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Miles spent but a short time getting his parents and sister to the Medicine, away from Fort McPherson. They arrived on Tuesday evening, March 19th, and left within a day or two. Miles apparently hired George W. or Wilk Snell, the twenty-one year old son of Jacob and Elizabeth Snell, to haul their goods and luggage to the Medicine. Jacob Snell was one of the post traders at the fort, while his wife kept the officers's mess. They were natives of Pennsylvania, where their five oldest children were born. About 1850, they moved to Illinois, where another child was born, and finally to Otoe County, about 1857, where two more children were born. Mr. Snell worked as a building contractor. He supposedly moved his rather large family to Denver about 1862, but he had established a road ranche near Cottonwood Springs by February 1867. Some time after that, he became post trader, and, in April 1870, his daughter, Sarah, married Louis M. Wooden, her father's partner.

Young Wilk was an experienced frontiersmen by the time of Ena's arrival, and he became one of her band of male followers. Though, in the census of 1870, he was listed as "attending school", he was living away from home, though at Cottonwood Springs, with the William A. Reid family and George Dillard. The latter was twenty, a year older than Wilk, keeping a saloon--the census taker gave his age as twenty-one, probably because of his occupation. Though young in years, he, too, had a great deal of experience behind him, for at the age of

fifteen years and four months, he had been discharged from the U.S. Navy, after having served two years. He, too, became one of Ena's devoted attendants in the following weeks. Life around Fort McPherson must have been very relaxed, for people who supposedly at jobs were always taking off for a few days hunting on the Medicine or the Republican. There were apparently enough hangers-on around the post, who were trusted, to take their places for a few days.

Of their arrival in Frontier County, Miles later wrote a few lines about the arrival of his mother and sister, the first white women to settle on the Medicine:

...After a long ride across the wild, roadless country, over level divides and through long canyons, from Fort McPherson, we came to the Medicine and went into camp.

Mother said:

"The last link is broken in the chain of civilization."

A flock of antelopes stood on a hill near by and watched us while we busied ourselves picketing out our horses and gathering up wood for our camp-fire. Wilk Snell got supper in true frontier style in the far West. Snow-drifts, remnants of the past hard winter, yet lay at the head of canyons, white and cold; the buffalo and wolves serenaded us with their various noises of weird cadences; a flock of wild geese passed over us, winging their way north, added to the unbounded solitude. Thus the introductory scenes of life in the Wild West were

thrown upon the minds of those pioneer ladies to institute a comparison and contrast with their old home in the far-away "Land of Flowers." /Bratt and Miles, 15./

From all we know regarding the life of Miles, it is highly unlikely he actually wrote his memoirs, unless there was a flowery side to him unknown to others. If one did not know better, one would almost think that Ena had an editorial hand in them, particularly in such as the fore-going paragraph.

Of the location of their camp on the Medicine, Wolf's Rest, Miles wrote:

The first house I built was upon a high hill, being far from water, and the winds blew so hard that we concluded to camp near the timber. Our choice place for a home was under the protecting branches of a large spreading elm tree.

When we made this selection from nature's grove, for our abode, near by was a large white wolf, dead with a big steel trap on his foot, which he had dragged over many a mile of prairie grass until he had become hungry and outworn with life's pilgrimage, had quietly lain down like one that is weary and sweetly reposed forever. We named our home under the elm "Wolf's Rest." After some inquiry we found that our only neighbor /down/ in Red Willow County, Storm King had set a trap at a dead buffalo, caught the wolf, which broke the chain and took the trap to Wolf's Rest. /Ibid., 19./

If Miles did build a house prior to the arrival of the rest of the family, Ena makes no mention of it. It seems likely that the house was built later, after they had already spent the summer of 1872 camping near the creek at Wolf's Rest. Considering the winter and the people available, it would have had to have been a crude shelter at best, and, if built on the hill, it would undoubtedly have been more comfortable in a sheltered tent in the valley. The Cliffords and their Indian wives would certainly have thought him a green horn for having built in such a location--so would most of the other frontiersmen.

While life settled down to await the arrival of summer on the Medicine, things at Fort McPherson were already beginning to stir. This included the Indians, for a party of Sioux swept down on McPherson Station and stole seven horses on Thursday, April 25th. Captain Charles Meinhold, 1st Lieutenant Joseph Lawson, and forty-five enlisted men of Company B, Third Cavalry, took off in pursuit. Cody was their scout, and it is likely that Texas Jack Omohundro also went along. They pursued the Indians to the Loup River, where they had an engagement, ending in the death of three Indians and the recovery of two of the seven horses. They returned to the post on the 27th, after marching 140 miles. /"Post Returns", April 1872./

It was for this engagement that Buffalo Bill received the Congressional Medal of Honor, though it was taken back several years later, as he had been a civilian at the time. Texas Jack must have played an exciting role, for, ~~later in 1872, an~~ *a short time later, a local resident in an* Omaha newspaper referred to him as the "hero of the Loup Fork".

Texas Jack was John Burwell Omohundro, a native of Virginia, born July 26, 1846. He supposedly traveled to Texas before the Civil War, being infatuated with the growing cattle business. This would have been in his very early teens. It is known he was in his native ~~Fluvanna~~ Fluvanna County, Virginia, on February 15, 1864, when he enlisted as a private in Company G, Fifth Virginia Cavalry. He was not yet eighteen. He served under General J. E. B. Stuart, who was not unfamiliar with Jack's future home, the Platte and Republican country, having been badly wounded in an encounter with Indians on July 29, 1857, in present Phillips County, Kansas, just south of the Nebraska state line. He had recuperated at Fort Kearny. After taking part in numerous engagements, he was wounded at the Third Battle of Winchester on September 19, 1864, and he spent the remainder of the war at the Omohundro home, near Palmyra, Virginia. Winchester was just a few miles north of Cedar Creek, where Ambrose Shelley was rallied to take part in defeating the Confederate forces by General Sheridan. /Herschel C. Logan, Buckskin and Satin (Harrisburg: Stackpole Press, 1954, 5, 6, 10-17./

When the war ended and Jack had recuperated, he made his way first to Florida, where he taught school, and then to Texas, where he returned to life on the range as a cowboy. He wrote of those years but left no dates or places. We only know that he finally made his way to the region of the Washita Mountains, where he was hired by Mahlon H^{enry} Brown to help in bringing a herd of cattle north to the Platte valley. He apparently helped Brown on two trips, but

whether these were in the late summer of 1868 and 1869 or 1869 and 1870 is not known. Brown's 1869 herd of cattle should have reached the vicinity of Fort McPherson toward late September, as Moses H. Sydenham, the census enumerator of 1870, wrote on Monday, September 13, 1869, from Fort Kearny:

...A Mr. Brown, of North Platte, Nebraska, arrived here to-day with 1,300 head of cattle from Texas. He is taking them to North Platte. They will be wintered in the canyons in the vicinity of Alkali station, on the Union Pacific Railroad, where, Mr. Brown informs me, they will have plenty of good grass and good shelter through the winter. Not a pound of hay will be cut for them. He has had twelve years' experience on the plains of Nebraska, and knows whereof he speaks. /Omaha Weekly Republican, Wednesday, 22 September 1869./

Brown was one of the first hotel keepers in North Platte, as well as one of the first ranchers. He had operated stage stations at various places along the overland trail during the 1860s. He was about thirty-five, when he brought the 1869 herd to the Platte valley. Before moving to the Black Hills, with the gold rush, he operated a hotel in Omaha, where he was quoted on his knowledge of Texas Jack from previous years:

...Mr. M. H. Brown, of this city, in whose employ Jack was for two years engaged in driving cattle from Texas to the plains, testified that he has seen him shoot with a six-shooter the heads off of four quails out of five, while they were running in the grass..../Omaha Daily Bee, Thursday, 17 July 1873./

The first real knowledge we have of Texas Jack is found in the daybook of Penniston and Miller's store in North Platte, where, on Thursday, December 16, 1869, "Jack Omohondrue" was charged twenty cents for a package of ammunition. From then to February 1871, Jack was mentioned nine times in the records of the store:

16 December 1869	Jack Omohondrue	1 pck amm	.20
4 May 1870	Filger & Omohundro	By cash	\$8.00
20 June 1870	J. Omahundrue	1 coat	4.00
7 August 1870	Omohondrue	oil	.70
31 August 1870	J. Omohundro	125" oats	3.13
		1 Lamp Chimney	.25
		1 Plug Tob	.50
26 September 1870	J. Omahundru	132" oats	3.30
		By Cash	12.08
20 December 1870	J Omohondrue	1 pr. overshoes	3.00
		Tob	.50
18 January 1871	J. B. Omahundru	1 Pr. Mitts	.50
		Tob 25	.
10 February 1871	J. Omahundru	Cash	4.00

/"Daybook of Penniston & Miller's Store", microfilm, Nebraska State Historical Society Archives, 362, 462, 488, 523, 538, 550, 590, 601, 609./

Unfortunately, about the only thing to be inferred from this is that Texas Jack chewed tobacco, plus that people had difficulty with the spelling of his name. It might be noted that in an age when newspapers were notorious for their misspelling of names, his was almost always spelled correctly. Several years later, a Lincoln newspaper reported: "In the year 1870 Jack resided in Plum Creek, or at least what there was of a town at that time, and scoured the Loup country picking up cattle which had strayed from their owners." /Lincoln Daily State Journal, Friday, 9 July 1880./ Again, we cannot be sure when this was, though he did not purchase anything at the store

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between December and May 1870, which would have given him plenty of time for chasing cattle. His purchase of December 20, 1870, rules out him having been on the Loup with the same outfit as Paddy Miles, who wrote his letter to Ena from Plum Creek on Christmas 1870.

When the census of North Platte was taken at North Platte on August 13, 1870, John Omohundro was enumerated as age twenty-three (he had just had his twenty-fourth birthday), working as a saloon keeper, with personal property valued at \$350.00. He was sharing quarters with another Virginian, James Miller, age fifty-one, who was employed as a day laborer. After this, except for his store purchases, Texas Jack disappears from the scene until the spring of 1872, though Cody later wrote and it can be assumed that he had started guiding hunting parties for the region, as well as working for the military at Fort McPherson on occasion. /U.S. Census: 1870. Platte City, Lincoln County, Nebraska, 16./

Just prior to the horse stealing raid on McPherson Station, Indian agent J. W. Daniels had written the Commissioner of Indian Affairs: ~~from the Red Cloud Agency:~~

Red Cloud Agency, W. T.
/Saturday, / April 20th 1872

Sir

I have the honor to state that "Spotted Tail" and his people arrived at this place today on their way to their Agency.

Spotted Tail and several of his principal men spent a couple of hours with me this evening talking over the question of their moving back down the White river. He spoke well and said "he wished to do as the Great Father said, he has the interests of his people at heart and

hopes they may soon be located on good lands for planting, he should go and select a place as soon as he got back, he had done as his Great Father desired, in going to the place he was now, and he wished he could stay there for his people did not want to go back."

He spoke kindly and with much feeling regarding the wishes of the Government and his people.

When I visited him last winter with General Smith, I took occasion to tell Mr. Todd Randall, sub agent, what the Department desired and wished him to make it a subject of conversation in all their feasts, to shew them as plain as possible the advantages of complying with the requests of the Government. I hope has done some good. I am Sir

Very Respectfully
Your obt. Servt.
J. W. Daniels
U.S. Indian Agent

/"Whetstone Agency Letters"./

Whether or what Randall had told the Indians at their feasts is not known, but, prior to their departure from the Republican country, he sent the following letter to Washington:

Spotted Tails Camp
Red Willow Frontier Co
State of Nebraska
/Monday,/ March 25th 1872

→ To the Hon Commissioner of
Indian Affairs Washington D.C.

→ Dr Sir

I have given Messrs Coe and Carter Receipt for three Hundred Head Beef Cattle Killed by Spotted Tails Band of Indians from their Herd running on Red Willow

Stinking Water & White Mans Fork--branches of the
Republican River Our Ponies have been very poor--
We having lost by Starvation half of our whole number
& the ballance too poor to hunt Buffalo--Hence Could
not prevent the Indians from Killing Cattle and have
receipted for them and given receipt for them to said
Coe & Carter accompanied by Statements from Spotted
Tail Two Strike Windy Black Crow No Flesh Rooster
and Crooked Foot--which are the Head Men of our Band
and they desire that said account be paid said Coe
and Carter by Your Department

Todd Randall
U.S Sub agent
For Spotted Band

/"Whetstone Agency Letters"./

Controversy was to rage over this case for many years, ending
up before the Nebraska Supreme Court, with the Indians claiming they
had killed about thirty cattle, and Randall, at the suggestion of
the cattle company had added a zero to the original thirty, making
it three hundred. It ended with the ranching company having to refund
a portion of the money they had received from Spotted Tail's Brule
annuities. Though few actually attended the trial, most of the early
settlers on the Medicine were subpoenaed for the trial in Omaha.

Aside from the Indian raid, life at Fort McPherson was quiet,
with the main work being the planting of cottonwood and box elder
trees around the buildings of the post. The planting of the trees,
Dr. Elbrey noted, increased the amount of work to be done at the
post, for the new trees needed a great deal of water, which was not

easily done. Toward the end of the month, on Sunday, April 28th, Captain Alexander Moore, 1st Lieutenant Henry Walton Wessells, Jr., and Company F, left Fort McPherson for a scout on the Republican. This undoubtedly included a visit to the mouth of Red Willow Creek, where Camp Red Willow was in the process of being established, for the protection of the settlers during the summer. They were gone over two weeks returning on Thursday, May 16th, having found all to be quiet on the Republican and its tributaries. /"Post Returns", "Post Surgeon's Returns", April, May 1872./

There was only one other flurry of excitement in the region during the spring of 1872. Another grand buffalo hunt of nobility was to take place in the autumn:

SPORT FOR OCTOBER.

A Meeting of English Sportsmen and Pleasure Seekers in Lincoln. Grand Buffalo Hunt to the Republican.

Mr. Dawson, the agent of the B&M RR in England, who has been making this city his head-quarters during the past two or three weeks, while he makes himself personally conversant with the topography of the South Platte region, has been perfecting plans for a grand excursion from England to this city and beyond.

A party of about 60 Englishmen, among whom are quite a number who enjoy titular distinctions and the attendant otium cum dignitate, properly attributed to the privileged classes, will rendezvous at this place, in October next.

Here they will prepare their outfit for a grand buffalo hunt in the Republican region, and beyond, expecting to spend a week or two in the pursuit of the lordly bison of the plains.

Mr. Dawson has engaged guides, among whom will be Mr Cody, the famous "Buffalo Bill," who conveyed the Grand Duke Alexis on his recent hunting expedition, and the necessary quantum of horses, wagons, &c, to attend the chase.

He has also contracted with Mr. J. N. Townley, of the Tichenor House, to furnish the commissariat of the expedition, and the necessary quartermaster's train to convey everything that the market affords, and the ingenuity of cooks devise for the comfort, fortification, and support of the "inner consciousness" of the Nimrods from the time they leave this city until they return laden with the spoils of their address with the rifle, and skill in getting away from and away with the indigenous bovine of Nebraska.

Every arrangement has thus been made to secure the grandest success of this gigantic pleasure trip, and there will be rare sport for our trans-Atlantic cousins.

This is a capital way to make the higher classes of the old country acquainted with the marvelous attractions of Nebraska to those desiring to secure homes in a new and fertile country. /Lincoln Daily State Journal, Friday, 24 May 1872./

Three days later, the newspaper retracted part of their story, noting, "We were mistaken in saying that Mr. Dawson had engaged Mr.

Cody as a guide for the English buffalo hunters next October. Mr. Ward Manley, a celebrated frontiersman, is the gentleman who will act in that capacity." Unfortunately, this grand hunt never took place. The U.S. Army had a great many problems providing for one grand duke and his rather small party. It is hard to imagine the results of bringing sixty wealthy English to Nebraska for a hunt, most of them undoubtedly bringing at least one manservant. The Tichenor House was a noted Lincoln restaurant, but it seems more than likely that such a hunt would have taxed even their noted facilities to the limit. By the cancellation of this tour, a great many tales of interest were lost. /Ibid., Monday, 27 May 1872./