

DAVID THOMPSON'S JOURNEYS IN THE SPOKANE COUNTRY

The last number of this *Quarterly* (January, 1918) chronicled the arrival of David Thompson at Kettle Falls, of the Columbia River, on August 20, 1811, and we now take up the itinerary after his arrival there again on October 30, following. Meantime he has explored the course of the Columbia River from there northward some three hundred miles to the mouth of Canoe River, in British Columbia; has explored the Canoe River some forty miles; has crossed the Rocky Mountains through the Athabasca Pass; and returned to Kettle Falls with goods for the winter's trade with the Indians. Crossing the Rocky Mountains at that latitude with a pack train during the month of October requires courage and endurance; and the navigation of Death Rapids, the most dangerous stretch of the Columbia River, in a canoe, requires courage and skill. Such experiences and the record of the first ten days of November (herein printed) indicate what sort of stuff David Thompson was made of. He ranks as one of the most remarkable men known in connection with the history of the Columbia River.

Upon arrival at Kettle Falls at this time he finds no one to meet him, and even no Indians there from whom he can procure horses; he is therefore obliged to walk seventy miles to Spokane House and then return to get his trading goods. Jaco Finlay, his clerk, was stationed at Spokane House, but from what little we can ascertain, does not appear to have been a man of much real energy, although quite intelligent. His name is not mentioned even. The record of these three trips between Spokane House and Kettle Falls is in a way a repetition of what has been previously recorded, but preserves for present day readers the continuity of these journeys, and makes more clear the trail then used. It is disappointingly silent as to any events at Spokane House, but confirms the location of that historic site as *one mile* from the confluence of the two streams. This is the spot agreed upon after research. The next transcript will concern trails in use to the eastward from Spokane House across the valley of the Spokane River.

[1811]

Oct. 31st.

Thursday. A fine day till Evening, then rain, & at 7 a.m. set off with Jos. Cote & Bap. Deleau on foot for the Spokane House. Pray

good Providence to keep us well. At 8½ a.m. at the lower crossing place.¹ At ½ p.m. at our Camp of Pt. of Fir,² at 4 p.m. at the Canoe crossing place,³ went abt. 1 m. beyond & camped for Rain at 5 p.m., say 3½ m. to crossing place 1 m. to Camp.

Nov. 1st.

Friday. A misty mornng. & a little Rain, afterwards fine, at 7.10 a.m. set off, held on to the Brook⁴ to where we baited formerly, then on to the Camp. of Michel, on to the place where we traded Roots,⁵ when finding 2 Tents of Indians, we camped at 4½ p.m. in hopes of getting Horses brot us, but without effect, they have none.

Nov. 2nd.

*Saturday.*⁶ A very fine day. At 6.10 a.m. set off, at ¼ p.m. at the foot of the Hills. At 4¼ p.m. camped at the Skeetshoo River, met a man & woman.

Nov. 3rd.

*Sunday.*⁷ A fine night & day. At 2¼ a.m. set off, at 5½ a.m. descended the Bank on the Skeetshoo River & at 7 a.m., thank good Providence, arrived at the Ho. very much tired, sent off directly a young man with a letter to Mr. F. McDonald⁸ to keep a look out for the Canoes should they pass by McGillivray's River, the Lads here searched for Horses till the evening when they went of to the large Meadow⁹ to bring those belong to the Coy., poor living.

Nov. 4th.

*Monday.*¹⁰ A sharp frosty mornng., at ¼ p.m. the Horses were brought, at ½ p.m. set off, at 2¼ p.m. at our Camp on the Skeetshoo River, at 4:50 p.m. at the bend of the first Brook, where we camped.

Nov. 5th.

*Tuesday.*¹¹ A fine day. Could not find the Horses till 9 a.m., at 9.10 a.m. set off, held on to 5¼ p.m. & camped abt. 2 m. short of the Canoe crossing place.

Nov. 6th.

Wednesday. Rain in the night & mornng., fine day, at 7.10 a.m. set off, held on till 1½ p.m., when, thank good Providence, we arrived

¹ Just above Meyers Falls.

² The camping place on August 19th.

³ About three miles above Arden.

⁴ Dunn Creek.

⁵ Probably on Long Prairie, south of Chewelah.

⁶ They walk today about twenty miles and camp at Tumtum on the Spokane River.

⁷ Their early morning walk is about ten miles.

⁸ Finan McDonald was then trading among the Saleesh or Flathead Indians and was cautioned to send messenger to watch for the North-West Co. party coming by way of Kootenay River.

⁹ Either Peone Prairie or Spokane Prairie about where Hillyard now is.

¹⁰ They travel about twenty miles and camp on Chimakaine Creek.

¹¹ They travel about thirty miles and camp on west side of the Colville River south of Arden.

at the Columbia & found my men & things all safe, the man had badly dried the meat, got it dried & laid up our Canoe. Got the baggage ready as much as possible.

Nov. 7th.

*Thursday.*¹² A fine day. At 10 a.m. set off on foot, part of the people on Horse back, at 11½ a.m. crossed the Root Brook, Co. S. 60 E. 3½ m. 15 or 20 yds \times 20 in. deep, held on S. 80 E. 4½ m., crossed a Brook of 2 yds., at 3½ m. crossed a Brook of 2 yds. \times here we baited at 1 p.m. At 2.10 p.m. set off Co. S. 80 E. ½ m. to the Meadow, then S. 40 E. 5½ m. following the Brook for nearly the whole way, camped at 4-¾ p.m., the men at 5¼ p.m., killed Part-ridges & an Owl, camped a little short of the end of the Plain, 2¼ m. of Co. gone, 2 small Brooks, & close to us a small Rill.

Nov. 8th.

Friday. In the Mornng. small Rain. Sent the Men off at 8-¾ a.m., did not find 2 Horses till 9¼ a.m., when they also came at 9½ on the top of the Knowls, just opposite the bold Brook¹³ with gravel Flats from the N. Ed. 11¼ a.m. finished the Knowls, at 10½ a.m. at the lower Traverse or canoe crossing place, Say S. 28 E. 1-¾ m. to opposite the bold Brook + 2¼ m. to the Canoe Traverse + 1¾ m. to end of the Knowls. S. 12 E. 1-¾ m. in a Curve to a Brook of 3 yds. \times from S.W.Wd. where we baited at ¼ p.m. At 1-¾ p.m. set off Co. S. 60 E. 7 m. 2.20 p.m. at the Traverse Brook \times 6 yds. & comes from the same Cut with the last do. & both run oblique into the Root Rivulet against its Current. 2.56 p.m. at the little Pond, at 3.15 p.m. at the next Brook 3 yds \times held on & late passed the Duck Ponds & to where I dined at the 2 Rills, stony & muddy, camped¹⁴ between them at 5 p.m., say 1¼ m. to Traverse Brook, 2½ m. to the Pond, 3¼ m. to the Brook from S. 20° Ed. 6 m. to the Duck Ponds + 1 m. to Camp. Saw a few Ducks & Geese. M.M. Carrott Roots when baked quite black & sweetish.

Nov. 9th.

*Saturday.*¹⁵ A fine Mornng. & day. At 8½ a.m. set off, at 9.40 a.m. at the Rill & Camp of Michel. S. 60 E. 3¼ m. at 10.40 a.m. at the Brook, Co. S. 5 E. 2¼ m., at 11.5 at the Rill & Camp of the Ind. S. 40 E. 1 m., baited. At ½ p.m. set off at 1 p.m. at the Rill of the long Plain, Co. S. 10 E. 1 m., 2½ p.m. at the Brook South of

¹² The usual trail to a camp on the meadow lands west and south of city of Colville before the road enters the hills on the west side of the River which he called the "knowls."

¹³ The Little Pend Oreille River.

¹⁴ Probably between forks of Huckleberry Creek.

¹⁵ Impossible to identify the many streams, but the "long plain" is evidently Long Prairie of today, and the "large brook" is the Chimakaine, and the camp at night is south of Springdale.

the Plain, 5 yd. \propto S. 10 E. 3 m., at 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ p.m. a Brook 2 yds. \propto S 10 E. $\frac{1}{2}$ m. at 2- $\frac{3}{4}$ p.m. at a Rill of 2 ft. S. 10 E. $\frac{1}{2}$ m. at 2.50 P. M. at a Rill of 2 yds. \propto S. 10 E. $\frac{1}{5}$ m. at 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ p.m. at the large Brook of 6 yds. \propto S. 10 E. 2 m., at 3- $\frac{3}{4}$ p.m. recrossed it S. 10 E. $\frac{1}{2}$ m., then a long swampy Brook on our right, large Brook of 3 yds across at which we camped at 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ p.m. S. 10 E. 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ m., we do not cross this Brook, we have come well in. Made much bending to the left in this last Course.

Nov. 10th.

Sunday. A fine cloudy day. At 8 a.m. set off, Co. S. 50 E. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ m. to the foot of the Hills, then S. 50 E. 1 m. to the Brook¹⁶ 2 yds. across, S. 50 E. 1 m. to the top of the Hills, 9 a.m., then Co. among the Knowls S. 60 E. 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ m. to the descent of the Bank to the Sketshoo River,¹⁷ Co. along do; up it S. 60 E. 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ m. Co. over the Pt. S. 60 E. 5- $\frac{3}{4}$ m. to the River again, then S. 60 W. $\frac{4}{5}$ m. to the Junction of the Rivulet¹⁸ with the Sketshoo River, the Brook or Rivulet 30 yds across. The Sketshoo River 40 or 50 yds across, Co. to the House, S. 30 E. 1 m., at 4.0 p.m. havg. at 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ a.m. come on the River & there baited $\frac{1}{2}$. Sent a man to tell the men to camp here, they came at 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ p.m.

T. C. ELLIOTT.

¹⁶ Rail Creek.

¹⁷ Tumtum again.

¹⁸ The Little Spokane, called by Mr. Thompson the "Trout Brook or Rivulet." The Indian ford was at the mouth of this stream.