

With the Indians in the Rockies

Uncle Wesley stayed with us only a few days that spring. He intended to remain a month, but one morning Pierre Chouteau, the head of the great fur company, came to our house and had a long talk with him, with the result that he left for Fort Union the very next day, to take the place of some one who had died there.

So I went back to my studies, and my parents kept me closer at home than ever. I was allowed to go out on real play spells only for two hours on Saturday afternoons. There were very few American boys in the town in those days. Most of my playmates were French Creoles, who spoke very little English, or none at all, so naturally I learned their patois. That knowledge was very useful to me in after days.

I am going to pass over what I have to say now as quickly as possible, for even after all these years, and old as I am, the thought of it still hurts. In February of the following winter my father fell ill of smallpox and