

in the river. At the point [where] we reached the river is a shoot or sudden fall of about 3 ft. When the canoes came up this, the bows were entirely out of water while the men in the stern were not visible. It requires great exertion to raise a canoe up there. The river presents a beautiful prospect, greatly heightened by a number of small islands singularly formed by large high rocks at their head on the lower side of which a soil seems to have gathered by the eddies, and are now covered with large handsom trees. We embarked and proceeded up against a strong current, 2 m. when we again landed and walked 1 mile to the portage du Coteau.¹ At the foot of this portage is a very singular island of rocks in the middle of the river about 100 ft. high on which a few pine trees and bushes scarcely find soil sufficient to support them. It is said this heap of rocks is lime stone. I could not get across to examine them.

This portage was represented to be the worst on the river, but it was found the easiest. It is called *the knife* portage because of its being entire ledges of stone lying nearly on an angle of 90°. They are sharp and pointed and pierce the feet at almost every step. It was 3 pauses and is about 1 mile long. I walked it in less than an hour with my baggage. At the head of the portage is a fall of about 12 ft. mostly perpendicular, and extending nearly across the river. I think it presents one of the finest views I have seen on the tour.

The ledges of slate stone commence $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile below the head of the Grand portage, and extend to the head of the Coteau. They lie in the same range with, and shelving from, the mountains which run through here and I suppose are connected with the Chippewa mountains.

W. fair.

SANDY LAKE, Thursday, July 13, 1820.

Early on the morning of the 10th Mr. S., Lt. M., Mr. C., Mr. T., and myself² with a party of the soldiers and two

¹ *Schoolcraft* (p. 111): "Portage aux Coteaux, so called from the carrying path lying over a surface of vertical argillite."—Ed.

² Messrs. Schoolcraft, Mackay, Chase, Trowbridge, and Doty.—Ed.