

River, where a few families then resided, and then pushed into the great western wilderness. Our route was very nearly upon what, I have since learned, was the 37th degree, or perhaps half a degree south of that parallel. We crossed a branch of White River, which I named the Currents, which it has ever since retained, and then Black River, and afterwards Spring River, which we followed to its source, where we found a very large spring, and hence the name of the stream. We next passed the main fork of White River, and then continued on westwardly until we reached the prairie country, and went beyond all the western head waters of the Mississippi, except the Arkansas and Missouri.

We continued our journey, as I should judge, between eight hundred and a thousand miles from the settlements. On our outward journey, we met with a number of friendly Indian parties of the Chickasaws, Choctaws, and Creeks or Muscogeas, engaged in hunting, who did not venture too great a distance beyond the western verge of the white settlements; but we had no difficulty with them. We encountered vast herds of buffaloes, and occasionally large herds of wild horses. We judged from the buffalo trails, that we passed near the Great Salt Rock; and a long distance beyond, we came in view of the spurs of the great Rocky Mountain chain.

In this remote region, we one day, during the summer, met three men, who proved to be the only survivors of a party of some fifteen trappers who had penetrated high up the Missouri, when in two savage attacks by the Indians, all the others were slain; and these survivors were now directing their course to the Arkansas River, and admonished us to desist our further journey westward. Not heeding these earnest admonitions, we kept on, and the next day discovered a party of a dozen or twenty wild Indians, probably Comanches or Pawnees, chasing and catching wild horses with the lasso, which they used with great dexterity and success. We saw them in time to secrete ourselves, unseen by them, and had a full view of them for three or four hours, in an immense prairie; and though generally perhaps not less than