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Our encampment was within a few miles of the place where the road crosses to the north fork, and various reasons led me to divide my party at this point. The north fork was the principal object of my survey; but I was desirous to ascend the south branch, with a view of obtaining some astronomical positions, and determining the mouths of its tributaries as far as St. Vrain's fort, estimated to be some two hundred miles further up the river, and near to Long's peak. There I hoped to obtain some mules, which I found would be necessary to relieve my horses. In a military point of view, I was desirous to form some opinion of the country relative to the establishment of posts on a line connecting the settlements with the south pass of the Rocky mountains, by way of the Arkansas and the south and Laramie forks of the Platte. Crossing the country northwestwardly from St. Vrain's fort, to the American company's fort at the mouth of the Laramie, would give me some acquaintance with the affluents which head in the mountains between the two; I therefore determined to set out the next morning, accompanied by Mr. Preuss and four men, Maxwell, Bernier, Ayot, and Basil Lajeunesse. Our Cheyennes, whose village lay up this river, also decided to accompany us. The party I left in charge of Clément Lambert, with orders to cross to the north fork; and at some convenient place, near to the *Coulée des Frères*, make a *cache* of everything not absolutely necessary to the further progress of our expedition. From this point, using the most guarded precaution in his march through the country, he was to proceed to the American company's fort at the mouth of the Laramie's fork, and await my arrival, which would be prior to the 16th, as on that and the following night would occur some occultations which I was desirous to obtain at that place.

July 5.—Before breakfast all was ready. We had one led horse in addition to those we rode, and a packed mule, destined to carry our instruments, provisions, and baggage; the last two articles not being of very great weight. The instruments consisted of a sextant, artificial horizon, &c., a barometer, spy glass, and compass. The chronometer I of course kept on my person, I had ordered the cook to put up for us some flour, coffee, and sugar, and our rifles were to furnish the rest. One blanket, in addition to his saddle and saddle blanket, furnished the materials for each man's bed, and every one was provided with a change of linen. All were armed with rifles or double barrelled guns; and, in addition to these, Maxwell and myself were furnished with excellent pistols. Thus accoutred, we took a parting breakfast with our friends, and set forth.

Our journey the first day afforded nothing of any interest. We shot a buffalo toward sunset, and having obtained some meat for our evening meal, encamped where a little timber afforded us the means of making a fire. Having disposed our meat on roasting sticks, we proceeded to unpack our bales in search of coffee and sugar, and flour for bread. With the exception of a little parched coffee, unground, we found nothing. Our cook had neglected to put it up, or it had been somehow forgotten. Tired and hungry, with tough bull meat without salt (for we had not been able to kill a cow), and a little bitter coffee, we sat down in silence to our miserable fare, a very disconsolate party; for yesterday's feast was yet fresh in our memories, and this was our first brush with misfortune. Each man took his blanket, and laid himself down silently; for the worst part of these mishaps is, that they make people ill-humored. To-day we had travelled about thirty-six miles.

July 6.—Finding that our present excursion would be attended with considerable hardship, and unwilling to expose more persons than necessary, I determined to send Mr. Preuss back to the party. His horse, too, appeared in no condition to support the journey; and accordingly, after breakfast, he took the road across the hills, attended by one of my most trusty men, Bernier. The ridge between the rivers is here about fifteen miles broad, and I expected he would probably strike the fork near their evening camp. At all events he would not fail to find their trail, and rejoin them the next day.

We continued our journey, seven in number, including the three Cheyennes. Our general course was southwest, up the valley of the river, which was sandy, bordered on the northern side of the valley by a low ridge; and on the south, after seven or eight miles, the river hills became higher. Six miles from our resting place we crossed the bed of a considerable stream, now entirely dry—a bed of sand. In a grove of willows, near the mouth, were the remains of a considerable fort, constructed of trunks of large trees. It was apparently very old, and had probably been the scene of some hostile encounter among the roving tribes. Its solitude formed an impressive contrast to the picture which our imaginations involuntarily drew of the busy scene which had been enacted here. The timber appeared to have been much more extensive formerly than now. There were but few trees, a kind of long-leaved willow, standing; and numerous trunks of large trees were scattered about on the ground. In many similar places I had occasion to remark an apparent progressive decay in the timber. Ten miles farther we reached the mouth of Lodge Pole