

(11)

June 1872

The rains of May continued into early June. The days were warm and sunny, but clouds moved in at night with thunder and lightning--and more rain. The buffalo and other grasses retained their bright green on the hillsides and bluffs south of the fort. The post garden, just south of the Platte required no irrigation. There was much activity at the fort, as two expeditions--one frivolous, one serious--were preparing to leave the valley. The first is best described by "Nebraska", who wrote of it to an Omaha newspaper on Monday, June 3rd:

A novel undertaking is on foot here, and is of gigantic proportions. Colonel Sidney Barnett, of Niagara Falls, is getting up a grand Buffalo hunt at Niagara Falls, from the 1st to the 4th of July. He is now here for the purpose of completing arrangements and superintending the starting of the enterprise, and shipping the buffaloes East.

He has secured the services of the celebrated scout and hunter, Mr. J. B. Omohundro, better known as "Texas Jack," the hero of the Loup Fork. "Texas Jack" is a partner of "Buffalo Bill," and nothing that skill and foresight can accomplish will be spared to make this hunt a perfect success.

Through the kindness of Major /Frank/ North, the commander of the Pawnee Scouts, arrangements are being made for a party of Pawnee Indians--the deadly and bitter enemy of the Sioux--to go to Niagara with their fleet ponies and lodges, and full war and hunting equipment.

The buffaloes will pass through Omaha the latter part of this, or early part of next month.

We here think this is a grand affair, and believe there can be no question of success from the reputation of the parties engaged in it. The spectacle that will present itself to the scores of thousands who will be spectators at Niagara will be the most novel and thrilling ever seen east of the great plains, and will give our eastern friends an idea of what buffalo hunting is in Nebraska. /OWH, Wed., 12 June 1872/

Sidney Barnett was a showman of sorts, his father having founded a museum at Niagara Falls in 1827. They were early in the tourist business, hoping to attract more visitors to the American side of the falls. The museum featured artifacts from around the world, but Barnett's featuring of a buffalo hunt was a change of pace. It seems likely that he decided upon this program because of the international publicity of the hunt of the Grand Duke Alexis, particularly since he came to Fort McPherson, has had the duke, for his buffalo. No one described Barnett's outfit--the type and strength of the wagons--but it was not a hunt that could have been gotten up quickly. Ordinary wagons, including the sturdy freight wagons of the time, would have offered little challenge to a grown, even half-grown, buffalo. /Rosa, They Called Him Wild Bill, 163/

The other expedition preparing to leave Fort McPherson was not so romantic. Colonel Reynolds still hoped to recover the remainder of the stock stolen from near McPherson Station in April. "Nebraska" mentioned this second group only in passing:

The third cavalry are now here (headquarters and three companies). They are a fine body of men, commanded by able officers. Buffalo Bill goes out on a scout with one company tomorrow, up the Loup Fork and on into the Yellowstone region, and will probably be gone six weeks or two months. No fears of trouble with Indians in this region are anticipated.

"Nebraska" was in error as to the destination of the command. As "friendly" Sioux visited the post regularly, perhaps Reynolds intentionally spread this story, that the expedition was heading for the Yellowstone, though such a march could have been mounted much easier from Fort Laramie. Such a destination would imply that the army was in search of Oglala Sioux. Fort McPherson, however, was in Brule country, and it was to the Brule reservation that the expedition was headed--far to the northeast on the Missouri River in Dakota Territory. Perhaps Reynolds had received word the horses were there, perhaps he was acting on a hunch. Certainly too much time had passed and too much rain had fallen for him to hope his command could find and follow the trail of the raiders.

Captain James Curtis was placed in command, seconded by Second Lieutenant Edgar L. Stephens, according to post returns, though no officer by that name is listed in Heitman's Historical Register, and no Stephens or Stevens is listed as an officer of the Third Cavalry. The fifty enlisted men of Company I were under the care of Acting Assistant Surgeon A. L. Flint. Hank Clifford, in from the Medicine, was hired as guide, while Buffalo Bill was named as scout. It was to be a long journey, one of the longest to ever leave Fort McPherson.

June - 4

They left on Wednesday, June 5th, to be gone an indefinite time. This must have given Cody some qualms, as his wife was seven months pregnant. /Post Returns, June, August 1972/

Barnett's buffalo hunting expedition reached the settlement on Medicine Creek, Friday, the 7th. To Ena it was an extraordinary experience, and, on that date, she began the first of her extant diaries. Though she was interested in the goal of the men, it could not compete with the men themselves--particularly its star attraction:

...First of all, I have been introduced to "Texas Jack"-- one of our "Western Heroes" -- and a fine picture of handsome, dashing, manly manhood he is! Certainly one of my Beau-ideals of a hunter or a "Scout." Hope I shall see more of him and that I shall like his character as well as I do his face....

Texas Jack, in return, was not unimpressed. He presented her with a "toy-bag of China-work", which he had used as a cartridge pouch; Ena planned to use it for the same. Apparently, Texas Jack suited her romantic nature, as the other men of the Medicine had not. Also, his former service in the Confederate army probably stood him in good stead. Ena's first journal entry devotes one long section to his looks, his charm and his ability. The rest of the hunters were mentioned in passing.

Barnett's outfit consisted of Texas Jack, Dashing Charlies Emmett, and Andy Barrett, among others. Here on the Medicine, they were joined by Bloody Dick and Paddy, before moving off for the Republican. Not all were enthusiastic about the trip, for Ena wrote, "Some day it

June - 5

it is dangerous work; some <sup>h</sup>propesy not only broken arms and legs and crippled horses, but dead men as well as dead horses."

There were other visitors to the Medicine that day. Washington Mallory Hinman was on his way to Red Willow Creek, where a temporary military post had been established, at the place where it entered the Republican. It was rumored a fulltime post would be established in the vicinity, and this rumor must have been of interest to Hinman. At various times, over twenty years, he had journeyed through the West with his portable steam sawmill, following the military as it established new posts. He had taken it almost to the Pacific Northwest in 18 . During the preceding dozen years, he had been at Forts Laramie, Kearny and McPherson, always eager for government contracts. The last few years, however, he had been settled down in Lincoln County, becoming an established citizen. Adventure was calling again, however, and Hinman was on his way to check out the new settlement. /McDonald, Lincoln County, /

J. W. Kirby, the county clerk, stopped by for lunch, returning to Ena her volume by Joaquin Miller, which he had liked. William Black also visited, as he was going into the fort the following day. As a good neighbor, he offered to run errands as well as mail letters. Ena wanted beads and buckskin for a sewing project. Mr. Lewis, the "sheep-man" was also there, but he was not in the best of moods. He was in the process of building a shearing pen, and his expected help had taken off to the Republican, to be a part of the great buffalo roundup.

For a few days, life was quiet at Wolf's rest. The community consisted of Ena, her parents, Mr. Lewis, Jack Fritcher and George Dillard. Quiet--but not without its momentary excitements. Lieutenant

June 6

William Henry Miller stopped to rest, on his way from Camp Red Willow to Fort McPherson. He flirted with Ena (or so she saw it), talked of poetry and recited verses. Ena was not displeased. Of far more importance, however, Ena lost her bird. She returned from an afternoon walk and found it missing from its cage in her buffalo robe-lined tent. She and George hunted for it in vain, but the arrival of Jacob Snell from the fort enlightened the evening. He was on his way to Red Willow to escort an unidentified young woman back to the post.

Red Willow was a place of importance during the summer of 1872, being much mentioned in the state press. It had begun in November 1871, when a group of Nebraska City men organized the Republican Valley Land Company, which planned to found a colony in the valley. Later that same month, an exploring party visited the region, and the point where the Red Willow entered the Republican was selected as the site of the colony. Later, the plans for a formal colony collapsed, but several of the original founders went ahead, Royal Buck remaining the nominal head of the group. When they arrived at the creek in late May, they found Camp Red Willow already established upon the east bank. There was talk that a new land office to serve the Republican Valley, would be located there, but Lowell, far northeast in Kearney County, was chosen instead. /Riley, "Royal Buck Letters", NH, V.47, N.4, (Dec.1966)/

General Eugene Asa Carr's Republican River Expedition of 1869 had virtually cleared the valley of hostiles, and settlement began in Webster County the following year. Keeping up with settlement, in a region still visited by friendly and supposedly friendly Indians, as well as by buffalo herds, the U.S. Army had established a small, temp-

June - 7

orary military camp at some point in the valley, usually at the western edge of settlement. Camp Cameron had been established in Franklin County in 1871, three counties east of Red Willow County. The counties, of course were paper counties. The boundaries had been defined by the state legislature, but no county organization had taken place. They were described in the press, however, as actual counties. After Camp Red Willow was established, a small group of frontiersmen went further west, pushing toward the western edge of the county.

As the summer posts were temporary, they were little more than encampments. Camp Red Willow was described by Russell F. Loomis, a pioneer of 1872:

The first summer we were here there were some soldiers station on the Willow to protect the settlers. Every week they took a team over to the Platte for supplies. They carried our mail all summer....There was about a company of soldiers I think. They lived in tents and dugouts. There was a store /commissary/ near their camp that kept provisions of different kinds and whiskey. /Loomis, Indianola Reporter, 30 October 1924/

On July 1st, Royal Buck, the "leader" of the Red Willow settlers, added a few more details about the camp:

...well, we have been here a little over one month, living in our tent and under a temporary shed made of small poles and green boughs. This is very popular here, almost every settler is doing the same thing and all the military forces (two companies) likewise..../Riley, "Buck", op.cit., 376/

Settlers were trickling up the Republican Valley, along with the professional hide hunters, and also settling along the spring-fed canyons, which, like the Medicine, reached almost back to the bluffs at Fort McPherson. Federal surveyors were frantically working to lay out the section lines, so the settlers could file upon the land. A few crops--sod corn, beans and pumpkins--were planted. As in the case of the Indians, however, the mainstay of the frontier diet, as well as its main cash crop, was the buffalo. Meat was dried and stored for the coming winter's consumption, while many of the hides, tongues and humps ~~were~~ prepared for sale at North Platte or Plum Creek on Union Pacific. Though directly south of the former, better trails lead to the former, so that most southwest Nebraska business was done there.

Back at Wolf's Rest, Ena spent an almost quiet Sunday, on the 9th. True, she did find and catch her bird, but she complained to her diary that "Nothing of him-portance today!" Romantically that was true, but she went on to describe her meeting that day with one of the most notable excentrics of the region--Storm King.

John S. "Storm" King was the first settler in what became Red Willow County. He settled there in 1872 and built a small cabin. He is also credited with doing the first farming (a small patch of corn) in that county. He supported himself, however, by hunting and trapping, ranging far from the Republican, being gone for weeks at a time. It was said he was a Civil War veteran, though no record has yet been found. Beyond stories written many years later, we know only that he was born in Pennsylvania about 1843 and he had a brother Cornelius. Though his contemporaries implied he was old, he was about twenty-nine in 1872, when he met Ena.



John F. Black, another Red Willow County pioneer left a dramatic account of the meeting of Ena and Storm King, including a shooting match, of which Ena makes no mention:

Later Mrs. Ramon with her brother and father and mother settled on the Medicine creek in what was later known as the Ramon bend, which was thickly clad with a growth of tall ash saplings. As soon as the news of these new settlers reached the valley, King mounted his best horse, gun in hand, hied away across the valley, the high lands and canyons, forded the Medicine and called at Mrs. Ramon's tent. After introducing himself he invited Mrs. Ramon out to shoot at a mark. "Certainly," replied Mrs. Ramon. With gun in hand the new settler stepped out. "How far do you wish to shoot, Mr. King?" "Say it yourself," replied the old soldier. Now the firing commenced a half a quarter toward the highland. "The sight of my gun has certainly got jarred out of place," said King. "Let me see your gun," rejoined Mrs. Ramon, "that is a good looking gun. Let me have a cartridge, Mr. King. And another one, Mr. King, and a third one, please." All were placed precisely in the center of the bull's eye. "That fault is not in your gun," said Mrs. Ramon, "your nerve is not steady." King returned to his home in the valley, but said very little about his visit to the Ramon bend. /John F. Black, "Pioneer Days in Red Willow County", Indianola Reporter, 27 June 1918./

Black is correct in many small details, the blood relationship between Paddy Miles, Ena, and their parents, which many people did not know or pretended not to know. Ena was living in a tent during her early months on the Medicine, Black's dialogue, except for the last line, does not compare badly with Ena's own writings. But, from her own writings, it does not seem likely that Ena would openly insult Storm King as to his shooting ability. At least she was always ready to make excuses for the other males she outshot--at least the young and good looking ones.

In his short memoir, Black notes he met Ena at a later date:

I was driven into Ramon Bend by a snowstorm. I shall ever be grateful for the hospitality extended by Mrs. Ramon.

I found her a Southern raised lady with a warm appearance.

She wrote in verse. Her leash of hounds indicated that she enjoyed the chase. /Ibid./

Though Ena had her dog, Spot, which shared her tent, and she mentions other dogs, <sup>though</sup> they are never described, she gives no intimations of every having hunted with hounds. From her written viewpoints on the proper methods of hunting, it seems unlikely she would have approved of using hounds. As with men, so with animals--Ena loved a one-to-one chase.

Late the following day, Monday, the 10th, the buffalo hunters returned, and Ena was excited at the prospect of seeing her first buffalo. The hunt was not a success. William D. Wildman of Cass County was homesick in the vicinity of Red Willow, and he wrote an account of it for an eastern newspaper, upon his return:

June - 11

Homesteads were plenty, with timber and water. Buffalo in countless numbers, the wild cattle of Nebraska upon "ten thousand hills." Here I will relate an incident heretofore unheard of in Buffalo hunting. A gentleman from Saratoga, N.Y., came to Fort McPherson and hired three of the Western scouts to capture eight full grown Buffalo, to astonish the town of Saratoga, on the 4th of July, at a grand celebration on that day, and I understand a party of Pawnee Indians were to be taken along to shew the uninitiated how Lo could do the Buffalo on a hunt. Three gentlemen well known to Western men for daring were chosen as the leaders, viz., Dashing Charley, Texas Jack, and a man by the name of Barrett (his initials I did not know, as my informant did not know them). They started from Red Willow early Sunday morning, 9th June, crossed the Republican, and proceeded to Beaver Creek, 15 miles away, and before noon the eight bulls were prisoners, and loaded on wagons. The mode of capture was as follows: One would throw a lasso over the animal's neck, and follow with a slack rope, until another could lasso the foot. Then they proceeded to down the "baste." Once down he was quickly tied, and ready for loading on the wagons, and so the fun went on with one variation. After Texas Jack had lassoed an uncommonly large ugly old bull, and before any one could secure his leg, he turned short, and charged, caught the horse, and pitched both into a gully. Here the grit and action of a true western hunter became apparent; his well

well trained horse waited for its rider, and my informant stated that the rope was not even dropped, but man and horse were together, again following the buffalo, until he was finally captured. To read of such things is all very well; but to do them is quite a different thing. For my part I believe rather than to be one to capture one of these fellows I had rather to go through the Battle of Chickamanga again.

I was told the next morning seven of the eight died. /Lincoln, Daily State Journal, 2 July 1872. The fore-going account has also appeared in Rosa, They Called Him Wild Bill, op. cit., 164, for which work the author gave the letter to Mr. Rosa. Dr. William F. Carver, who arrived on the Medicine two months later, told his biographer of this hunt, but, in his story, the hunters were Wild Bill Hickock and himself. It was not uncommon for Carver to do this--though he had many real adventures of his own--he would take a real event that happened to someone else, change it or the date slightly, and then say it ~~would~~ had happened to him. Other such stories will be noted. For this event, see Raymond W. Thorp, They Carver, Spirit Gun of the West (Glendale: Arthur H. Clark, Co., 1957) 45-49./

Sidney Barnett and part of his ~~company~~ soon left for Fort McPherson, taking with them one young antelope. There would be no thrilling buffalo chase at Niagara Falls on the 4th of July, but Barnett did not give up on his idea. When (of if) the buffalo were captured

Wildman was right of course. Only one buffalo survived to be brought to the Medicine. Ena and Mr. Snell (he had returned from Camp Red Willow, rode over to view the catch. Ena enjoyed the visit, getting to meet Andy Barrett, "'The Half-Breed or the wonderful "California Horse Tamer'" for the first time, whom she described as "a rather fine looking man". After much discussion, the one pathetic buffalo was deserted, but whether it was turned free or ended up in a Medicine Creek larder is not known. Ena had enjoyed her visit. Most of all, she had a "pleasant little chat with Texas Jack." Adding, almost as an afterthought, "In fact with all the white men."

Sidney Barnett and part of his company soon left for Fort McPherson, taking with him one young antelope. There would be no thrilling buffalo hunt at Niagara Falls on the 4th of July, but Barnett did not give up his idea. When (or if) the buffalo were captured, Texas Jack was to accompany them and the Indians to New York. While Barnett continued on his hunt for buffalo, Texas Jack was to go to the Pawnee reservation in eastern Nebraska and line up a small company of Pawnee to accompany him as hunters. Though Texas Jack had been on the Platte for three or four years, it is not known if he had had any previous experience with the Pawnee, a semi-sedentary tribe, who seldom visited Fort McPherson, for it was located in the territory of the Brule, long time enemies of the Pawnee. Texas Jack's contact with the Pawnee Agent, though a failure, would lead him to change his summer's plans, leaving the New York adventure to another noted frontiersman. He, himself, would spend his summer on the Plains hunting the buffalo Indian fashion.

June 1872 - 14

Further down the Medicine on that same day, twenty-eight year old Abrose S. Shelley (formerly Ambrose S. Schultz) was writing a letter to his old home in Pennsylvania:

Dear Father,

Medicine Valley, Nebraska  
/Saturday,/ June 15th 1872

I will drop a short note to you this evening to ask if you if you would be so kind as to send my chest of tools to me. I am going to build a House on towards fall, and the settlers begin to make their appearance here lately, and they tell me that quite a number of familys started from the State of Iowa, bound for the Republican and Medicine Rivers. The Government is also going to build a Fort here. They located their Reservation about four miles west of my claim. That will make some lively times here. The Rail Road /is/ coming /up/ the Republican Valley and the Government establishing a fort here will clean the Indians out in a very short time which will induce people to settle here, /and/ if I have my tools here I can pick up a good many Jobs and I have to have my tools ~~to~~ to do My own work anyhow. I inquire what it would cost me to have them send here and the Freight Agent told me not over eight Dollars by Freight. I dont care if it will cost eighteen /as/ it will still be a good deal cheaper than to buy new tools in this country.

I wish you would send the Cheast as soon as you possibly can, as it may take a good while before she gets here. I expect to come home by next spring if I possible can but I am going to built me a good House and make all the necessary improvements on my claim before I leave it. I think

June 1872 - 15

the old chest will stand it if the tools are well packed. I dont know weather there is any pieces on the Bottom of my chest for her to set on or not. if not perhaps you had better fix me on the Bottom and sink the key into one of the pieces and screw it well onto the Bottom of the chest. that way you can also send the Key. I will give you the Address, and the Chest well secured and well addressed.

Address.  
A. Shalley, ~~in-e~~  
North Platte City, U. P. R. R.  
Nebraska  
In care of John Bratt

These men live at North Platte and Mr Bratt comes here often he has over sixteen Thousand head of cattle in the country and he offered to take the chest to /sic/ out for me as soon as it get their. I am about 70 miles away from the rail Road and I might not find it out in a hurry when the chest arrives there, but any of these men will take it out of the Frieght House for me and then they cant charge no storeage at the station. have it well directed and she will find me.

We have a very heavy Thunder storm this evening. it is raining powerfull this very Moment. My corn and Potatoes and Melons look splendid. My garden is getting along fine too. I have over three Hundred hills of Melons planted I can feed the whole state of Nebraska on Melons if nothing happens /to/ them. Write me a letter with all the news in when you send the cheast and ~~and~~ put it in the cheast /for/ then I will get the letter as soon as the chest, but I have

to close it is getting late My best respects to mother and sister and accept the same yourself.

A. S. Shultz

I will give you the director fbr chest sepertate

A. Shalley  
North Platte City  
U. P. R. R. Nebraska  
In care of John Bratt

Though this is his only extant letter, we must assume that Shelley had already informaed his Pennsylvania family that he was no longer going by his real last name but had traded it for his middle name. At least he does nothing to explain his use of an alias, though he signs the letter "Schultz" rather than "Shalley".

Besides giving a slight self portrait, the most interesting part of Shelley's letter is the portion telling of the locating of a new military post on the **Medicine**. A post on the Republican had been talked of at various times for several years, but this is the only mention of it being established on the Medicine. The main road of the homeseekers was up the Republican, and it seems unlikely that another post would be built on the Divide, so near to Fort McPherson. The most mentioned site for a post was either at the mouth of the Red Willow, where the temporary post was located, or about thirty-five miles west of there at the Big Timbers, just east of the present town of Stratton. This location had been mentioned by the military for several years, at least since the Republican River Expedition of 1869.

The following day, the 21st, Ena went riding again, apparently not alone. Her escort evidently pressed his suit, but she did not respond favorably. It seems likely he was Dick Seymour, for, on the following day, Ena wrote he had left and added, "can't say I regret



it, as I think it best in more way than one that he should go." The same day, however, Wilk Snell and his father arrived for a visit, which reminded Ena of her arrival at Wolf's Rest and how Wilk had tried to teach her how to survive on the frontier. And, of course, there was George to take her riding or to talk with.

Though George Dillard was only twenty-two, he like most of the community on the Medicine had lived a wide and varied life. He was born in Christian County, Kentucky, on January 22, 1850. Less than ~~two~~<sup>four</sup> months after his thirteenth birthday, George joined the U.S. Navy. On May 13, 1863, he was assigned to the Mississippi Squadron, serving on various vessels--"Grampus", "Kenwood", "Osage", and "Neosho". He "participated in a number of engagements with the rebel warships and forces, and he suffered disabilities...." He was discharged two years later on May 29, 1865, at the age of fifteen years and four months. Apparently Civilian Life did not suit him, for, a year later, on July 3, 1866, George joined the U.S. Army at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. He became a private in Company B, Second Cavalry. By the time he was discharged at Fort McPherson on April 20, 1869, his rank had gone up and down--which was not uncommon in that rough day. In December 1867, he had been appointed bugler, but the following April he had been reduced to private, only to be made corporal on June 1st. Less than two months later he was once again a private, the rank he held at the time of his discharge a year later. After that he took odd jobs around the fort and, at one time, he worked as a bartender at Cottonwood Springs, living with one of the Snell brothers. By all accounts, he was a friendly witty man, often involved in a humorous scrape.

Though Ena chided him on his persistent talking, during her times of contemplation, she must have found him a pleasant companion that summer, in spite of his having been a Union veteran--though Ena was not one to wave the Stars and Bars, particularly since she had the West and its Scouts to investigate. /"Pension Records", U.S. National Archives (Dillard's records are copied and on file in the Nebraska State Historical Society); North Platte, Semi-Weekly Tribune, 30 November 1897; U.S. Census Records: 1870, Nebraska: Lincoln County, 1./

For the rest of June, Ena spent a quiet period--going horse back riding and hunting, as well as taking dinner at the sheep camp of Mr. Lewis. She abhorred the fact that there was talk and back-biting among the frontiersmen, and then, for several days, she was too ill to leave her tent.

Meanwhile things were not going well for Texas Jack. From the very beginning he had taken Sidney Barnett's job offer seriously. The buffalo hunting expedition had reached the Medicine on June 7th and returned on the 11th. But it seems that he must have written the Pawnee Agency prior to his departure on the hunt as to taking some Pawnee to Niagara Falls, for on Wednesday, the 13th, Jacob M. Troth, the Pawnee agent, had written to Barclay White, the superintendent of Indian Affairs, at Omaha as follows:

I referred to the letter of J. B. Omohundro in reference to the Buffalo hunt at Niagra Falls. I had not replied to him but wrote at once communicateing our disapproveal of our indians engageing in any enterprise of the kind. /"Pawnee Agency Letterbooks", Oklahoma State Historical Society. Photocopy, Nebraska State Historical Society Archives./

Troth then wrote a short, brusque note to Texas Jack, repeating what he had written to his superintendent:

Your letter was rec and I have had an interview with the Superintendent on the subject and we unite in our view in reference to our Indians going off /on/ an expedition of the kind you propose. It is also prohibited by the Department. /Ibid./

President Ulysses S. Grant had hoped to reform the Indian policy of the United States, and he had followed the advice of those reformers who had advocated placing the various Indians under the control of the various religious denominations of the country. The Pawnee, Omaha, Winnebago, and Otoe, among others, were grouped in the Central Superintendency, with headquarters at Omaha, and ~~placed~~ given into the hands of the Society of Friends or Quakers. As far as the Pawnee were concerned, the matching was not a success. The Quakers meant well, the Pawnee were bewildered and bemused.

The honesty of the Quakers is not questioned. The Pawnee were their wards, and the Quakers would see to it that their annuities would no longer be stolen, that the agency trader was honest, and the chiefs of the four Pawnee bands would be as kind-but-strict fathers to children, as they would be fathers to the chiefs. Quaker religious principles would be used to lead these children of the prairies into the paths of righteousness. This did not mean, of course, that the Quakers did not recognize the political orthodoxy of nepotism, for they quickly filled all agency jobs with relatives and friends.

Troth then wrote a short, brusque note to Texas Jack, repeating what he had written to his supervisor:

Your letter was rec and I have had an interview with the Superintendent on the subject and we unite in our view in reference to our Indians going off /on/ an expedition of the kind you propose. It is also prohibited by the Department. /Ibid./

Under President Ulysses S. Grant, the various Indian agencies had been divided up among the various religious groups in the country, hopefully to end the great amount of corruptness in the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The result was mixed. Corruption--stealing of Indian monies and annuities--dropped, but new problems arose. Of the various problems that arose, and they did, the problems at the Pawnee Agency only continued. Probably no two peoples were less adapted for cooperation than the Pawnee and the Society of Friends, or Quakers, to whom Grant handed over the sedentary tribes of the middle Missouri country.

Decades before, the Pawnee--once the terror of the Plains--had sided with the encroaching white men. Overland travelers dreaded their arrival in Pawnee country, though it was seldom that their encounters ended in death, ~~though~~ The Pawnee continued to engage in warfare against other Indian tribes, and they continued to uphold their tribal "honor" against the whites. It is an exaggeration to say the Pawnee were thieves, but Dicken's Artful Dodger would have admired them. The Pawnee were the great horse thieves of the Plains. From their reservation in central Nebraska, they made raids as far south as Texas and New Mexico, often making the trip south on foot and returning on horseback.

The Quakers had several major problems develop, during their years with the Pawnee. They, like most of their contemporaries and many people today, did not realize the tribal chiefs were leaders rather than despots. The Indian tribes were recognized as independent nations by treaty; they had no apparent elections, therefore the chiefs ruled the other Indians as subjects. The Quakers did not realize that being a Pawnee chief called for all the arts of a New York City ward boss. Oratory was vital, but so was ability, presence and past success in leadership. The old American standby of greasing the palms of followers was well known to the Pawnee. When it came time for the distribution of annuity goods, the Pawnee chiefs (some hereditary, some elected) made sure that their own particular followers received an ample supply of goods--scrap metal, pots, hoes, blankets and calico--while more independent minded tribal members were not treated so generously. Naturally, this made for good followers. But, according to the law, the annuity goods were to be divided equally among the members of the Pawnee nation. The Quakers were shocked. After that first annuity day under their supervision, the Quakers announced that all goods would be divided equally. The chiefs protested, but the agent was true to his word. All would be treated equally. It does not seem that the Quakers ever realized what their honesty had done to the Pawnee. They had destroyed much of the power of the individual, including the hereditary, chiefs. During the following years the Quaker agent would pass an order to the chiefs and then be amazed, when the chiefs could not get the people to automatically follow their order. They would, probably of course, berate the chiefs for their inadequacy and threaten them with disposal. They never seemed to relate gift-giving with leadership.

Texas Jack did not give up after receiving Troth's letter of the 13th, and he made a trip to Omaha, advertising the Niagara Falls hunt and ~~ix~~his role in it. He was a social success in Omaha, and he received his first extended press coverage. Texas Jack had become a "public" person, for the time being to equal the notoriaty of Buffalo Bill. All articles about Omohundro give the feeling that he was a "nice guy", easy to get along with, without the heroic reputation of Buffalo Bill and thus more approachable:

TEXAS JACK.  
THE NIAGARA FALLS BUFFALO HUNT. SOME INTER-  
ESTING PERSONAL FACTS CONCERNING THIS NOTED  
SCOUT AND HUNTER.

The celebrated scout and hunter, Te~~x~~as Jack, has been camping at the Metropolitan Hotel for a day or two, having come to Omaha on business.

Some few weeks ago Sidney Burnett came out from Niagara Falls for the purpose of securing some live buffalo for a grand hunt at the Falls on the Fourth of July. Proceeding to Fort McPherson, he employed the noted hunter, Te as Jack, to capture them. A hunt was ~~organized~~ accordingly organized, and the result was that eight buffalo were taken alive. Some of them have since died, and it is doubtful if any of them can be transported alive on ~~an~~ account of the warm weather. If, however, Mr. Burnett is successful in securing and transporting a sufficient number of live buffalo, he will give the proposed grand hunt at Niagara Falls on the Fourth of July. The hunt will be managed entirely by Texas Jack, who will take with him Captain Mathews, as interpreter, a

Pawnee lasso man, and several Pawnee Indians. They will take with them their entire equipments--horses, weapons, and Indian costumes.

Jack is here, under instruction of Mr. Burnett, to obtain permission of the Superintendent of the Pawnee Indians, who resides in this city, to take the required number of Pawnees to Niagara Falls. The Superintendent has given his permission, but says that it will be necessary to get further orders from Gen. Walker, the Commissioner, at Washington. Jack accordingly sent dispatches to Mr. Burnett, and he has sent on to Washington to obtain leave to take the Indians.

Texas Jack, whose right name is J. B. Omohundro, is a Southerner by birth. From his boyhood up, he has followed the profession of a scout and hunter. He is now twenty-four years of age, /He would be twenty-six the following month./ Is tall, broad shouldered and handsome; weighs 180 pounds, and like all frontiersmen he has muscles of iron, and the courage of a lion.

He talks fluently and uses correct grammatical language; and all his actions denote that he is one of Nature's own noblemen. He has never had much of an opportunity to obtain a school education, yet he may be said to be<sup>a</sup> tolerably well education man, having improved his leisure time in study.

Texas Jack and Buffalo Bill are the warmest friends. They have been acquainted for three years, and for the last

six months they have been in partnership in hunting. Texas Jack received an invitation to go out with the Duke Alexis party, but as he was out hunting at the time, he refused to go. For a couple of months past he has been employed as a scout for the government.

During the late buffalo hunt for Mr. Burnett, he had a very narrow escape from death, which, to him, was but a mere trifling incident, having passed through so many nearly fatal experiences. He was riding his celebrated horse, "Tall Bull," when a fierce buffalo bull attacked both rider and horse, badly goring the latter. Texas Jack, his horse, and the buffalo all fell into Beaver river, from which they soon after emerged, and the fight continued, the result of which was the capture of the buffalo, and the probable death of the horse.

"Tall Bull" is one of the most celebrated horses in this country, having been captured in a fight from old Tall Bull, a noted Indian chief, who was defeated and killed.

The horse is the swiftest and longest-winded animal on the plains, having never yet been beaten in a race, although having had hundreds of contests of speed. Jack thinks he is the finest horse in the Western country, and expresses a great deal of sorrow over the goring of his pet, as he is of the opinion that he will never recover. "Tall Bull" was Jack's favorite horse, although he owns several other fleet animals. He formerly rode "Prairie



Belle," a fleet black mare, educated and brought up on the plains. "Whalte-bone," another fast horse, was badly wounded during the hunt, but will recover. Jack himself was cornered over twenty times in a single day by the monarchs of the plains.

Texas Jack makes a lucrative livelihood from the proceeds of the hunting expeditions, and his numerous engagements as a scout for the Government and as a guide for English and American hunting parties, which are becoming more fashionable each year.

Last winter he undertook the guidance of Professor /Henry A./ Ward's party, who came out to gather specimens. He afterwards sent the Professor the head of a buffalo killed by the Duke Alexis.

Last evening he received quite a reception at the hands of many of our citizens, who were very much pleased with the open-hearted frontiersman. He attracted considerable attention by his costume and manly appearance, and made a most favorable impression upon those who had never met him.

He was entertained during a part of last evening by an exhibition of scientific billard-playing by Louis Shaw, at Richards & Bakers hall. /"That the gentlemen's game requires more skill and possesses more attraction than any other now in vogue is a universally admitted fact...but at present Nebraska and the adjoining States and Territories have no champions and for some time past have had no tournaments. It is now proposed to have such an affair take place in

this city on or about the first of August, at the handsome and commodious rooms of Messrs. Richards & Baker....

Mr. Louis Shaw, the well-known amateur of this city, expects to contend for the prize. In proof of his skill it is only necessary to state that in an exhibition game at Lincoln some time ago, he beat the celebrated John Deery; that on the 24th of April he made 111 shots at French caroms, the largest run ever made at that game; and that Saturday he made a run of 726 at the four-ball game...." Omaha Daily Bee, Monday, 20 May 1872. / He also accepted an invitation from Frank Currier, the artist, to have his photograph taken to-day. Professor J. H. Steiner, the aeronaut, also invited him to go up in a balloon with him on the 4th of July, and if the buffalo hunt does not come off on the 4th at Niagara Falls he promised to be here, and accompany the Professor in his ascension. / Omaha Daily Bee, Saturday, 22 June 1872. Texas Jack never made it up in the balloon on the 4th of July, unfortunately, but it is an interesting idea. J. H. Steiner was also covered in the Omaha press: "This morning Prof. J. H. Steiner, chief aeronaut of the United States Army, and champion aeronaut of the world, arrived in this city...and is now at the Metropolitan Hotel.... He has followed the profession of an aeronaut more or less the greater part of his life.... For several years he was a commissioned officer in the regular army of the United States, and although having resigned some time since, he is still in the service of the Government. During the late war

he was second<sup>ly</sup> in command of the balloon service during the first year of its existence, and during the last two years... he was first in command. Since its discontinuance Professor Steiner has held the position of Chief of the Aeronautic Department of the United States Army, and is now engaged in making topographical surveys....

During his life-time he has made 314 aerial voyages, and thousands of minor ascensions. He has been longer in this profession than any other living man, with one single exception, namely, John Wise, and is the champion aeronaut of the world, having won this title and honor by actual trial....

The Professor has several prospective trips in view. One is from Omaha to the Atlantic coast....

The Fourth of July is near at hand, and it has been suggested to Professor Steiner that he aid in the celebration in this city, before starting out on one of his long ~~vaxgx~~ voyages from this or some other point.

He accordingly intends, if sufficient inducements are offered him to make an ascension from this city on the Fourth of July. The only inducement that he will require is that a sufficient sum of money be raised to defray his actual expenses....

The balloon which will be used on that day by Professor Steiner, if he makes an ascension, is of 20,000 cubic feet capacity, and will accomodate three persons, and is much larger than the balloons generally used on such occasions." Omaha Daily Bee, Thursday, 20 June 1872./

Texas Jack was a success in Omaha, but he did not succeed in gaining permission to take Pawnee to Niagara Falls. Two days after the newspaper story appeared, Agent Troth wrote Superintendent White, partially dealing with him: "In my last letter from Columbus of the 22nd I omitted to state that J. B. Omohundro rec a dispatch from Burnt that the Commissioner refused permission for our Indians to engage in the Hunt of Buffaloes intended to take place at Niagra Falls. I communicated with him at Fort McPherson in reference to his engagement to go out with the Pawnees." /Jacob M. Troth, Pawnee Agency, letter, 24 June 1872, to Barclay White, "Pawnee Agency Letterbooks" Vol.I, 35./

Texas Jack had failed twice. First, the buffalo captured died, and, second, he was unable to receive permission to take any of the Pawnee to New York. He was replaced on the adventure by James Butler "Wild Bill" Hickock, while the Pawnee were replaced by Kansas Indians. The hunt did not take place on the Fourth of July, but in August. It was not the grand success that had been hoped for.

Texas Jack must have paid a visit to the Pawnee Agency prior to his trip to Omaha. The Pawnee were preparing to go on their annual summer hunt, and, apparently, Agent Troth had decided that an experienced frontiersman should accompany them, rather than allowing them to go freely, as they had in the past. While Troth had not approved of the tour to New York, he had apparently approved of Texas Jack and asked him to accompany the Pawnee as sub-agent, even though he had had no previous experience with the Pawnee. When the final ruling came down from Washington, Jack accepted the other opportunity.