on a small lake from which was visible the Butte Maisen du Chien, twenty-one miles distant. On the following day Stevens dispatched a party of four men to make a reconnoissance of the Butte Maisen du Chien and the Coteau du Missouri to connect the work of the expedition with that of Lieut. Grover with instructions to rejoin the main party in four days. On the same day the main party reached the first tributary of the Mouse river, which was much swollen because of recent rains. Part of the route for that day lay along a beautiful ridge much resembling a railroad embankment. On July 21 the party reached the Mouse river and on the 22nd the party followed a route between the Coteau du Missouri which was visible during the entire day and the Mouse river. On the same day the expedition was visited by two hunters from a second Red river expedition which was in charge of General Da L'Orme, whom Stevens met on a visit to the Camp of the Hunters. On July 25 Stevens dispatched Tinkham, Lander and Paul Boilleau

2. The Dog Den Butte
to reconnoitre on the Mouse river in order to ascertain its possibilities with regard to coal and iron. The route for the day was over a rolling prairie sometimes hilly, with but one coulee to cross. The trail of the expedition from July 20 followed the route of Lieut. Grover, who had preceded them by four days. On July 26 the party camped on the bank of a small lake where there was encamped a party of some 1200 Indians of the Assiniboine tribe. The Indians were under the command of the Chiefs Blue Thunder and Little Thunder. On July 28 Stevens sent a party under the command of Lander to the "Pierced Rock" on the Mouse river, to make a careful examination for coal and iron. Lander was also to visit the White Earth river and make a thorough examination of the country along the Coteau du Missouri and rejoin the expedition at Fort Union. Stevens also left Paul Beilleau and Le Frambois with the Assiniboines to gather information regarding the traditions, habits, and numbers of them and to prepare a vocabulary of their language.

On July 29 the expedition made 20 miles over a level country, with the last three miles of it being in a more broken region, the camp being located near the head waters of the Muddy river. The following day the party made about 24 miles and encamped about 11 miles from a small stream called by Stevens Painted Wood Creek. On July 31 the road was level and hard with a gradual ascent, coming in sight of the Yellowstone river. August 1, the party reached the Missouri and Fort Union.

Lieutenant Glover had preceded Stevens to Fort Union reaching there on July 28. Following his departure from the main train at Pike lake on June 25 he had almost a direct line for Lake Traverse. After exploring the territory on the east side of Lake Traverse, he crossed the Bois des Sioux three miles further up than the crossing of the main train. His crossing
of the Wild Rice was located thirty-five miles from its junction with the Bois des Sioux at a place where it makes a wide bend near a track of sand hills. From this point he took nearly a straight line to the James river passing by the Dead Colt Hillock. The point at which he crossed the James river is about ten miles above the junction of a small stream called by Grover the Grizzly Bear Creek. Grover followed the course of the James river as far as the Butte aux Os or Bone Hill Butte. Leaving the course of the river at that point, he struck off in a north westerly line until he reached the Mouse river, his route in general following the ridge dividing the waters of the James and Missouri rivers. From the camp of Steven's party on July 20, Grover's line of march coincided with that given for the Stevens expedition.

From Fort Union the objective of the expedition was Fort Benton on the Upper Missouri and from this point the goal was Fort Walla Walla, Cadotte's pass through the Rocky Mountains being used. While no railroad was constructed along this route as a result of its investigation, the expedition was important since it gave a most thorough and extended investigation of the territory lying between St. Paul and the Pacific Ocean.
The Discovery of Gold in Idaho, Montana, and British Columbia

and the Overland Expeditions into these Regions.

The first gold discovery in Idaho was made by a French-Canadian on the Pend d'Oreille river in 1852, not however in sufficient quantities to warrant extensive mining. In 1855 there occurred an extension of gold mining in this region sufficient to be called a gold rush. The base of supplies was Fort Colville in the north eastern part of Washington Territory. The difficulties were considerable since the gold was light float gold, and for its successful collection, quicksilver and sluice gold systems were required. Food supplies were scarce and transportation difficult.

Boating on the Columbia did not begin until 1859 when the first steamboat was launched above the Dalles.

In Montana the first gold was discovered by Benetsee, a Red river half-breed, on Gold Creek. His discovery was unimportant as compared with the arrival in the Beaverhead Valley of James and Granville Stuart in 1857 and their discovery of gold. The discovery of gold in British Columbia dates from the latter part of the fifties. The three districts where gold was found were Cariboo, Kootenai, and the Upper Columbia. The Cariboo district lies north of Quesnelle Lake and the Fraser river. In 1861 it was estimated that nearly 1500 men had penetrated this region and had mined gold to the value of $2,000,000. In 1862 the number of men at work was approximately 2500 and in 1863 at 4000.

These same years saw the rush of gold seekers into Idaho and Montana, where gold had been found in paying quantities. The discovery of gold in

2. Trimble, The Mining Advance into the Inland Empire, Madison, Wisconsin, 1914, 16.
3. Ib., 40.
4. Ib., 47.
August 1852 in the Boise Basin was the one discovery which, probably more than any other caused the great influx of miners. Similarly the Salmon River mines were attractive to the gold seekers. The Boise mines were favorably situated and exceedingly rich. It is estimated that $17,000,000 was produced in the first four years. A climate milder than that of the mines of British Columbia and the fertile soil of the valleys of the Payette and Boise rivers made it a desirable location for settlers. From the Boise Basin it was easy to pass to the basins of the Jefferson, Madison, and Gallatin rivers where were to be found rich gold fields. In the Jefferson basin were situated the Bannock mines which were the objective of the gold seekers of Minnesota, who in great measure made up the Fisk expedition.

There were several routes by which the gold seeker might cross the plains from the east to these various diggings. He might go up the Missouri by steam boat as far as Fort Benton and then take the Mullan military road to Fort Walla Walla or he might go overland from St. Paul across the Dakotas, through the country lying between Fort Union and Pembina.

It is the latter route which forms a part of this discussion and among the expeditions which utilized this route were those under the command of Jas. L. Fisk in the years 1852, 1853, 1864, and 1866. The starting point of the first expedition was Fort Abercrombie. Captain Fiske was in charge of the military escort, the expedition exclusive of that escort numbering 117 men and 13 women. Pierre Bottineau who had accompanied Stevens in 1853 acted as guide while George Gera was the Sioux interpreter. In general the expedition took the Stevens route of 1853. Leaving Fort Abercrombie on July 7, 1852, the party camped that evening on the Wild Rice river. On July 16, they were at Lake Jessie, the camp being located about midway between Lake Jessie and a smaller lake about

1. Trimble, The Mining Advance into the Inland Empire, 74.
2. The authority for this expedition is Executive Document No. 30, 37th Cong. 3rd Sess., reprinted in the North Dakota Historical Collections II., Pt. II
one half a mile to the south, which Fisk named Lake Lydia in honor of
his wife. The remains of the Stevens camp were visible on a high bluff
clear of timber on the eastern shore of the lake and a half mile from
Fisk's camp. The noon camp of July 22 was at the base of the Butte Morale.

On July 31 the party came upon a trail from the direction of Mouse river,
which was thought to be that of a party of emigrants which had started
from Minnesota about a month in advance of the Fisk expedition and had
proceeded by way of Pembina and St. Joseph.

"In former times there was considerable travel and communication
between the settlement at Pembina and Fort Union by the Red river
hunters; but this has been mostly if not quite abandoned at the present
time, and no other trail is visible across the country than that made
as above stated. Bottineau decided to follow this trail, as he understood
that the party was guided by a person whom he knew to be as well acquainted
as anyone with the country lying between Fort Union and Pembina." 1

The expedition followed this trail and instead of gaining time it
lost time since the expedition mentioned above had lost its way, its
guide having deserted them. On August 10, however, the expedition arrived
safely in Fort Union without a single loss of life. At Fort Union Bottineau
and his son left the expedition and returned to Pembina. Here the members
of the expedition had the first news of the mines which they were seeking.
The Salmon river mines were reported as being very rich but of small extent.

It was estimated by a returning miner that there were ten thousand persons
there who had come by way of California. Prices were exceedingly high,
flour selling for $40 per hundredweight, bacon about the same price, and
coffee and sugar about 45-50 cents a pound. At the Deer Lodge mines the
yield was reckoned as being not more than $2 to $3 per day. 2

1. North Dakota Historical Collections, II., Pt. II., 56.
2. Ib., II., Pt. II., 74.
Another expedition of 1862 was that mentioned above, which instead of leaving Fort Abercrombie, proceeded from St. Joseph. The expedition left St. Joseph shortly after the 18th of June and consumed eighteen days in arriving at Fort Union. The expedition hired a guide, paying one hundred "down" and agreeing to pay the second hundred upon arrival in Fort Union. On July 11 the company met a company of Sioux Indians and held a council with them and the following day the guides left the expedition. From that time the expedition was compelled to rely on its own good luck and on a treacherous Indian guide who deserted after having stolen a horse. The route from St. Joseph to Fort Union is described as being very bad, poor water, and little wood. After the crossing of the Mouse river, numerous buffalo were seen. In this route the distance from St. Joseph to the Mouse river was estimated at 145 miles or eight days travel. From Fort Union to Fort Benton the party followed the route of the Stevens expedition in 1853.

The Fisk Expedition of 1863

On April 21, 1863, Captain Fisk gave an official notice in the St. Paul Daily Press of an escort for an expedition from Fort Abercrombie and Fort Benton to Walla Walla. St. Cloud was designated as the place of rendezvous and June 1 set as the date on which the expedition would start. The expedition was duly organized, the guide being Antoine Frenier. Professor Hessey of the National Observatory and Col. Jones and Messrs. Hamilton and Major accompanied the expedition, their destination being Washington, where they were ordered to locate the boundary line between Washington and Idaho.

On July 14 the expedition was at Fort Abercrombie. Dr. Dibb, the surgeon accompanying the expedition, in a letter of that date stated that George Grierson was acting as Sioux interpreter and that the expedition consisted of 20 wagons and 60 men, of whom 25 were mounted. In general, the route

1. North Dakota Historical Collections, II., Pt. II., 76.
2. Ib., 80.
3. Ib., 82.
the expedition was the same as that of the previous year. On July 20
Captain Fisk camped on Lake Jessie, remaining there one day. On September
5 the entire expedition arrived safely at Fort Benton.

The Fisk Expedition of 1864

This expedition is more remarkable in many respects than any of those
which preceded it. The route of the preceding expedition was abandoned
and one taken which was shorter but which led to a conflict with the Indian s.

In March 1864 General Pope, Department of the Northwest, cautioned all em-
grants to the mines of Idaho that there were indications of a combination
of the Sioux tribes to obstruct the navigation of the Missouri and to resist
the passage of emigrants across the upper plains. For the purpose of safety
he urged that all emigrants refrain from going into the dangerous territory
until the military expedition under the command of General Sully had either
swept the Indians in a decisive battle or driven them into the interior.

In order to secure his expedition as far as possible against the attacks
of the Indians, Captain Fisk selected only those emigrants who possessed
well-equipped wagon trains and men who were skilful drivers and well armed.

The expedition left Fort Ridgely on July 15, 1864. It consisted of 88
aggons and carts, nearly 200 men, women, and children and an escort of
avalry with one small piece of artillery. The route followed the course
of the Minnesota river as far as Big Stone Lake turning west on the dividing
ridge between the waters of the Red and Minnesota rivers. After leaving the
region of Big Stone Lake, the route led up to the Coteau des Prairies,
following the trail of the command ordered to build Fort Wadsworth. Here the
arty rested for one day and on the following day struck out for Fort Rice

North Dakota Historical Collections, II., Pt. I., 421.
Ib., 423.
Ib., 432.
on the Missouri, which was reached on August 15. The party tarried there a week in order to wait the completion of a ferry and the arrival of a steam and also to repair the wagons which had been much affected by the hot and dry weather. On August 22 the expedition was transferred across the Missouri by the steamer General Grant. After a delay of a day the party set out again, this time following the trail of General Sully. The escort of the expedition at this time consisted of only forty-seven men, following the Sully trail for some eighty miles, Captain Fisk left Sully's trail and proceeded due west in order to reach the Big Horn as near its mouth as possible. From this point he purposed to cross the river and also the Yellowstone and to follow the Yellowstone up on the west side to Bannock. After proceeding for 80 miles, on September 2, when about 22 miles east of the east branch of the Little Missouri, the expedition was attacked by a large band of Sioux Indians and in less than an hour a loss of twelve men inflicted upon the expedition. On the following morning the party was again attacked by the Indians and after a march of two miles the party halted and formed a fortified corral. The Bad Lands were in sight and did not look favorable to the progress or defense of the expedition. Captain Fisk determined, therefore, to dispatch messengers to Fort Rice for assistance. Lieutenant Smith and thirteen men were sent on this dangerous undertaking. The remainder of the party immediately set about fortifying the camp, digging a well, and caring for the stock. Fortunately a heavy rain furnished sufficient water and the cattle were driven out for two or three hours each day to feed on the prairie. On the sixteenth day there appeared in the distance ten men, the advance pickets of Colonel Dill's command of 750 men, which had been sent as a relief party.
The spot where the expedition was besieged by the Indians was called Fort Dilts in honor of Jefferson Dilts, the scout of the expedition, who died of his wounds and was buried there. On September 21, the Fisk expedition began its return and arrived at Fort RCA nine days later, and where it disbanded.

The Fisk Expedition of 1866

Not deterred by the failure of the previous year, Fisk determined in 1865 to organize an expedition to reach once more the foot of the Rockies. This expedition was largely a commercial venture of a stock company bearing the name of the Yellowstone Town and Mining Company. The capital stock of $50,000 and the number of shares at 1000, the par value being $50, which was paid for in full upon the issuance of the certificate. Each share paid for two lots 50 by 100 feet in the town plot and a pro rata share in the mining interests of the company. It was the intention of the supporters of the concern that the stock should be purchased by the immigrants themselves rather than by eastern capitalists. Men with families, small farmers and apprentices were required in a frontier country."I have the pleasing satisfaction of a very large party and of the inevitable success of the undertaking. All leading men, the newspapers, and I are safe in saying that there will be at least two thousand persons in the colony.

"Over five hundred persons have called on me during the past week, while letters received from all parts of the states report squads and companies organizing.

"General Thomas Francis Meagher called yesterday, and gave me his final decision to join me and cast his fortunes with the colony and the rise of a territory to a state."2

1. North Dakota Historical Collections, II., Pt.I., 444.
2. Ibid., 446.
Notwithstanding the brilliant prospects for a successful expedition, it failed to materialize and was not organized until 1866. This was the last of the overland expeditions led by Captain Fisk which crossed Dakota Territory. It was much larger than any of the previous expeditions and noteworthy also in that it was not a company of gold seekers but of inventors and traders, and it did not have a military escort furnished by the government. On this expedition were Charles F. Sims and his brother who took 500 sacks of flour which they disposed of on their arrival in Helena. In order that the expedition might be self-supporting, the device of the payment of a certain sum with subscriptions to a stock company, paid in immediately, was adopted. These subscriptions were to be invested in a portable saw mill machinery, and implements for mining. Seeds and agricultural implements were also to be taken to furnish an opportunity for agriculture.

The expedition with Pierre Bottineau as guide left St. Cloud in the first week of June. It was composed of about 60 wagons and 325 men. The wagons were loaded principally with flour, and also large quantities of tea, coffee, and such articles as are required in a frontier country. The expedition left Fort Abercrombie June 25, 1866. From Fort Abercrombie the route of the expedition was almost a straight line for Fort Berthold on the Missouri river. The crossing of the James was made near the Bone Butte, one of the landmarks of that river. On July 19 the expedition reached Fort Berthold having found sufficient good water and grass and supplies of the shape of wood or buffalo chips. On August 2 the expedition arrived safely in Fort Union having had no accidents and having been unmolested by Indians.

1. North Dakota Historical Collections, II., Pt. I., 450.
2. Ib., 448.
3. Ib., 455.
This is the last of the important overland expeditions across Dakota Territory. Their decline was due to two facts—the extension of the railroad across the Red river in 1871 and a greatly augmented steamboat traffic on the Missouri river. With the decline of the use of these overland routes also, one must associate the growth of farms and agriculture, since the interest of the pioneer was changed from this region as a highway to its possibilities as an opportunity for agricultural exploitation.

The first expedition which comes within this period is that of a survey for a road from Michigan to Big Sioux river, performed by Major C.F. Platte of the survey of topographical Engineers in 1863. He left St. Louis on the steamer Illini for Council Bluffs where the party was to procure its outfit. The expedition commenced its work there, following the Missouri as far as the mouth of the Big Sioux. The route followed by the expedition from this point lay across the territory to the Little Sioux, the Des Moines, the Maquoketa, and Le Sueur rivers reaching the Minnesota river near the mouth of the Des Moines river. From the village of St. Peter the party followed in general the course of the Minnesota river until the Traverse de Sioux was reached. From that point a road, just completed by Captain Dodd to St. Felix was followed.

The next expedition was made by Captain Hiram Bully from Fort Halleck to Fort Pierre, August 28 to September 24. In the expedition.

[Excerpt from the report of the expedition, dated March 3, 1864]
CHAPTER VI

The Military Expeditions of 1853-1864

The military expeditions which took place in this period were important in that they helped to establish the connections between the Mississippi and the Missouri river basins, along different lines than those laid down by Nicollet in 1839. They also played a large part in breaking the power of the Indian east of the Missouri river, and thus made settlement in that region possible and safe. In addition to this the Sully expedition of 1864 afforded the means of exploring the region west of the Missouri river known as the Bad Lands and thus added to the information concerning this territory.

The first expedition which comes within this period is that of a survey for a road from Mandota to Big Sioux river, performed by Major J.C. Reno of the Bureau of Topographical Engineers in 1853. He left St. Louis on the steamer El Paso for Council Bluffs where the party was to procure its outfit. The expedition commenced its work there, following the Missouri as far as the mouth of the Big Sioux. The route followed by the expedition from this point lay across the territory to the little Sioux, the Des Moines, the Mankato, and Lessur rivers reaching the Minnesota river near the mouth of the Mankato river. From the village of Mankato the party followed in general the course of the Minnesota river until the Traverse des Sioux was reached. From that point a road, just completed by Captain Dodd, to St. Paul was followed.

The next expedition was made by Captain Alfred Sully, from Fort Ridgely to Fort Pierre, August 25 to September 24, 1856. The expedition

1. The report of this expedition is found in Ex. Docs., House of Rep., 1st Seas., No. 97. The map of the route is found on Map of Nebraska and Dakota and Portions of the States Bordering Thereon, Compiled by Bre't Major Gen. G.K. Warren, March, 1867.
followed the southern bank of the Minnesota river to a point not far from
the southern end of Lac qui Parle. Turning westward they crossed the Lac
qui Parle at its junction with a small stream called by Sully the Lone Tree
river. The party followed this stream and then striking due west came to
Lake Kampeska, arriving there on August 13. Still continuing to the west
Sully crossed the James river, at a point about five miles from a tributary,
called by him the Muddy river. From this point Sully directed his course
to the Medicine Knoll river which he followed down to its mouth. From this
point he took a westerly direction crossing the Missouri about five miles
from Fort Pierre.

The Military Expeditions into Dakota Territory in 1863

The immediate cause of these expeditions was the uprising of the Sioux
Indians in 1862. The summer of 1862 was a very dry one, resulting in a
shortage of grass while swarms of grasshoppers devastated large areas
in Minnesota and Dakota Territory. In addition to this, corrupt government
agents withheld supplies from the distressed Indians. The first attack
of the Sioux was made on the Yellow Medicine agency in 1862 by the
followers of Little Crow.1 In September, 1862, the Federal Government
ordered Major General John Pope to Minnesota to conduct the war against
the Indians, although by September the danger to the frontier had been
removed to a large extent by the effective use of the militia under the
command of Colonel Sibley.2 Little Crow with his followers and re-enforced

1 Minnesota in Three Centuries, III., 293.

2 Henry Hastings Sibley was born in Detroit, Michigan, February 20, 1811. In
1823 he was engaged as a clerk in the Indian trade, being located at the
Sault St. Marie. A year later he went to Mackinaw in the service of the
American Fur Company. He remained there until 1834, when he went to
Fort Snelling as agent for the American Fur Company in that region. In
1848 he was elected as the first delegate from the Territory of Minnesota
to Washington. He aided Alexander Ramsey in making the Indian treaties of
1851 and in 1855 he was elected the first governor of the state. He died
in 1891. Minnesota in Three Centuries, II., 93.
by large bodies of other Siouan tribes, collected at Devils Lake, and Pope determined in the spring of 1863 to send an expedition to destroy them.

The command of the expedition was given to Sibley and the place of departure for the expedition set at the mouth of the Red Wood river, a tributary of the Minnesota river. On June 16, 1863 the expedition began its march. Its route followed the course of the Minnesota river as far as the Lake Travers and Big Stone Lake. Turning to the Northwest the expedition followed the higher land lying to the west of these lakes.

By the evening of July 4 the expedition was located at Camp Hayes, on the north side of the Sheyenne river at the first crossing. Here the expedition waited until the 9th for supplies and men from Fort Abercrombie. The location of this crossing of the Sheyenne river is eight miles to the east of the mouth of Dead Colt Creek. On the departure from Camp Hayes, the expedition followed the Sheyenne to the second crossing. There were four camps between this camp and this crossing of the Sheyenne located a distance above Bald Hillock Creek. After this crossing the expedition camped near Lake Jessie. Proceeding 11 1/2 miles to the westward the expedition established on July 18 a camp called Camp Atchison. Here a semi-permanent camp was established as a garrison Sibley left Companies C and G of the Sixth Regiment together with all the sick and invalids and those unable to march rapidly. Taking the rest of his command including the cavalry and provided with twenty-five days' rations, Sibley pushed westward. On July 24 the expedition caught up with the Indians and defeated them in several engagements, the
last of which was fought in the timber along the Missouri river. The Indians were driven across the river, escaping with their horses only. On August 1, since pursuit of the Indians was out of the question and Sully had failed to appear, the expedition began its return. From a point about two miles south east of Bismarck the expedition retraced its steps to Camp Atchison. The return proved to be more pleasant than the outward journey. A copious rain had fallen which replenished the sloughs and lakes. From Camp Atchison the force followed the old trail laid down by Stevens in 1853 as far as Fort Abercrombie. From Fort Abercrombie the return was made by way of the Red river trail and the expedition arrived at Fort Shelling on September 12, 1863.

The Sully Expedition of 1863

It was the purpose of the Sully expedition to leave Fort Pierre in such time as would enable him to cooperate with Sibley and thus catch the retreating Indians in the flank and crush them. General Sully was selected as commander of this expedition because of his knowledge of the Indians and of the territory over which he was to march. He had been connected with the military posts at Fort Pierre and Fort Randall on the Missouri river and Fort Ridgely on the Minnesota river. His command was located in camp at Sioux City, Iowa, and was represented as being fully equipped and ready to march. Due to a lack of transportation facilities Sully was not able to leave before the end of June. On July 22, the expedition arrived at Fort Randall and on August 7 it arrived at Fort Pierre. General Sully established a depot there leaving all the dilapidated wagons, broken down horses and mules together with the sick of his command. Three companies of

The sources for this account are:
the 7th Iowa Cavalry were left as a guard and on August 13 the reduced party left Fort Pierre. Two days later the expedition reached the mouth of the Little Chippewa river, where it was again delayed. On August 21 the expedition left this point and on August 29 they were at a point about fifteen miles to the southeast of the present city of Bismarck.

Up to this time no trace had been found of the Sibley expedition or of the Indians. By September a scouting party of the expedition had found Sibley's trail and followed it to the eastward. On the following day Sully came upon a large body of Indians and a conflict ensued in which the Indians were defeated. On September 2 the possessions of the Indians were destroyed and the expedition began its homeward march on September 9.

This battle was called the battle of White Stone Hill and the battlefield is located on the eastern edge of the Coteau du Missouri in what is now the northwestern corner of Dickey County. Sully's loss was 21 men killed and 38 wounded. The return route of Sully was southwest to the Little Cheyenne river where he retraced his steps to Sioux City, arriving there about the middle of October.

The Sully Expedition of 1864

Notwithstanding the successful expeditions of Sibley and Sully in defeating the Indians, the Federal government in 1864 again ordered an expedition against them. General Sully, as in the previous expedition, was to proceed up the Missouri river and meet the force from Minnesota under the command of Colonel M.T. Thomas. The whole expedition was to consist of two brigades under the command of General Sully, the first brigade consisting of Brackett's Battalion of Cavalry and Kansas and Iowa infantry and the second brigade consisting of the Eighth Regiment of Minnesota Volunteers which was mounted, the Second Minnesota Cavalry, and the Third Minnesota Battery.

1. For a complete list of the Indian property losses see Beede, Ha Courier, Bismarck, N.D., 1915, p. 40.

The second battalion assembled at Fort Ridgely on June 1 and commenced its march on the 5th, taking thirty days' rations. The expedition followed the course of the Minnesota river and the Lac qui Parle river and thence to a lake called the Goose Nest Lake on the Coteau des Prairies. From that point the expedition followed almost a straight line to the mouth of the Elm river, a tributary of the James river. From the crossing of the James river the route lay in a direct line to the head waters of the Elm river.

From that point the expedition marched for the Missouri striking it at a point seven miles from the mouth of Swan Lake Creek. At that point on June 30, 1864, the junction was made with the battalion under General Sully. On July 4 the combined expeditions marched for Long Lake river where they arrived on July 8. Opposite the mouth of this river General Sully located Fort Rice. The whole command crossed the Missouri by means of steam boats and immediately prepared for a campaign against the Indians.

On July 11 the expedition left Fort Rice, following the course of the Cannon Ball river for five days and then turning north to the Heart River. Up to that point the expedition was accompanied by an emigrant train from Minnesota. The military force set out in search of the Indians who were reported to be encamped on the Knife river. On the third day after crossing the Knife river the Indians were located in a strong position where was fought the battle of Kill Deer Mountain. On July 30 the force began its return march to the Heart river which was reached on the following day.

On August 7 the expedition reached the Little Missouri where a second engagement with the Indians was fought. The expedition continued its march towards the Yellowstone through a region devoid of grass and infested with

Minnesota in the Civil War and Indian War, II., 524.
Ib., II., 539.
grasshoppers. At the crossing of the Yellowstone two small steamboats met the expedition with provisions. These boats were also used in transporting the baggage of the party to Fort Union. Following the course of the Yellowstone river the expedition arrived at Fort Union on August 18, 1864. On August 21 Sully set out for Fort Berthold, following the Missouri river and arrived there on the 28th. On August 30 he made a detour toward the Maison du Chien (Dog Den Butte), hoping to find the remnants of the defeated Indians. Failing in this he turned southward and reached Fort Rice on September 9. When at Fort Rice Sully learned of the plight of the Fisk expedition and a force was sent to their relief. On September 15, the Second Battalion, having been relieved of its duty, marched for Fort Wadsworth reaching there on September 26, 1864.

By this expedition Sully completed the task of breaking the Indians east of the Missouri river and thus settlement in that region was made safe. He had traced a route between the Missouri river and the Yellowstone through the Bad Lands. He was a pioneer in first utilizing the Yellowstone river and led the first army through this part of the Missouri valley. By his work the Bad Lands were made known and military posts were established at Ft. Rice, Ft. Stevenson, and Ft. Berthold.
They encamped near by, and the close yard which they formed presented quite a contrast to the open manner adopted by us. They made a circular or square yard of the carts, placed side by side with hubs adjoining, presenting a barrier impassable either to man or beast. The tents or lodges were arranged within, at a distance of about twenty feet from the carts; and were of a conical shape, built of poles covered with skins, with an opening at the top for the passage of smoke and for ventilation. They were 104 in number, being occupied generally by two families, averaging about ten persons to the lodge. Skins were placed over the tops of the carts, and underneath many of train found comfortable lodging places.

The animals were allowed to run loose during the day to feed, but were driven into the corral at dark. Thirty-six of the men are posted as sentinels, remaining on guard all night. We have but twelve guards, three reliefs, not more than four men being on guard at one time.

I was much pleased with Governor Wilkie, who is the head of the expedition. He is a man of about sixty years of age, of fine appearance and pleasant manners. This party are residents of Pembina and its vicinity. When at home they are engaged in agriculture, raising wheat, corn, potatoes, and barley. The land yields about twenty-five bushels of wheat to the acre, their farms averaging about 15 acres each. They are industrious and frugal in their habits, most of them of the Roman Catholic persuasion, living a virtuous and pious life. They are generally accompanied by their priests and attend strictly to their devotions, having exercises each Sabbath, on which day they neither march nor hunt. All or most of the yard is committed to them.

Their municipal government is of a parochial character, being divided into five parishes, each one being presided over by an officer called the 'captain of the parish.' These captains of the parish retain their authority while in the settlement. On departing for the hunt they select a man from the whole number, who is styled 'governor of the hunt,' who takes charge of the party, regulates its movement, acts as referee in all cases where any differences arise between members in regard to game or other matters, and takes command in case of difficulty with the Indians.

In the early part of the year, until the middle of June, these people work at agriculture, when they set out on their first hunt, leaving some thirty at the settlements in charge of their farms, houses, stock, etc. They start out to the southward in search for buffalo, taking with them their families, carts, animals, etc. These carts, when loaded, contain about 800 pounds, and are used in common. There were 336 men in the present train, of whom over 300 were hunters. Each hunt, of which there are two each year, continues about two months, the first starting in June, the second about the middle of October. Their carts were already half full, and they expected to return to their homes in the latter part of August. On their first trip the buffalo are hunted for the purpose of procuring pemmican, dried meat, tongues, etc.; the skins, being useless for robes, are dressed for lodge skins, moccasins, etc. In October the meat is still better and fatter, and they procure a like quantity of dried meat, reserving sufficient for a year's provision, which is about one-half of the whole amount procured; they dispose of the rest to the trading posts of the Hudson's Bay Company.
"The meat which they carry home finds its way through the Red river trader of the Fur Company to Fort Snelling, where it is exchanged for goods, sugar, coffee, etc., at the rate of fifteen cents a pound.

The trade of this company is all in dry goods, sugar, tea, ammunition, etc. Notes are also issued by the Hudson's Bay Company which are currency among them. Several of these of the denomination of 'five shillings' payable at 'York Factory', and bearing the signature of Sir George Simpson, were offered in change to various members of the expedition on purchasing various articles.

The skins collected in the summer are usually retained by the hunters for their own use, while the robes are a staple of trade with the Fur Company, and also with the Hudson's Bay Company, which latter company do a large business in this portion of the country, supplying the settlers with most of their clothes, groceries, etc.

The Red river settlements are made up of a population of half-breeds, traders of the Hudson's Bay and Fur Companies, discharged employees of these companies, and Indians, representatives of every nation of Europe, Scotch, Irish, English, Canadians, and speaking a jargon made up of these dialects, intermingled with Chippewa and Sioux patois, French being the prevailing tongue.

These settlements, started some twenty-five years since, now number, in the vicinity of Pembina mountain, some four thousand people. The men are generally much finer looking than the women. On the latter depend all the drudgery of camp duties, pitching the tents, attending to the animals, cooking, etc.

The men dress usually in woolens of various colors. The coat generally worn, called the Hudson Bay Coat, has a capot attached. The belts are finely knit, of different colored wool or worsted yarn, and are woven in the manner of sashes. Their powder horn and shot bag, attached to bands finely embroidered with beads or worked with porcupine quills, are worn across each shoulder, making an X before and behind. Many have also a tobacco pouch strung to their sashes in which is tobacco mixed with 'kini-kini' (dried bark of the osier willow scraped fine), a fire steel, punk, and several flints. Add to these paraphernalia a gun, and a good idea will be formed of the costume of the Red river hunter.

The women are industrious, dress in gaudy calicoes, are fond of beads and finery, and are remarkable apt at making bead work, moccasins, sewing, etc. They purchased from the train a supply of pemmican, dried meat, sugar, and other things, some of the men buying moccasins, whips, and other necessities."