

Fur Traders as Undertakers on the Upper Missouri.

by

Michael Casler

© 2006

A Paper Presented at the Third National Fur Trade Symposium, Chadron,

Nebraska, October 12-14, 2006

I have been fortunate that my interest in the fur trade has become a large part of my professional career. Almost daily I interpret the story of Fort Union and the fur trade of the Upper Missouri to the visiting public. It is a fascinating subject. Much more than just an economic exchange between cultures, it is the story of peoples coming into contact on the early American frontier. Each side brought different needs and expectations to this exchange and found a common middle ground that proved mutually beneficial to each. With this contact arose a little understood phenomenon of these cultural bonds, that of the trader assuming the role of undertaker at the fur trading forts.

One inevitable aspect of the fur trade was the death and dying of individuals involved in this economic enterprise. The history of the fur trade is filled with the spectacular violent deaths of leading individuals on both sides, but what of those people whose passing quietly affected them and were solemnly buried and mourned? The records of the fur trade also contain these stories. During the research for this paper, numerous sources, both primary and secondary were located, and to relate them would take much more time to discuss than we have been allotted today. The following paper details only a few brief sketches of people whose final stories should be told.

Along the Missouri River, in Walworth County, South Dakota is located the archeological site of Swan Creek. Now inundated by Lake Oahe, Swan Creek was a protohistoric Arikara Indian village occupied from 1675 to 1725. Dr. William H. Over from the University of South Dakota excavated over 30 burials from this site from 1920 to 1940.¹ Dr. Over's efforts unearthed a collection of 500 individual Native American skeletons from more than 200 sites around South Dakota and were housed in the State Museum of South Dakota. In 1978 the "William H. Over Collection" was loaned to the University of Tennessee for study and analysis. In 1984 Dr. Richard Jantz and Dr. Douglas Owsley were allowed to study the collection prior to its repatriation. One particular skull in the collection drew their immediate attention because of its statistical deviation far outside the set of data from the rest of the collection, skull 2198. During the field season of 1932, Dr. Over excavated nine different graves at Swan Creek and skull 2198 was found in grave six.² This grave contained the partial skeletons of five different individuals buried six feet deep including skull 2198. A sixth skeleton from grave six was found. However this burial was a secondary inhumation and was buried only four feet below the surface.³ All of the remains from grave six were Native Americans except skull 2198, which was found to be Caucasian.

Skull 2198 or the Swan Creek man was a male aged between 40 to 50 years old representing a European or Euro-American who had spent a considerable amount of time among Indians.⁴ An analysis of the composition of his teeth suggests he had lived in a different environment during the time of his tooth formation and had come to Swan Creek as an adult.⁵ Dr. Jantz and Dr. Owsley's article "White Trader in the Upper Missouri: Evidence from the Swan Creek Site," hypothesizes that this individual may have been a trader amongst the Arikaras. However, only a single blue glass bead of European manufacture was ever recovered from the Swan Creek site.⁶

Indeed, was he a trader or was he a captive who was later adopted into the Arikara Tribe? Which ever is the case, upon his death, the Arikaras buried him as one of their own. The real question regarding the Swan Creek man is what he was doing at Swan Creek seventeen years before La Vérendrye's first contact with the Arikara in 1742.⁷ In a personal communication to the author, Dr. Jantz suggested that from the skeletal analysis, the Swan Creek man may have been Spanish. An intriguing clue perhaps to his identity may have been written some 78 years later by Pierre Antoine Tabeau, who also lived amongst the Arikara, for in his journal he makes a reference to a Spanish prisoner who taught the Arikara to remelt glass beads.⁸

The Missouri Fur Company's 1809 expedition up the Missouri may best be remembered for escorting the Mandan Chief Sheheke (Big White) back to his village. The first of two groups to leave consisted of 160 men, among whom were "a few Delaware's and Shawonies (sic.), employed for hunting."⁹ One of the Americans hired on this expedition was Thomas James, whose book, Three Years Among the Indians and Mexicans, is one of the very few first person accounts of the activities at Fort Raymond, and the fort at the Three Forks of the Missouri. (This fort, it seems, was never named.) This portion of the expedition arrived at Fort Raymond too late in the year to press on to the Three Forks area. But "early in the spring of 1810 a strong party, in which at least two partners, Pierre Menard and Andrew Henry, set out for the Three Forks area." "Upon the arrival of the party at the Three Forks the erection of a post was promptly begun on the neck of land between the Jefferson and Madison Rivers, about two miles above their confluence."¹⁰

On April 12th, 1810, a camp of about eighteen trappers, located forty miles up the Jefferson River was attacked by the Blackfeet. Five of the men, James Cheek, Ayres, Fleehart, Hull, and Rucker (no first names of the four have been found) defended themselves as best as they could, before being overrun, killed or taken prisoner. Michael E. Immell, unaware of the attack, rode back into camp around dusk, noting a large Indian camp of thirty lodges, with a white man bound to a tree. Returning to the trapper's camp, and seeing Cheek's body, he then rode back to the fort at the Three Forks.¹¹

Thomas James picks up the story: "A greater part of the garrison, with myself, started out on the morning of my coming in to go in pursuit of the Indians up the river, and to bury our dead. We found and buried the corpses of our murdered comrades, Cheek and Ayres, the later being found in the river near the bank. Hull was never heard of, and two others, Rucker and Fleehart, were also missing, being killed or taken prisoners by the Indians."¹² James Cheek and Ayres have the distinction of being the first white Americans to be formally buried in what would become the state of Montana.

These deaths caused the trappers to retreat to the safety of the Three Forks fort, fearful of further Blackfeet attacks. After having been penned up for over a month "twenty one men, including George Drouillard, finally rode up the Jefferson, in one last, desperate attempt at trapping beaver."¹³ Again James relates the events: "One of our company, a Shawnee half breed named Druyer, the principal hunter of Lewis and Clark's

party, went up the river one day and set his traps about a mile from the camp. In the morning he returned alone and brought back six beavers. I warned him of his danger.”

“I am too much of an Indian to be caught by Indians, said he.” “On the next day he repeated the adventure and returned with the product of his traps, saying ‘this is the way to catch beaver.’ On the third morning he started again up the river to examine his traps, when we advised him to wait for the whole party, which was about (to be) moving farther up the stream, and at the same time two other Shawnees left us, against our advice, to kill deer. We started forward in company and soon found the dead bodies of the last mentioned hunters, pierced with lances, arrows, and bullets and lying near each other. Farther on, about one hundred and fifty yards, Druyer and his horse lay dead ... his body hacked to pieces. We pursued the trails of the Indians till night without overtaking them, and then returned, having buried our dead, with saddened hearts returned to the fort.”¹⁴ Meriwether Lewis’s favorite hunter and close companion of the expedition would now forever lie in the state of Montana.

Pertinent to this discussion is Lisa’s much smaller expedition up the Missouri in 1812. “The expedition, which left St. Louis in early May, 1812, was a small one, carrying only \$11,000 worth of merchandise in two boats.”¹⁵ This group, under Lisa’s leadership traveled up the Missouri River to a point near today’s North Dakota-South Dakota border, where, on August 12, 1812, construction began on Fort Manuel Lisa. Ray H. Mattison of the National Park Service noted its location at “just above the mouth of Hunkpapa Creek” in South Dakota.¹⁶ Fortunately, John C. Luttig, a clerk of the expedition which built the post, left a journal which covers the period from the time the party left St. Louis in May 1812 until the post was abandoned on March 5, 1813.¹⁷ Toussaint Charbonneau, his wife Sakakawea, and their daughter Lizette were residing at Fort Manuel Lisa during this time. Luttig’s first mention of Charbonneau is on Thursday August 17, 1812, he also writes of the death of Joseph Elie’s, “Snake Indian Wife” on the 18th.¹⁸ It can be deduced, each fort would have a burying ground near by and Elie’s wife would have been given a proper burial, as the deceased were much loved and greatly mourned.

These funerals were likely very simple affairs, the deceased occupying a plain box, made of local materials, and a rudimentary burial, with perhaps a few words spoken at the grave side. However, few diarists in the early years of the fur trade on the Upper Missouri make note of them. John Luttig though is perhaps best remembered for his diary entry of December 20, 1812. “Sunday the 20th ... this evening the Wife of Charbonneau a Snake Squaw, died of a putrid fever she was a good and the best Women in the fort, aged abt 25 years she left a fine infant girl.”¹⁹ Sakakawea’s grave is located somewhere near Fort Lisa, under the waters of Lake Oahe. Most historians accept this as the obituary of Mrs. Charbonneau for a couple of reasons: while it was well known that Charbonneau was “married to two Shoshone women, Sakakawea, and Otter Woman, it is less well known that the later wife died shortly after their return to the Mandan villages, in 1806.”²⁰ And as historian Ray Mattison points out, while Charbonneau is mentioned by numerous credible diarists on the Upper Missouri for three decades after, there is,

however, no mention of Sakakawea at all after Luttig's December 20, 1812 journal entry.²¹

On March 20, 1822, the following advertisement appeared in the Missouri Republican, a newspaper in the city of St. Louis. "To enterprising young men. The subscriber wishes to engage one hundred young men to ascend the Missouri river to its source, there to be employed for one, two, or three years."²² Most, who answered the ad, would become legends in the West: Jedediah S. Smith, David E. Jackson, William Sublette, and Daniel T. Potts. These men, and others, would become the seeds sown by William Ashley and Andrew Henry, blossoming into the Mountain Men of American folklore. Departing St. Louis on April 15, 1822, the 1800 mile journey up the Missouri would not be without mishap. Near Fort Osage, one of the keelboats struck a snag and sank, and beyond the Mandan Villages the Assiniboin Indians made off with fifty horses.²³ These losses caused the plans of the expedition to change. After arriving at the Confluence of the Missouri and Yellowstone Rivers, they began building Fort Henry.

Mike Fink, known on the Ohio River as "The Snapping Turtle" and the Mississippi as "The Snag" was the Paul Bunyan of keelboat men.²⁴ His two fellow keelboat men, William Carpenter and Levi Talbot, joined Mike in this new venture as trappers. Upon completion of Fort Henry, the fall hunt was organized and parties were detailed up the Yellowstone to the Powder and up the Missouri as far as the Musselshell. Among the party who traveled to the Musselshell were Fink, Carpenter, and Talbot, along with Jedediah Smith and during the winter Fink and Carpenter began to quarrel over a woman from some port they had shared.²⁵ Evidently, they had patched things up by the time the Musselshell trappers returned to Fort Henry in the spring of 1823.

Keelboat men at this time practiced a particularly dangerous game of shooting cups of whiskey off each others heads at seventy paces. Fink proposed to Carpenter that they shoot cups off each others heads to show things had been truly patched up between the two. And Fink, having won the coin toss, prepared to fire, when he lowered his rifle and said to Carpenter, "hold your noodle steady, Carpenter, and don't spill the whiskey, as I shall want some presently."²⁶ Mike Fink then promptly shot his friend right between the eyes. The men who witnessed the murder could only stand by as Carpenter died. When playing a deadly game, a man takes his chances. Levi Talbot, however, knew what he had seen and would have to wait to avenge his friend Carpenter. Sometime later when Fink was deep in his cups, he admitted to killing Carpenter on purpose. Talbot, hearing this admission drew his pistol and shot Fink through the heart, killing him instantly.²⁷ The men of the fort buried him next to his ex-partner Carpenter.

In a macabre twist to this story of murder and revenge, a report in the Hudson Bay Company's; Edmonton House Factory Journal dated 23rd January 1824, details the return of a Blackfoot war party; "Previous to the return of this war party, they had fallen in with an American Fort situated on the banks of the Missouri River which had been sometime before abandoned: and where they found nothing except, the bodies of two men that had been buried therein ... they commenced to open the graves in order to strip the bodies of

whatever clothes might be wrapped about them, but finding that they were in a putrid state, they left them without offering further molestation.”²⁸

By the 1830’s with the creation of the American Fur Company’s “depot level” forts, of Pierre and Union, and with better documentation of travelers on the Upper Missouri, cemeteries at these places were better documented in the historic record. “The Fort Pierre graveyard lies about a quarter of a mile south of the fort; it is a square piece of ground which has been well fenced in but not ornamented in any way; it contains the bodies of a number of dead, both Indian and whites: the later are in the ground and their graves are marked with wooden crosses, or with tombstones recording their names and dates of their death.”²⁹

In March of 1831, Fort Pierre’s Journal and Letterbook notes the illness and death of the son of William Laidlaw, the fort’s bourgeois. “Tuesday, 28 – Mr. Laidlaw’s son very low, not expected to live long. Wednesday, 29th – At 10 am Robert son of William Laidlaw departed this life in the 5th year of his age. At 4 pm his remains were interred.”³⁰ It is assumed that Robert was the child of Laidlaw and his Sioux wife, Mary Ann, with whom he also fathered five daughters, and another son.³¹

Prince Maximilian, while at Fort McKenzie in the late summer of 1833, attended the triple burial of two relatives of the Piegan, Bear Chief and the infant son of David Mitchell by the fur traders. On August 16, 1833 Maximilian writes”... (The Bear Chief) sent word to Mr. Mitchell, that he must go to revenge his kinsman, ...but, that it might fall into good hands, he would make a present of it (the body) to Mr. Mitchell, whom he requested to bury it.”³² On the morning of August 17, 1833, “Early in the morning ...the corpse of the murdered man was brought into the fort. It was wrapped up very tightly in buffalo skins, and tied to a travois drawn by one horse... When our people had taken the body from the travois...and carried it into the Indian apartment... An infant, the child (of David Mitchell and his Blackfoot wife) and the brother of the deceased, (who) died on the same night... Thus we had three dead bodies in the fort... The two Indians (and the child) were laid in the same grave, wrapped in a red blanket and buffalo skin, over which was laid a piece of coloured stuff, given by Mr. Mitchell. The bottom and sides of the grave were lined with boards: the bodies, too was covered with wood...and the grave was filled up.”³³

In 1835 Charles Larpenteur, a clerk at Fort Union, describes in his journal the tragic story of the funeral of the Assiniboine Chief, The Light (Ah-Jon-Jon). The Light had traveled to Washington, D.C. in 1831 as part of the Upper Missouri delegation. While in St. Louis, George Catlin had the opportunity to paint the portraits of The Light and the Cree Chief, Broken Arm who was also part of the delegation. The Light was profoundly changed by his visit to Washington; he also met with President Andrew Jackson, which afterwards led him to be sometimes referred to as Jackson by the traders. Upon his return home, The Light began regaling his fellow tribe’s men of the sights and wonders he had seen in Washington, to such an extent that his fellow tribe’s men considered him a great liar. It was during one of these story telling sessions that a young man from a different band called The Light a liar to his face. In response to this affront,

The Light beat and humiliated the young man.³⁴ This young man now determined to avenge himself, filed down the leg of a cast iron pot. Part of the myth surrounding The Light was that he was immune to lead bullets. The young man then shot The Light in the head, through the back of his tipi.³⁵

Several days later, Charles Larpenteur recounted in his journal: “10th Friday (July, 1835) ...about ten o'clock the old chief by the name of capo blew arrived and informed us that he has left twenty indians (sic.) behind who was escorting the corps of Jackson their chief who had been shot by an indian but as we had no interpreter at the time I could not learn who had done it and for what cause it was done the party arrived two hours afterwards the body was deposited in one of the vacant rooms and was put into (a) coffin made by the carpenter for as he had been made chief by the whites it was our duty (to) treat him such.” “...after the body (sic.) was put in to the coffin there was a shirt put over him for mortification had taken place so bad that it was impossible to clothes him a pair of pantaloons was put into the coffin and a very fine Chiefs coat a looking glass a paper of vermilion and after the lid was put on, it was covered with a yard of scarlet cloth and one of blue During the time the men (of the fort) was erecting the scaffold... about half an hour before sun set the corps was carried to the scaffold by four whites and followed by the whites of the Fort... there was a pole planted with a piece of callico tied at the end which (is) customary with indians (sic.) thus ended the ceremony for to day.”³⁶

Long time Fort Union trader Edwin Denig describes these Assiniboin customs by stating; “When bodies are brought to the trading houses for interment or scaffolding they are always boxed by the whites, the coffin being made large enough to contain the implements and ornaments enveloped with the corpse. This in former times was a great honor done the Indians and highly recompensed... It was the custom of the Assiniboin to put up a funeral flag over the graves of their dead... which at this time is composed of some such fabric as red flannel or calico tied to a pole.”³⁷ Denig also wrote of the Assiniboin Indians that “Of late years, however they prefer their being interred by the whites at the different trading forts if possible, but as this can only happen to a few.”³⁸

In October of 1851, Rudolph Kurz while employed as a clerk at Fort Union described the funeral of the wife of Crazy Bear: “October 30, After he had sent ahead three messengers to announce his coming, the “Knife”, brother to Crazy Bear (Ours Fou), arrived this afternoon with the corpse of his (sister-in-law), brought on a travois drawn by a horse. He wished her to be buried beside her daughter... Mother and grandchild lie beside each other enveloped in their blankets, then wrapped in a buffalo robe. Inasmuch as the mourners brought with them four packs of buffalo hides – that is 40 robes – the bourgeois had a meal served them... During this feast a coffin was got ready. The family took charge of the body, laid it in the rude box, Mr. Denig spread a new blanket, as gift, over it, the top was nailed down, and six of us carried it to our God’s acre, lowered it ourselves into the grave already prepared and then covered it over.”³⁹

On July 1st, 1858, a similar burial of an Assiniboin woman occurred at Fort Union. Lutheran missionaries who were staying at the fort waiting to travel to the post of

the Crows wrote; “The funeral procession came closer from the direction of the mountains. A man with two horses rode ahead, then a one-horse carriage that carried the corpse. It was followed by five or six women; one of them was the mourning mother. They greeted us in friendly manner. We soon realized that they expected a funeral service of me. Indeed, the gentleman – Redfield, Culbertson, Vaughan – were dressed in black. Redfield stepped toward me and demanded of me, upon Mr. Culbertson’s request that I should conduct the funeral service at the grave of that person according to the rites of our church. I was not able to learn for certain whether she had been baptized. Therefore, I declined... We stood near the fence of the burial place while we talked. Everyone was angry with us especially Mr. Culbertson...”⁴⁰ Because of the refusal to perform the burial rites at the grave side of this poor woman, the missionaries, Schmidt and Braeuninger, experience the hostility of the fort personnel. The next day, Indian Agent Redfield exclaimed “...that Indians and whites alike are human beings and have a human soul.” Schmidt’s recalcitrant refusal of burial rites for non-members of his church drew a heated reply from the normally calm Redfield: “What the hell, you are a minister? When people die everyone looks for your officiating, but you refuse constantly.”⁴¹

In his July 10, 1865 journal entry Charles Larpenteur, wrote of the passing of one of the most prominent traders amongst the Crows, Robert Meldrum: “Monday the 10th ... A Steamboat hand which Shot himself axidently in the foot and was left in the hospital about two weeks ago died this afternoon. Mr. Robert Meldrom died at about nine oclock. As there was good fiddlers (sic.) in this half breed crew, fiddling was going on all the time that (the) ding (dieing) was going on. Tuesday the 11th Half Breeds done trading or giving away their meet and Started in the after noon. Weather Still very pleasent not too warm, Buried the two Corps (corpses).”⁴²

John C. Ewers in his seminal work on the Blackfeet stated that: “Prominent Chiefs sometimes expressed the desire to have their bodies taken to fur posts when they died. It was then the responsibility of the fur company’s to bury them... A number of prominent Piegan chiefs who died in the eighteen fifties and sixties were taken to Fort Benton for burial by the white fur traders.”⁴³

As the fur traders moved up the Missouri River they entered into complex relationships with the Indians living along this river system. More than just economic exchanges occurred at these posts between traders and Indians. In order for these economic exchanges to take place, social bonds had to be created.⁴⁴ The trader seeking to make a more durable bond with their customers, and securing his relationship to the Plains Indians would marry an Indian woman. This intermarriage between the two cultures then established the social bond and reciprocity of trust which allowed the peaceful exchange of goods and services.⁴⁵ By this marriage into an Indian family the trader established, through kinship ties, and assumed all of the obligations implied through this system as viewed by the various Plains Indian groups. The “gift or present” of a dead body was one such implied family obligation of the fur trader coming within the purview of this reciprocal exchange system.

The Blackfeet and Assiniboin Indians considered it “the greatest honor one Indian could confer on another (the burial of a loved one) and was a claim of patronage of the relatives during their lives.”⁴⁶ Thus, the Swan Creek man, benefited from this kinship system when he was buried as an Arikara so long ago. It was not my intent here to fully document all of the burials by fur traders or to explore the complicated Plains Indian kinship systems. But rather to suggest a rational behind these mortuary behaviors on the Upper Missouri. This unexplored aspect of the fur trade is certainly worthy of further research. That it was at these posts and forts where the two cultures came together and formed these social bonds. And it is here where they lived, they loved, and they died, and today lie in lonely unmarked graves, mostly forgotten, along the Upper Missouri.⁴⁷

Notes: Fur Traders as Undertakers on the Upper Missouri.

¹ Douglas W. Owsley and Richard L. Jantz “White Trader in the Upper Missouri: Evidence from the Swan Creek Site”, in Skeletal Biology in the Great Plains: Migration, Warfare, Health, and Subsistence, (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994.), p. 197.

² Wesley R. Hurt, Jr., The Swan Creek Site 39WW7, Walworth County, South Dakota, (Pierre, South Dakota, Reminder Inc. August, 1957.) p. 14.

³ Ibid. p. 15.

⁴ Jantz and Owsley, “White Trader in the Upper Missouri,” p. 197.

⁵ Personal communication with Dr. Richard Jantz.

⁶ Jantz and Owsley, “White Trader in the Upper Missouri,” p. 199.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Annie H. Abel, ed., Tabeau’s Narrative of Loisel’s Expedition to the Upper Missouri, (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1939, second printing 1968.) “A Spanish prisoner taught them how to melt our glass beads and to mould them into a shape that pleases them. This art which is as yet unknown to them is practiced only secretly and still passes for a supernatural and magical talent.” p. 149.

⁹ Richard E. Oglesby, Manuel Lisa and the Opening of the Missouri Fur Trade, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963, second printing, 1984.), p.75.

¹⁰ Hiram M. Chittenden, The American Fur Trade of the Far West, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986.), Vol. 1, p. 141.

¹¹ Abraham Nasatir, “The International Significance of the Jones and Immell Massacre and of the Arikara Outbreak in 1823”, Pacific Northwest Quarterly, Vol. 30, January, 1939, p. 77.

¹² General Thomas James, Three Years Among the Indians and Mexicans, (Chicago: Lakeside Press, 1953.), p. 75.

¹³ M.O. Skarsten, “George Drouillard”, The Mountain Men and the Fur Trade of the Far West, Leroy R. Hafen, ed., (Glendale: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1966.), Vol. IV, p. 81.

¹⁴ James, Three Years, pp. 82-83. Skarsten, “George Drouillard”, pp. 81-82.

¹⁵ Oglesby, Manuel Lisa, p. 126.

¹⁶ Ray H. Mattison, “Report on Historic Sites in Oahe Reservoir, Missouri”, South Dakota Historical Collections and Report, Vol. XXVII, 1954, p. 111.

¹⁷ Ibid. p. 112.

¹⁸ John C. Luttig, Journal of a Fur Trading Expedition on the Upper Missouri, 1812-1813, Stella M. Drumm, ed., (New York: Argosy-Antiquarian, Ltd., 1964.), pp. 78-79.

¹⁹ Ibid. p. 106. Mattison, “Report”, p. 115.

²⁰ Luttig, Journal, p. 133.

²¹ Mattison, “Report”, p. 115.

²² Chittenden, The Fur Trade, Vol. 1, p. 261.

²³ Ibid. p. 262.

²⁴ Leland D. Baldwin, The Keelboat Age on Western Rivers, (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 1941, paperback reissue, 1980.), pp. 110-111.

²⁵ Robert M. Utley, A Life Wild and Perilous, (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1997.), p. 47.

-
- ²⁶ Dale L. Morgan, Jedediah Smith and the Opening of the West, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1953, Second Bison Book Printing, 1965.), p. 48.
- ²⁷ Morgan, Jedediah Smith, p. 49. Utley, A Life, p. 47.
- ²⁸ Nasatir, "The International Significance", pp. 85-86.
- ²⁹ David I. Bushnell, Jr., Burials of the Algonquian, Siouan, and Caddoan Tribes West of the Mississippi, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1927.), p. 31.
- ³⁰ "Fort Tecumseh and Fort Pierre Journal and Letter Books", South Dakota Historical Collections, Abstracted by Charles Edmund DeLand, notes by Doane Robinson, Vol. 9, 1918, p. 152.
- ³¹ Ray H. Mattison, "William Laidlaw", The Mountain Men and the Fur Trade of the Far West, Leroy H. Hafen, ed., (Glendale: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1966.), Vol. III, pp. 171-172.
- ³² Prince Maximilian zu Wied, Davis Thomas and Karin Ronnefeldt, eds., People of the First Man, (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1976.), p. 105.
- ³³ *Ibid.*
- ³⁴ Hiram M. Chittenden and Alfred T. Richardson, Life, Letters and Travels of Father Pierre-Jean DeSmet, S.J., (New York: Kraus Reprint Company, 1969.), Vol. III, pp. 1178-1180.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 1178-1181.
- ³⁶ Charles Larpenteur, The Original Journal of Charles Larpenteur, My Travels to the Rocky Mountains Between 1834 and 1872. (Chadron, Nebraska, The Fur Press, 2007.), Transcribed and annotated by Erwin N. Thompson. Michael M. Casler, ed., p. 49.
- ³⁷ Edwin T. Denig, The Assiniboine, J.N.B. Hewit, ed., (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000.), p. 180 (574).
- ³⁸ *Ibid.* p. 177 (571).
- ³⁹ Rudolf Friederich Kurz, The Journal of Rudolf Friederich Kurz: The Life and Work of this Swiss Artist, (Fairfield, Washington, Ye Gallon Press, nd.) pp. 218-219.
- ⁴⁰ Gerhard M. Schmutterer, Tomahawk and Cross; Lutheran Missionaries Among the Northern Plains Tribes, 1858-1866, (Sioux Falls, South Dakota, The Center for Western Studies, Augustana College, 1989.) p. 142.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.* pp. 36-37.
- ⁴² Larpenteur, The Original Journal, p. 256. Robert Meldrum had been living at Fort Union in semiretirement. Although Larpenteur disapproved of the merriment, the old mountain man may not have minded at all.
- ⁴³ John C. Ewers, The Blackfeet; Raiders on the Northwestern Plains, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958, seventh printing, 1985.), p. 107.
- ⁴⁴ Mary Whelan, "Dakota Indian Economics and the 19th Century Fur Trade", in Ethnohistory, (Duke University Press.), Vol., 40, No., 2 (Spring, 1993). P. 249.
- ⁴⁵ Thomas C. Buckley, ed. Rendezvous: Selected Papers of the Fourth North American Fur Trade Conference, 1981, Bruce M. White, "Give Us a Little Milk: Social and Cultural Significance of Gift Giving in the Lake Superior Fur Trade." (St. Paul, North American Fur Trade Conference, 1984.) p. 189.
- ⁴⁶ Denig, The Assiniboine, p.176 (570). Ewers, The Blackfeet, p. 107.
- ⁴⁷ Portions of this paper were originally delivered at the 39th Annual Great Plains History Conference, Bismarck, North Dakota in October, 2004.