

David Thompson's Narrative. Toronto The Champlain Society Edited  
by J.B. Tyrrell. (1784-1812) 1916

July 7th.. Having descended 10 miles we saw several men on horseback proceeding to the westward, two of them rode to the river side. We went to and smoked with them and each of us held on our ways. I learned that they were sent from a village to apprise them of our coming. Having continued for four miles we came to two long Lodges of the same structure as those we have passed, sufficiently well covered with rush mats; one of these lodges was two hundred and forty feet in length; the other sixty feet in length; the first 100 feet each by thirty feet in breadth. all these measurements are by stepping the lengths at three feet each step. By their account of the name of this tribe is Sinkowarsin (these were Pishquosh Indians, now known as Wenatchees, belonging to the Salish family and speaking the same language as the San Poil. Thompson had passed Rock Island rapids.)

they are about one hundred and twenty families and from the women and children must be about eight hundred souls: the language is still a dialect of the Saleesh but my Simpoil Interpreters find several words they did not understand; when we passed and put ashore belong them they were all dancing in their lodges to the sound of their songs for hitherto we have not seen a musical instrument even of the most rude kind along the river. We sent to them to come and smoke, five steady-looking men came, sat down near us and smoked; five steady looking men, came, sat down near us and smoked but although many of the Native we had passed viewed us with some suspicions as at loss what to make of us, these men much more so, nor could they countenance conceal that they did not know what to make of us; all the other villagers that had been apprised of us by some who had smoked with us, these had only heard of us by report; except what they had learned from the two norsemen; no speech, as usual, was

made and the Simpoil Indians who accompanied us explained to them all the they saw with us, after smoking a few pipes I requested all the other men to come which they did but in an irregular manner, and it was twenty minutes before they could be made to sit down. Smoking commenced and they offered us a small present of roots and berries, their attention was strongly fixed on our persons, especially on those who had let their beards grow; on our dresses which were wholly of woolen or cotton, their clothing being of heather. On our guns, axes, knives and making of a fire to which last they paid great attention; they appeared delighted with the use of the axe in cutting and splitting of the drift wood, I now explained to them by the interpreters the object of my voyage down the river that it was to procure for them articles and clothing such as they saw with us, besides many other things equally wanted by them.

All this passed in conversation with one and another, there was no chief to speak to them; a fine looking man came and sat close to me with strong curiosity in his face; after eyeing me all over he felt my feet and legs to be sure that I was something like themselves but did not appear sure that I was so, a very old man now came to thank me for visiting them and that he had the pleasure of smoking good tobacco before he died; at length being satisfied that we came as friends and (with) the intention of doing them good, they brought to us two salmon for which I paid them; they then lifted up their arms and hands towards the skies praying for our safety and to return to them; their appearance was much the same as those we had passed, but having more nourishment their persons were more full in form and many of the men were handsome with a manly look, the women I could not call any beautiful but many were pretty good looking with mild features, the children well formed and playful and respect with kind attention to each other pervaded the



whole; tho at present poor in provisions they were all in good health and except the infirmities of old age we have not seen a sick person, partly from using much vegetable food and partly from a fine dry temperate climate.

They describe their counry to the southward to be being high dry and barren, without animals; to the northward the lands are good with Antelopes, Mountain Sheep(big horn) and goats of which their clothing is made, and of the fine long wool of the latter they make good rude blankets. They had also a few Bison robes which they must have traded from other tribes; all these things allowed them to be better clothed than any tribe we had yet seen. We saw no weapons of war with them and like all the other tribes they may be said to be unarmed; and like them also they were all as cleanly as people can be without the use of Soap; an article not half so much valued in civilized life as it ought to be.

What would become of the Bell and the Beau without it. And also all line and cotton; I have often known the want of it and had to use fine blue clay as a substitute.

As we were about to leave this people with their prayers for our safety, a fine looking man came to us and requested a passage in our Canoe for himself and wife to a tribe below us of which he was a chief. He remarked to us that the Simpoil Indians could not interpret for us much farther down the river as the natives spoke a different language, which both himself and his wife well understood and that he would then become an interpreter glad of the offer we gave them a passage with their little baggage. After descending seven miles we put ashore to boil salmon for which while with the Indians our whole time is occupied in talking and smoking with them and keeping guard on all that is passing for with people to whom we are utterly unknown a trifling accident might produce serious effects.

Here was a place for a winter campment, it was of the form of a long lodge, the earth a dry light soil excavated to the depth of one foot, clean and level, the floor added of earth over which the lodge is erected. Having descended the current for twenty-one miles we camped for the night. (1) This camp was near the mouth of Crab Creek and the head of Priest Rapids where the town of Beverly is situated today. Thompson and his men suffered here from high wind and mosquitoes during the night and rigged up a mast and sail the next morning. This is the southern limit for Indians of the Salish family.

To this distance the banks of the River have become much lower, but all the bays opposite the points of the river have steep banks of trap rock about forty to fifty feet, the points are of fine meadow and when the water subsides to its usual level must be extensive; the current more moderate yet has many whirlpools. On the whole this day the river and country has a more pleasing appearance than usual but without woods, except a few scattered dwarf red Fir.

July 8th--Having proceeded seven miles we came to a village of sixty two families (2) The rapid current drove us half a mile below the village before we could land; the chief, a middle aged manly looking man on Horseback now rode down to examine us, he appeared very much agitated, the foam coming out of his mouth; wheeling his horse backwards and forwards and calling aloud, who are you, what are you. Our custom was to leave one or two men in the canoe to keep it afloat, the rest of us drew up near the shore, about three feet from each other, all well armed, myself in the front, apparently unarmed; this chief sometimes appeared to make a dash at us, we then presented our guns and he wheeled his horse, in about a quarter of an hour he became (2--These Indians called Skummoon in Thompson's notes are Snop Shahaptins from the Kimooenim (Snake River) a name which puzzled Lewis and Clark in 1805-06. This active



white haired man is mentioned by Alexander Ross the following month but higher up the stream.) composed my native interpreter who stood with us now spoke to him in a manly manner telling him who we were and what we came for, to which he listened with attention, then called out oy, oy. He was not<sup>1</sup> joined by a well made short stout old man, his hair quite white, he was on foot and came with a message. He invited him to come with his people and smoke up on which he set off on a gallop, the oldman on foot keeping near him. Having repeated to the people what we had said and to come forward and smoke he returned at the same pace, the old man keeping close to him. To our admiration, he was naked and barefooted and we could not help saying to each other which of us at his age will be equally active. The man came and smoking commenced, a present of four salmon and two fish of a small species with berries were made, of the latter we took only part. By the interpreter I told them what I had to say, the chief repeated the words in a loud voice which was repeated by a man in a louder voice. The women now came forwards, singing and dancing which they continued all the <sup>time</sup> ~~the~~ the men were smoking. The men were well formed but not handsome though their features were regular, though they were poorly clothed; and the women equally so, two of them were naked, but not abashed; they all had shells in their nostrils, some had fillets, round the head and bracelets of shells around the wrists or arms, but want of clothing made them appear to disadvantage, These people are altogether distinct from those we have seen and are of the Shawpatin or as it is sometimes pronounced Sararpa in nation of which there are several tribes and speak a language peculiar to themselves; it appeared soft with many vowels and ~~and~~ easy of pronunciation; it is the native tongue of the interpreter. These people, as well as those of the last village are making use of the seine net which is well made from wild hemp which grows on the rich low grounds. The net appeared about full

six feet in breadth by about thirty fathoms in length; it was trimmed and worked in the manner we use it, which gave them a supply for the day, and a few to dry. But fish however plenty can never compensate the want of deer, sheep and goats for clothing and frequently a change of food.

We left these people and proceeded forty miles to 5 1-2 pm when seeing a large camp before us we put ashore; four horsemen came to us and having smoked I told them to invite the men to come and smoke; they came and sat down in an orderly manner the pipes went around and the often repeated speech was made of my going to the sea to procure all the articles they were so much in want of and return to them, and for which they must be industrious hunters in the winter season and procure furs in payment; all this was readily promised; they said somewhat near their campment would be a good place for us to make a lodge and trade with them as the large river close below led them to a fine country and skirted the distant mountains we saw; that they had a very mild winter, the depth of snow they showed was about eight inches, they had sometimes more but it soon melted away. They represented to us that they had plenty of deer, two of the species very small (2) with small trout and other fish for the winter, with dried salmon; all the above in long detail was repeated by three chiefs, after each other, in a loud voice; they made us a present of four salmon for the first time, fat, and gave a little oil on the kettle (1) This was one mile below Pasco Franklin county, State of Washington where the Northern Pacific railway crosses the Columbia and Snake Rivers. The Indians of this encampment were the Sokulks who had entertained Lewis and Clark in October, 1805. The name Skaemena applied by Thompson is not noted by other travelers but presumably refers to the Yakema (yakima) River Indians. The Shahaptin and Yakima families often met here.) (2)



These small deer are the Columbian Black tailed deer .Odocoileus Columbianus Richardson later described them from the mouth of the Columbia river; and the coast white tailed deer, Odocoileus virginianus leucurus (Douglas) described from the Falls of the Willamette. boiled, they had neither roots nor berries; while the salmon season continues they live wholly by the sein net.

The name of this tribe is Skaemena, they are Shawpatins, and number one hundred and fifty families and are not less than about one thousand souls. They were all tolerably well dressed, many of the women had no shell in their nostril, and were less ornamented than those we have seen. They were healthy and as clean as people can be without soap. The men were generally above the middle size, rather tall, well made for activity, their features good, mild yet manly; many of the women would pass for handsome if better dressed, they were decent, modest and well behaved. And both sexes kind and attentive to each other and to their children most of the latter were poorly clothed or naked. After giving a dance for a safe voyage at 9 p m they left us and we passed a quiet night.

Chapter X..

July 9th Having gone half a mile we came to the junction of the Shawpatin river with the Columbia, the water is high in both the former is about five hundred yards in width strong current and turbid water, the natives say when the water is low it is a series of rapids; close below the confluence the Columbia is between eight and nine hundred in width. In the distance of three miles we passed twenty families seining of salmon, at two miles lower down we came to about twenty families with who was the chief of all the Shawpatin tribes; he received us in manners superior to all the other chiefs; he appeared about forty years of age, say six feet in height, of a mild manly countenance, good features and every way

a handsome man, clean and well dressd; we found him an  
 intellliteent friendly man, he made no speeches but discoursed with  
 us, as man with man; I found my interpreter to be a  
 person much noticed by him; he had several active men about  
 him who acted as Couriers to the other tri bes; others as soldiers  
 without arms; while we were there two old chiefs made their  
 appearance upon which he sent tDodd some of them about one  
 hundred yards to meet the ; upon explaining to him the object of our  
 v oyage he enter d into all our views in a thoughtful manner, pointing  
 out to us their helpless state and that under their present  
 c ircumstances they co ld never hope to be better for we must continue  
 in the state our our fathers and our children will be the same  
 unless you white men will bring us arms, arrows, shods of iron, axes,  
 knives and many other things which you have and which we verymuch want, w  
 we informed himtha e had armed all the natives pa ticularly the Saleesh  
 and Kootanaes and that as soon as possible we would do the same to  
 all his people; that the we we brought the Goods at present  
 obliged us to cross high mountains and through hostile people that we  
 n ow sought a short safe way by which all the articles they wanted  
 would come in safety. (1) Chief Yellepit of the Walla Walla tribe which  
 occupied both sides of the Columbia for thirty miles below Snake  
 river as well as the country about the Walla Walla river. Thompson  
 says in his notes that he had an American medal of 1801, Thomas Jefferson  
 and a small flag of that nation. The medal was given him by Lewis  
 and Clark who describe him as a "bold" handsome Indian with a  
 dignified countenance, about 35 years of age, about 5 feet 8 inches  
 high and well proporated. Alexander Ross also mentions him  
 under the name Allowcatt.)

He requestd we would make a lodge for trading at the junction of  
 the rivers and many of the natives would readily find their way to  
 that place; he viewed all we had with great attention but the



but the women were most delighted with the kettles, the axe, the awl and the needle; and I remarked in all their speeches, they never mentioned tobacco or woollen clothing as necessaries although highly desired, yet they were pleased when anything was paid for, to see blue beads, rings and other trifles for the women form part of the payment. This chief, whom with his small party had come here to have space for fishing, had separated themselves from the others, were actively employed in cleaning, splitting and preserving the salmon by smoke, using all the precautions which I have already noticed; he made a present of two good salmon for which I paid him five feet of tobacco; he remarked to me that they were obliged to be very industrious during the salmon season as it was the principal dependance ~~to~~ through t the year, for their only way of hunting the deer was by surrounding them, which seldom gave all of them meat enough;

Hitherto the country has lowered much and along the river when the water is low there must be much fine meadow but on the upper banks and to the foot of the hills the land is too dry, the grass short and not tender, a hard soil with the trap rock in places, how far it is fit for the plough I cannot say; the climate is very fine and even. In this month of July the heat of the day is always tempered by the westerly winds which rise about 10 a m and gradually increase to a gale at 10 p m then abate and by 2 or 3 a m there is a fine fine calm and heavy dew but at times the gale continued all night; I remarked to the chief the utter want of forest trees, nothing to be seen but a chance dwarf fir and their whole dependence was on drift wood, that in other countries there were forests of various trees which would require more than one moon to cross them; he said that they had no forests, that it was only in the countries of the Aleash tribes he had seen forests of one or two days journey; that it was more than three winters since he had been there and that the

south part of that country belonged to them; of late they had left it on account of the hostility of the Snake Indians of the Straw Tent tribe but if armed they would again possess that country from which even even from here we are not far; for in one day's march we come to the mountains (1) The mountains here referred to are the Blue Mountains of Eastern Oregon and the country where buffalo still ranged was the southern Idaho country along the courses of the Upper Snake River)

which there are low; the next day we cross them and the third day are where we hunt the Bisons for which we have plenty of good horses; but they have no bison clothing among them. Through the whole of these tribes I have seen no weapons of war, rarely a bow and arrows and those fit only for small deer; not a single stone ax and small sharp stones for knives without handles; they certainly have no turn for mechanics, an Esquimaux with their means would have stone tools and kettles to hold water and boil their fish and meat, whereas all these tribes do not appear to have anything better than a weak small basket of rushes for this necessary purpose.

Most of the musical instruments of the eastern natives are made of parched or rawhide dried as the tambour drum and rattle and even allowing the skins of animals to be too valuable for such purpose, yet the hoofs of the small deer might be made into an agreeable rattle as with the Indians on the east side of the mountains; the whole of their music is their own voice which costs neither time nor labor.

We embarked and proceeded 32 miles down the river and passed about 80 families in small straggling lodges; at one of which ten families we put ashore to smoke with them but they were terrified at our appearance. My men stayed on the beach and I went forward a few paces unarmed and sat down with a pipe and stem in my hand; they sent forward two very old Men, who lying flat on the ground in the most pitiful manner; crawling slowly frequently lifted their heads a



little as if imploring mercy; my Native interprete would not speak to them and all the signs I could make gave them no confidence; close behind the men the women crawled on their knees; lifting up their hands to me as if supplicating for their lives; the men were naked and the women nearly the same, the whole a scene of wretched destitution, it was too painful that they did not smoke with us; I gave to each of the men two inches of tobacco and left them. They appeared as if outcasts from the others; all those we have passed today appeared idle, we saw none of them employed with the Seine when I spoke to the interpreter he gave when we camped to learn the state of these people, he gave me no answer and both himself and his wife did not wish to be spoken to about them.

In the afternoon when the river ran to the WSW a high mountain, isolated of a conical form, a mass of pure snow without the appearance of rock appeared which I took to be Mount Hood and which it was; from the lower part of the of the river this mountain is in full view and with a powerful achromatic telescope I examined it; when clear the snow always appeared as fresh fallen, it stands south of the Columbia river near the shores of the Pacific ocean and from six thousand feet and upwards, is one immense mass of pure snow; what is below the limit of perpetual snow, appears to be continually renewed by fresh falls of snow; its many streamlets form rivers one of which the Willamette, a noble river through a fine country falls into the Columbia River.

July 10th A fine morning. Having gone twenty one miles we came to 82 families; they were well arranged for the salmon fishery, their seine net was about eight feet in width with strong poles at each end and good lines and (1) Thompson's camping place this night was not far from Castle Rock, Oregon. about fifty fathoms in length, they had also dipping nets with strong hoops and about five feet in depth. Their Canoes as usual with all the tribes were made of the hollow trees

drifted down the river; I measured one of them 36 feet in length by three feet in width. We staid about an hour with them smokin and talking but they had no information to give us; proceeding seven miles we put ashore at two lldges containing eighty families with whom we staid two hours; after smoking had commenced they made us a present of three salmon for wh c I paid two feet of tobacco. They then gave us a dance to their singing, superior to any dance and the song was varied in notes to which the dancers kept time with an easy graceful step, for which all the natives are remarkable, the youth of each sex formed a separate curved line, the elderly people behind them, the dancing and singing were regulated by an old chief and ended by a short prayer for safe treturn.

On anquiring why they always preferred the curved to the straight line in dancing the answer was that the ucurved line gave them t e pleasure of seeing each other and that every one behaved well, which a straight line did not allow; in none of their dances that I have seen do they intermix with each other, but each person keeps steady to the first place, slowly dancing a few steps forward and backwards without any change of the body. At the end of each eance which may last a few minutes they sat down; in doing so both sexes with an easy motion sunk to the ground, none of us could sdo the same, we were too stiff. After leaving these friendly people we went to two men who wee seining salmon and bought two fish. Shortly after 6 p.m. we put up verymuch fatigued with a heavy gale of head wind which drifted the sandlike dust (This camp was as nearly as can be determined on t e north bank of the river opposite the J<sub>h</sub>n Day river and below what are now known as the Indian Rapids. It was here that Thompson first heard from the I<sub>n</sub>dians news of the American ship's arrival)

From information and from what we have seen the coun ry through much lowered is still high, dry country covered with short grass now faded for want of rain, the banks of the river ar all of



this kind of grassy ground gently sloping from the interior, which is an undulating plain to the foot of the distant hills. And the soil everywhere appears poor and sandy; it may do for sheep but what we see is not fit for any other animal. And we never see an animal of any kind; the few trees are as usual stunted red fir, the only tree that will grow on these dry grounds and the natives wholly depend on the driftwood for all purposes. The night being clear I observed for Latitude and Longitude of which I make a constant practice to correct the survey of the river and to give a true geographical position to every part though of no importance to the general reader, and therefore not noticed.

July 11th " fine morning, having proceeded three miles we came to a village of sixtythree families, with whom we staid smoking for near an hour and went on our way over many strong Rapids some of them required all our skill, ~~over~~ to avoid being upset or sunk by the waves; we passed two villages but could not pass ashore. At 2 p m we came to a village of about 300 families we put ashore close below them; they gave us a very rude irregular dance to discordant singing; several respectable men came and tried to keep order which they barely maintained, we saw no person who appeared to act as chief; no speeches were made and as my stock of tobacco was diminishing every( Having passed through the dangerous John Day Rapids and Hell-Gate Rapids and Portaging over the Great Falls at Celilo Thompson camped on the south bank of the river at the head of the upper Dalles (Ten Miles Rapids) at the Indian village of Echeloots (Klickita) where is situated another great salmon fishery of the Columbia rivalling that of Kettle Falls above. The Indians of this village were the first Thompson had met belonging to the Chinookan family and here his Shahaptin interpreter left him and returned to the village at Celilo where Thompson found him on the

return journey.) xday I allowed smoking to only the respectable men; they were all poorly clothed and the women more so than the men and this sex in decency, modesty and cleanliness fell short of the upper country women; like all the natives along the river their living was the salmon fishery with the seins and dipping nets. Had they been clean and well dressed both sexes would have had a good personal appearance. He informed me they had heard of white people from the sea and warned us all to be wary of the Dalles and Falls which were close below us, the soil was light and like what we had passed; at night the old men with some trouble got them all to retire to their lodges and after smoking a few pipes left us to pass a quiet night.

July 12th—we were now at the head of the Dalles to which there is a carrying place of a full mile. I have already mentioned the Dalles of the Saleesh and Spokane rivers these Dalles were of the same formation, so steep, high walls of basalt rock with sudden sharp breaks in them which were at right angles to the direction of the wall of the rivers; these breaks formed rude bays under each point was a violent eddy and each bay a powerful dangerous whirlpool these walls of rock contract the river from eight hundred to one thousand yards in width to sixty yards or less; imagination can hardly form an idea of the working of this immense body of water under such a compression raging and hissing as if alive. Some twenty-two years after I passed in 1811 M Peter Ogden one of the Partners of the Hudson's Bay company on his way to Fort Vancouver came to these Dalles in a Canoe with 11 men. M. Ogden put ashore and walked down, he advised the men to carry the canoe with the baggage over the carrying place, the road of which is near the bank; the water being low they preferred running the Dalles they had not gone far when to avoid the ridge of waves which they ought to have kept they took the apparent smooth water, were drawn into a whirlpool



which wheeled them round into it's vortex, the canoe with the men clinging to it went down end foremost and they were all drowned; at the foot of the Dalles search was made for their bodies but only one man was found, his body much mangled by the rocks. Last evening when the old men quitted us they promised to send us men and horses to take everything over the carrying place but after waiting for them some time we set out to work and crossed everything over a tolerable good path to a small sandy bay; here we had the pleasure of seeing many grey colored seals; they were apparently in chase of the salmon; we fired several shots at them to no purpose.

About one more mile of Rapids of which we carried two hundred yares finished the falls and rapids of this river; the country in appearance has improved, the grass somewhat greener and a few trees in places. My interpreter with his wife left us at the great village but his own people are higher up the river. I paid him as well as I could for his services which were of great service to us; but he said he would accompany us to the sea if he understood the language of the native. He was a fine steadymanly character, cheerful often smiling but never laughing he once remarked to me when he saw my men laughing heartily that men ought not to laugh, it was allowed only to women.

...having passed 16 miles we saw the first ash trees with willow and aspen...came to a village of houses built of logs, the people which are called Wawthlarlar (2)

Had just passed Lyle, it is on the south side of the river just below this point that the ash and oak trees begin. These Indians were called by Lewis and Clark Wahclellahs, and those on the south side the Yehhuhs. Thompson is now at the head of the Cascades, the Great Shoots of Lewis and Clark and the fallen "Bridge of the Gods" of Indian tradition. According

to the text he camped on the north side of the river but his notes indicate that he camped on the south side just above the site of Cascade Locks, Oregon.

(Later in book, on way back)

August 4 and 5--Two fine days we proceeded 60 miles, strong current and Rapids; for the whole of this distance the sides of the river are of basalt rock in all its wildest forms, a field for the imagination to say in, and forms structure from castle to a table.. Columbia here is 900 yards in width with powerful current.....

We are now at the junction of the Shawpatin river with the Columbia (By Lewis and Clark ..by the United States named Lewis and Clarke's river\* a distance of three hundred and thirty-four miles from the sea; from the above place to the Ilthkoyape falls is four hundred and three miles; the whole of this distance we know by experience to be little else than a series of heavy rapids from their descent....

We had passed one hundred and twenty men at their occupation seining salmon and were now at lodges containing two hundred men and their families; they were all of the Shawapatin tribe and this place was their principal village, (1) These are the Sokulks once more, really Nez Perces. Alexander Ross supplements the narrative here with an interesting note: On the 14th early in the morning what did we see triumphantly waving in the air at the confluence of the two great branches but a British flag hoisted in the middle of the Indian camp planted there by Mr. Thompson as he passed with a written paper laying claim to the country north of the forks as British Territory. Ross says that these Indians called Thompson



Thompson "Koo-Koo-<sup>o</sup>int" which appears to be a corruption of the Salish word for "Star" and probably meant "The Star Man."

they are a fine race of men and women and with their children very cleanly in their persons and we no longer had to see naked females, many were well clothed, all of them decently with leather and in clean order; it was a pleasure to see them. We camped with them and as usual (they) entertained us with singing and dancing for an hour; here I traded a horse for my Indian interpreter and otherwise paid him for his services and he remained with his people. We smoked and talked until late. They were pleased with the account of the exertions we were making to supply them with the many articles they want and the hopes of a vessel with goods coming by sea next year; but that at present

I must proceed to the mountains for goods; all these natives have the good sense to see that to assist me is to forward their interests.

The junction of this river with the Columbia is in Latitude 46 12 15 N Longitude 119, 31, 53, west variation 18 degrees east.

August 6--We left this friendly village with hearty wishes for our safe return and ascended a strong current to noon on the 8th. The water was high with the tops of the willows just above water; the width of the river between four and five hundred yards; the land moderately high, the banks sloping but all sandy, sterile with coarse hard grass in round turfts, equally bare of birds and deer as the lands we have passed. We were now at the road which led to the Spokane river, having come some five or fifty miles up this river; we had smoked at four small villages of whom we procured salmon of the lesser species, of about three to five pounds weight, they were well tasted and in good condition but to cook them we were still dependent on drift wood for these sterile grounds produce no trees. At the road was a village of fifty men with their families. They were anxiously waiting our arrival, they had sung and made speeches until they were hoarse, and danced till they were tired,

we sat down and smoked; told the news and then informed them that I had

(They had now left the Columbia and begun the ascent of the Snake river. Thompson had decided to return to Spokane house overland instead of by the slow river route against the current and had sent a messenger to Jacob Finlay for horses. Meanwhile he continued in his canoe up the Snake river to the crossing of the main trail leading northward) TO GO TO THE MOUNTAINS NORTHWARD OF US AND THE COURSE OF THIS RIVER being northward I could proceed no farther in my canoe; that my men would require horses to carry our things on our intended journey for which I would pay them on my return from the mountains; to all that I said they listened at times saying oy oy we hear you; they retired and shortly after made me a present of eight horses and a war garment of thick moose leather such as I have already described; but saddles and other furniture they had none to spare us and we had to make use of our clothes for these purposes.

On the 9th we laid up the canoe for future use (1) it was very leaky as there being no trees we could procure no gum for the seams while we were doing this the old men came to us and after smoking said the chiefs and the men below us are good people but whatever they give they expect will be paid but this is not to make a present which is a gift without payment such as we have made to you; this was all very good but I knew they could not afford to make presents and gave to each person who brought me a horse for the value of ten beaver skins in goods payable at any of the trading posts which when explained to them, they were much pleased though they could not comprehend how a bit of paper could contain the price of a Horse. Having finished a series of observations I found the latitude of this place to be 46 36 13 N longitude 118 49 51 west and the variation 19 degrees east. In the afternoon we left this place and also on the 10th went northeastward 28 miles; we crossed several



brooks and at length thank heavey got clear of the sterile ~~stend~~ sandy ground with wr tched grass of the basalt formation which in this distance often ~~too~~ shows itself above ground with many sharp splint rs which cut the feet of the horses; in taking my leave of the basalt rocks I may safely say that although I paid attention everywhere to find some traces of an igneous origin yet I have not found any, no ashes, no scoriae and every spring of cold water. For my part I have no belief in its supposed origin but believe that as the diety has created all the other various rocks so he has likewise created the several hundred square miles of basalt rocks of the Columbia river and adjacent countries.... the number of natives along the banks of the Columbia may be estimated at 13,615 souls, reckoning each family to average seven souls. This estimation is not above the population. The estimation was made by counting the number of married men and ~~00~~ that smoked with us and also that danced. Their subsistence appears to be about 10 months on fresh and dried salmon and two months on berries, roots and a few antelopes, those on the upper part of the river once a year cross the mountains to hunt the bision and thus furnish themselves with dried provisions and bison robes for clothing

(1)--This was at the mouth of the Palouse river (Drewyer's River of Lewis and Clark) otherwise styled by the fur-traders Pavion, Pavillion or Flag river. It was another established camping place for the Nez <sup>r</sup>erces. Later it became Lyons ferry, the crossing place for all travel between the Walla Walla and Kootenay and Colville and Spokane districts and the crossing of the first military road surveyed by the United States government between the Columbia and Missouri. Thompson did not wait for the horses which Jacob Finlay was to send ~~by~~ but negotiated a horse trade against a note in hand.)

(Spokane house 90 miles from the Snake river as the Crow flies.)

Ilthkopape falls.. Spokane House.

On return trip at Celilo falls....

One came and informed us that some of the Chiefs with their men were coming to seize our arms and keep them; we directly got ready for the defensive; and soon saw a straggling party coming towards us; when near us and seeing us ready to defend <sup>u</sup>rselves they made a halt; after some sharp words on each side they retired; we had to keep watch all night it was very stormy and drifting sand; they kept walking about and with all our watch ng they stole from us fifteen ~~10~~ feet of the line for tracking the canoe up ~~the~~ current. These people are part of the same ~~village~~ large village that behaved so rudely as we passed on our road to the sea. I have already remarked that the <sup>u</sup>pper Dalles of all the rivers on the west sides of the mountains are formed of basalt; these last which we call the great or upper <sup>u</sup>pper Dalles, had the natives been more peaceably inclined I intended to have passed a few hours in examining them

August 1--We had some difficulty to get the interpreter to embark, which having done we set off, thankful to heaven for having passed the last of these troublesome people; a short distance above the village we came to an isle which was held sacred to their dead. There were many sheds under which the dead bodies were placed all which I wished to examine but my interpreter begged of me not to do it as the relations of the dead would be very angry, ~~we~~ we passed about 170 men in several parties into which they have not divided themselves to have full space for sening salmong upon which they are all employed. Having proceeded 26 miles the banks of the river the same barren basalt and the plains much the same we camped at 7 p m with searching about for bits of wood enough to boil the kettle. (1)

August 2--Early set off and proceeded 26 miles in this distance we passed



one hundred and fifty five men and their families they were all employed with the sein and with success; in the early part of the day measured a salmon four feet four inches in length and its girth two feet four inches; this is the largest of the species but (not the largest I have seen.

August 2 Having advanced a full mile we came to a Rapid from which the very many shells we named the Muscle Rapid; these shells are very frequently found on the beach as well as on the rapids; the natives find them alive but do not consider good to eat and only hunger obliges them to use them for food....

"(1 the camping place at night was some distance below the mouth of the John Day River. The Hell Gate and John Day Rapids were difficult to ascend with the line.

2 This day's travel included several strong rapids and took the party only about as far as Roosevelt on the North Bank or Arlington on the South bank. The rapids where mussels were observed were probably those now known as Indian Rapids near Squally Hook.

August 3 and 4th--Appearance of the country much better.. rattlesnakes etc etc.

(On August 3 Thompson got beyond the high hills into the lower country and appears to have camped near Cayote station in Oregon  
On August 4 he lined up the Umatilla Rapids where he complained of rattlesnakes which still exist in some abundance in that neighborhood and camped near either Juniper on the south bank or Tomar on the north bank)

(This account written by David Thompson when 70 years old