

A HISTORY OF

Spokane House 1810-26

FROM THE JOURNALS OF THOSE WHO WERE THERE



Mark Weadick

FRIENDS OF SPOKANE HOUSE

SPOKANE HOUSE HISTORY 1810 - 1826

From the journals of those who were there

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*Dedicated to Jacques Raphael Finlay (1768-1828)
The first and last citizen of Spokane House*



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PROLOGUE

The North West Co., Pacific Fur Co., and Hudson's Bay Co. all contributed to the fur trade history at the Middle Spokane Indian's Great Gathering Place, Nim Chin Tseen.

These fur traders in the field were focused on obtaining beaver pelts to meet a huge European hat demand, and not acquiring the Indian's land or changing their spirituality.

The Plateau Tribes at the time of contact had bow and arrows, but no metal implements or pottery cookware. The traders brought in trade guns, steel knives, axes and fire steels, plus metal kettles to trade for beaver and other pelts.

The fur trade companies also depended on the Tribes to provide food and horses, which the Indians traded to the companies, in addition to beaver pelts, for beaver credits. It was a mutually rewarding relationship, and the "currency" was the beaver pelt.

Alcohol was not traded to the Indians by the fur trade companies at Spokane House, or elsewhere in the Columbia Department. Alcohol came in later with the European emigrants and U.S. Military.

This history of Spokane House was written using existing fur trade journal quotations to provide a detailed chronology of trading activities, and challenges experienced at Spokane House, and the Spokane District in the production and transportation of furs and provisions. Key words and phrases have been highlighted to facilitate a quicker reference to fur trade terms and events.

The Appendices are designed as "go to" references particularly for people interested in developing an early 1800's persona for living history at Spokane House.

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Mark Weadick, May 20, 2015
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

SPOKANE HOUSE HISTORY 1810-1826

From the Journals of those who were there

News of the successful Lewis and Clark expedition helped spur the Canadian North West Co. to find a way through the Rocky Mountains to the headwaters of the Columbia River. Meanwhile John Jacob Astor owner of the American Fur Co. was also inspired to charter the Pacific Fur Co. to establish a trading post, supplied by sea, at the mouth of this mighty river. The race to establish fur trade in the Columbia was on.

The history of Spokane House really starts with the beaver. The value was in it's dense under fur used for making hats. The ever-increasing demand for gentlemen's top hats and military hats made from the felted fur drove the expansion of the fur trade across North America.



Across the Rocky Mountains:

The North West Company (NWC) led the fur trade across the Rocky Mountains. This business, incorporated in 1778 by a group of nine prominent fur traders from Montreal, was a partnership with profits being divided by shares owned.

The Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), chartered in 1670 by the King of England, was given the fur trade franchise to all tributaries of Hudson Bay. As we shall see, this "franchise" was aggressively challenged by the Canadian fur trade peddlers from Montreal.

David Thompson started his fur trade career as an indentured clerk for the HBC in 1784 at the tender age of 14. He worked for the company 13 years during which time he was taught how to compute longitude and latitude in order map land areas.

When Thompson found out that the Company wanted him to settle as post manager he quit, and went to work for the NWC, as field clerk and land surveyor.

In 1804 Thompson was made a NWC partner and was post manager at Rocky Mountain House at the head of the North Saskatchewan River. He had a wife Charlotte who was half Cree.

Responding to a group of the Kootenais from the west side of the mountains request for trade, Jaco Finlay was hired by the NWC in the summer of 1806 to clear the Indian trail from Howse Pass down the Blaeberry River to the Columbia River for David Thompson.

Jaco Finlay was a free hunter, independent trapper born into the fur trade with a Ojibwe/Cree mother and Scot father. As we shall see Jaco played a key role in the development of the Inland Northwest fur trade.

In June 1807 David Thompson with his clerk Finan McDonald and voyageurs set out to cross the mountains. After floundering through miles of snow and downed timber, they reached the upper Columbia River. Traveling up stream and into the head of Lake Windermere, Thompson started building Kootenae House in July of 1807. With Thompson were French speaking Iroquois, Nippissing, and Metis "free hunters" who trapped beaver and provided meat for the brigade. Jaco Finlay was part of this group of free hunters.

Finan McDonald was a big Scot over six feet tall with red hair and beard. He was a skilled field clerk and Thompson's second in command. He had a Pend Oreille/Spokane wife and gave her the name Charlotte. Finan also played a prominent role in the fur trade.

By September of 1809 Thompson and company had reached the north shore of Lake Pend Oreille and built Kullyspel House near present day Hope, Idaho with McDonald left in charge. Continuing up the Flathead (Clark Fork) River, Thompson with clerk James McMillan, engagees, who were company employees, and free hunters built Saleesh House, near Thompson Falls, Montana and spent the winter.

By spring 1810 Thompson had acquired 46 packs of furs and eight bags of pemmican, totaling 4860 lbs.¹ If two thirds of the 46 packs were beaver, this represented approximately 1840 pelts. The remaining pelts were mostly otter and muskrat. This fur bounty was produced by free hunters, Flathead, Coeur d'Alene, Pend Oreille, Spokane, and Kootenais.

Jaco Finlay is hired to build Spokane House:

On May 7, 1810: "Having given Jaco his Summer orders we embarked another Cargo of Packs and Provisions & set off for the Portage."² The "Summer orders" Thompson gave Jaco were to build a trade house on the Middle Spokane Tribe's gathering place at the junction of the Spokane and Little Spokane Rivers. His clerk Finan McDonald was assigned to remain in charge of Saleesh House.

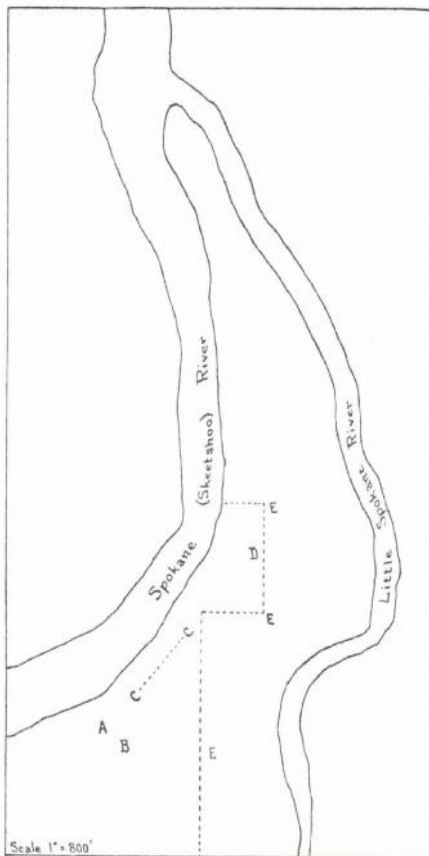
¹Thompson Narrative, pg 429.

²White, pg. 104.

The Great Gathering Place:

Pauline Flett, Spokane tribal elder, said this place was known as Nim Chin Tseen; that translates to Great Gathering Place. There were excellent salmon and steelhead runs in the two rivers bordering the flat. This was a shared fishery with other Plateau Tribes. There were five Indian trails leading into Nim Chin Tseen. These tribes had been gathering here for thousands of years to fish, trade, race horses and gamble. This was also a great place to establish a fur trade post.

Jaco had help in building this trading post, but neither Thompson's nor subsequent journals say who were his helpers. It is most likely that Jaco's crew included other free hunters, as Thompson would need his engagees to help him transport the furs back to Canada.



A. Approximate site of the Astorian post.
B. Log cabin, 17' x 13', sometimes pictured as "Spokane House."
C—C. Somewhere along this line on the river front was the probable site of the original Spokane House.
D. The "saddle-bag" log barn, 43' x 16'.
E—E—E. Eastern lines of the State Park property.

There have been no physical descriptions of this original NWC Spokane House post buildings. It is reasonable to assume, based on other trade houses built by Thompson that the first structure was a building to store the trade goods and furs, followed by a sleeping quarters. These buildings would have been "piece-on-piece"³ construction in common with other British and Canadian fur trade posts of the time.

David Thompson visited Spokane House five times before leaving the Columbia in the spring of 1812 but unfortunately did not leave any description of the buildings. He did take field measurements at Spokane House to determine latitude and longitude.

"No person was more experienced using a sextant and mercury horizon to determine latitude and longitude than David Thompson. Both land based and maritime methods for determining latitude within 500 to 1000 feet had been known for centuries. However the lunar distance method of determining longitude (developed for maritime purposes on the open ocean) only allowed an accuracy of 10 to 20 miles during this time. These surveying methods and procedures allowed Thompson to obtain adequate accuracies for rivers, lakes, mountain passes and trading posts to make his large scale map of mostly unknown of

northern North America” (Denny DeMeyer, land surveyor and member of the NORTH AMERICAN LAND SURVEYORS).

The actual location of this first Spokane House has not been found to date. There have been many speculations by historians based on sketchy journal references. Ceylon Kingston, a professor at State Normal School, Cheney, WA made a very thorough study of the fur trade history at Nim Chin Tseen. His conclusion on the probable location of the PFC and NWC trading post is summed up in his scaled map⁴.

Meanwhile back in New York:

J.J. Astor, owner of the American Fur Co., had amassed a small fortune in the Great Lakes and China fur trade and now envisioned tapping the Columbia riches by establishing a maritime headquarters at the river's mouth. He formed the Pacific Fur Co. (PFC) and in the fall of 1810 dispatched two brigades, departing from New York; one by ship and the other overland.

Astor built the PFC by hiring Canadians from Ft. Mackinac and Montreal; men looking for profit and adventure. Free hunters were not a part of this cadre.

A group of thirty-three partners, clerks, mechanics, and voyageurs sailed aboard the Tonquin around the tip of South America, stopping at the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) for provisions and hiring Hawaiians as engagees. The Tonquin, loaded with trade goods, provisions and building tools, arrived at the Columbia the following spring, of 1811.

They erected their fort christened "Astoria" and began trade with the local tribes.⁵

The overland brigade, led by Wilson Price Hunt, was to travel following the Lewis and Clark route to reach the mouth of the Columbia. Their trek was diverted from the upper Missouri and proved one of singular hardship, starvation and loss of life. The brigade, forced to scatter in two parties through Southern Idaho's desert, straggled into Astoria over a period of weeks in January and February of 1812.

Thompson advised of PFC plan for a post on the Columbia River mouth:

Upon returning with the Columbia District fur packs to the NWC post on Rainy Lake (today's International Falls, MN) in July 1810, David Thompson found out that the PFC had sent brigades to build a trading post at the mouth of the Columbia River.

He immediately turned around and headed back to the Columbia District. After an arduous trek across Athabasca Pass in January 1811, he arrived at Saleesh House finding

⁴ Kingston, pg. 112.

⁵ Franchier, Ch. IX.

it abandoned and in disrepair. He pressed on to Spokane House with the trade supplies, arriving on June 14.⁶ There he found Finan McDonald and his engagees.

Thompson immediately proceeded on horseback to Kettle Falls with a crew of voyageurs. There they built a cedar plank canoe and launched for the mouth of the Columbia River on July 3, 1811.

David Thompson and company reached the mouth of the Columbia on July 15th. only to find the Pacific Fur Co. construction of Ft. Astoria well under way with the American flag flying aloft.

Despite Thompson's intentional and misleading description of the interior, the Pacific Fur Co. assigned David Stuart to head upriver with 1800 lbs. of trade goods to construct the first American posts. Stuart selected a point on the Columbia at the mouth of the Okanogan River. The post, due to the lack of standing timber, was constructed from driftwood. Alexander Ross was left to "clerk" the post while Stuart and three others continued up the Okanogan to establish trade with tribes along the way and then into the Fraser River Valley. The Stuart brigade returned to Astoria in the spring of 1812 with 2500 beaver pelts.

The Pacific Fur Co. ship "Beaver" reached Astoria in the spring of 1812, via the Sandwich Islands, with much needed supplies and additional "Owyhee"(Hawaiian) engagees. Also on board were wintering partner John Clarke, and clerks; one of whom was Ross Cox. Mr. Cox's published narrative of *Adventures On The Columbia River* gives us some of the best descriptions of the interior fur trade life and events, for this time period.

David Thompson Retires:

David Thompson had spent the winter of 1811 at Saleesh House, and in the spring of 1812 returned, via Spokane House, to Kettle Falls with 122 packs each weighing 90 lbs.⁷, totaling 10,980 pounds. If only half of the furs in these packs were beaver it would still represent approximately 3,600 plews.

Thompson, with Jaco Finlay and voyageurs at the mouth of the Colville River built "two canoes of Cedar boards and two of Birch Rind, which with the two (cedar) Canoes left here, placed six Canoes at our service."⁸ John George McTavish, Thompson's replacement in the Columbia District, and James McMillan were at Kettle Falls to see Thompson off. On April 22, 1812 Thompson and company headed up the Columbia River, starting the 2000 mile journey back across Canada to Ft. William on Lake Superior.

It was at this time that David Thompson left the Columbia and North West Co. for

⁶ Elloit, WHQ vol. 8, no.3, Thompson Journal.

⁷ Thompson Narrative pg. 556.

⁸ Ibid. 555, 556.

good. He was 42 years old and had been in the field trading, exploring and mapping for 27 years. During that time he traveled over 50,000 miles and never lost a man. He completed his maps of Canada and the Columbia River by 1814, submitting the sections to the North West Co. The map measured 10 feet by 6 1/2 feet. This map today is on display at the Provincial Archives of Ontario, Toronto, Canada.

The competition comes to Spokane House:

By summer 1812, PFC field brigades were out again not only to re-open Ft. Okanogan but to bring direct competition to the Nor'Westers at their interior posts.

The American brigade coming to Spokane House, led by John Clarke, included four clerks - "Messrs. Pillet, Farnham, McLennan, and Cox"⁹, twenty-one Canadian engagees, four Owyhees and an Indian guide. They traveled by canoe and bateaux up the Columbia to the mouth of the Snake River, up the Snake to the Palouse River and then overland on horseback, reaching the Spokane House on August 6.

Ross Cox was one of the PFC clerks who wrote a two-volume journal, *Adventures on the Columbia*, published in 1831. Cox hired on with the NWC after the purchase of the PFC, and spent periods of time at Spokan House. His journal is a major source of information for Spokan House activities.

Construction began immediately on The PFC post. "The spot selected for forming our establishment was a handsome point of land, formed by the junction of the Pointed Heart and Spokan rivers, thinly covered with pine and other trees, and close to a trading post of the North-west Company, under the command of a Mr. M'Millan."¹⁰

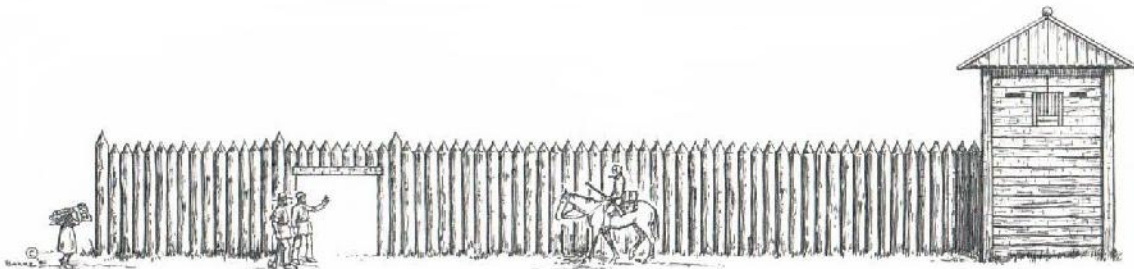
Clarke immediately dispatched his field clerks to outlying NWC trading posts to provide direct competition for the Indian and free hunters' furs. Pillet and six men were sent to the NWC "Kootenais" post to compete directly with Montour. Farnham and Cox were assigned to compete directly with Finan McDonald at Saleesh House. McLennan and engagees were assigned to establish trade with the Coeur d'Alenes. Although trade with the Coeur d'Alenes was successful, there is no record of a trading post being built in their territory.

Returning to the PFC, Ft. Spokane at the end of December 1812, Ross Cox gives us the following description of the fort. "During my absence, Mr. Clarke had constructed a snug and commodious dwelling-house, containing four rooms and a kitchen; together with a comfortable house for the men, and a capacious store for the furs and trading goods: the whole surrounded by paling, and flanked by two bastions with loop-holes for musketry."¹¹

⁹ Ross, pg 226.

¹⁰ Cox, Vol. I, pg.75.

¹¹ Ibid., pg. 78.



Alexander Ross made a December 1812 visit to Ft. Spokane from his Ft. Okanogan post, and made the following observation on the trade tactics between the PFC and NWC. “During the three days I remained with him (Clarke) I had frequent opportunities of observing the sly and underhand dealings of the competing parties, for the opposition posts of the North West Company and Mr. Clarke were built contiguous to each other. When the two parties happened to meet they made the amplest protestations of friendship and kindness, and a stranger, unacquainted with the politics of Indian trade, would have pronounced them sincere; but the moment their backs were turned they tore each other to pieces.”¹²

On a positive note, Ross Cox tells of the following agreement. “Their chief, ILLIMSPOKANEE, or the Son of the Sun, was a harmless old man who spent a great portion of his time between us and Mr. M’Millan. We entered into a compact with that gentleman to abstain from giving the Indians any spirituous liquors, to which both parties strictly adhered.”¹³

In May 1813 the field clerks for both the NWC and PFC brought in their beaver and other furs to their respective posts at Spokane. The Salish and Kootenais had made excellent winter hunts and their success exceeded expectations.

The great tobacco race:

Which company got the Flathead furs that spring to bring to Spokane was another challenge. Tobacco was essential to be given and smoked before any trades were to be made with Indians.

Ross Cox again tells of the importance of tobacco. Ft. Spokane received a message from Farnham, the clerk at Flathead Post that the Flatheads were traveling to the Spokane posts, and were camped at the Pend Oreille River crossing, Seneacquoteen, waiting for tobacco to set the stage for a trade.

¹² Ross, pgs. 217, 218.

¹³ Cox Vol. I, pg. 78.

Although it was noon when the message was received, Cox talked Clark, the PFC trader, into letting him use his fast racing horse Le Bleu, to take tobacco to the Flatheads to secure their furs in trade, even though it was a 72 mile ride. Cox with two others accompanying him, started up the Spokane valley, and turned north on the Skeetshoo trail to Seneacquoteen. About two hours later the NWC at Spokane House sent two riders with tobacco in hot pursuit.

Cox on Le Bleu, after about two hours out distanced his companions and continued at a gallop. By dark he was into the woods along Hoodoo Cr. and had trouble staying on the trail. Trusting his horse's better night sight they reached the crossing where Farnham was camped with the Flatheads about 8:00 p.m.

"I had brought a few fathoms of thick twist-tobacco with me; on learning the Indians crowded about us, and in a few seconds each man's head was enveloped in clouds of smoke. They promised that we should have all their skins; but in order to make assurance doubly sure, we requested them to bring their respective packages to the tent, and deposit them therein until morning. This was at once complied with, after which the smoking continued."¹⁴ The NWC riders arrived later in the night at the crossing.

Finan McDonald protested to the Indians that were deserting him and trading with strangers, "They replied, that being the first to satisfy their hungry craving for tobacco, they could do no less than give us the preference; but added that they would punctually pay them any debts which they had contracted with Mr. M'Donald, which promise they faithfully kept."¹⁵

The duel:

Pillet, PFC and Montour, NWC had been competing head-to-head all fall and winter for the Kootenais furs. Upon arrival with spring fur packs at their Spokane posts, their feud took a serious turn. "Mr. Pillet fought a duel with Mr. Montour of the North-west, with pocket pistols, at six paces; both hits; one, in the collar of the coat, and the other in the leg of the trousers. Two of their men acted as seconds, and the tailor speedily healed their wounds."¹⁶

The fortunes of war:

Later in May 1813, Clarke with clerks and engagees departed Ft. Spokane for Astoria with the season furs, leaving Mr. Pillet in charge of the fort with four men.

¹⁴ Cox, Vol. II, pg. 46.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid. pg. 80.

While at the Palouse village, at the mouth of the Palouse River, to retrieve their canoes, a silver goblet and some other personal items were stolen. Clarke informed the village headman that if the items were returned by the next morning the incident would be pardoned but added that if it were not, and that he should find the thief, he would hang him. Unfortunately, the likely thief was caught stealing more personal items that night. The next morning Clarke assembled the village, erected a temporary gallows and hung the Indian by the neck until dead. This was likely the first time the people had seen an execution like this, as stealing for these Indians was not a serious crime. Indian riders immediately rode off to tell other Indians what had happened.

The Clarke brigade left their horses, and hastily canoed down the Lewis River (Snake River) to the Columbia River. There they met Donald McKenzie by pre-arrangement as he had returned to the Nez Perce country to retrieve a cache of trade goods from the year before. McKenzie was able to recover most of the items stolen by the Indians from the cache.

Donald McKenzie was a Canadian who joined the Pacific Fur Co. overland brigade that finally reached Astoria in February 1812. He had tried unsuccessfully to establish beaver trade with the Nez Percés during 1812 and before retreating to Astoria paid a visit to John Clarke at Ft. Spokane

Arriving at Astoria on June 11, 1813, Clarke and crew found out that the United States and Great Britain were at war. John George McTavish, NWC field clerk, had arrived April 11 in two canoes with 16 men and delivered the formal Proclamation of War.

The situation was grim for the PFC. Their supply ship the Beaver was three months overdue, and both trade goods and provisions were low at Astoria; not adequate to compete with the NWC in the coming season.

The NWC was also expecting their supply ship the Isaac Todd to arrive from Canada at the mouth of the Columbia River anytime, accompanied by a British man-of-war. If Astoria were to be taken as a prize of war, the Pacific Fur Co. would forfeit all their assets.

The North West Company held all the “aces” in this economic poker game. After much negotiating, the sale agreement was signed on October 23, 1813. D. McDougall, PFC and J.G. McTavish, NWC signed for the purchase of all of the PFC furs, supplies and provisions. This Astoria Inventory has survived, and has been transcribed.¹⁷

In summary, the NWC supply ship Isaac Todd finally arrived at newly sold Astoria on April 17, 1814; a year late.

¹⁷ Astoria Inventories 1813.

The NWC now has a monopoly on the fur trade in the Columbia District:

McTavish offered to employ all PFC men who wished to work for the company. As most of the PFC personnel were Canadians who had worked for the NWC back in Canada; they readily transferred to the NWC. McTavish also guaranteed free passage to those wishing to leave the Columbia District

The Americans and some of the Canadians did not hire on with the NWC. The Americans, W.P. Hunt, Russell Farnham and others departed on the American ship Peddler, April 14, 1814. The NWC canoe brigade, loaded with newly purchased PFC supplies, headed up the Columbia River to supply Forts Okanogan and Spokane. With the brigade were Gabriel Franchere, John Clarke and other Canadians leaving the district and returning across Canada to Ft. William.

In addition to the provisions and supplies on the Isaac Todd, there was a white woman on board, Miss Jane Barnes a bar-maid, from Portsmouth traveling with John McDonald. She created quite a stir with the local Indians as well as the other fur traders. In spite of several marriage proposals, she left on the Isaac Todd with the Columbia District furs for Canton. There she met and married a wealthy English merchant with the East India Company.

The British man-of-war, Raccoon, arrived later at Astoria on November 30, and took "possession" of the fort, hoisting the Union Jack and naming the post Ft. George after the British King.

The interim years:

NWC business records and post Journals at Spokane House for the 1814 to 1822 period have not been found. Various events during this period are tracked by journals kept by men in the Columbia District, particularly the journal of Ross Cox. His journal refers to the newly purchased PFC post now as Spokan House.

We know that the NWC personnel moved into the newly purchased post. It is likely that the transition happened over some months, as the new Spokan House would need some expansion to accommodate the NWC men. It is also possible that the original Spokane House timbers might have been salvaged to facilitate the expansion.



Spokane House was a great place to winter. The post sported a “ballroom” (more likely the fur warehouse) where winter nights were spent singing and dancing to fiddle and flute with local copper-tinted ladies before a blazing hearth fire of pine knots.

Other diversions included reading from the post’s libraries, gambling, horse racing, cribbage, storytelling, and special occasion “regales.” On special occasions the engagees at the trading post received a treat, “At Christmas and New-year they were served out with flour to make cakes or puddings,

and each man receives half a pint of rum. This they call a Regale, and they are particularly grateful for it.”¹⁸

The fair young Spokane women were another major attraction and the flirting and dancing often led to marriages of the country (“a la falcon du pays”) without benefit of clergy.

The garden: “We planted the year before (1813) some turnips, potatoes, cabbage, and other esculents, which yielded a pretty good crop. The quantity increased the following spring; and this autumn we had an abundance of these vegetables.”¹⁹ Cox summered in 1815 at Spokane House and again makes the following reference: “Our kitchen garden now began to assume a thriving appearance, and, in addition to a fine crop of potatoes, we reared a quantity of other excellent esculents. The soil was deep and rich; and a few melons and cucumbers, which we had put down throve admirably.”²⁰

Spokane House also had imported livestock in 1813. “We had brought up a cock, three hens, three goats, and three hogs. The Indians were quite astonished at beholding them.”²¹ This is astonishing when we realize that this livestock was likely shipped from Hawaii to Ft. George, then up the Columbia River in bateaux to the “Forks”, then overland some 60 miles to Spokane House. It can be assumed that management personnel were the beneficiaries of this livestock.

The Columbia District trading posts were dependent primarily on the adjacent Indians and free hunters for meat and fish. At various times Spokane House was well supplied with grouse, wild geese and ducks. Deer and periodically bear were also brought to the post. The Spokane and Little Spokane Rivers were great sources of salmon, steelhead and even “carp” (suckers?) in season. Weirs in these rivers were made and maintained by the

18 Cox, Vol. II, pg. 136.

19 Ibid. Vol. I, pg. 137.

20 Ibid. Vol. II, pg. 18.

21 Ibid. Vol. I, pg. 137.

resident Spokane Indians. The fish were speared or netted, and the additional fish were traded to Spokane House. Later the company built their own fish weir.

Packs of pemmican and dried buffalo meat were also periodically sent to Spokane House from Flathead Post. This original PFC trading post was located about eight miles above the original Saleesh House on the Clark Fork River. By 1820 Saleesh House had been abandoned in favor of this up river post.

The buffalo hunting Salish and Pend Oreille traded lots of dried buffalo meat as well as fat to the post. The company took these components and turned it into pemmican. The fur traders never acquired a taste for the hair and dirt “condiments” in the Indian produced pemmican. All of the country produce was traded by the Indians to the company for beaver credits, “the Coin of the Realm”, by which they obtained trade goods.

Horses were essential to the Spokane House fur trade operations. They were packed, they were ridden, and they were eaten.

In spite of other sources of country protein, there were times when horses had to be eaten. According to Cox, “We lived principally on deer, trout, and carp and occasionally killed a fat horse, as a substitute for beef. Custom had now so far reconciled us to the flesh of this animal, that we often preferred it to what in Europe might be regarded as luxuries. A horse for the table should be not under three years, or above seven. The flesh of those which are tame, well-fed, and occasionally worked, is tender and firm, and the fat hard and white; it is far superior to the wild horse...”²²

It was also common, when furs and supplies were being moved up and down the Columbia River to trade with the Indian villages along the way for dogs to eat.²³

Fur packs, provisions and trade goods were transported overland by horses between the Columbia District trading posts. Horses were also the Indians and free hunters primary mode of transportation. The standard pack weighed 90 lbs. and both horses and voyageurs were expected to carry two per load. As noted previously, David Thompson departed Kettle Falls in April 1812 with 122 packs of furs and supplies. These packs, hauled from Spokane House, would have taken at least 61 horses. Other personnel accompanying the packhorses were also horse mounted. During the 1810 to 1826 period of fur trade at the Spokane House, there were at least 60 head of horses maintained by the company.

Ross Cox notes that the Flat-heads and Cootonis who live in more thickly timbered areas only have enough horses to meet their needs. The tribes that live in chiefly open plains

²² Cox, Vol. I, pg. 78.

²³ Ibid. pg. 88.

such as the Wallah Wallah, Nez Perces, and Shoshones have thousands of horses, some of which go wild. It appears that these tribes were the main source of horses for the fur trade.²⁴

Donald McKenzie returned to the Columbia District in the summer of 1816 to oversee the fur trade operations. He may have stationed himself at Spokane House for a while.

McKenzie felt that Spokane House was not well located for moving furs and provisions on the Columbia River, to and from Ft. George, being 60 miles inland from the river. In 1818 he constructed Ft. Nez Perces at the mouth of the Walla Walla River on the Columbia.

McKenzie organized and led a upper Snake River beaver trapping brigade. It was composed of Canadian and Iroquois trappers and several Hawaiian engagees. The venture proved unprofitable in spite of the rich beaver resource due to the unruly and unproductive Iroquois, and trouble with the Snake and Bannock Indians.²⁵

In subsequent years, Ft. Nez Perces continued to serve as a supply source to the Snake Country Brigades. Spokane House still remained the fur depot of the upper Columbia River.



Finan McDonald's large size had a matching temper. Cox's journal tells of two instances at Spokan House. McDonald's first language was Gaelic, followed by English, French and Salish. When in a fit of rage, he expressed himself in a random combination of all these languages.

Feeling he had been cheated in gambling by a resident Spokane Chief, Finan, with fowling piece in hand, challenged him to a duel. The Chief was ready but suggested they go to the woods and have their duel, not standing in the open. Hearing the commotion, people from Spokan House ran to the scene and were able to intervene talking Finan out of the duel.

24 Ibid. Vol. II, pg. 44.

25 Reeb, pg. 64.

In another instance one of the Canadian voyageurs, Basil Lucie said something that offended Finan. Finan challenged him to a duel. Basil was some six foot three inches tall, every bit as muscular as Finan and a bully to his comrades. Basil agreed to a duel but with fists, to which Finan agreed. It was reported that in less than ten minutes Basil was completely disabled and unfit to work for some weeks after.²⁶

Ross Cox left the Columbia District from Ft. George on April 16, 1817 in a party of eighty-six souls. They were a mixture of Scotch, English, Irish and Canadians, plus the voyageurs muscling the bateaux. Their destination was Ft. William on the west shore of Lake Superior some 2000 miles from Ft. George.

The 1821 “shotgun merger” of the NWC with the HBC:

Almost from the beginning in 1778 the NWC was competing head-to-head with the HBC for the Canadian beaver trade. The NWC, with headquarters in Montreal and their major fur depot at Ft. William penetrated deep into the HBC territory, building competing trading posts. The HBC relied on supplying their trading posts from York Factory on Hudson Bay.

The competing trading posts were built next to each other for watching activities, and grudging mutual protection in case of Indian attack. The posts undercut each other on trade good values to get the Indian’s furs. On the east side of the Rocky Mountains, alcohol was traded, in great quantities, to the Indians for their furs by both companies. The alcohol was physically and culturally devastating to the Indian tribes. The companies stole each others fur packs when possible. This competition severely cut into each of the company’s profits.

The HBC policies were governed by the London based Board of Directors. NWC policies were set by the Company Partners who were share holders. The partners were also British subjects. Both companies appealed to the British Parliament for relief in the trade war. The parliament responded by dictating that the two companies would merge with the NWC being amalgamated into the HBC.

It was not a “happy marriage” as far as the NWC was concerned. Word of the coalition reached Ft. William in the spring of 1822 and traveled with trade goods supplying the trading posts across Canada and the Columbia District.

George Simpson entered HBC service in 1818, and by being in the right place at the right time was appointed Governor of the Northern Department in 1821. He successfully brought the NWC into the HBC fold. He made three cross continent trips to check on field operations. He was knighted in 1841 and “ruled” the HBC until retiring in 1860.²⁷

²⁶ Cox, Vol. I, pg. 140.

²⁷ Watson, pg. 870

Meanwhile, back in the Columbia District, things didn't change much initially since the NWC (now HBC) had a monopoly on the fur trade. The trading post reference was changed back to Ft. Spokane, in keeping with the HBC policy of designating their trading posts as "Forts." It is also possible that an HBC flag or two were included in the next shipment of trade goods. The HBC now referred to this area as the Columbia Department.

Donald McKenzie, who had managed the Columbia District until 1821, left but continued employment with the HBC as a Chief Factor in 1822.

John Lewes, who started with the HBC at the tender age of fifteen, was appointed Chief Trader at Ft. Spokane serving from 1821 to 1823.

Supply to the Department was still via ships from England around Cape Horn to Ft. George. Much of the district furs were traded in China for tea, silk, opium and necklace size blue beads, often listed as "Canton beads."

There was still the annual canoe express back and forth across Canada to Ft. William with correspondence and orders for provisions and trade goods for sea shipment. Personal transfers to and from the Columbia Department were also made via these canoe brigades.

The Ft. Spokane District Journal 1822-1823:

This Journal, generally referred to as the "Daybook", was found in the HBC archives (HBCA microfilm B208/a/1), and was transcribed by Jack and Claire Nisbet in 1998. The Daybook captures the activities at the fort and gives us a window into the daily life at Ft. Spokane. These activities are summarized for each month with selected quotes.

The first portion of the Journal was kept by Finan McDonald starting April 15, 1822.

"Monday 15th. At 2 pm. Five boats – manned by forty men, accompanied by two clerks vis Mssrs Kittson & Bernie, left this for Fort George, having on board 75 packs of furs 20 bags of gum and provisions for the journey." Gum, pitch from ponderosa pine, was essential for "gumming" between the boards on the bateaux traveling on the Columbia and other rivers. If only half of the furs in the 72 packs were beaver it would represent 2,160 pelts.

Wednesday 17th. The Indians (resident Spokanes) started constructing a weir in the river, anticipating the salmon run. "Examined the seed potatoes in the cellar and found them short of my expectations"

Friday 19th. "All men and women belonging to the fort are preparing new and old ground for planting potatoes. "The Indians caught 126 fish in their barrier."

Saturday 20th. a man was sent to check on the horses and found 81, including the men's horses safe.

Wednesday 24th. "People finished clearing and hewing the garden."

Friday 26th. "People employed collecting brush to make a fence around the new garden.

Monday 29th. "All hands employed cutting & planting, potatoes..."

MAY

Sunday 5th. "(Francois) Payette with Paul and 2 other invalids arrived from the forks (junction of the Spokane and Columbia Rivers) to pass the summer here the latter are three men from Fort George who are so unwell (with venereal disease) as not to be able to undertake the voyage across the mountains and consequently remain a burthen on this place all summer - Fine pleasant weather Revet brought a beaver from his traps."

Monday 6th. "Sent one man to work to cut down timbers for making a barrier in the river for catching salmon." This is the start of competition between the fort and the Indians for catching salmon. Keep in mind that the resident Spokanes were "selling" the salmon to the fort for trade goods, not the least of which was tobacco.

Salmon were caught and sun-dried in great quantities at Nim Chin Tseen. These dried fish were an important source of protein for the Indians and Ft. Spokane, as well as provision for the trading posts to the Flatheads (Salish & Pend Oreille) and Kootenais.

Sunday 12th. "In the course of this day a few Indians arrived who traded a few roots and 2 beaver. Fine clear weather." The Indians, during this season, had been bringing "roots" most of which was camas for trade. As the fort was always in need of fresh meat the beaver mentioned might have been whole.

The men are still building the fish barrier

Thursday 16th. "La Salle's father in law brought me 15 ½ beaver skins and 98 muskrat skins he wanted a gun which request I complied with as he is a good beaver hunter..."

Saturday 18th. People have been at work as yesterday at the barrier. An Indian brought me 42 lbs of fresh meat which I paid him for. The Indians begin to remove off this point to the plains it being the time to gather roots."

Monday 20th. "Nez Perces arrived and brought me a horse for sale which I purchased for 17 skins in ammuntion & triffls." The following day another horse was purchased, "for 16 skins principally ammuntion."

Sunday 26th. "A few Coeur d Allenes arrived with few musk rat skins & dried fish – which I traded from them. Fine weather."

JUNE

Monday 3rd. "I learned today that a young man of the Ear Ring (Pend Oreille) tribe was killed lately by a Coeur d Alene which is likely to cause a war between their two nations. Relations of the deceased seem determined for revenge and are raising up Indians of this place to join them in their war excursion."

Tuesday 4th. "a number of Ear Ring Indians arrived for the purpose of attacking the Coeur d'Allenes if they found any near the fort. The Coeur d'Alenes approached the fort and the Pend Oreilles ran off. Finan was able to trade the Pend Oreilles out of 25 beaver skins and, "got them persuaded to return quietly to their land weather pleasant."

Wednesday 5th. "A few Indians arrived from the plains, by whom we learned that the young man who was reported killed by the Cour d'Allens has come to life again."

Thursday 6th. "The barrier finished today. This is the fish weir being built by fort engageses."

Sunday 9th. I fitted out Baptiste La Coquine and a Iroquoy with steel traps and necessaries to enable them to hunt beaver till this fall. They were to pay one half their hunt to the Company and if they broke or lost any of the steel traps they were to pay half price."

Wednesday 12th. "I killed 2 salmon at the barrier."

Friday 14th. "Killed a good many salmon at the Barrier."

Monday 17th. I promised...tobacco to the Ear Ring Chief...with a long speech in order to encourage them to tent off from the fort, and go in search of beaver instead of losing their time here where they do nothing but dance and gamble their property away a propensity to which they are much addicted."

Thursday 20th. "People employed in erecting palisades round a part of the garden..."

Monday 24th. "One man employed white washing the houses." Some Indians are fixing their weir in a better part of the river.

Wednesday 26th. "Gave the People a respite from Labour to day to wash their clothes &c."
JULY

Monday 1st. "Three Nez Percies arrived & brought a few horses for sale. Got 6 salmon from

our barrier the Indians got 27 in theirs.”

Tuesday 2nd. “The country all around us appears to be in fire in some parts so near that some cord wood we had cut in the wood was all burned.”

Wednesday 3rd. La Coquina & Iroquoy returned to the fort without going anything. “I have turned them out to provide for themselves.”

Friday 5th. through Wednesday 10th. Many Indians are coming in daily to fish for salmon to get their winter supply.

Thursday 11th. McMillan, Brown and Kittson with four men arrived from Okanogan where they left the (bateaux) brigade coming from Ft. George. They need thirty head of horses for New Caladonia. This included saddles and apechemours (saddle blankets, generally tanned pieces of buffalo hide).

Saturday 13th. Mr. Kittson with two men left this with a band of horses to meet our boats at the Forks (junction of the Spokane and Columbia Rivers)…”

From the 13th. to the 15th. The Fort weir got 30 salmon and the Indian weirs got 650 salmon. This disparity continued through the salmon run season.

Tuesday 16th. Mssrs. (John) Lewes & (James) Birnie arrived here at 6 OClock AM and some time after Mr. Kittson with people and goods from Fort George (arrived)…”

A band of Kootenais arrived with a good many beaver skins. They came to make peace with the different tribes of Indians now camped around the fort. The Kootenais were allowed to sleep in the fort.

Thursday 18th. A large band of Coeur d’Alenes arrived and camped away from the fort. “We armed ourselves to protect our guests the Kootoney in case their enemies should be disposed to attack them treacherously.”

Friday 19th. “after a great deal of ceremony and presents one tribe to the other a general peace was concluded amongst the different tribes assembled here.”

Monday 22nd. “Employed taking inventory of all the property belonging to the company…”
Delivered the Charge of the Trading Shop & stores over to Mr. Bernie.”

The Spokane District Journal was continued by James Bernie. Born in Scotland in 1796. He joined the NWC and by 1818 he was at McKenzie’s Ft. Nez Perce serving as a clerk. He continued service with the HBC at Spokane House, and other Columbia trading posts.

Tuesday 23rd. through Wednesday 31st. Neither the Indians or the fort weirs produced any salmon. Some of the Indians moved down river to the Forks where fishing was better. "This evening to gratify the natives we set off some sky rockets & a hand grenade. The weather warm all day but cool towards evening."

AUGUST

Thursday 1st. "We sent off seven men to square wood for the New Store – 11 feet long by 7 In. wide on only two sides to be squared and seven others to cut palisades 15 feet long & squared on two sides." This marks the start of construction and expanding of Fort Spokane.

An Ear Ring courier arrived to tell of a battle that the flatheads had with Indians on the east side of the mountains, killing several. The flat heads have arrived at Mr. McDonald's wintering ground with a large quantity of provisions to trade. "They are much in want of ammunition."

August 4th. Mr. McDonald and Mr. Kittson left with 12 men and four loaded horses to meet the Ear Rings at the Coeur d'Alene (Seneacquoteen) portage. "Mr. (Clark) Ross, two women, and five children arrived for to pass the mountains this fall."

Tuesday 6th. Souteau St.Germain arrived from the Indian village, "he having contracted a debt of 76 skins since last year & in no way exerted himself for to pay the same." Mr. Lews gave him some necessaries to enable him to pay the old debt as he is going off to the Flatheads.

Wednesday 7th. "The blacksmith and Bellevue have been cutting grass for to make hay as long as the weather is good."

Friday 9th. "We caught 36 salmon in our barrier & the Indians caught 160 in theirs."

Monday 12th. Mr. Forte and the Indian are taking all the company horses and saddles to meet McDonald and Kittson the Ear Ring and Flathead. "All the country around us is on Fire. We had the misfortune to have some wood being burnt..."

Wednesday 14th. "The sawyers have finished the palisades which is in all 250 (pieces cut to length and squared on two sides)."

Thursday 15th. "This morning Mr. Kittson arrived with the brigade he had 43 bales of dried meat & 2 packs of furs..."

Saturday 17th. The men rafted down to the fort 56 pieces of building wood and, "4 soles 49 feet long (and) 2 28 feet long & a flag staff. The "soles" were foundation pieces for the new

trade store and give us the building dimensions.

Thursday 22nd. "The two sawyers are still kept busy at sawing boards for the store." The boards were being cut from logs at a pit saw, and were to be used for roofing the new trade store.

Saturday 24th. "To day the men finished the frame of the store."

Monday 26th. "To day all hands except the sawyers putting up the ridge pole of the store & flag staff after we had finished it, the British flag was hoisted upon the mast head we gave a salute with our cannon the remaining part of the evening was spent in dancing."

Wednesday 28th. This morning Mr. Lewes and McDonald found some Indians in a canoe spearing salmon from the fort's barriers. Not heeding McDonald's warning to stop, he went into the water and "brock the canoe." In retaliation the Spokane Chief broke down nine garden palisades. "We not knowing all their intentions got our cannon loaded but one of them informed us, it was only him (the Chief) who was displeased with what we had done." The fort kept a guard that night.

SEPTEMBER

Sunday 1st. "Today we killed 80 salmon in our barrier. We get more fish than the Indians on account of their letting their barrier get out of repair."

Tuesday 3rd. "Mr. McDonald and his family with Mr. Lewes and his, left this place accompanied by Mr. Kittson for Kettle Falls where they will meet the boat from the forks & there embark for the rocky mountain portage." This is the Athabasca Pass.

Friday 6th. "This morning we killed 306 salmon at our barrier of which we give half to the Indians for their good conduct as we had more than we could dry."

Monday 9th. "the other men have begun to put up the palisades for to enclose the new store it will extend the fort 40 feet and on the other side 32 feet."

Friday 13th. Michael Bourdon arrived from the Snake country, having left seven of his free men at the Ear Ring Indians. They had several skirmishes with the Blackfeet; two of his Bourdon's were killed and two were wounded. Seven of the enemy were killed; the wounded were not known. A party of free men have gone towards Ft. Nez Perce with 2200 beaver pelves. Bourdon could not get these Iroquois to come to Ft Spokane.

Monday 16th. "Payette & party have arrived from Kettle Falls & brought 810 pieces of dried salmon and 12 beaver skins..."

Tuesday 17th. The party of freemen Mr. Bourdon left at the Ear Rings arrived with 985 beaver skins belonging to them, 167 Indian trade, and 80 damaged skins left in cache by Iroquois in the spring 1820.

Thursday 19th. "We have been employed all day giving the freemen a little advances as they have determined to go and make a hunt towards the head of the Missouri river & return late in the fall to Flat-heads (Post)."

Monday 23rd. "Put five hands to dig up the potatoes in the garden we have but a poor crop when compared to that of last year."

Monday 30th. "Traded this month 160 beaver skins 590 musk rats 9 otters 7 Minks 1075 pieces dried salmon 5 pack horses and 2 sm deer skins."

OCTOBER

Wednesday 2nd. Mr. Lewes gave Perre de Julle Felle a present of a capot 1 foot tob (acco) and a damaged jocky cap for his good behaviour. He is to take our horses in charge this winter."

Friday 4th. "about noon we were surprised with the alarm of fire in the big house but by a timely discovery we got it under, upon examination we found the fire had taken from a hole in the chimney near the roof."

Friday 11th. "Today we were surprised by the arrival of 16 free men from the east side of the mountains they have come without our knowledge for the purpose of going to the Snake country. They have brought with them 500 beaver skins but having no provisions we are obliged to feed them while here."

Friday 18th. "This morning Alexander Kennedy C.F. (Chief Factor) came to take charge of this place..." Mr. Lewes will go to Ft. George.

Tuesday 22nd. "Two men rafting down wood for the bastion. The weather cold with a light frost in the morning."

Saturday 26th. "Today all hands employed at the bastion & new store."

NOVEMBER

Friday 1st. "This being All Saints Day the men have not been at work – The day has been spent in devotion by the men."

Tuesday 5th. "Last night Mr. Kennedy give a ball being the custom of the place when men leave for their winter grounds some of the men got a little intoxicated and wish to purchase rum but we never sell them that article here. Today Mr. McDonald and Kittson and party after some trouble with their horses left this for the flat Heads about 12 O'clock N."

Saturday 9th. "The blacksmith & Paul have been cutting wood for to make (char) coal." Charcoal was a necessary fuel for forging iron.

Friday 15th. The horse keeper was sent out with the company horses to winter pasture. "he is to receive the value of one skin per horse in the spring he has received as first payment 2 Blankets 2 ½ pts."

Monday 18th. Mr. McMillan arrives at Ft. Spokane from Ft. Okanogan and will spend the rest of the season with Mr. Kennedy at the post.

Thurs 21st. "The Spokane chief arrived here from gathering roots he now wishes much for to remove the Indians a little distance from the fort as they are troublesome in the winter season."

Thursday 28th. "To day Mr. Kennedy made a present to the Chief of this place of a blanket capot & red silk handkf for his good conduct towards the whites."

Saturday 30th. "a little after sun down two men arrived from the flat heads quarter with letters from Mssrs. McDonald and Kittson the purport of which is that they have traded since their arrival 169 beaver skins Indian trade & received from the free men 1549 of which they have forwarded 1400 skins and 15 bales of dried (buffalo) meat."

DECEMBER

Sunday 1st. "A few Cour d'Allene Indians arrived from their lands and brought with them 188 lbs fresh meat & 3 small beaver skins to trade."

Wednesday 4th. "The blacksmith employed repairing axes that was out of true(?)."

Thursday 5th. "The Indians about the fort have been making preparations for to dance they having built a large lodge for that purpose & all the Indians have collected from the upper falls of this river."

Sunday 8th. "Traded two large beaver skins one otter five trout (maybe steelhead) 7 gallons roots (likely camas) 10 musk rats & one duck."

Monday 9th. "One man employed diging a saw pit under the boat shade." "Shade" is very

likely a roof above the fort boat(s) to keep the boat planks from drying out.

Tuesday 10th. "Paul is being still on the sick list Mr. Kennedy has reduced his rations to one half incase it should be imaginary." Paul was one of the three men sent from Ft. George to Ft. Spokane back in May who had venereal disease.

Friday 13th., Saturday 14th. The roof is being put on the bastion, and the blacksmith is making door and shutter hinges for same.

Tuesday 17th. the weather has been cold and snow is on the ground. There was a chimney fire in the men's range of houses.

Thursday 19th. : The sawyers cannot get on with their work as the wood is too hard froze." Shutters are being put on the new store.

Saturday 21st. "This morning the mercury in Fernham's Thermometer was 23 below the cipher."

Sunday 22nd. "The weather clear & cold the mercury this morning was 25 below the cipher – The spokan that have been dancing at the cour d'allens have returned. This may have been a winter Solstice dance.

Tuesday 24th. "This being Christmas eve the men had a dram of rum."

Wednesday 25th. "This morning the men came into the hall for the purpose of paying their respects to Mr. Kennedy and Mr. McMillan after receiving a few drams. They had the following allowance over & above their rations ½ lb flour ½ pint spirits 1# Indian meal 1/2 # grease. They passed the day very agreeably together – the weather frosty & overcast"

Saturday 28th. Today the Cour d'Allenes arrived for the purpose of gambling with the Spokans. The "gambling" referred to was very likely the Stick Game. "The Blacksmith employed cutting up leather into cords for the packs."

Monday 30th. Construction of the gallery, an elevated walkway on the inside wall of the fort palisade, has been started.

Tuesday 31st. "We sent for the Spokan Chief & give a little tobacco so as not to come to the fort tomorrow."

JANUARY 1823

Wednesday 1st. "This being the commencement of a new year our men had the following allowance over and above their rations – To each man vis 1# flour 1# grease 1# In. meal ½#

sugar 1 pint berries 1 oz. pepper 1 oz. salt 1 pint spirits the women had half a mans allowance except the spirits. The men came and paid their respects to Mr. Kennedy & McMillan this morning after firing three rounds with great & small arms. They came into the hall and were received by the above gentlemen very politely after receiving a few drams give us a nother salut from the cannon & then went to enjoy their grog. The poor Indians find it hard to be excluded from the fort for two days."

The reference to "hall" is not evident in other physical descriptions of the Ft. Spokane buildings. In other fur trade posts of the time there are references to "the Indian Hall" a receiving room where tribal representatives would meet with post managers for trade and other negotiations, and at times sleep. At Ft. Spokane, this "hall" may have been a room within the trade store/warehouse.

"Grog" is a Naval term that refers to mixing a small amount of rum with water that after imbibing a few one becomes "groggy."

Thursday 2nd. The trade for December was 72 beaver, 11 otters, 36 muskrats, 4 mink, 2 foxes, and 1 keg of roots.

Friday 3rd. "The mercury was this morning 24 below cipher - Caught a trout (steelhead) in our barrier."

Throughout the month the men were building on the galleries, and sawing roof board for the new trade store. The blacksmith continued "repairing" axes, and making nails and hinges for the store.

A few "trout" were being caught daily at the barrier.

There were two reports by Indians that there were 140 and then later 200 beaver skins to be brought in for trade from Kettle Falls.

Sunday 26th. "Two Cour d'Allene Indians arrived, and brought us 30 lb fresh meat which we were glad to see as we have been long living upon dried provisions (most likely salmon & pemmican)."

Thursday 30th. "the men that are to return with Mr. McDonald to the flat heads are preparing in getting their sledges ready.

FEBRUARY

Saturday 1st. "The Indian trade for last month was viz 33 large beaver skins 9 small 2 otter 11 Foxes 2 Martins 30 muskrats & 80 pieces dried salmon."

Wednesday 5th. "Mssrs. McMillan & McDonald left this (for Flathead Post) accompanied by three men and a Indian to fetch back our horses.

Friday 7th. "The Indians about the fort are dancing gambling from morning to night and from night to morning."

Sunday 9th. "The Kettle fall Indians left this after the Chiefs had received the following presents viz the Old Chief 1 E.W. calico shirt 1 half ax 10 ball & powder 1 foot tobacco 1 in. awl 1 fire steel 1 gun flint His son 1 com. Check shirt – 10 ball & powder 1 scalper (knife) 1 fire steel The Little Chief of the Lakes (band) 1 Com check shirt 10 ball & powder – The weather mild with heavy fall of snow Caught 3 trout in our barrier."

The men are making steady progress on the new store construction. The rafters are in place and the gable ends are being filled in. some of the roof from the old store is being removed to put on the new store.

Wednesday 19th. "We caught 15 trout in our barrier – give the Old Indian that takes care of it 1 yard of red flannel (wool)."

Friday 21st. "they have finished the roof and are now at work on the gable ends."

Saturday 22nd. "We have removed all the furs & provisions from the old store into the New one, as part of it is finished."

Monday 24th. all hands are working laying the flooring and putting up the window shutters. "A Cour d'Alene arrived & brought news that their tribe had killed 53 deer if we could send horses we might have part of the meet but our horses not being here we could not send."

Wednesday 25th. "the blacksmith having no coal he was unable to work in his shop..."

Friday 28th. "This evening a few Cour d'Alenes arrived & brought us 230# fresh meat & 2 otter skins to trade."

MARCH

Saturday 1st. We caught 19 trout in our barrier. The new store now makes a good appearance in the fort."

Tuesday 4th. "...our Indian shop was completed to day also the provision store." These must have been rooms within the new store.

Saturday 8th. "To day the men finished the store & gallery which goes half way round the fort."

Tuesday 11th. "The blacksmith has been filling up between the pieces (horizontal wall timbers) in the store with mud."

Wednesday 12th. "Last night the Spokan had been gambling with some strangers and having a dispute the little Chief got wounded in the back with two arrows the strangers got off."

Friday 14th. "We caught 20 trout & gave the most part or them to the natives as the fish is not in season and are not very good."

Trout are being caught daily at the fort's barrier but are being given to the Indians as they are in poor eating condition.

Thursday 20th. "We caught 98 trout in our barrier after giving the men their ration out of them we give the remainder to the Indians for which they appear to be grateful." Sixty trout were caught the following day, most of which were given to the natives.

Sunday 23rd. "We still have many Indians on the sick list. One young girl paid the debt of nature this evening." There is no indication of the cause of this sickness; could it be the common cold to which the Indians would have no resistance?

Monday 31st. They caught 98 trout in the barrier and after giving the fort personnel their ration gave the rest to the Spokanes.

APRIL

Tuesday 1st. "Caught in our barrier 280 trout they were given out as before."

"Wednesday 2nd. "Revet employed turning over the beaver skins and airing them."

Friday 4th. "About sun down Messrs. Mountiguy & Pion arrived from Okankan with 38 horses that were sent from New Caledonia." Ft. Spokane was supplying horses for the Thompson River trading post in what is now British Columbia. Mr. McLeod, Chief Trader at Ft. George, also sent up 14 men to with two boats to the forks. "he has also sent 15 bags of corn and 800 dried salmon."

"Saturday 12th. The men have been making up packs of furs that have been traded at the fort over the past year. "the people working at the Packs have finished."

Sunday 13th. "Revet arrived with all the People from the flat heads with 42 loaded horses."

Monday 14th. "to day all the packs from the flat heads were all opened and dried. The weather clear & pleasant all day."

Tuesday 15th. "The men employed making up the packs & pressing them."

Thursday 17th. " a party of 6 men and 30 loaded horses left this for the forks to wait for Mr. Kennedy... They have with them 40 packs & 20 pieces of gum (for caulking the boats on the Columbia River)." Note the ratio; each horse is carrying two 90 lb. packs.

Saturday 19th. "to day 8 men with forty loaded horses left this for the forks they have 79 packs of furs."

According to George Simpson's journal the Spokane District produced 9000 beaver pelts in this year, of which about half were produced by the Snake Country Expedition.²⁸

In the spring of 1823 Mr. Kennedy outfitted a Snake Country Expedition from Ft. Spokane, led by Finan McDonald with Michael Bourdon as his Segundo. Kennedy was then transferred to Ft. George as Chief Factor.

Peter Skene Ogden came to the Columbia District in 1817 as a NWC Clerk. He survived the amalgamation and was assigned as an HBC clerk at the Thompson River post in 1820. Peter Skene Ogden was appointed Chief Factor at Ft. Spokane in 1823. He continued a long career with the HBC.²⁹

There was a Salish wedding at Ft. Spokane in 1823. Peter Skene Ogden met and courted Julia Rivet, the step-daughter of Francois Rivet. It proved to be a lasting marriage.³⁰

John Work, Irish born, began his career at the HBC York Factory, and rose to the rank of clerk. He traveled in 1823 with Mr. Ogden to Ft. Spokane and served there as clerk. From 1825 to 1831 Peter Skene Ogden led Snake Country Brigades. His journals have been transcribed, and give a tremendous insight to the Upper Snake River fur trade competition with the Americans.³¹

In February 1824 Alexander Ross led the Snake Country Expedition starting from Flat Head Post. He had trouble managing the Iroquois free hunters, and the expedition upon return was not considered profitable. Ross retired from the fur trade to Red River, Canada with his family in 1825.

The "Emperor" visits his Columbia Department 1824 – 1825:

George Simpson entered the HBC service around 1818, and in 1820 was sent to Canada to

28 Merk, pg. 44.

29 Watson, pgs. 733, 734.

30 Binns, Ch. 9.

31 Watson, pg. 989.

take charge should then Governor William Williams be arrested by the NWC. In 1821 he was appointed Governor of the Northern Department. This was all of Canada, and the Pacific Northwest (the Oregon Territory). Simpson was knighted in 1841. He served as Governor until his death in 1860. He made huge company profits.³²

The canoe and boat express from Canada carrying Governor George Simpson arrived at the Forks (where the Spokane River meets the Columbia) on October 27, 1824.

With him was Dr. John McLoughlin. He was of Irish Catholic descent, and trained as a physician in Scotland. He joined the NWC in 1803 and was made a partner in 1814. He transferred to the HBC after the NWC amalgamation.³³

Simpson also had a bagpiper with him to “pipe” him ashore at various stops. He was met by Peter Skene Ogden and John Work. There were also 30 men with bateaux from Ft. George. The next day, Simpson, with Dr. McLoughlin, Ogden and Work made the 60-mile horseback ride to Ft. Spokane. Riding 60 miles in one day is no easy task for both horse and rider. Finan McDonald and William Kittson were at Ft. Spokane to meet them.

Simpson was not impressed with the Freemen hanging about Flat Head Post between Snake Country Expeditions and living on credits of trade goods and provisions. Simpson wrote, “This band of Freemen the very scum of the country and generally outcasts from the Service for misconduct are the most unruly and troublesome gang to deal with...”³⁴ In spite of this, the Freemen provided half of the furs annually in the Spokan District.

He was also not pleased with the operation of the Spokane District, “the good people of the Spokane District and I believe of the interior of the Columbia generally have since its first establishment shewn an extraordinary predilection for European Provisions without once looking at or considering the enormous price it costs...”³⁵

The Governor advised everyone to hoard the European provisions because there would be scant more to come to the Columbia Department. He felt that the Spokane District could live off the salmon, garden and country (Indian trade) produce, particularly since, according to his journal, he was cutting Ft Spokane District personnel by about one third. Simpson said he would send garden seeds across next season to be tried at Spokane House, “I feel confident that they will thrive, *Indian Corn cannot fail.*”

On October 30th. Simpson concluded his business at Ft. Spokane, and with Dr. McLoughlin rode the 60 miles back to the forks. He noted, “the Dr. quite knocked up being

32 Ibid, pg. .870

33 Ibid. pg. 673.

34 Merk, pg. 45.

35 Ibid. pg.47.

unaccustomed to such violent exercise.”³⁶

Governor Simpson spent the winter of 1824–25 at Ft. George, further “terrorizing” the company servants with his micro-managing policies. While there he concluded that Spokane House, during the winter, could get along with 1 Clerk, and 4 Men. In the summer it would be 1 Chief Trader, 2 Clerks, 4 Summer Men and 14 Voyageurs.³⁷

Simpson also directed that Ft. George be moved some 60 miles up the Columbia River to a broad plain opposite the mouth of the Willamette River, and that it would be named Ft. Vancouver. Dr. John McLoughlin was appointed Chief Factor of the Columbia Department and would supervise the new post construction.

Simpson’s boat brigade is now heading up the Columbia River. From Simpson’s journal, “Forks Spokane River Friday, April 8th. (1825) Had a consultation with Mess Kennedy, McMillan, McDonald & Ross on the subject of removing the Establishment of Spokane House to Kettle Falls...” Simpson went on to list the reasons for the move being the 60 miles that Spokane House was from the Columbia River; the fact that there was a large area with good soil for farming above the falls, and that there was a huge salmon fishery at Kettle Falls. He also noted that the overland travel from Cootonai Post and Flat Head Post would be about the same as from Spokane House. All of these reasons would result in a significant cost saving in supplying trade goods and provisions from England to the Upper Columbia trading posts.

According to Simpson, “The only difficulty in removing (from Spokane House) is that it may give offence to the Spokane Indians who have always been staunch to the Whites and induce them to Steal our Horses and annoy us otherwise...”

John work was assigned to take charge of affairs at Ft. Spokane, “until the arrival of some Commissioned Gentlemen from the other side.” At the same time Simpson appointed James Bernie to the summer charge of Spokane House, with four men. Birnie was apparently also a clerk, working for John Work. Birnie was to get the trade goods, provisions and other items packed up for transporting to Kettle Falls.

“Monday April 11th. Our accounts nearly wound up, they shew a profit of about L10,000 for this Dept. the returns amounting to about 20,000 Beaver and Otter...” Simpson mentions that with his efficiency changes that the Columbia Dept. can produce an additional L5,000 and 10,000 Beaver and Otter.

Although fur traders were not interested in changing the Indians’ spirituality, Simpson believed that the Indians needed “Christianizing”, and that the HBC would support

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid. pg. 70

missionaries in a certain degree. As an education experiment he, "Baptized the Indian Boys, they are the Sons of the principal Spokane & Coutonais War Chiefs, Men of great Weight and consequence in this part of the country; they are named Coutonais Pelly and Spokan Garry." The boys returned across Canada with Simpson.

They were to be educated at the Red River Episcopal Mission School. Sadly, Coutonais Pelly died a few years later at the school. Spokan Garry "survived" mission schooling and returned to his people. He was not successful in getting the Spokane People to buy into Christianity. But did serve, with his knowledge of English and French languages, as an intermediary for his people with the ever increasing number of Europeans.

Meanwhile, the Simpson bateaux brigade had moved up the Columbia River, reaching Kettle Falls on April 14th. After portaging the falls Simpson immediately met with the Chief of the place and asked permission to build a fur trade post, on his lands. Simpson also asked that there be a friendly Indian disposition and protection of the "Establishment." The Chief readily received the proposal and offered Simpson a choice of land.

The Governor selected a beautiful flat above Kettle Falls with good soil and timber for the trading post. He named it Ft. Colville, after one of the London board of Directors. He marked out a garden area and wrote Mr. Birne at Spokan House to send a couple of men immediately to plant 5 or 6 bushels of potatoes.

John Work, Field Clerk Spokane District:

Our window to the Spokane House history now shifts to John Work's Journal of June 1, 1825 to April 18 1826.³⁸

John Work spent the winter of 1824-25 at Ft. George. On June 21st, 1825 he left with 32 men in five boats from the Ft. Vancouver site with trade goods and supplies for forts, Nez Perces, Okanogan, Thompson River and Colville. On June 29th. the boats reached Ft. Nez Perces. Leaving provisions there, they head up the Columbia to the Snake River.

Work's mission was to trade for 150 horses from the Nez Perce. On July 1st. with 28 men in two boats and lots of trade goods he headed up the Snake River to the big Nez Perce Camp at the junction of the Clearwater and Snake Rivers (Lewiston, ID).

By July 17th. he had traded for 112 horses at an average of 20 "skins" per horse in trade goods. The next day he headed for Spokane House, with Indian Charlie as his guide. The trail roughly followed the ID/WA state line.

Meanwhile, The supply boats were headed on up the Columbia River for Ft. Okanogan to

38 Elliott, WHQ, vol. 5, nos.2, 3 1914;vol 6, 1915.

drop off the supplies as well as for the Thompson River post in New Caledonia (British Columbia). This post would have to be supplied by packhorses. This was part of the reason Work had traded for so many horses.

On July 20th. Work and engagees arrived at Spokane House with 89 horses. Some 17 horses became too weak or lame to continue along the route, and were abandoned. Work found that James Birnie had been busy, "(he) has made up 254 pieces including trading goods, provisions, stores, and sundries."

These pieces (packs weighing 90 lbs. each) were ready for packhorse transportation to Kettle Falls. Spokane House was 60 miles from the Columbia River, and the Indian Trail, known as the Ilthkoyape Road, was about the same distance to Kettle Falls.

The local Indians knew that Ft. Spokane is being abandoned and were uncooperative in providing horses for packing goods to Kettle Falls. At two packs per horse, it would take 127 horses to get the goods to Kettle Falls, in one trip. At the time there were only 34 horses at the post.

July 21st. Work notes that the "returns in furs are far short of those last year." The garden looked remarkably well "the potatoes are bigger than eggs."

Birnie gave Work a "note" from Governor Simpson. In it he tells Work that he has lined out the fort site at Kettle Falls, and to transport the Spokane property to Kettle Falls as soon as possible. Simpson also states that the potatoes are not to be eaten from the Ft. Spokane garden but to be taken to Kettle Falls and planted in the garden there. He estimates that there should be 30 to 40 bushels of potatoes for planting. The Governor also advised, "no imported provisions can in the future be forwarded from the coast (Ft. Vancouver)."

Simpson directs that furs and country provisions from Flat Head and Kootenai Posts be sent to Ft. Colville via the Clark Fork/ Pend Oreille and Kootenai Rivers, if possible. Finally, he asks Mr. Work to, "Do me the favour" to collect samples of plants and animals to be sent via next years supply ship back to London. This is for David Douglas, the British Naturalist, expected visit to the Columbia Department.

On July 23rd. Work set out with 70 horses for Ft. Okanogan. On the 24th, after crossing the Grand Coulee, they arrived on the Columbia River opposite Ft. Okanogan. They rested the horses for a day, and then swam the horses across the river.

While at Ft. Okanogan Work received a packet, by Indian courier, from Mr. Ogden who is leading the Snake Country Brigade that he is on the Upper Missouri, and planning to come into Flat Head Post (instead of Ft. Nez Perces). Work figures this may delay the closing of Ft. Spokane until next year if the Snake Brigade's fur packs must be transported to Ft.

Vancouver from Ft. Spokane. Work also thinks that the Snake Country outfits might have to be brought up to Ft. Spokane from Ft. Nez Percés.

Saturday July 30th. Work sends the Courier back to Ft. Spokane requesting Mr. Birnie to send horses to the Forks to take the property to Spokane," as we know not whether the Fort can be removed this year until answers are received from Ft Vancouver to our letters." Mr. Work now travels up the Columbia River in the three supply boats to the Forks.

August 4th. Leaving Ft. Okanogan: "Embarked past 3 o'clock (a.m.) and arrived at Spokane Forks at 8 (p.m.)." Men with horses arrived from Spokane, with a letter from Birnie that they had some trouble with the Indians at Spokane, about removing the fort.

The goods and property were unloaded and sorted for Ft. Spokane, Kettle Falls and for the Rocky Mountains. "The two boats (of the three) are to remain here also laid up and some 26 pieces (fur packs) which was sent from Spokane, buried in the sand, till it to be sent below next fall."

Friday August 5th. John Work rode to Ft. Spokane with 35 horses carrying provisions and baggage. The boat and cargo of tools and supplies continues on to Kettle Falls. A crew of eight men with the boat are to work at preparing timbers for a store at "the new establishment (Ft. Colville)."

Mr. Work traveling with the pack string arrived at Spokane on August 7th. He noted that the Fort had 4 to 5000 pieces of dried salmon in the store, besides roots. This is fortunate as all of the dried meat (buffalo) was "so completely spoiled and damaged that it is useless."

Work then rides to Flat Head post to trade with the Salish and Pend Oreilles. He also has supplies for Ogden's Snake Brigade expected later at the post. He traded for 374 large and 99 small beaver, and 1 otter. He also acquired 76 bales of meat (buffalo), 5 lodges (buffalo hide tipis), 1 horse, 29 saddles and cords (buffalo rawhide).

John Work rode ahead from Sceneacquoteen to Spokane on Aug. 25th. The pack string arrived at Spokane the next day. The Flat Head packs were opened and found to be "in good order." The dried meat was also in "fine condition" and weighs about 5,500 lbs. Mr. Work notes that they are "living now (at Spokane) on dry provisions as nothing is fresh to be got." A fire spread from the Indian camp to the garden and burned some of the fence "composed of thorn bushes."

John Work on August 31st. sets out from Ft. Spokane to check on the work progress at Kettle Falls. On reaching the Ft. Colville construction, he finds "little progress." Mr. Dears, in charge of construction, reports he could not get men to work faster; some were most always sick. Two men "at present ill with the venereal...." Work noted, "The potatoes

(planted earlier) looked well but moles are destroying some of them....”

Tuesday September 6th. Mr. Kittson arrived at Spokane from the Kootenais having made a good trade: 99 beaver, 62 deer and 34 elk skins (probably rawhide for fur bale wrappers) and 2 horses. The Kootenais have asked for a permanent post be built for them.

William Kittson started in the service of the NWC as an apprentice clerk at Ft. Nez Perces. He continued employment with the HBC, and was a clerk at Ft. Spokane. His field trading was mainly with the Kootenais. Unfortunately, his journal has not been found.³⁹

On the 12th. some “Pendent Oreille “ Indians traded 20 beaver. Mr. Work mentions the next day that the remainder of “the furs were aired and beat, they are now all piled by and in excellent order.”

A few Nez Perce stopped by with a large band of horses. They came to visit and brought no furs. The Nez Perce don't do beaver. The blacksmith busy making axes.

Saturday September 17th. There is an boat Express from Ft. Vancouver coming up river to the Boat Encampment with families, to meet an officer from the HBC coming from the east over the Athabasca Pass with dispatches for Ft. Vancouver. The families are headed for Red River settlement.

A messenger from Wallawalla arrived with dispatches from Ft. Vancouver for Messrs. Ogden and Work. Ogden's letters were sent to him by courier. “I (Work) am directed by Mr. McLoughlin to stop the buildings at Kettle Falls till the arrival of the (return) Express from across, because the site pointed out for the Fort is on the south side of the River.”

On September 18th. Messrs. Work and Kittson after a day and a night ride reached Kettle Falls.

Monday September 19th. The out going Express had arrived at Kettle Falls. Mr. Work set the Express men to gumming the boat, and sent them off at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. “The crew consists of 8 men. “The boat is not deep laden but a good deal lumbered on account of passengers, Mr. McLeod's wife & 2 children, Mr. Ross's wife and 4 children & St. Martin & 1 child. The men have provisions, corn, pease, dry meat & dry salmon for 36 days.” Two of the Express men were sick, one with venereal, “two others had to be sent in their place.”

John Work found that not much progress had been made on the store at Kettle Falls. Timbers had been cut and squared but not erected. He directs Mr. Dears to have the men continue to cut timbers but not to start erection until he can confirm that Ft. Colville is being constructed in the location lined out by Governor Simpson. Work writes in his

39 Watson, pgs. 537, 538.

journal that, "It will be necessary to call home the men to put the houses, etc. at Spokane in order to pass the winter."

Wednesday September 21st. Work and Kittson return to Ft. Spokane. During the next week activity at the fort is mostly putting more "mats" (most likely tule' mats made by local Indian women) on the roof of the store

Monday September 26th. One of Ogden's men arrive at Spokane from the Missouri (?) with a letter that he with 20 men is on his way to Wallwalla (Ft. Nez Perces) from the Snake Country. Ogden has ordered that part of his outfit consisting of 50 horses, 20 saddles & eppichimans, leather, cords, etc. be forwarded to him at Ft. Nez Perces. He also requests that Mr. Dears be sent to meet him with the horses. Work notes that about 20 horses will be left at Spokane and "most of them unfit for any duty."

Mr. Work then sends an Indian with horses and instructions to Mr. Dears at Kettle falls to get the potatoes in a pit below frost line. He is to return with the men to Ft. Spokane as soon as possible.

John Work then lists the winter activities for the men at Spokane as, "preparing material for boats, and providing fuel...and repairing houses." There will be " plenty to do attending to the boat building...."

Monday October 3rd. "Had four men off seeking timber to saw for the boats, they felled nine trees none of which would serve, they are good distance up along the River seeking it. The wood of the dimensions required, 40 feet long and 14 inches square, is difficult to find." T.C. Elliot who transcribed John Work's journals in a footnote states that the boat trees were cedar located at Deep Cr. some five miles above the Fort. The following day, the men had found three suitable trees for boats, and more men were sent to fell and square the logs.

The fort garden potatoes were dug yielding 28 kegs from 5 kegs planted. Some of the potatoes had started to sprout.

Friday October 7th. The party was sent off to Ft Nez Perces. Messrs. Kittson, Dears and their wives, six men and 2 Indians with 50 horses; 18 loaded. Kittson and 4 men are to return to Spokane with some horses, if they can be spared. "The party are well armed and I think sufficiently strong to pass through the Indians with safety."

"The men at the Fort got home with the boat timber and were afterward employed getting wood for a saw pit."

Governor Simpson wanted John Work to determine if the Pend Oreille River was navigable to the Columbia River. At this time he didn't have anyone who could check out the river and postponed the task until next year. This is interesting since David Thompson

checked out the lower Pend Oreille River in 1809 and again in 1810 and found it to NOT be navigable.

Monday October 10th. "Men employed as follows. Two sawing wood for boats, 2 seeking stem and stern posts, and six cutting wood for coals (making charcoal). The sawyers got on pretty well. The wood for the stem and stern posts was also found."

On the 14th. the men returned with enough wood for four boats, but found one log with heart rot even though both ends were sound.

Saturday October 15th. the men are squaring timber 40 feet long, 12 inches wide and 6 inches thick to saw into boards. Others brought "home" some white earth to whitewash the houses. During this time at the fort men were working daily cutting and hauling firewood.

Wednesday October 19th. Mr. Kittson returned from Ft. Nez Perces with 5 horses and four men

Saturday October 22nd. "Mr. work sent two Indians and "16 horses loaded with appichimans saddles etc. for New Caledonia & Thompson River." "the people are to remain at the Forks till the Express arrives (from the Boat Encampment)."

Monday October 24th. "The sawyers finished the wood for three boats, in all 73 boards 6 inches wide and 40 feet long & 3 pieces for keels 40 feet long & 14 inches wide, and 6 pieces for the gunwales 40 feet & 2 inches wide in 15 days, they worked well..."

On the 28th. "Old Phillip and another man finished covering the dwelling house with mats,"

Monday October 31st. the Express arrives at the Forks. Over the next two days some property from the Rocky Mountains was brought to Spokane. Mr. Work sent a letter request to Dr. McLoughlin with the departing Express boat for Mr. Dease to come and take charge of the Spokane District.

Warren Dease was American born at Mackinac, Michigan in 1788. He grew up in the fur trade joining the XY Company and then the NWC. He joined the HBC in 1821 and was given the designation of Chief Trader. He was the last Spokane District Chief Trader from 1825 to 1826.

Friday November 4th. "The men arrived (at the Fort) from the Forks. They were so benumbed with cold that they could scarcely untie the loads." The outsides of the bales were wet with snow and rain.

Tuesday November 8th. Mr. Kittson with 5 engagees and 9 horses set off for the Forks to

trade with the Kootenais. As per Governor Simpson's directive, they are to take a small boat up the Columbia River to the Kootenai River, and then proceed up river through Kootenai Lake, and on to the Falls of the Kootenai. There below the falls they are to build a trading post to serve the Kootenais.

Sunday November 12th. Mr. Work received word that Mr. Dease would be delayed in coming to Ft. Spokane due to Mr. Ogden not yet arriving at Ft. Nez Percés. Work is to immediately take a trading outfit to the Flat Head Post, and leave Birnie in charge at Spokane.

On November 17th. After crossing, with the trade goods, at Seneacquoteen, Mr. Work decides to take three canoes along with the horses up the Clark Fork River to haul the furs back down the river.

Thursday November 24th. Mr. Work's trading outfit reached Flat Head Post. The weather had been "raw, cold and foggy", with times of rain. The doors and windows on the "houses" were gone and the floors torn up. The roofs leaked. Over the next few days the men replaced the doors and covered the windows with rawhide. Tule' mats were traded to repaired the roofs.

Messengers, with tobacco were, were sent up river to the Flathead(Salish) and Pend Oreille winter camps to let them know that Flathead Post was open for business. The Salish came in to trade on November 26 and again on the 29th. to trade.

Wednesday November 30th. Mr. Work summed up the Salish trade as follows: 310 large & 202 small beaver, 11 otters, 76 muskrats, 1 mink, 1 buffalo robe, 6 dressed deer skins, 17 deer parchment skins, 4 dressed elk skins, 11 saddles, 111 fathoms of (rawhide) cord, 97 appichmins (buffalo hide saddle blankets), 69 bales, 4094 lbs. net wt. dry (buffalo) meat, 170 fresh tongues, 103 dry tongues, 14 buffalo horns, 4 hair bridles, and 2 dogs.

The meat bales include 2314 lbs. lean, 1340 lbs. back fat, and 440 lbs. inside fat. These are the components for making pemmican. As previously noted, the fur traders preferred to make their own pemmican, sans dirt and hair common in the Indian product.

Saturday December 3rd. Mr. Kittson arrived, unexpectedly, at Flathead Post in a canoe with the Kootenai trade outfit. He found segments of the Kootenai River not navigable between the mouth and Kootenai Lake. Kittson with his crew and trade goods had to backtrack all the way back to Ft. Spokane and then proceed to Flat Head Post via the standard route up the Clark Fork River.

Thursday December 6th. John Work sent off 2 canoes with 5 men each to Ft. Spokane with the Flat Head trade. He was anxious for La Course one of the tradesmen to get back to Spokane to work on the boats. The engagees were to return with the canoes as soon as

possible so that the remaining trade in furs and provisions could be carried back to Spokane before the river froze.

Saturday December 10. The Nez Perce came in to trade: 18 beaver, 23 appichmins, 2 robes, 5 saddles, 4 dressed skins 97 tongues, and 11 bales of meat (dried) 665 lbs.

On Tuesday and Wednesday, December 13 and 14, the Kootenais came in and traded: 488 large and 231 small beaver, 8 otters, 1200 muskrats, 6 fishers, 7 mink, 21 deer and 27 elk skins, 9 parflashes, and 31 fathoms of cord.

Messrs. McKay and Hubert arrived with a cache of Snake Country furs they had raised, counting 17 packs and 4 partons (?)

Saturday December 17th. Mr. Work receives a letter from Mr. Dease at Ft. Spokane that he (Work) must be back at Spokane by April 5th. to meet the Express at the Forks. Works notes in his journal that to leave Flat Head Post so early would "injure" the spring trade.

Monday December 19th. Yesterdays Flat Head trade totaled: 222 large and 107 small beaver, 1 otter, 4 robes, 72 appichmins, 1 elk skin, 18 pack saddles, 113 fathoms cord, 4 hair bridles, 52 bales dried meat 3122 lbs., 119 fresh tongues, 23 dry tongues, and 10 ½ lbs. castorum (beaver scent glands).

On December 22nd. Work sent 2 canoes with the winter furs and provisions traded from the flat Heads off to Ft. Spokane.

Sunday December 25th. Christmas Day at Flat Head Post. The weather is cloudy, raw and cold, with masses of ice running pretty thick down the river. "This being Christmas Day the two men here had a dram and we served out extra ration each of fresh meat, a tongue, and a quart of flour. For the old freeman Blastang the same.

"Two Pendent Oreilles traded the carcasses of 2 sheep (mountain) ... weighing 62 & the other 60 lbs."

Wednesday December 28th. "The men finished assorting & baling up the meat. We have in store 67 bales, 84 lbs. net each, Lean meat 1596 lbs. & Back Fats 1008 lbs. in all 5628 lbs." Some of the Indians moved up river. There are about 20 lodges that remained next to the Post. "those Indians that remain here employ most of their time gambling."

Saturday December 31st. "The men sent to Ft. Spokane with the Flat head trade returned." They had to leave the canoes below Thompson Falls "Chutes" Mr. Works notes, "They have made a very expeditious voyage." Mr. Dease, Chief Factor at Ft. Spokane, sent a letter asking that either Messrs. Work or Kittson pay him a visit. "Nothing material has occurred a Spokane since we heard from it last."

Sunday January 1st. New Year Day 1826 at Flat Head Post. "Stormy with heavy rain the greater part of the day; the snow has nearly disappeared."

"This being the first day of the new year, according to custom, each of the men got an extra ration of 6 lbs. fresh venison, 2 lbs. back fat, 1 buffalo tongue, 1 pint of Flour and 1 pint of rum. At daylight they ushered in the new year with a volley of musketry, when they were treated with 4 glasses of Rum, cakes & a pipe of tobacco. With this and the pint of rum given to each of them, they soon contrived to get nearly all pretty drunk. They appeared to pass the day comfortably enjoying themselves without quarreling."

On Monday the 2nd. Mr. Work notes, "The men doing little today."

On Wednesday January 4th. Mr. Work in a canoe with 6 men departs Flat Head Post for Spokane, as per Mr. Dease's request. The canoe has 18 packs of furs and provisions, plus saddles and appichmins. On the 7th. they reached the Sceneacquoteen portage. Not having any horses to meet them, they cached the canoe cargo.

Sunday January 8th. Mr. Work and the engagees started walking, in deep snow, on the Skeetshoo Road (the Indian trail named by David Thompson). The next morning Mr. Work writes, "Resumed our journey before 3 o'clock (a.m.) and reached Spokane at 1 in the afternoon. They had walked 70 plus miles in those two days.

On Saturday January 14th. John Work and his engagees departed Ft. Spokane to return to Flat Head Post. He had extra horses and men with him to retrieve the goods cached at Sceneacquoteen for return to Spokane.

Friday January 20th. Following the usual route, with canoes and horses on the trail up the Clark Fork River, Work reached Flat Head Post. "Found Mr. Kittson and people all well. The Indians had just brought in 14 deer to trade and the fresh meat was most welcome. "The men have been employed, getting wood for a canoe, making troughs to (beat) meat & make pemmican, cutting cords & putting an upper flooring in the house, etc."

For the next six days Mr. McKay and men were away from the Post looking for canoe wood. The weather had been mild and pleasant.

Tuesday January 31st. The snow is nearly a foot deep. "Part of the men employed cutting & melting tallow, & part, pounding meat to make pimican."

Saturday February 4th. "Yesterday evening, I gave one of the men Togonche, a boxing for making too free with my wife..." On February 7th. "T. Togonche came back to the fort in the night & took away his things and other provisions, the others deny that they knew of his going off. I believe they are telling lies."

The journals kept by company managers were a business record. Women were not mentioned unless something extra ordinary happened to them.

From the 5th. to the 11th. of February the men were making pemmican and working on constructing the canoe. "The canoe was put on stocks & the head & stern were formed." "None of the Indians can give us any account of Togonche who deserted some days ago."

Monday February 13th. " An Indian arrived from Spokane with letters...Mr. Dease sends orders for me to proceed to Spokane... and leave Mr. Kittson in charge of this place."

Mr. Work was not happy to be ordered back to Ft. Spokane at this time, as there is still spring trading to be done, and the seasons trade accounts would not be up to date.

From February 14 to the 19th. the men were continuing to make pemmican for Spokane. Trades were being made with the Kootenais at the Post; the largest some 500 muskrats. Another group of Kootenais made fur trades including 114 dressed deer skins (these were brain tanned buckskins).

Monday February 20th. Work heading for Fort Spokane, "Left Flat Heads in a canoe with 7 men & an Indian and 22 pieces (bags) Pimican & fat, 1 box candles & my baggage, besides provisions for the voyage, in all about 27 pieces (each weighing 80 to 90 lbs.)" Mr. Work decided not to take horses on this trip as the trail down the Clark Fork River had too much snow and ice.

Below Thompson Falls "Chutes" Work spread the loads between two more canoes. The river had segments that were frozen, and slippery dangerous portages had to be made around these areas. On February 21st. "Bonufont deserted, and ran off with my old gun and Powder horn.

Engagees generally signed a three year work contract for a specified annual wage, a clothing allowance, and some trade store credit. These servants were considered by management as company "property", and often perused and returned, if found to discourage others from deserting.

On Thursday the 23rd. John Work and men reached Sceneacquoteen and camped on the north side of the Pend Oreille River. The snow was three to four feet deep, with more snow showers. At daylight the next day, after leaving an Indian to guard the property, they canoed across the river, and set out on foot for Ft. Spokane. Heading south on the Skeetshoo Road, they passed two Indian camps and managed to borrow three pairs of snowshoes. On the night of the 24th "When we camped we were very tired and had no water, however, by melting snow on a piece of bark at the fire we soon obtained sufficiency."

On Saturday February 25th about mid-day they reached the plain. This would be in the vicinity of Rathdrum, Idaho. Continuing down the Spokane River Valley, they ran across a camp of Jaco Finlay's sons, and spent the night with them. Finally, on February 26th. about 11 a.m. John Work and his men arrived at Ft. Spokane. He noted in his journal, "Found Mr. Dease and his people all well."

Monday February 27th. "Mr. Dease had determined to let it (the pieces and baggage at Sceneacquoteen) remain sometime till the snow thaws." He did send a man, Chilifaux, off to the portage to tell the Indian guarding the pieces of the delay due to snow. Chilifaux was instructed to bring Work's baggage back to Spokane, including his papers (company records from Flat Head Post). Mr. Birnie was in charge of beaver pelts being pressed into bales, and by Sunday March 5th. they were finished.

Tuesday March 7th. The local chiefs had agreed to provide 80 horses to pack the fur bales to the Forks. "Mr. Birnie with 3 men, 13 Indians and 80 loaded horses set out for the forks first trip. Mr. B(irnie) is to remain in charge of the furs & property. Only 4 to 6 pieces of private property."

Chilifaux returned in the evening to Spokane with Mr. work's "trunk & blankets - about 100 lbs.." The next day Chilifaux was sent off to join Mr. Birnie at the Forks.

On Friday March 10th. "The men were employed with two Indians pressing fur packs..." They finished on Saturday, completing 36 packs by evening. The Indians returned from the Forks with part of the horses. On Sunday the remainder of the horses came in.

Monday March 13th. The men are tying up fur packs for the next trip to the Forks. Mr. Work notes, "Busy all day paying Indians for their horses for the last trip.

Thursday March 16th. Another 60 "loads" of furs are ready to be packed to the Forks. Saturday the 18th. is the scheduled day to start. The Indians have been engaged again to furnish 60 horses. Pere de Jolie Fille has been engaged to retrieve the property that has been cached at Sceneacquoteen.

Snow and cold weather has delayed the packhorses leaving for the Forks a planned for Saturday.

Sunday March 19th. Although there has been some rain and sleet, a pack string of 62 loaded horses with three men, ten Indians, and led by interpreter Rivet set off for the forks. "There is very little property of any kind now remaining. The women and children also went off today."

Francois Rivet had a long and amazing career in the fur trade. He was a member of the Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery, returning to St. Lewis in 1806. He is next mentioned in

David Thompson's journal in 1810. He had a Salish wife. He worked as a freeman interpreter for the NWC and HBC on the Spokane District, and continued to work for the company at Ft. Colvile, after the closing of Ft. Spokane. He became a U.S. citizen in 1851, and died at St. Paul, OR the next year at the age of ninety-five.⁴⁰

Tuesday March 21st. "The Blacksmith & cook the only two men we have now here, employed collecting all the iron about the place, stripping hinges off doors, & etc." Based on a significant area of charcoal found in front of the blacksmith's shop,⁴¹ it is most likely that the doors, shutters and other things with iron were burned, and the iron retrieved from the ashes.

John Work notes, "The Indians much regret our going off, and frequently complain that they will be pitiful when the whites leave them."

From the 22nd to the 25th., the men and horses returned to Spokane from the Forks. The Indians were paid for their trip. A letter was delivered from Mr. Kittson that he was coming to the Fort with the spring Flat Head Post trade in furs and pemmican. Due to the deep snow at Sceneacquoteen, a message was sent back for him to wait at the portage.

Thursday March 30th. "La Course caulking his boats." It would be nice to know what was being used for caulking.

Thursday March 28th. "Rivit, 2 men and some Indians went off to meet Mr. Kittson with 70 horses."

On Sunday April 2nd. The pack string with the Flat Head trade arrived at Ft. Spokane. "The men immediately employed opening and examining the Provisions (pemmican). A good deal of it is wet & getting mouldy." Part of the day was spent settling with the Indians for the use of their horses.

On Friday April 7th. The Indians swam the company horses, without packs, across the Spokane River to the south side, and trailed them to a location below the mouth of the Little Spokane River. The river was too high and fast to risk moving the cargo on horseback. The remaining packs, mostly provisions, and some furs, and sundries (such as the salvaged iron) were put in a boat and floated down river to meet the horses. "At noon I (Mr. Work) set out with 59 loaded horses & encamped late at the Kettle Encampment." T.C. Elliot, the journal transcriber, speculates that this is where the main trail from Ft. Nez Perces to Kettle Falls crossed the Spokane River.

40 Watson, pg. 819.

41 EXCACATIONS, 1964.

Sunday April 9th. "The boats, three in number, which left Spokane yesterday arrived at the Forks (below the junction of the Spokane and Little Spokane River)." The boats were then loaded with cargos that had been transported there by pack string. The boats were lined down the falls at Long Lake, and Little Falls. La Course's boat struck and stone near the Forks but did not upset.

April 10th. "The horses and property all arrived at the Forks (Spokane and Columbia River junction) safe in the morning where the loads were received. The bales of meat were opened to be aired several of them were a little wet. Busily employed in the after part of the day paying off the Indians for the lend of their horses and their own labour coming to the Forks."

Ft. Spokane is now abandoned. The HBC did not make any ownership claim on the remaining buildings.

Tuesday April 11th. The Express boat coming up stream from Ft. Vancouver, and headed for Boat Encampment just happened to reach the Forks while the people and horses from abandoned Ft. Spokane were still there. "They brought 3 pigs & 3 young cows for Ft. Colvile.

Thursday April 13th. Two of the boats, built at Ft. Spokane, were sent down river to Ft. Okanogan to collect their fur packs. "F. Rivit, Old Philip & old Paget & Pierre with a number of women and children and all the horses & young cows were sent off to Kettle falls. They have a quantity of seed potatoes with them & tools to commence farming immediately."

On Tuesday April 18th. a boat (most likely the third constructed at Ft. Spokane) set out for Ft. Okanogan with fur packs, sundries and company personnel.



APPENDICIES

A. The Spokane District People

There was an ethnic diversity of people, and languages spoken at these posts. Upper and lower classes of people were defined by their heritage, jobs, and by how they dressed.

The proprietors and partners were gentlemen of rank, mainly Scots, Irish and English extraction, though in some instances U.S. or Canada born. They would wear wool suits daily with dress shirts, cravats, boots or leather shoes and top hats. A bit of tartan might be worn as a vest, or cummerbund.

The clerks were the next management rank and could, based on performance, one day become a post manager or field partner. They might have a wool suit for dress occasions, including boots or shoes. They would have a common frock coat, and on a daily basis wear gingham, linen, cotton or wool flannel shirts, often with a cravat, and knee breeches or trousers of wool, corduroy, linen or Nankeen cloth, and moccasins. Hats worn might be broad-brim, balmoral, cappie, or in cold weather a tuque.

The next group would be tradesmen (mechanics) carpenter, cooper, blacksmith, boat builder, gunsmith, cook and tailor who probably didn't have suits but might have boots for some jobs such as blacksmith. Some might have a frock coat. Most probably wore moccasins along with knee breeches or trousers of canvas, Nankeen cloth, corduroy or buckskin pants. Shirts would be of common type cotton, linen or wool flannel. Leather gloves and aprons would be worn depending on the trade. Headgear would be about the same as the clerks. A bandanna might be worn for arduous work but not as decoration.

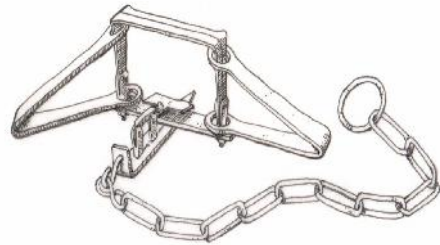
Engagees were hired on contract, generally for three years at an annual wage and clothing allowance, and some credit at the trade store. They were fed and lodged at company expense. These were the lowest class of company employees but because of their ethnic diversity can best be viewed by job.

Voyageurs, another class of engagee, were French Canadians often of mixed Indian/white heritage. They built and paddled canoes, made and drove dogsleds, and when portaging carried two packs weighing a total of 180 lbs. They could also be engaged to trap beaver for the company. Hard workers they were, as long as the tobacco and food held out, and they never passed up a drink. They dressed less formally but with more color. Shirts would be of cotton, wool or calico. Hats would be broad brimmed, or tuques, often with a plume. Colorful head and neck scarves were common but a decorative sash was always worn. Pants tended to be knee-breeches when wading in the water and were of cotton, canvas, wool, buckskin or perhaps corduroy. Half leggings would be worn with knee breeches for overland travel. Due to their Canadian heritage and preference, center-seam moccasins might also be seen as well as the local side-seam type. The

most common coat (capote) would be made from a wool point blanket.

Owyhees (Sandwich Islanders) were the lowest laboring rank engagee and were initially dressed in sailor clothes when traveling by ship to the Columbia Department. They were company employees and not slaves.

Free hunters were Iroquois, Nippissing, and other Metis who were trapping beaver in outlying areas in the Columbia Department. These trappers made valuable contacts with native peoples and paved the way for continued expansion of company territory. They purchased their own traps, guns, horses and other equipment; on credit to be paid for by the furs they trapped.



Free hunters were not fed or lodged at company expense. They would have dressed much like their voyageur counterparts, possibly some wearing leggings and loinclothes in favor of pants. As most of these men married Indian women and into her tribe, they would have had more in the way of ornamented buckskin coats and pants in addition to the colorful cloth shirts and scarves. Blanket capotes and buffalo robes would have been common. The men, even though difficult to deal with at times, produced half of the furs annually in the Columbia Department.

The Women at the inland posts during this time who were married into the fur trade were all Indian or Metis. Their clothing reflected status of their men. Those married to management mostly wore Canadian style European dresses while perhaps retaining their native moccasins and half leggings.

Engagee's wives might have a buckskin dress, decorated with some quillwork, a few beads, and other trade goods for special occasions. Otherwise, they wore simple fabric replicas of their native dress, perhaps trimmed with some silk ribbons. Moccasins and half leggings would continue to be worn. They would have a leather belt and/or perhaps a sash that held a knife, awl, and strike-a-light bag.

The wives of the free hunters would take advantage of the European trade goods in their dress and ornamentation. Cloth dresses particularly of wool trade cloth for colder weather would have been common. A leather belt with knife, awl and strike-a-light bag were essential. A wool point blanket would be her common outer "coat."

B. Fur Trading

The Flatheads, Pend Oreilles and Kootenais were more willing to trap beaver in order to acquire guns to defend themselves against the Blackfeet during their annual buffalo hunts. The Flatheads and the Pend Oreilles also traded literally thousands of pounds of dried buffalo meat, fat and pemmican to the companies, annually.

The free hunters in the Spokane District had a brief period in 1812 and 1813 when the American Pacific Co.(PFC) was competing with the North West Co. had an opportunity to see which company would give them the best deal on their furs, keeping in mind that their debts had to be paid off to their creditor in actual pelts. After the purchase of the PFC by the NWC in October 1813, it was back to a one-company monopoly. This continued when the NWC in 1821 was "adsorbed" into the HBC.

The tribes around Spokane House while needing guns, didn't do all that much beaver trapping, in spite of the urging of both fur companies. The tribal peoples soon found out that the companies needed lots of horses not only for moving packs of trade goods and furs but for food. The Spokane and Coeur d'Alene traded a lot of their horses from the Nez Perce, and then, either traded or "rented" their horses to the fur trading post. Having a good supply of horses, these tribes acquired trade goods without having to do much trapping.

The companies also had to rely on the local Indians for much of their food, besides horses (and at times dogs). The meager fort garden produced some potatoes and other "esculents" but the local people found a ready market for large quantities of camas, and other roots and berries. Both fresh and dried salmon, steelhead trout, and "carp" were also traded to the companies. Various other items such as brain-tanned hides, moccasins, and pitch were also traded.

During the 1812-1813 period, there was vigorous competition to get trade furs and provisions from the Spokane District Tribes. Competition between the PFC and NWC for the Indian trade was without the open hostility, as was common between posts east of the Rocky Mountains. In part, this may be credited to agreement between companies not to use alcohol as a trade item to get furs and provisions from the Indians. Representatives of both companies took their competition out to posts among the Flatheads and Kootenais. Spokane House was a popular summer rendezvous and wintering headquarters for personnel from outlying posts, and traveling Indian parties.

One of the most essential of trade items was tobacco. It had to be given as presents, and then smoked before trading could begin. The Indians considered tobacco so essential that the trader without it might just as well pack up his goods and move on!

The Indians and free hunters sought guns, flints, powder and ball, skinning knives, axes, kettles, fish hooks, fire steels, files, traps, mirrors, white and blue Canton beads, "Russian" (faceted) beads, brass thimbles, awls, needles, metal buttons, sewing thread, hawk bells, combs, blankets, blue and red wool trade cloth, calicoes and vermilion.

Trade goods and supplies for the posts arrived from Ft. William overland on the canoe highway across Canada from 1807 until 1813. From 1814 on, the trade goods and supplies for the Columbia Department trading posts arrived by ship from England, at Ft. George and later Ft. Vancouver.

Furs from the Inland trading posts were taken down the Columbia River, and transported by the supply ships to China, where some of the furs were traded for tea, silk and opium. Some of the beaver pelts were still returned England to meet the hat trade demand.

C. Standards of Trade Columbia River 1824-25

With the merger of the North West Co. and the Hudson's Bay Co. (HBC) in 1821, the Columbia Department was now controlled by the HBC, under the direction of Governor George Simpson.

Simpson visited the Columbia Department, via the canoe highway across Canada to the Columbia, arriving in the spring of 1824. The Governor spent the winter at Ft. George (Astoria, OR). While there he prepared a list of trade items and provisions and set their value in "Skins Made Beaver" for the fur trade season of 1824-25.

The *Standards of Trade Columbia River 1824-25* is unique in that the value of provisions and articles are listed in "Skins Made Beaver", for two trading posts. In viewing this list it is well to keep in mind that the original editor, Frederick Merk, in 1931, was transcribing this information from pages written with quill pen and ink, over 180 years ago. This can be a challenging task, depending on the writer's penmanship and condition of the pages. Once the editor has captured this information it was then type set, by another person for printing. This raises the chance for errors in transcribing and such errors may have also been "faithfully copied" in this *Standards of Trade* list reproduction.

Some terms, unique to the fur trade, and units of measure used over 180 years ago are not in our vocabulary today. Those writing with pen and ink also used abbreviations whenever possible, some of which may require clarification. With this in mind, the following explanations are offered to assist in reading the *Standards of Trade Columbia River 1824-1825* list. The order of these definitions and explanations are as encountered in reviewing the list.

Skins Made Beaver: Often referred to as "Made Beaver"; it is one large (32" in diameter or larger) fully prime winter fur, unblemished, stretched and dried beaver pelt. This was

the "coin of the realm", the "furry banknote" of the trade (Weadick, 1999).

Coating: This refers to the beaver and otter pelts that the Indians had tanned for their own use. These tanned pelts were sometimes traded besides the dried untanned pelts. The degree of wear and tear on the pelt would affect the value given by the trader.

Chevreuil: (Chevx., Chev.) This is a French word commonly used in the fur trade for deer or perhaps mule deer (Chance, 1973). There is still some question in this regard.

Red Deer: This refers to elk which to the European people looked like their "cousins" the red stag. Note that there was no value on red deer at Spokane House as there were few if any elk in the area at that time.

Gallon: (Gall.) You probably figured this out on your own.

Pilchards: These were herrings or similar fish.

Wapanoos: (Wapatoes) This is a Salish word for water potatoes, a starchy tuber of the Arrowhead plant, *Sagittaria cuneata*.

Awl: These were square steel shafts with points forged on each end. After putting a handle on one end, awls were used to punch holes in leather, rawhide and birchbark as needed, for sewing.

Axes: The reference to "half ax" is not clearly understood today. It could refer to a tomahawk type head since the word "tomahawk" was not commonly used to describe an ax type in the western fur trade. There is no question that a square-headed half ax was your trapper's hand ax used in making beaver and other trap sets. It had a flat, extra metal back (pole) opposite the blade which was used to pound stakes and other things. They were light enough to swing one-handed.

Blanket Points: These were black wool bars woven into the edge of the blanket, about 18" from the end. Each bar was about 4" long. The number of points noted blanket size, not value in beaver pelts. There is still much to be learned about the fur trade terms used to describe blankets.

Canton Beads: As noted, some furs from the Columbia Dept. were traded with Canton (China). Beads, generally sky blue, about 1/4" in diameter were also acquired in Canton for trade throughout the HBC domain.

Buttons Y & W: This refers to brass (yellow) and whitmetal (pewter or sheet iron) buttons. Buttons of these metals could be either cast or stamped (Oregon Archaeological Society, 1993).

Buttons, List: These are cloth covered buttons.

List Cloth: "Is a colored stripe on the edge or selvage of this cloth. Gray list cloth has a white stripe on the selvage. White list cloth has a gray stripe and was coarser than gray" (Dennis, 1990).

Fathom: A nautical term, refers to a length of 6 feet.

Capot: French for coat. Made from trade blankets or other heavy wool material. It was a long coat with a hood and held shut by a sash or buttons.

Ell: A former British cloth measure of 45 inches. Like the yard, it does not tell how wide the material is that's being measured.

Dag: This is an abbreviation for dagger, a double edged knife.

Duffels: (Duffel) A coarse, felted woolen cloth with a thick nap (Dennis, 1990).

Gartering: Ribbon, likely made of silk.

Knives, Scalping: Made in great quantity for the Indian trade. It had a plain wooden handle and a blade of about 7." The blade had a slight bottom curve (belly). It was an "all purpose" belt knife, used by both men and women.

Knives, Clasp: This was also a folding blade knife with an outside spring along the handle bottom. When open the blade would lock in place. The spring would be pulled back, by a finger ring, to release the blade to close.

Stroud Cloth: "A coarse woolen cloth formerly used by the British in bartering with North American Indians" (Dennis, 1990). The author does not know what the references "b'd cord" mean, yet.

Shot, Beaver: Beaver were taken by shooting as well as by trapping, particularly in the spring. This shot was thought to be about 00 buck size.

Vermillion: This is the red powder that Indian people used particularly for facial and body decoration. It was red mercuric oxide, and very poisonous. This was apparently not known at the time.

Wire, Brass Collar: The author is guessing that this is round wire that could be cut in lengths to make bracelets and neck decorations.

STANDARDS OF TRADE COLUMBIA RIVER 1824-25



<u>Returns</u>	<u>Skins Made Beaver</u>	
	<u>Ft. George</u>	<u>Spokane House</u>
1 Large Prime Beaver	1	1
1 Small " "	1/2	1/2
1 Pup " "	1/4	1/4
1 Large Beaver Coating	1	1
1 Large Land Otter	1	1
1 Small " "	1/2	1/2
1 Prime Sea Otter	12	-
1 Com. Large Sea Otter	10	-
1 Med. " "	7	-
1 Small " "	3	-
1 Large Piece coating	2	-
1 Pup Sea Otter	1/4	-
1 Musk Rat	1/10	1/10
1 Mink	1/4	1/4
1 Martin	1/4	1/3
 <u>Dressed Leather Etc.</u>		
1 Prime Deer Skin	2	2
1 Prime Chevx.	1	1
1 Large wooden Canoe Native work	15	-
1 Small According to Size	8	-
1 Good Working Horse	15	15
1 Chinook Hat 1st. Quality	4	-
1 " " Common	1	-
1 Large Chinook Mat	2/5	-
1 " " Double	1/2	-

<u>Provisions.</u>	Skins Made Beaver	
	Ft. George	Spokane House
1 Red Deer Fresh	4 1/2	-
1 Chev "	3	2
1 Beaver "	1	1
1 Black Bear Fresh	1	2
1 Sturgeon Fish Mdlg. Size	2	-
1 Salmon Large 30 lbs.	1/3	1
1 Gall. Smelts or Pilchards	1/2	-
1 Seal	3	-
1 Gall. Wapanoos or Columbia Potatoes	1/2	-
1 Gall. Berries of All Sorts	1	3
1 Gall. Fish Oil	2	-
1 Gall. Hazle Nuts	1	-
Sturgeon Glue Well Prepared per lb.	2	-
Swans ea.	1	-
Geese "	1/2	-
Ducks "	1/4	-
Cranes "	1/2	-

Articles (Heading added by author)

Awls Indian p. doz.	1	1
Axes Com. Half ea.	2	2
" " Small ea.	1	1
" Square-headed Half ea.	3	2
" " Small ea.	2	1
Blankets Plain 3 points ea.	6	6
" " 2 1/2 " "	5	5
" " 2 " "	4	4
" " 1 1/2 " "	3	3
" " 1 " "	2	2
" Green 4 " "	10	2
" " 3 " "	8	2
" H. Bay 3 " "	8	2
" " 2 1/2 " "	7	6
" Rose 9/4 " "	5	6
" " 8/4 " "	4	6
Balls Musket & Trading p. lb.	1	-
Beads Sky Blue Enam'd. p. lb.	5	-

Articles cont'd.	Skins Made Beaver	
	Ft. George	Spokane House
" Transparent Canton p. lb.	5	10
Buttons Y & W Metal p. doz.	1	1
" " " List p. doz.	1/2	1
Cloth Blue List p. fathom	6	6
" Com'n Scarlet fathom	8	10
Combs Com'n Horn pr. doz.	3	6
Coating Bolt Blue, Grey & Red pr. fathom	4	-
Capots Woolen 3 1/2 ells ea.	4	5
" " 3" "	3	4
" " 2 1/2 " "	2 1/2	3
Dags Plain 7 inches ea.	1	1 1/2
" Eyed 8 " "	2	2
" " 12 " "	3	2
Duffels Blue pr. yd.	3	-
Files Flat 6 & 7 inch pr. doz.	6	12
" " 8, 9 & 10 inch " "	12	12
Flints, Gun pr. doz.	1	1
Guns Com. N.W. each	20	18
Guns Fine Half Stocked ea.	30	-
Gartering pr. Roll	3	4
Glasses Looking Oval Gilt ea.	1	1
" " Pocket Caned ea.	1/2	1
Gun Powder per lb.	3	4
Hats Beaver ea.	6	-
" Com'n Wool ea.	3	-
Hooks Large Cod p. doz.	1	1
" Small Kerb p. doz.	1/2	-
Horns Powder ea.	1	1
Knives Scalping ea.	1	1
" Folding ea.	1/2	1/2
" Clasp ea.	1	1
Kettles Brass & Copper pr. lb.	2	2 1/2
" tin pr. Gall.	2	-
Needles assorted p. 20	1	-
Pistols Com. American ea.	3	4
" Engl. brown barrels	4	4
Rum reduced 1/3 p. bottle	1	-
Rifles American ea.	3	

Articles cont'd.	Skins Made Beaver	
	Ft. George	Spokane House
" English twist Barrels ea.	40	30
Rings plain brass per doz.	1/3	1
Strouds com'n blue b'd cord p. yd	2 1/2	3
Strouds H. Bay blue b'd cord p. yd.	3	3
Scissors women pr. pair	1/2	1/2
" large shop pr. pair	1	1
Tobacco Twist p. lb.	11/2	2
" Leaf p. lb.	1	11/2
Thimbles brass p. doz.	1/2	1
Vermillion p. lb.	4	8
Wire Brass Collar p. lb.	2	-

FUR TRADE AND EMPIRE: GEORGE SIMPSON'S JOURNAL, edited by Fredrick Merk, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, Copyright 1931, 1967 by President and Fellows of Harvard College

D. NOTES ON ITEMS COMMON IN THE SPOKANE DISTRICT

DURING THE 1810 - 1826 PERIOD

Firearms:

All arms would have been flintlocks. There were mostly trade guns (42" and 36" barrels), fowling pieces, and some rifles. Pocket and horse pistols were also present. There were swivel guns, blunderbusses, and small cannons. At the posts, engagees did not carry long guns; these were kept locked up and only issued when needed for hunting or defense.



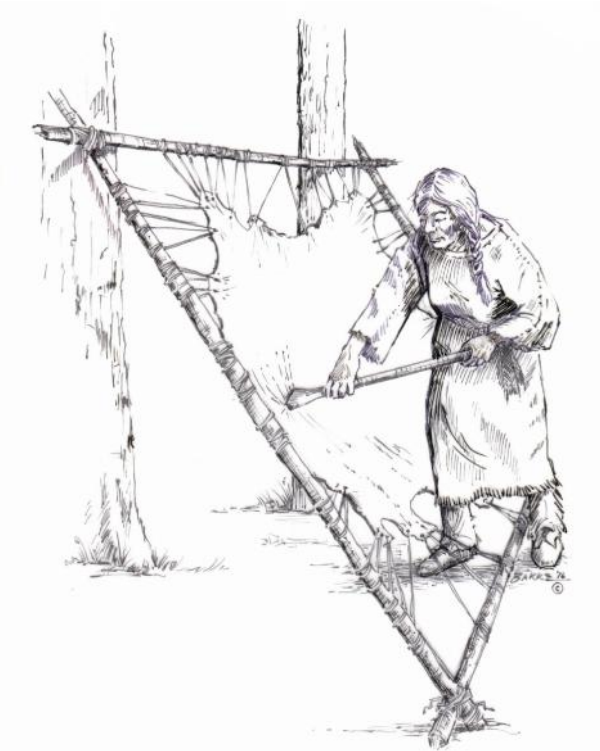
Clothing and Accessories:

Since the sewing machine was not patented until 1846, all clothing would have been hand sewn.

Men's wear: Pants of all types were drop-front, either broad or narrow fall, and without outside pockets or belt loops. Country made buckskin jackets would be common for free hunters and perhaps voyageurs but not Indian "war shirts" with loom beaded shoulder strips. Animal pelt hats were tailored in the European styles of the period and worn in the winter. Leather boots were Wellington type, shoes mostly brogans, and moccasins were of the center and side seam types.

Bone hairpipes were not present in the fur trade at this time.

Women's wear: The women were Indian or Metis at the posts. Wives of the managers would have worn "Canadian" or European styles of the period, and undecorated center or side seam moccasins. In either case, no respectable woman of any class would have allowed any portion of her legs to be seen in public.



Sylvia Van Kirk in her book Many Tender Ties describes the Canadian style: "the women wearing high-waisted gowns with gathered but shapeless skirts which reached the ankle. Long-sleeved, jacket-like bodice (with a ruffle at the back of the waist) was very low-cut and filled in with a criss-crossed scarf arrangement to facilitate the nursing of children. The outfit was not complete without Indian 'leggings', moccasins and usually a blanket... The blanket was important as a head covering, for mixed-blood women did not wear hats as a rule. They fashioned their hair simply in a single braid at the back which might be decorated with ribbons and beads, and they were very fond of jewelry such as necklaces, earrings, and rings." A broad brim low-crown straw hat might also be worn at times. Prairie dresses and calico bonnets came later.

Shelters:

Camps around the posts consisted of company brigades, free hunters, and Indian tribes. Typical shelters were wedge tents, tarp lean-tos, tule mat tipis and longhouses or a tarp bedroll on the ground. We do not know if there were other log cabins outside the posts. Whelan or Baker type tents were not of this period.

Foods At the Posts:

Meats: Deer, horses, salted beef and pork, buffalo pemmican, bear, beaver, dogs, grease and probably hog lard.

Fowl: Grouse, ducks, geese, chickens, and swans.

Fish: Both fresh and dried. Salmon, steelhead, trout, and "carp"(suckers?).

Dairy Products: There was a goat or two at the posts so perhaps there would be some goats milk and cheese. Hens eggs, wild duck and goose eggs. These items were mostly limited to the manager's table.

Vegetables: Post garden: potatoes, and other "esculents" (onions, turnips, rutabagas, carrots, cabbage?), cucumbers, and melons. From Indian trade: wapatoes, camas, kouse, arrowroot, bitterroot. From Astoria/Ft. George/Ft. Vancouver: rice, corn, peas, wheat flour, barley. Biscuits (pilot bread), a hardtack cracker.

Fruits & Nuts: Fresh and dried from Indian trade: huckleberries, serviceberries, blackberries, and maybe hazelnuts. Though not specifically noted, perhaps chokecherries, elderberries, and gooseberries.

Beverages: Souchong, bohea and hyson teas, coffee (the beans were green and had to be roasted and ground), and native herbal teas.

Liquor: Rum (also listed as high wine was 150 proof), wines (port and Madeira), and brandies.

Condiments: Salt both coarse and fine, pepper, vinegar, sugar (cane and maple), molasses.

Cooking Gear & Table Service: Foods were cooked over open fires and hearths whether in the post or encampments. Inside the posts there were skillets and cast iron caldrons in addition to the usual copper, brass, and sheet iron kettles. These would have been suspended from cranes, and there might have been a trivet or two.

In the camps outside foods were cooked in kettles, roasted or baked in the ashes. Larger kettles most likely would have been suspended over the fire by cord/chain from a wood tripod while smaller kettles would just be pushed up next to the fire. These traveling camps, likely would not have fire irons, grills, or trivets.

Tableware common would have been tin ware, pewter, earthenware, wood and horn (buffalo and cow). Ceramic-enamelware was not of this period.

Wooden cassettes would have been used for storing and carrying everything from provisions, to cookware, to personal items. Parfleches were also common as saddlebags.

E. THE YEARS AFTER

A CHRONOLOGY OF REFERENCES TO FT. SPOKANE

May 11th. 1826. David Douglas, British naturalist, guided by one of Jaco Finlay's sons arrived at abandoned Ft. Spokane. Jaco, his Spokane wife Teshwintichina and children were living there. He reported that they were surviving on black moss cakes, as the salmon run has not started. The purpose of Douglas' visit was to have Jaco repair his flintlock fowling piece. Jaco made the repair and received a pound of tobacco for his service.⁴²

August 3rd. 1826. David Douglas traveling with John Work moving horses north arrived at the abandoned post, and found "Old Finlay" still there with his family. Thanks to the salmon run, Douglas was able to eat better than the previous visit.⁴³

May 20th. 1828. Jacques Raphael Finlay died, and was rumored to be buried under the east bastion of the fort. He was 60 years old.⁴⁴

September 26, 1841. James Sinclair, hired by the HBC, led a group of Metis emigrants to settle in the Ft. Vancouver area. They passed by abandoned Ft. Spokane, "All that remained were the chimneys and a crumbling bastion."⁴⁵

1854. John Campbell a member of the second Sinclair led group of emigrants to the Columbia, said he did not recall seeing any evidence remaining of the (Ft. Spokane) trading post.⁴⁶

1939. Land was donated to Riverside State Park that included the Ft. Spokane site.

1951-53. Archaeological excavations at Ft. Spokane: This was a jointly financed project by the National Park Service (NPS) and Washington State Parks & recreation Commission (WA Parks). The dig was led by Louis Caywood, NPS. The objectives were to find and map the palisades and cellars,

42 Nisbet, *The Collector*, pg. 83, 84.

43 Elliott, WHQ, vol. 6, work journal, pgs. 36, 37.

44 Perkins, personal correspondence.

45 Weadick, 2011.

46 Ibid.

During the dig, Jaco Finlay's grave, with funerary items, was found under the east bastion area, confirming the rumor of his interment location. The excavation artifacts, including Jaco's skeleton and burial items were stored at the Cheney-Cowles Museum, in Spokane, WA.⁴⁷

1962-63. Archaeological excavations at Ft. Spokane: This excavation was jointly funded by WA Parks, and Washington State University WSU). The field work was supervised by John B. Combes (WSU).

The excavation focused on finding the fort buildings footprints, and other features within the palisades. Artifacts found were cataloged. Some of these artifacts reside in the Spokane House Interpretative Centre.⁴⁸

1966. The Spokane House Interpretative Center building was completed. The Centre, located next to the Ft. Spokane site, has displays and interpretation of both Tribal and fur trade artifacts from the fort and Nin Chin Tsen area.

1976. In July, Jacques Raphael Finlay's remains were formally reburied in the original location under the Ft. Spokane east bastion. His funerary items were NOT reburied with him. There is a cement grave cap with a brass plaque. The reburial of Jaco's remains was brought about by Jeannette Whitford (Spokane), a descendent of Jaco, and at the time a board member of the Eastern Washington State Historical Society.⁴⁹

1985. Friends of Spokane House were formed. A group of people interested in the fur trade history started to promote public awareness of the trading posts at Nim Chin Tseen, with annual encampments next to the Fort Spokane site. We are registered as a non-profit corporation in the State of Washington and have a 501- c -3 Federal tax status. Our website is *friendsofspokanehouse.com*

47 ARCHEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS AT FT. SPOKANE 1951, 1952 AND 1953.

48 EXCAVATIONS AT SPOKANE HOUSE – FT. SPOKANE HISTORIC SITE 1962 – 1963.

49 Perkins, personal correspondence.

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