

The Summer Buffalo Hunt 1861

Some of the hunters have returned to Pembina from the summer hunt, and through them we learn that the “running” has been most successful this season. The buffalo were first found by this party at the Badger Hills, some two and a half days march beyond the Pembina Mountain, and here they had some profitable “runs.” At the little Souris they came upon great herds of buffalo, 900 of which they slaughtered in the first race. After an interval of a day, the chase was renewed at the same place, when about the same number were shot down. Still the buffalo kept within sight, grazing almost within gunshot at times. Altogether during the seven or eight days they camped here they ran eight or nine times making a total of twelve runs up to the time our informant left, —and as the buffalo were numerous, and the hunters fortunate much more pemmican had been made than is usual at such an early period. It is said there was not one in the brigade but made pemmican.

They encountered a tremendous hail storm at this place. The hail stones were extraordinarily large and came down with such force as to kill some of the colts in camp. Five or six hundred Assiniboines, Crees and Chippewas, tented alongside the Half-breeds, hunting, feasting and preparing themselves by religious ceremonies for their anticipated fight with the Sioux. To keep their hands in practice they occasionally stole a horse or two from the camp of their neighbors—the indulgence of which peculiarity generally resulted in a demand for restitution on the part of the owners and the profession of an astonishing degree of innocence on the part of the thieves, which was, of course, followed by the production of the horse. The hunters are expected in three or four days.

The other party going in the direction of Beaver Creek, have also been heard from, and are said to have found game quite as numerous as the hunters in Dacotah.

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