

hurried to the junction of Bear Creek and the Saskatchewan, crossed that river and ascended the North Fork in search of a valley, which Outram mentions on his map, "The-Valley-of-the-Lakes." The entrance to this valley is quite nine miles from the mouth of the North Fork. At low water, a ford may be easily made opposite the rift in the hills, but at high water, can only be reached by crossing below on the main stream and following the west shore of the river. The trip though short, was an arduous one, and almost devoid of real interest. We found a very ancient Indian trail, which needed much circumnavigating and cutting, to get even our now depleted packs through; the growth was very heavy and the way consequently dark and gloomy. By a hawling, noisy little river, we made the only camp where a sign of feed seemed possible for the tired horses, and that in the midst of fallen timbers on the avalanche-swept hill-sides. Outram describes this valley as he saw it from the summit of Mt. Lyell, 11,500 feet below him; we saw it at 8000 feet, where we climbed the following day, the sun beating down upon us, and the surrounding clouds so low that Lyell and everything else interesting was utterly obscured. The lovely lakes were only sloughs after all and the chief joy of the trip proved to be that we had been the first travellers to break the spell of silence in that lonely cleft of the hills. It had been many years since an Indian had been there, and the only other sign of life, was the blow of the axe from a solitary white hunter who had passed in the dead of winter. It was now October 5, and Howse and Baker Passes, our return route, quite unknown. Up the Middle Fork and to the Howse Pass, was like reading ancient history. One hundred and fifty years ago, the Indians from the Kootenai country took this portion of the trail on their journey to the Saskatchewan Plains (hence the name Kootenai Plains), to trade with Kline of Jasper House. As far as Howse Pass, it was delightful trailing; being but 4800 feet, we were on and over almost before we knew, and soon tumbling down beside the merry, chattering Blaeberry River. The instant Howse Pass is crossed, the character of the vegetation changes, and the trail becomes impeded with heavy fallen timber and an almost tropical undergrowth. Government surveyors had preceded us in the fall of 1907, and though the way was not a bed of roses, miles and miles of fatiguing work had been saved our men as far as the "Hunter's Cabin."