

wards to a point near the Great Elbow of the Saskatchewan 125 north of the Line. In the central portion of this triangular district the plateau has on its north side a few sheltered ravines containing small groves of poplar, and in the country falling towards the north, being less broken, some good pasture is found. This locality, which is of very limited area, probably 36 square miles in all, was for a few years the winter residence of about 80 families of half-breed hunters, who, though originally belonging to the Red River Settlement, 25 days' journey to eastward, were forced by the migration of the buffalo to travel so far westerly in pursuit, that they were unable to return to Red River, and have consequently abandoned their old home, and have established their winter-quarters nearer the buffalo-country. This site, known as Woody Mountain, had been visited by many of the old half-breeds of Red River, and though it was suspected to be in British territory, it does not appear to have been visited by any travellers competent to determine its geographical position. It was consequently a matter of the greatest value and importance that the reconnaissance party of the British Commission during the summer season of 1873 were able to push so far to the westward as to discover the position of this oasis in the middle of the semi-desert, and but for the happy accident of meeting a party of Sioux Indians who said that they had just come from a hunters' encampment a long day's journey to the northward, this site would not have been discovered that season, for it lay 25 miles north of the boundary-line, concealed among the ravines on the reverse or north side of the plateau, of which the southern escarpment only had been explored, further progress northward having been arrested at the time by the equinoctial snow-storms, which left 18 inches of snow on the high ground, and completely filled up the valleys by drifts. The back track of the Sioux Indians was followed through the snow for 25 miles northward across the plateau, where the reflected glare of the snow was so great as to cause all the reconnaissance party to be more or less affected with snow-blindness. The rude and desolate huts of the half-breed hunters were found in some sheltered ravines, and, with one or two exceptions, all the families were absent in the direction of the Rocky Mountains for the autumn buffalo-hunt. A few hours' detention at this place, and the good fortune of a bright, sunny morning, sufficed to determine the latitude and longitude of this favourable spot, which was found to be 22 miles north of the boundary and 416 miles due west of the Red River. It was found from its position and natural advantages of wood, water, and good pasture, to be admirably suited for a *dépôt* site from which the Boundary Commission could complete the marking of the