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Salpian Journal 74 (unpublished) Notes
courtesy of Father Garraghan

Wednesday, June 3, 1/68

Early in the morning we had made every preparation for a long journey. The Rev'd Father De Smet then assembled all who were to accompany us, formed a circle, then offered one of the most impressive and appropriate prayers for the occasion. At 7 A.M. we made a start. (*The starting point is given in De Smet's account as Fort Rice, N.D.) Besides myself and Father De Smet was an escort of eighty friendly Upper and Lower Yanctonaix, Cut Head, Blackfeet and Unkapapa Indians. After travelling twenty two miles, we formed camp on the north bank of Cannon Ball River. (**~~we~~ had travelled southwest to this well known river. The facts about as to the condition of country, roads, prevalence of antelope, and growth of cottonwood are testified to in the book by Lieut. G.K. Warren.) The surrounding country is very undulating, but is covered with luxuriant grass. The roads were very bad for wagons. Some of the party came in with two fine Antelope, a welcome addition to our larder. Had quite a shower during the day accompanied with wind. At 8 P.M. we were quietly settled down. All seemed contented. Some were preparing their couches from the boughs of small cottonwood. Others, preparing to give contentment to the inner man, were occupied in cooking their supper.

Thursday, 4th

After passing a pleasant night, we soon got everything in readiness for another day's travel. At 6 A.M. we were on the move, taking a westerly course. The roads rendered soft by yesterday's rain, made it very heavy for our wagons. Continued on, stopping only to allow the animals rest. The Indians would then form groups, bring forth the never-forgotten pipe, and enjoy the halt, joking and smoking among themselves. The face of the country, same as yesterday. The frequent showers seemed to have put a new dress on the earth, the grass looked as if it had new life, and the variety of beautiful flowers "passed during the days", were waving to and fro with the gentle breeze, as if kissing their mother-earth rejoicing in a new existence. The Indians I kept in advance for the purpose of obtaining fresh meat. Were very successful, having killed eight Antelope. They could not arrive at a better time. We were just locating our camp and were ready to devour anything in shape of eatables. Selected a suitable spot to camp twenty eight miles from our last. Water is abundant, mostly found in small ponds and holes. The Box Elder, Elm and Wild Cherry is found along the Creeks and Rivers. The country is gradually becoming more level as we advance. Weather cloudy, some appearance of rain. Our Camp is on Three Butte Creek. (**Identified on early maps mentioned.)

Friday 5th

The Indians passed the night counselling among themselves, a dispatch having arrived, stating, that provisions had been distributed to their families, this causing a great deal of talk. At 5½ A.M. we broke Camp. After having gotten fully under way, we were overtaken by a heavy rain; it poured perfect torrents. As we were too far advanced to return to our old Camp and no wood to be found, we were compelled to pursue our way through the flood, to the Sand Buttes, (** See note three above,) making twenty two miles under the most unfavorable circumstances. The Indians with their wet robes and blankets, looked more like denizens of another world, than human beings, but still cheerful. Two Bears, chief of the Yanctonaix, had formed his camp when the wagons came up, which was not altogether as desirable a place as could be wished, taking the weather in consideration. Running Antelope of the Unkapapas, wished to proceed and select a more