

# Report of the Annual Meeting Rapports annuels de la Société historique du Canada

Report of the Annual Meeting

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Volume 8, numéro 1, 1929

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/300553ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.7202/300553ar>

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Éditeur(s)

The Canadian Historical Association/La Société historique du Canada

ISSN

0317-0594 (imprimé)

1712-9095 (numérique)

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Citer cet article

Sage, W. N. (1929). John Work's First Journal, 1823-1824. *Report of the Annual Meeting / Rapports annuels de la Société historique du Canada*, 8(1), 21–29.  
<https://doi.org/10.7202/300553ar>

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## JOHN WORK'S FIRST JOURNAL, 1823-1824

By WALTER N. SAGE

In the Archives of British Columbia at Victoria, B.C., are preserved the manuscript journals of John Work. Transcripts prepared by Mr. Robert Edward Gosnell are in the Public Archives in Ottawa. Several of the journals have been published in the *Washington Historical Quarterly* and the *Oregon Historical Quarterly*. Messrs. William S. Lewis and Paul C. Phillips have edited the journal of the next Trading and Trapping expedition to the Flathead and Blackfoot Indians,<sup>1</sup> in 1831. Hubert Howe Bancroft was acquainted with these Work journals. Practically all of the journals which have been published deal with Work's activities south of the present International Boundary. The one exception is the journal of the McMillan expedition from Astoria to Fraser River in 1824 which sought a site for a trading post and explored the mouth of the river. This journal published by the Washington University State Historical Society in 1912<sup>2</sup> is really the second journal of John Work in chronological order and immediately follows the journal which is the subject of this paper. The Archives of British Columbia is planning the publication of all the Work journals.

The peripatetic side of fur trading life is clearly portrayed in these journals. John Work does not usually make records of happenings at the posts. These events were chronicled in the journals kept at the forts. What Work does is to write down day by day in his almost indecipherable handwriting, what happened when he was on one of his numerous journéys. His first journal of 1823-24 is no exception to the rule.

John Work or Wark, as the name apparently was originally spelled, was born in the north of Ireland in the year 1791.<sup>3</sup> He entered the service of the Hudson's Bay Company about the year 1814.<sup>4</sup> Until 1823 he was employed by the company in the vicinity of Hudson Bay. In that year he was ordered to proceed with Peter Skene Ogden to the Columbia. He left York Factory on July 18, 1823, and arrived at Spokane House October 27. He wintered at Spokane House and spent most of the summer of 1824 on the Columbia River going to and from Fort Astoria. Returning to Spokane House in August he set out on August 24, 1824, with Finan McDonald on a trading expedition to the Flathead Indians. He then went back to Astoria and returned up the Columbia. He was at Spokane House when the express arrived in October 27, bringing Governor Simpson and Dr. McLoughlin arriving on November 8. Ten days later he accompanied the McMillan expedition to Fraser River.

In June, 1825, he left Vancouver with brigade for the interior and the next year went back to Fort Vancouver with the brigade. But there is no need to trace all his movements in detail. Suffice it to say that he spent the year from 1826 to 1831 trading along the Columbia river. In that year he succeeded Peter Skene Ogden in charge of the Snake River brigade.

<sup>1</sup> Lewis and Phillips, *Journal of John Work*, Cleveland, The Arthur H. Clark Co. 1923.

<sup>2</sup> *Washington Historical Quarterly*, Vol. III, pp. 198-228.

<sup>3</sup> This is by inference. He died Dec. 22, 1861, at the age of seventy. Cf. *British Colonist Victoria*, B.C. Dec. 23, 1861; Lewis and Phillips, *op. cit.* p. 61.

<sup>4</sup> Archives of British Columbia, Memoir II. Victoria B.C. 1918, p. 12.

He was now a chief trader.<sup>5</sup> He led an expedition to the valley of the Great Salt Lake but met with little success on account of the hostility of the Blackfeet.<sup>6</sup> Returning from this journey he conducted another trading venture among the Flatheads and Blackfeet.<sup>7</sup>

Returning to Fort Vancouver in July, 1832, he was sent down to "Bonaventura Valley" in California. This expedition was not very successful. His men fell sick and he was hindered by American competition. The Russians in California were not sympathetic and would not sell him needed supplies. In disgust Work turned back, arriving at Fort Vancouver April 2, 1833. He was at once sent to the Snake river. In 1834 Work led a hunting party to the Umpqua country in southern Oregon.

In 1834-35 Work was placed in charge of the company's shipping on the northwest coast with headquarters at Vancouver. In 1837 he was placed in charge of Fort Simpson<sup>8</sup> where he remained until 1849. During this period he was in 1846 promoted to the rank of chief factor.<sup>9</sup> In 1849 he retired to Victoria and in 1854 Governor James Douglas appointed him a member of the Council of Vancouver Island.<sup>10</sup> He died in Victoria, as we have stated, on December 22, 1861.

John Work was a genial Irishman who served the company faithfully and well for thirty-five years. He possessed a strong physique, otherwise he could never have endured the terrific strain of almost constant travelling. He was a keen trader and if many of his expeditions were unsuccessful we must remember that he had to face not only adverse conditions but Indian hostility and American competition. Bancroft quotes a contemporary's opinion of him as "a tender hearted, generous Irishman who often amused his associates by his murder of the French language."<sup>11</sup>

So far as is known Work's first journal has never yet appeared in print. It is interesting as an account of a transcontinental journey of over a century ago and for its detailed account of life in the Columbia during the spring and summer of 1824.<sup>12</sup>

The journal begins at York Factory as follows:—

"July 1823 Friday 18

"Having received orders to that effect I embarked with Mr. Ogden for the Columbia with two light canoes four men in each. Mr. (John Lee) Lewis also embarked with us for Cumberland House. It was one o'clock when we embarked. The day was fine and we got on well we stopped near Penny cutaway.<sup>13</sup> Mr. Lewis killed a deer near cut."

The route followed was the usual one by way of Hayes River and Oxford House to Norway House. The weather was hot and sultry with occasional thunder storms. Ogden was making good time for Work remarks on several occasions on the length of the day's journey. They reached Oxford House a little before sunset on July 23. There they obtained a supply of pemmican. Starting out at three o'clock in the morning on July 26 the canoes reached

<sup>5</sup> The date of Work's promotion to commissioned rank is given in E. H. Oliver, *The Canadian North-West*, (Ottawa 1914) I. 624, as 1830. But the Minutes of Council 1830 (*ibid* I. 651) list him as a clerk. The minutes of Council for 1831 (*ibid* I. 666) list him among the chief traders for the Columbia District. Lewis and Phillips (*op. cit.* p. 58) give the date 1831 quoting Washington Historical Quarterly I. 263.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Oregon Historical Quarterly XIII, 363-371, XIV. 280-314.

<sup>7</sup> This journal has been published by Lewis and Phillips, *supra* Note I.

<sup>8</sup> E. H. Oliver, *op. cit.* II. 767, (Minutes of Council for 1837), Lewis and Phillips *op. cit.* v. 60 give the date as 1835.

<sup>9</sup> Lewis and Phillips, p. 60.

<sup>10</sup> Archives of British Columbia, Memoir II. p. 24.

<sup>11</sup> H. H. Bancroft, *The North West Coast*, II. 464.

<sup>12</sup> The writer is indebted to Mr. John Forsyth, former Archivist of British Columbia, and to Mr. John Hosie, the present Archivist, for permission to make excerpts from the original MS.

<sup>13</sup> Pennycutaway River runs into Hayes River about twenty-five miles from York Factory.

Play green Lake that afternoon. Messrs. Ogden and Lewis went on ahead to Norway House taking with them one of Work's voyageurs. Work followed the next morning and arrived at Norway House "a little after sun rising some hours before any of the gentlemen got up."

Starting off from Norway House about 12 o'clock (noon) the canoes made favourable progress for about twenty miles, part of the way under sail but the sea became rough and the travellers had to put to shore. The supplies taken on board at Norway House had weighted the canoes rather heavily and they were now low in the water. The next day, July 29, the lake was still too rough to allow the canoes to proceed and the party enjoyed an unexpected holiday. The weather having moderated the express started again, but not until it was discovered that one of the voyageurs had deserted. He had evidently started to walk back to Norway House, a cross-country journey of about twenty miles.

And so the travellers went on across the north end of Lake Winnipeg to Cedar Lake and the Saskatchewan River to Cumberland House which they reached on August 5. It was the height of the fly season for we read, "we were like to be devoured with flies last night and today." Ogden engaged another voyageur to take the place of the one who deserted at Lake Winnipeg. Mr. Lewis left the express at Norway House. Work tells us that they had now six men for each canoe. A supply of pemmican was taken on board at Cumberland House but much of it was found to be moldy and quite unfit for use. As a result the voyageurs faced a shortage of provisions. Nor were the Indians of much assistance for we read under the date of August 11:

"We saw two bands of Chippewyan Indians, but they had no provisions to give us. Mr. Ogden says that there is never anything got from these Indians in this way. The cause is that formerly the Canadians going past would take what provisions they had from them and give them scarcely anything for it, hence they take care to keep anything they may have concealed in the woods."

Two days later while making their way along the chain of lakes which communicate with the Churchill River, Ogden, Work and their companions overtook the New Caledonia brigade commanded by McDougall. Ogden was very apprehensive that their provisions would not last until they reached Fort Isle à la Crosse and so McDougall gave him half a bag of pemmican.

On August 16 the express reached Isle à la Crosse. There the canoes were repaired. Work tells us that a new canoe which they had intended to take in exchange for one of their own was found worse than the one they had and so could not be taken. Fort Isle à la Crosse was the most important post in this region. Here the southern route to the Columbia separated from the northern route which led to the Athabaska, Mackenzie River and also by way of Peace River across the Great Divide to New Caledonia.

The men's provisions were just exhausted when the canoes were pulled up on shore at Fort Isle à la Crosse. Work then bears testimony to the appetite of the voyageurs.

"The men's provisions were just done. On leaving F<sup>14</sup> the canoes had 2 bags of Pemmican (one of them turned out to be a bag of grease given in mistake) and a bag of flour. At Oxford House a supply of two bags more was got. Then at Norway House a further supply of four bags of Pemmican and at Cumberland five bags more. Two of the bags got at Cumberland were unfit for use and have to be cast away

<sup>14</sup> F York Factory. This symbol is often used for the factory in fur trading journals.

which leaves eleven bags that have been used in thirty days from York Factory besides  $\frac{1}{2}$  bag from Mr. McDougall. The men certainly worked hard but they eat as well."<sup>15</sup>

Forty pounds of dried meat was obtained for the men at Fort Isle à la Crosse—a meagre enough ration which was expected to last out until a supply of fresh provisions was secured at Moose Portage. The route now lay up Beaver River which flows into Lake Isle à la Crosse from the south. The men were soon complaining of the poorness of their fare. Some Indians whom they met furnished them with a little venison and the men tried their luck at hunting but without result. On August 22, the travellers passed an encampment of "free men"<sup>16</sup> and Indians but they reported that they were starving. The men were tired of dried meat which was so tough that they could not satisfy the pangs of hunger. The carcass of a buffalo was found but it was not edible. The voyageurs became excited for a moment when they came upon some fresh buffalo tracks but their hopes were in vain. At length on August 26, they came to the Moose Portage which leads from Beaver River to the Saskatchewan. Here the hoped for provisions did not materialize. Ogden decided to send Work with three men on foot to Edmonton to get food. One of the men, J. B. Gadwin, had wintered for several years in the Saskatchewan country. He was to act as guide. Ogden remained in camp with the other twelve men.

The little party set out in the afternoon of August 26, lost their way and having killed nothing on their journey went supperless to bed. Their equipment consisted of their guns, three quarters of a pound of powder, twenty-five balls, two blankets among four persons, one knife each and a small pot which Work carried.

Gadwin, apparently, was not a very competent guide and failed to find the trail to Moose Lake. At dusk the party encamped. Their supper consisted of two small ducks. Throughout the day they had found some few berries. They had had no breakfast. When they stopped for the night they had not had a drop of water.

The next day, August 28, the travellers reached the Saskatchewan. Following the river "along a good track" in the evening they met a canoe and two boys who were going to Carlton. From them they got "a good supper of the flesh of the jumping deer, which "Work quaintly adds, "we were not out of the need of having had no breakfast." The boys told Work that he was on the wrong road and the travellers lost several hours in making their way through long weeds and grass and over burnt, fallen wood to the river. But the trail still eluded them and it was not till the following day, August 29, that with the assistance of a Mr. Rock who was going with horses to Carlton House that they found it. That afternoon they fell in with a "herd of about 16 buffalo" and succeeded in killing a buffalo bull. They took enough meat to last for two days.

Finally on September 3, the weary quartette reached Edmonton, utterly tired out and their feet "much injured for want of shoes." The previous day they had had no breakfast, but they had supped off nine small ducks and a muskrat. That morning they had gone hungry but when they reached Edmonton La Rocque gave them an excellent dinner.

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<sup>15</sup> There were four men, besides passengers, in each of the two canoes from York Factory to Cumberland House, and six men in each canoe from there to Fort Isle à la Crosse. The consumption of pemmican was about three pounds per man per day—an average amount.

<sup>16</sup> Time expired servants of the company were known as "free men".

At Edmonton Work ascertained why provisions had not been sent to Ogden. The following is part of the entry for September 3:—

“The cause of no provisions being sent to Moose Portage was none having been received in time. The Indians are all at war and none of them worth mentioning have visited the Fort during the summer, so that no provisions have been received, but a small quantity, part of which was sent off yesterday to the Five Islands to meet the Columbia canoes. Mr. La Rocque imagined that Mr. Ogden would have been able to procure as much provisions as would have enabled him to reach that place. All the provisions at the Fort, consisting of three bags of pemmican and three bundles of dried meat, was now got ready with the utmost expedition, with which I am to go down the river in a canoe with the three men who accompanied me, while two other men are to proceed by land with five horses to meet us at Dogmeny's creek for the purpose of conveying provisions to Moose Portage, and if the provisions be found too little to serve the people from three to Five Islands part of the horses are to be killed to make up the deficiency. This is the only practicable way of getting a supply to Mr. Ogden.”

Work started down the river in a freshly gummed canoe, which was none the less so leaky that they had to put ashore and gum it. At the same time they cooked “a meal of excellent meat and potatoes,” a luxurious contrast to the starvation of a few days previous. The canoe met with various accidents but in spite of this, assisted by a blanket rigged as a sail, the voyagers reached Dogmeny's Creek in safety just before sundown on September 6. Three days later, after many adventures, Work and his men reached Moose Portage. There he found a letter from Ogden stating that his lack of provisions coupled with Work's delay in returning had forced him to push on up the Beaver River towards Lake La Biche where he hoped to get some food from the Indians and free men. At last on September 10 Work overtook Ogden. Except for sixty pounds of pemmican which they got from a man who was on his way to meet William Connolly, Ogden and men had been subsisting on a few fish—six to eight a day—and some wild berries.

Ogden was now very ill, being seized by violent chills. He was utterly worn out and was suffering not only from the pangs of hunger but from the fatigue of walking day by day along the river bank. The Saskatchewan was now too low to allow anyone to travel in the canoes, which were being dragged through the shallow water by the men on the bank. In spite of chills and fever Ogden pressed on. Part of the time he rode, occasionally he was able to ride in a canoe, but when he was feeling stronger he walked. Usually he paid up for attempting to walk. We read thus in the entry for September 13.

“Mr. Ogden who appeared to be nearly recovered, was again seized with another shivering fit and taken very ill this evening. He walked along shore in the afternoon, probably the fatigue caused the relapse.”

Both the steersmen were suffering from sore feet and being unable to work had to walk along shore all the way up the river. Ogden's condition grew worse. He was delirious at night but he would not give in. It was indeed a terrible journey. But Ogden was endowed with a strong constitution and slowly he recovered.

On September 14 Ogden, Work and their men arrived at the portage leaving from Beaver River to Lake La Biche. This portage is between eight and nine miles long and everything had to be carried, even the canoes. A number of Indians and freemen were encamped at the lake and Ogden purchased some fresh meat in return for tobacco. Ogden was still very ill, each evening the chills returned and the nights were torture but by morning he was usually well enough to proceed. The Athabasca,

or as Work calls it the Great Deer River, was reached on September 19. The current was too swift for the use of the paddle and fortunately the water was low enough to admit of polling. This was faster than towing or "tracking" and the voyageurs made good progress. Five days later, September 24, the canoes reached Fort Assiniboine which was then in the process of erection. Work thus describes this new post of the company on the Athabaska:—

"Wed. 24. Embarked at daylight and about noon arrived at a new House which Mr. McDonald the gentleman who is superintending the building calls Fort Assiniboine. It is situated on the North side of the River. This is the House which was to have been built at McLeod's Branch, the distance of which is four days work up the river, so that we were surprised at understanding that the buildings were here."

On September 27 the express passed McLeod's branch and on October arrived at Jasper House. After a three day's rest Ogden and Work left Jasper with their canoes a little after sunrise and in a few hours arrived at Henry House. There they left the canoes. On October 10 they reached the top of Athabaska Pass. Work thus describes the Great Divide:—

"Friday 10. In the afternoon we crossed the height of land. This though so named is in the narrow valley which we have been following and is enclosed between high mountains topped with snow—that on the left hand or East side is called McGillivray's Rock in honour of Mr. W. McGillivray who was the head of the N.W. Co. it is a very high mountain. The one opposite to it tho' less elevated is also very high. Between these two mountains are situated three small lakes all in a line, in the one we just came to the branch of the Elk or Athabasca river which we have been following has its source and is at just very narrow. In the third Lake the foul or faint hearted river (sic) which empties itself into the Columbia, rises, the Middle Lake empties itself into the third one and when this water is high it also runs into the first one. So that at the season of the high water, both the above rivers may be said to have their rise in this Lake, though they run in opposite directions. The foul hearted river is here very narrow and tumbling down through rough stones and rocks, the banks in many places soft and boggy. The Road is sometimes in the one and sometimes on the other side of the river. Encamped in the afternoon near what is called the big hill.

"Saturday 11. "Overcast in the morning.

"Proceeded on our journey, after ascending a pretty steep hill on the west side of the valley, we came to the top of what is called the big hill, which we descended through a very steep and difficult road in many places towards the top and on the top of the hill boggy, and often almost blocked up with fallen wood towards the bottom of the hill the road is harder and better. At the bottom we again fell into the faint hearted river which here receives another small river from the West. We proceeded down a narrow valley between steep hills some of which are topped with snow though covered with wood nearly on the summits. The river often divides into different channels and wider from side to side of the valley which is here called flats and is entirely overflowed in the season of high water.

"The hill which we came down is covered with very large wood chiefly pine and cedar, some of the largest of the latter are 12 feet in circumference. I measured one which is 18 feet in girth. There is also a small shrub called the prickly ash. Some brush are met with at the bottom of the hill. The cedar are not found further up than about the middle of the hill. On reaching the bottom of the hill the climate seems greatly changed from what we have had for some time past."

On October 13 the travellers were at the Boat Encampment. Here they found Kennedy and Alexander Ross who had been waiting twenty days for them. They now made haste and arrived at Kettle Falls on October 20. On the 22nd Ross and one man set out for Spokane. That day Kittson and one companion arrived from Spokane with the "melancholy intelligence that six of the freeman who accompanies Mr. McDonald to the Snake Country were killed by a war party of plains Indians from the other side of the Mountains."

Ogden, Kittson and Work set out for Spokane on October 25. Kennedy and Birnie with twenty-one men started for Astoria. On October 27 Kittson and Work arrived at Spokane House. Ogden with the remainder of the express party arrived on October 28, 1823.

At this point John Work's journal breaks off abruptly to be resumed again in April 15, 1824, when Peter Skene Ogden, John Work and Finan McDonald left Spokane House with a brigade of men and horses for Fort George, (Astoria). At Spokane Forks they found the boats awaiting them and arrived at Fort Okanagan on April 18. After waiting for boats from Fort George the brigade set out from Fort Okanagan on May 1 and two days later were at Fort Nez Percé (Fort Walla Walla). They passed the Cascades on May 11 and arrived at Fort George on May 13. The annual ship from England not having arrived and food being short at the depot, Work was ordered to go up the river to fish for salmon taking with him thirty-five men in three boats. For purposes of trade Work's party was provided with "a small outfit of Tobacco, Axes, Hooks, Rings, Files, Knives Beads and a little ammunition." The ammunition, Work tells us was not to be given for fish if they could be procured otherwise. The salmon fishing continued with varying success until the end of June when Work paid a flying visit to Fort George. The ship had not yet arrived and Work after obtaining a small supply of much-needed trading articles returned up the river early in July. It was a very wet season. Day after day Work pens the following entry: "Weighty rain the greater part of the day."

At length at the beginning of August Peter Skene Ogden decided that he could wait no longer for the ship. Accordingly on August 2 John Work, Finan McDonald and Francis N. Annance left Fort George with six loaded boats. Ogden accompanied by John Warren Dease, John McLeod and Mr. Kennedy caught up to the boats on August 3 and the whole brigade started up the river. John Work who was sent on ahead arrived at Spokane House on the 16th and remained there till the 22nd. Ogden and the boats reached Spokane Forks on August 25. Work met him with horses and four days later the brigade was at Spokane House.

The next day, Finan McDonald and John Work with a party of thirteen men and a supply of goods set out for the country of the Flatheads on a trading expedition. On their way they obtained six hundred and fifty beaver skins, twenty bales of deer provisions and some buffalo robes and dressed skins. Their trade was interrupted on September 10 by letters from Spokane House informing them of the arrival of the ship at Fort George on August 24. McDonald and Work were then near the Coeur d'Alene Plains. They made a rapid return to Spokane House and on Monday September 13 Ogden and his party started for Fort George. A week later the brigade was at the depot on the Columbia where they remained until September 28. On October 7 they were at Fort Nez Percé on the return trip. Ogden next day went on with the boats to Spokane Forks but Work started off overland to Spokane House "with letters and horses in case Mr. Dease can procure any from the Indians." Work obtained mounts for himself and one companion and arrived at Spokane House on October 14. Three days later accompanied by two men with forty horses Work set out for Spokane Forks where he was to wait for Ogden and the boats.

But from this point it is best to allow John Work to tell his own story.



- Monday 18 Arrived at the Forks in the afternoon. It was foggy in the morning and we lost a good deal of time searching the horses which had strayed, three of which we could not find. Sent an Indian to seek them in the afternoon.
- Tuesday 19. The Indian arrived with the horses in the morning.
- Wed'y. 20. Mr. Ogden arrived with the boats in the morning 21 days from Fort George which is reckoned an expeditious journey with loaded boats. The after part of the day was occupied arranging the property for horseback.
- Thursday 21 The property and all the Spokan men but 2 were sent off to Spokan in charge of Mr. McDonald. Mr. Ogden remained with me and the remainder of the extra men to wait for the Express.
- Wed'y. 27. The Express arrived in the afternoon, 2 Boats with Governor Simpson, Dr. McLaughlin (sic), Mr. McMillan and Mr. Dears and Mr. McKay.
- October, 1824. The Govr, Dr. McLaughlin, Messrs McMillan, Ogden and
- Thursday 28 McKay went off to Spokan—I was left with the men. The Governor informed me that I am to go to the Sea.
- Sat'y. 30. The gentlemen returned from Spokan—The Boats are ordered to be gummed in the evening, so that everything may be ready tomorrow.
- Sunday 31. Embarked about 10 O'clock with the Govr and Mr. McMillan in on (sic) boat and Dr. McLaughlin and Mr. McKay in another for Fort George. A third boat went ahead a few days ago to Okanagan. Mr. Ogden and the people for Spokan remain to proceed to their destination. In the evening we encamped below the Sampoil River.
- Nov. Embarked at daylight and arrived at Okanagan in time for breakfast
- Monday 1. Here a halted (sic) was made the remainder of the day preparing despatches for Mr. McLeod.
- Tuesday 2. Continued our journey early, and encamped in the evening just above Stoney island.
- Wed'y 3. Proceeded on our journey early in the morning and Stopped in the evening some distance below the Priest's Rapids.
- Tuesday 4. After Supper last night we persued our voyage and continue on all night and arrived at Walla Walla a little after Sunrising, where we remained for the day.
- Friday 5. We took our departure from Wallawalla after breakfast, and encamped in the evening a little below the Big island. We were considerably retarded the greater part of the day by a strong head wind.
- Sat d'y 6. Embarked before daylight and came to near halfway between the Dalls and Cascades, everything was carried at the Shoots, but we ran both the Big and little Dalls. We saw a good many Indians yesterday, only about a hundred at the Shoots.
- Sunday 7. Embarked in the night, passed the portage at the Cascades and encamped in the evening opposite the upper branch of the Willamat. We had a Sails wind part of the day below the Cascades.
- Novr 1824. After supper last night continued our journey and arrived at Fort
- Monday 8. George in the evening. The wind was favorable and assisted us a good deal.

The rainy season has not yet commenced."

The above extracts are indicative of the speed at which Governor Simpson and Dr. McLoughlin were travelling. They made fast time from the Forks of the Spokane to Fort Astoria. It was rare that the voyageurs were forced to paddle all night but Simpson loved to race and did not spare his men.

The rainy season did not commence until Sunday, November 14, but then we read of "weighty rain in the night and all day." In the meantime Governor Simpson and Dr. McLoughlin had been preparing to send out James McMillan and an exploring party to the mouth of Fraser River. John Work's first journal concludes with the following entry concerning this expedition:—

Wed y 17. "The Weather has been showery since Sunday last. preparations have been made for some days to send off an Expedition to the Northward, for the purpose of ascertaining the Situation of the entrance of Frasers River and the possibility of navigating the coast in small boats. Frasers River and about its entrance are also to be examined if it can be accomplished. It is understood from a report that these are the principal objects of the undertaking.—The party are to consist of Mr. Jas McMillan, who commands the Expedition, Mr. Thos. McKay, Mr. F. N. Annance and Myself and 35 men. The Journey is to be performed in small boats 3 in number. Everything is now prepared to start tomorrow."