

enlistments they were to provide for themselves. They had, in their individual capacity, made repeated efforts to procure supplies upon their own credit, but they met with very indifferent success. The millers and farmers would be running no small risk to dole out their surplus provisions to so many persons, of whose ability and good intentions to remunerate them they could know so little. It seemed necessary that some person should step forward, and act in the capacity of commissary, to supply the Rangers, and this I was induced to undertake at their urgent desire. I had become pretty well acquainted throughout the Missouri frontiers, and my anxious solicitude to serve the frontier settlers was also well known, and hence I could command the requisite credit from the millers and stock-raisers of the country.

I employed the necessary number of assistants to purchase and drive forward beef cattle, and hands to boat or wagon flour and other provisions to the frontier stations where wanted. At the same time, I continued to act as a spy, sometimes going in advance of my teams in places of danger. On more than one occasion, have I thus discovered the Indians in time to retreat, and save my men and teams. I remember in the spring of 1813, being at the head of five teams loaded with supplies, when at the fording of a large stream known as Peruque Creek, in the northern part of St. Charles county, I discovered a party of thirteen Indians concealed behind blinds, formed of bent bushes, or broken bushes stuck in the ground for a screen, and retreated in time to save both teams and loading. I then procured a large boat, in which to transport the supplies up the river to the nearest point to Fort Howard, in order to avoid the danger to which we were exposed by the land route. Leaving my horse, I went up with the boat, and met with no obstacle.

Upon arriving at Fort Howard, so many reports came to the ears of my boatmen, that they at first declined returning in the boat down Cuivre River a few miles to the Mississippi; when once into a large stream, they would feel perfectly safe, as they could keep out beyond the reach of danger. Cuivre River was