

THE EARLY HISTORY OF IOWA.

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(Continued from page 652 of Vol. IX.)

THE EXPLORATIONS OF THE MISSOURI AND OF THE WEST.

THE country between the Mississippi and the Missouri, in richness of soil and beautiful native scenery, is not surpassed by any location in the world. Hence its early history becomes a matter of interest, and for this reason some of the early events connected with the west are collected.

At a very early date, the Spanish from Mexico made explorations on the coast of the Pacific as far north as the forty-third degree of latitude.

In 1610, Henry Hudson, while on an exploring expedition, entered, for the first time, the bay which bears his name. In 1669, some London merchants associated themselves together under the name of the "Hudson Bay Company," and received a charter from Charles II., granting them exclusive privileges to trade with the Indians in the whole region around Hudson Bay. The French of Canada were their rivals in the fur trade with the Indians till the cession of that province to Great Britain, in 1763, but the acquiring of this country threw the whole trade into the hands of this company.

Jonathan Carver was the first to conceive the project of crossing the North American continent, and in 1766 he left Boston, and traveled as far west as the river St. Francis.

In 1766 some native merchants of Upper Canada got up a rival company against the Hudson Bay Company, established their headquarters at Michilimarkinoc, and extended their trade into the west, and in 1778 they established a fort for aiding in carrying on their trade on Lake Athabaska, which was called Fort Chipewyan. The interest of these

two companies led them, in 1783, "to an association of the principal merchants under the name of the 'Northwestern Company,' with their headquarters at Montreal. After this union they took measures to extend their trade. Among the members of this new company was Alexander Mackenzie, who, under the auspices of the company, in 1789 started from Fort Chipewyan on an exploring expedition, made his way north, following the river, which now bears his name, to the Arctic Sea. After making this discovery he returned, and in 1792 again started from Fort Chipewyan and ascended Pease river, crossed the Rocky mountains, and struck the head waters of Frazer's river, which at first he proposed to follow to its mouth, but learning from the Indians that its course was nearly south, he left that river and turned his course west, and reached the Pacific ocean, in latitude fifty-two.

In 1792 Robert Gray, commander of the ship *Columbia*, from Boston, while exploring the Pacific coast, discovered and ascended a large river near latitude forty-two, which he called *Columbia*, after the name of his ship.

After acquiring the country west of the Mississippi from France, the government caused exploring expeditions to be fitted out to examine the newly acquired territory. President Jefferson commissioned Meriwether Lewis, captain, and Wm. Clark, lieutenant, both natives of Virginia, to take charge of one of these exploring companies. This party consisted of nine young men from Kentucky, fourteen soldiers of the United States army, two Frenchmen (an interpreter and hunter), and a black servant. In addition to these, there were engaged a corporal, six soldiers, and nine water men, to accompany the party to the head-waters of the Missouri, to help in carrying their stores, and assist against any attacks that might be made by hostile Indians. The party started from their encampment near St. Louis, on the 14th of May, 1804, and pursued their journey up the Missouri. On the 30th of July they had ascended the river as far north as the $41^{\circ}, 18', 1.14''$, where they stopped and made an en-

campment on the west side of the river. The land at this point consisted of a "plane above high-water level." Back of this plane was a woody ridge about seventy feet above it. At the edge of the latter they formed their camp. "This ridge separated a lower from a higher prairie," "which extended back about a mile to another elevation of eighty or ninety feet, beyond which is one continuous plane." From this point may be had a beautiful view of the river and adjoining country for a distance of from four to ten miles. Messengers had been sent out to the neighboring villages of the Indians to invite them to visit the camp for the purpose of holding a council. And "the next morning the Indians, with six chiefs, were all assembled under an awning formed with the main sail, in presence of all the party paraded for the occasion." Here the Indians were informed of the change in government, and that they were now under the protection of the government of the United States. This intelligence seemed to please them, and they manifested a desire to have trading houses established among them.

"The incident above related induced the party to give the place the name of Council Bluffs, a name which has become much noted."

There were in this vicinity several bands of Indians.

Near the mouth of the Kansas river, north of that river and west of the Missouri, the Kansas Indians had two villages, at which there lived about three hundred men. The Otoes, who had once been a powerful nation, and lived on the south side of the Missouri, about twenty miles above the Platte, had, with the Missourians, been involved in a war with the Omahas (Mahas), which had so much reduced these two nations in numbers that they were no longer able to sustain themselves against their enemies, and had placed themselves under the protection of the Pawnees. And at this time the remnant of these two nations lived together on the south side of the Platte, about thirty miles from its mouth, and were only about two hundred in number.

About five leagues above the Otoes, on the same side of

the river, was the principal village of the Pawnees, at which there were about five hundred men.

There was another village on the Wolf fork of the Platte, about ninety miles from the principal village, at which there resided two hundred and eighty men. There was another village on the Red river, where they formed a tribe of four hundred men.

Above the Pawnees were the Omahas (Mahas). Their principal village had been located about five miles back from the Missouri, on Maha creek, which had "once consisted of three hundred cabins," but about four years previous to this time they had been visited with the small-pox, which "had destroyed four hundred men and a like proportion of women and children," and after this calamity they set fire to the village and burned it up.

A short distance below where the party held their council, on the opposite side of the river, at a point where the bluffs approach the river, there had been a village of the Iowas; but they had abandoned this location and taken up their abode on the river Des Moines. Above the Omahas were the Yankton and Titon bands of the Sioux.

On the 20th of August the party arrived at the point where the bluffs reach the river on the east side, the first bluffs near the river they had found since they left the place where the Iowas had had their village. Here they had the misfortune to lose one of their men, Charles Floyd, who held in their company the position of sergeant. "He was seized with a billious colic, and all their care and attention were ineffectual to relieve him." A little before he died he said to his companions: "I am going to leave you; I want to write a letter,"—but his strength failed him before he accomplished his wish, and he died with a composure which justified the high opinion his companions "had formed of his firmness and good conduct." He was buried on the top of the high bluff with the honors of war, and the place of his burial was designated by a cedar post, on which was inscribed his name and the date of his death. This place was

called Floyd's Bluff, in honor of the deceased; and about a mile beyond this point there is a small river, about thirty yards wide," which is called Floyd's river. Here, in this lonely wilderness, many hundred miles from his friends, he remains rested in quiet till 1857, when the high water washed away the bluff so that they were about to tumble into the muddy waters below. When this information was brought to the citizens of Sioux City, a large number of persons repaired to the spot, secured his remains, and re-interred them, with great ceremony, within about two hundred yards of their former resting place, on a bluff about two hundred feet high, which point commands a view for many miles of the surrounding country in Iowa, Nebraska, and Dakota.

The party industriously pursued their journey up the Missouri till the second of November, when they stopped and commenced building cabins to winter in, while those who were to return to St. Louis commenced building a piroque for that purpose. On the 20th of November they left their boats and moved into their cabins. These quarters they called Fort Mandon, from the fact of its being located in the territory of the Mandon Indians. They were located on a "point of low ground on the north side of the Missouri, covered with tall and heavy cottonwood, in $47^{\circ}, 21', 47''$ of north latitude, at a computed distance, from the mouth of the Missouri, of sixteen hundred miles." They remained at this point till the seventh of the next April, when they left their quarters, embarked in their boats, and pursued their journey up the river.

The party now consisted of thirty-two persons. Captain Lewis, with four men, started on foot in advance of the rest of the party, and on the 13th of June he came to the great falls in the Missouri. "The hills, as he approached, were very difficult of ascent, and two hundred feet high. Down these he hurried with impatience, and seating himself on some rocks under the center of the falls, enjoyed the sublime spectacle of this stupendous object, which since the creation

has been lavishing its magnificence upon the desert unknown to civilization." "The river at this cascade is three hundred yards wide. On the left there is a perpendicular cliff about one hundred feet high, which extends up the stream a mile. On the right the bluff is perpendicular for three hundred yards above the falls. For ninety or a hundred feet from the left cliff the water falls in one smooth, even sheet, over a precipice at least eighty feet." The remaining part of the river the rocks break the current of water, which forms a splendid spectacle of perfectly white foam. From this point, for miles above, there is one continual series of falls and high bluffs, the water dashing furiously over the rocks, all of which presents most magnificent scenery to the observer.

Here they left the river, and made their way by land till they passed the falls, when they again pursued their journey by water. Having ascended the river to that point where it was evident they must soon abandon their boats, and not having recently met with any Indians, and feeling the necessity of procuring horses to enable them to cross the mountains, Lewis, on the tenth of August, accompanied by three men, left the party, to proceed to the head-waters of the river and penetrate the mountains, till they should find the Shoshones, who resided in that section of country. On the next day Lewis discovered "a man on horseback, at the distance of two miles, coming down the plain toward them," but he became alarmed, and fled, without their being able to converse with him. They undertook to follow the Indian, but there coming on a shower of rain, they lost the track and abandoned the pursuit. On the twelfth they found "a large, plain Indian road," which they ascertained led up the valley of the Missouri. They followed this road along the river, which led for some distance through a valley (in a southerly direction) two or three miles wide, when it "turned abruptly to the west through a narrow bottom between the mountains."

The stream now gradually grows narrower, till at the dis-

tance of two miles one of the men stood with one foot on each side of the rivulet, and "thanked God that he had lived to bestride the Missouri."

They pursued their route up the stream, till at the distance of four miles from the abrupt turn, they reached a small gap between the mountains, from the foot of one of which "issued the remotest waters of the Missouri." "They had now reached the hidden sources of that river, which had never before been seen by civilized man."

And as they sat down beside this pure fountain, and surveyed the scenery around it, "they felt themselves rewarded for all their labors" and difficulties.

"They left reluctantly this interesting spot, and followed the Indian path" till they arrived at the top of a ridge, from which they could see high mountains, covered with snow, in the distance, at the west. This ridge on which they stood formed the dividing line between the waters of the Atlantic and Pacific. They descended the mountains for three-fourths of a mile, when they reached a creek of clear, cold water running to the westward. This was the headwaters of the Columbia, and was called Lewis river, after the name of the discoverer.

Early the next morning they started again in the Indian road, and after pursuing their journey four miles they discovered a man and two women coming in the road towards them, but when they saw the strangers they turned and fled. They pursued their course and soon met another party. With them they obtained an interview, and succeeded in satisfying them that they were their friends, and the party conducted them to their village, where they were received with great kindness. This was the first time these Indians ever saw a white man.

√ Lewis took with him the chiefs and a large number of men to the point where Clark, with the rest of the men, had arrived with the boats, where they held a council, and obtained from *them* the requisite number of horses to pursue their journey, and a guide.

On the 30th of August they left their camp on the Missouri, situated at the point where they had arrived in their boats, and started across the mountains. After suffering many trials and hardships, on the 16th of November they arrived in full view of the Pacific ocean. They here rested for the winter, and formed their camp on the north side of the Columbia, three miles up Netul Creek, "in a thick grove of lofty pines, about two hundred yards from the water, and thirty feet above the level of high tide. At this point they remained till the 23d of the next March, when they distributed among the natives several papers giving a brief account of their travels, and also posted up a copy in the fort, for the purpose, if in case they should be lost on their return, that their discoveries might be known to the civilized world.

They now took their leave of the Pacific coast and made their way back across the mountains, and arrived at St. Louis on the 23d of September, 1806, having been about two years, four months, and nine days, and during this long fatiguing journey they only lost one man — Sergeant Floyd.

The explorations of Lewis and Clark created a stimulus among adventurers to explore the western wilderness, and open up a trade with the Indians. The Missouri Fur Company formed at St. Louis in 1808, at the head of which was Manuel Lisa, established trading posts in the Indian country, extending to the upper Missouri, and beyond the Rocky Mountains on the head waters of Lewis river, which appear to have been the first trading posts established by white men in the country drained by the Columbia.

In 1810, John Jacob Astor, of New York, engaged in the enterprise of the Pacific Fur Company; sent the ship Iroquois around to the Pacific coast, and another party was sent across the mountains to meet the others at the mouth of the Columbia, for the purpose of establishing trading posts and opening up an extensive trade with the Indians. But the ship was lost, and this effort did not accomplish what it was supposed it would.

In the war with Great Britain in 1812, most of the Indians on the frontier united with the English, which almost entirely interrupted all trade with the Indians on the part of the United States. The trade with the Indians was quite limited till 1823, when ——— Ashley made a successful expedition beyond the Rocky Mountains. And in 1826 the Rocky Mountain Fur Company of St. Louis commenced regular trips to the waters of the Columbia and Colorado. The American Fur Company also extended their trade through the west, and in 1832 Captain Boneville started with a party for the mountains, and was absent two years, most of the time on the waters of Lewis river. About the same time Nathaniel Wyeth, with a party of men, started west to establish trading posts, and "he established two posts;" one at Fort Hall, near the junction of the Pontneuf and Lewis rivers; and the other at Fort Williams, on Wappatoo island.

The earliest emigrations across the plains from the United States, to make permanent settlements west of the mountains, was in 1832, but the whole of the great western country, from the Mississippi to the Pacific, had been extensively traversed by hunters and traders.

In the fall of 1834, three companies of dragoons were stationed at "Fort Des Moines" (Montrose). At this time but little was known of the country which comprises the northern part of Iowa. To learn of this country, by the directions of the United States government, one of these companies, under the command of Captain Nathaniel Boone, was sent on an exploring expedition of the country up the Des Moines river. They started from the fort on the 6th of June, 1835, and pursued their journey up the dividing ridge between the Des Moines and Skunk rivers till the 22nd, when they arrived at the mouth of the Boone river. At this place they left the Des Moines valley, and took a northeast course, and on the 4th of July they reached Trout river, a small stream flowing into the Embarras river, not far from the waters of the Mississippi.

They spent three days on this river, and then took a south-east course, and on the 7th, struck the Mississippi in about latitude forty-four, at a point where Wabasha, the head chief of the Sioux, at that time had his village. A short distance below this village they made an encampment, where they remained till the 20th. From this encampment they took a southwest course till the 22nd, when they struck their outward path and pursued it till the next day, and crossed Root river at the same place they had before; and now they followed the dividing ridge between this river and the upper Iowa, pursuing nearly a west course till they crossed the upper waters of the lower Iowa, where they found the water four and a half feet deep, and forty yards wide. They then traveled a little west of south till they struck the northern extremity of Fox (Albert Lea) lake; thence in a westerly direction till they were between the head-waters of the Blue Earth river and the Sandy or east branch of the upper Des Moines, near the northern line of the state, where, on the 30th of August, near evening, they were attacked by a party of Sioux Indians and a brisk fight ensued.

This encounter seems to have changed their intended course, and caused them to hasten from this locality as fast as they could, and from this point they turned an almost due south course, and crossed over to the west side of the Des Moines, and by forced marches reached the Raccoon Forks of the Des Moines on the eighth of August, where they camped a short distance up Coon river and rested for one day. On the 14th they were at Appanoose's village, then situated on the south side of the river, near Ottumwa, which then contained three hundred and fifty persons. On the 16th, they crossed over the Des Moines and camped near where the town of Iowaville was subsequently laid out, at which point there was a village of Keokuk's band of four hundred and fifty Indians.

The next day they struck their southward track, and pursued it back to Fort Des Moines.

The acquiring, in 1832, from the Indians large tracts of land in northern Illinois and Iowa attracted particular attention to the west, and the country purchased from the Indians rapidly settled up.

In 1834 a party went across the plains in company with Wyeth, who was then acting as the agent of the Boston Fishing and Trading Company, which was under the direction of the Rev. Jason Lee and David Lee, who established a missionary station among the Callahpoewahs (Flatheads) Indians on the Willamette river, about sixty miles from its discharge into the Columbia.

Jason Lee made a visit to the states, and in 1839, returned again to Oregon with a party of fifty persons. From this time on the country purchased from France by the United States attracted much attention throughout the states, and emigration flowed rapidly to the west. In 1840, 1841, and 1842, large numbers crossed the plains with pack-mules for the purpose of making settlements west of the mountains.

In 1843 quite a number of families left Missouri, crossing the river at St. Joseph, a large number of which were from Iowa, with wagons and cattle, and succeeded in getting their wagons to Walla Walla, where there was a missionary station established; here they disposed of their wagons, and "packed from there into the valley, a distance of about five hundred miles."

In 1844 there was a large emigration west, which went up the Platte river, and pursuing a more southern route, found a way across the mountains by which they traveled to the end of their journey with their wagons.

The lands purchased from the Sacs and Foxes, which was thrown open for settlement in 1843, brought a large emigration to Iowa, and much interest was taken in exploring and finding out the resources and wealth of this state.

In the summer of 1848, A. Randal, who was detailed by Dr. D. D. Owens, of the United States geological corps, accompanied by M. Dagger of Iowa, undertook to make a geological survey of the Des Moines valley. They started

from Keokuk on their exploring tour in June, and made a careful examination of its botanical, agricultural, and mineral resources. When they had reached "the Chanjurhkop river, a tributary of the St. Peter's," they encountered a large party of the Sissitong Sioux Indians, who robbed them of their horses, provisions, and everything they had, except their papers and collections, and broke to pieces their instruments, and then ordered them to leave their country; and they would probably have perished in this wilderness country had they not, "on the evening of the same day, met a camp of Fox Indians," from whom they obtained a supply of provisions, and a pony, which assisted them in packing what little had not been taken from them. After being robbed they abandoned further explorations, and made their way as best they could for the settlements, and after a journey of nine days, nearly exhausted, they arrived at Prairie du Chien.

The report of their travels was published, in which they spoke "in the highest terms of the country" through which they went, "for beauty, agricultural capacity, and mineral resources." They represented that "for two hundred miles on the Des Moines, coal, gypsum, forming cliffs for miles; limestone, suitable for lime; clay, suitable for brick; rock, suitable for polishing, for grindstones, whetstones, and for building purposes, of superior quality," were found in abundance.

These favorable reports were extensively circulated, and caused large numbers to seek homes in the newly acquired territory.

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