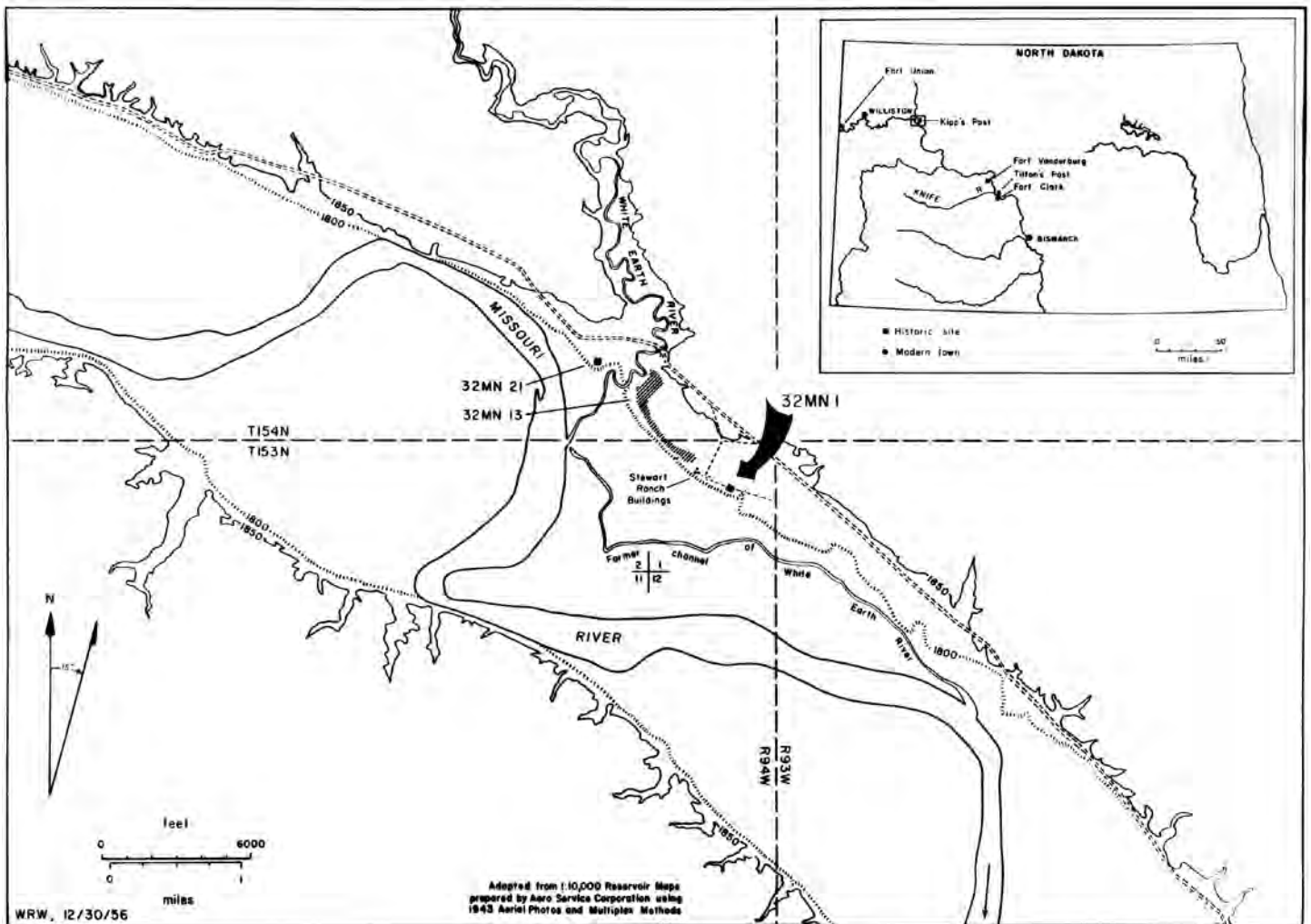


The range of cabins along the north wall of Fort Floyd as they were excavated in 1954. They would have included the kitchen/residence, a stock room for trade goods, and a room for pelts and furs. *SHSND AHP 32-MNI-23*

# A REVISED HISTORY OF FORT FLOYD

By W. Raymond Wood and Michael M. Casler

The physical location and identification of the Columbia Fur Company's Fort Floyd has long been a mystery for scholars of the Upper Missouri River fur trade. It was believed the original post at what is today Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site was called Fort Floyd because the pioneer fur trade historian Hiram M. Chittenden had so identified it in 1902.<sup>1</sup> But this was not the case; indeed, its predecessor was some 118 river miles down the Missouri River, and now new information allows us to tell its story in more detail.<sup>2</sup>



Fort Floyd (32MN1) and its vicinity, showing local features near the post at the time of its investigation in 1954. SHSND AHP 32MN1 figure 2

Let's begin that story in 1954, when Alan R. Woolworth and W. Raymond Wood excavated a fur-trading post on the east bank of the White Earth River in Mountrail County, North Dakota, on the property of the former Stewart Ranch. The site had been known for years prior to 1938, when Thaddeus C. Hecker of the State Historical Society of North Dakota (SHSND) located and mapped its remaining visible features.<sup>3</sup> George F. Will and Hecker later published a short note on what they called Kipp's Trading Post Site, but it was not until 1951 that the site received further attention.<sup>4</sup> A Smithsonian Institution Missouri River Basin Surveys field crew under the direction of historical archaeologist G. Hubert Smith obtained permission to carry out test excavations there that summer. He successfully located the palisade trench, recovered some

artifacts, and made a sketch map of the post.<sup>5</sup>

Recognizing that the erection of the Garrison Dam and the resulting Lake Sakakawea threatened to destroy the site, the River Basin Surveys made Smith's information available to Woolworth and Wood, who arrived at the site in July 1954 with a crew from the SHSND. They had just completed

James Kipp had been sent to the future Fort Floyd location in the fall of 1826 to build a post for the express purpose of trading with the Assiniboinés, who were then living north of the post.

the excavation of Fort Berthold I, an American Fur Company post further downriver, and they set up camp in and around a log cabin on the abandoned ranch a few hundred yards west of the post.<sup>6</sup> At some time in the past, cultivation had obscured what remained of the fort's surface features, although the plowing was shallow and only minimally disturbed what was left of its subsurface remains. The site was fully excavated in the following weeks, revealing the charred remains of its buildings and the palisade that enclosed them. It was obvious that its buildings and parts of the palisade had been destroyed by fire.

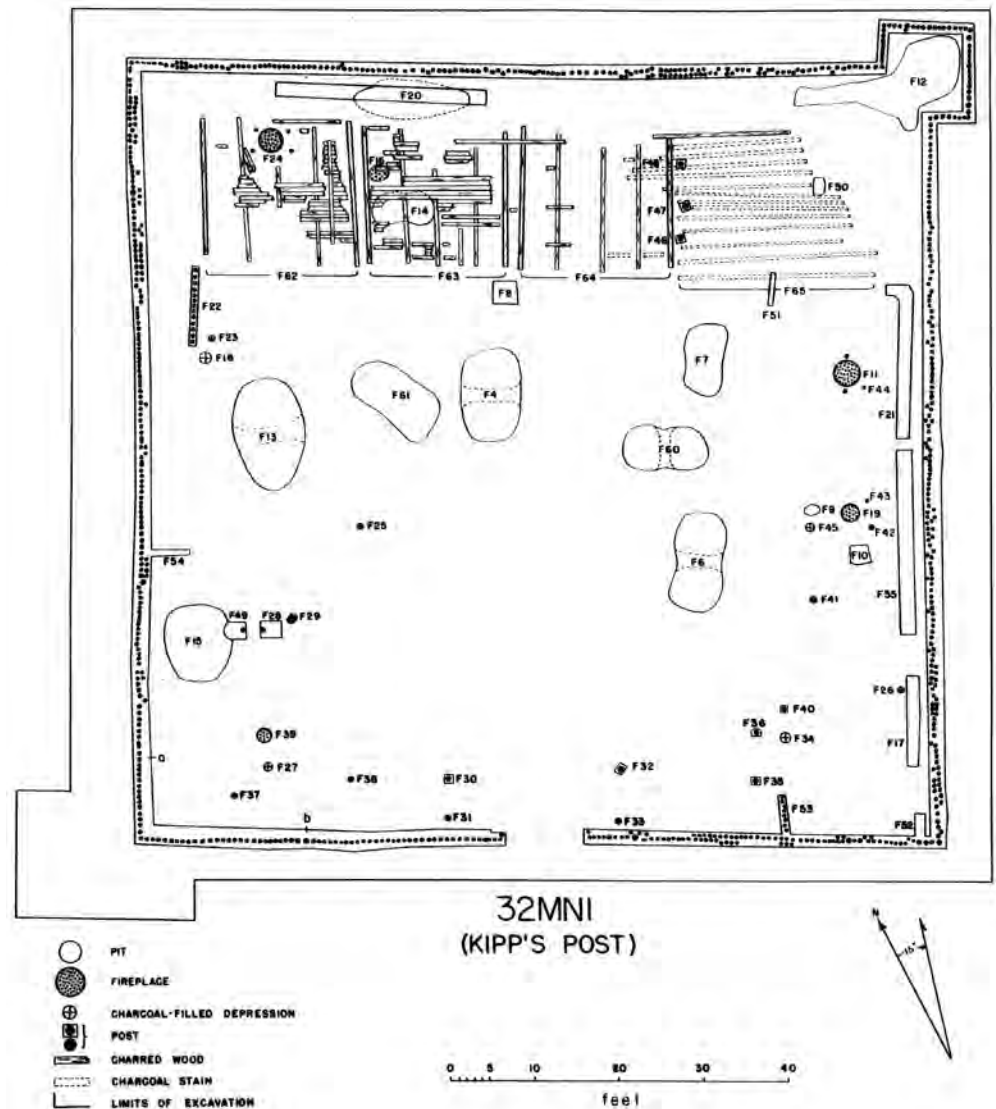
James Kipp had been sent to this location in the fall of 1826 to build a post for the express purpose of trading with the Assiniboinés, who were then living north of the post.

At the time of its construction, the nearest trading post was Fort Clark (1824–30) at the Mandan village of *Mih-tutta-hang-kusch*, near the mouth of the Knife River, about eighty miles downstream.<sup>7</sup> Built in an area free of any competition, Fort Floyd would have been seen as a profitable venture for the company, and it may also have been built in response to a request by the Assiniboines for a post in their territory.<sup>8</sup>

## THE SITE EXCAVATED

The excavations revealed the architecture of this post and, because it had remained in operation for only about four years, later rebuilding did not obscure its ground plan. The post was square in outline, ninety-six feet on a side, and enclosed by a palisade consisting of closely set cottonwood logs set in a shallow trench. Its south wall, built near the edge of a high terrace facing the Missouri River, contained a ten-foot-wide entry, probably once closed by twin gates. A single bastion on the northeast corner of the palisade was simply a five-foot extension of the palisade, for it lacked the superstructure found on the blockhouses of later posts. There was no comparable feature on the southwest corner, although fired clay chinking found among its posts might represent some elaboration of the palisade.

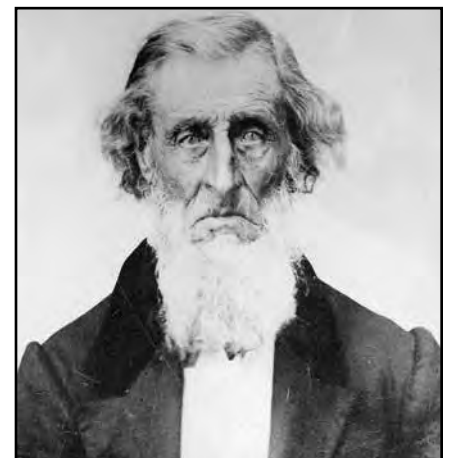
The charred remains of a range of closely spaced buildings along the north wall faced the entry. Three of them were cabins built of peeled logs and chinked with clay. Their foundations rested on log sills, outlining floors that were about sixteen feet wide by eighteen feet deep. Floor joists supported heavy, hewn-plank flooring that had been laid down over earlier, prepared clay floors. Thin fragments of window glass reveal that some of the cabins had windows. The westernmost cabin was probably a residence that also



Ground plan of Fort Floyd, as it was revealed by its excavation by the State Historical Society of North Dakota in 1954. The bastion on the northeast corner was not mirrored by one on the southwest corner. *SHSND AHP 32MN1 figure 3*

served as the kitchen, for large quantities of animal bone, broken dishes, cups, and bowls were in its ruins. It also boasted a clay-chinked stick chimney. Abundant kitchen refuse littered a long trench behind the cabin and next to the palisade wall, filled with broken dishes, wood ash, and the bones of Canada geese, mallards, grouse, bison, deer, beaver, elk, and muskrat.

The central and eastern cabins lacked fireplaces, making it unlikely they were used as living quarters—although both had plank floors, frequently built to keep goods away from moisture. One of the cabins probably served as a warehouse for trade goods and the other for storing furs. A fourth structure, denoted by parallel charcoal stains in the earth, may also have had a floor, but it



James Kipp in retirement, as photographed on March 29, 1873, probably near his home in Missouri, age 85 years 14 days. *Montana Historical Society Research Center Photograph Archives, Helena*



Rifle balls. SHSND 12621.21, 22



Dishes. SHSND 12621.100



Doll legs. SHSND 12621.121



Catlinite pipe. SHSND 12621.253

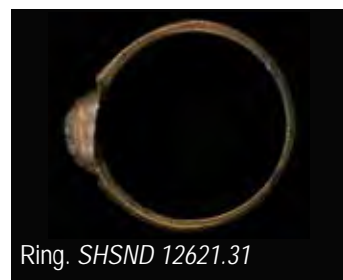
had been carried away by the plow. Kipp brought at least one cannon to the post, for fragments of a one-pounder were scattered about the enclosure. The iron used to make the tube was excessively porous and had been repaired using a wrought iron patch, indicating the reason for its sudden failure. One of its fragments was near what would have been the front door of one of the cabins, where it may have served as a doorstep.

Gun flints, rifle balls and shot, and bullet mold waste material were recovered that indicate the use of horse pistols or trade guns, rifles or fowling pieces, pocket pistols or rifles, and carbines or trade guns, though the only actual gun part recovered was a hammer from a flintlock rifle. The lead shot was for fowling pieces or smoothbore guns. Because waterfowl and other game birds were abundant in the kitchen refuse, these guns were obviously put to good use.

Scattered droplets of lead found near a fireplace on the east side of the compound suggest the men cast rifle balls there. Five large pits scattered about the compound had steep, nearly vertical walls and a narrow ridge of native soil across their short axis; two of them were floored with wood boards, which would have kept their goods off the earth and away from moisture. William Hunt wrote that these pits were similar in size and form to a number of pits exposed during the archaeological work at Fort Union that dated to its early years, perhaps in the 1830s. Perhaps they were

used at both posts to store goods out of sight until a warehouse could be built.<sup>9</sup> Whatever their function, the pits at Fort Floyd were filled with refuse after their original purpose was fulfilled.

A small rectangular pit in the southeast corner of the enclosure contained the remains, in a nailed wooden box, of an infant about six months of age. About five thousand blue glass seed beads accompanied the child. Because scaffold burial was the usual custom of the Assiniboine customers of the post, surely the infant was the child of one of the employees and his Native American wife.<sup>10</sup> A pair of conjoined ceramic doll legs found elsewhere suggests the presence of another child, a young girl; a groove around the doll's upper thighs would have served to attach them to a cloth body. There were other hints that Native American wives were living there. Perhaps these women were using the small, charcoal-filled pits in the compound for smoke-tanning hides, for the Hidatsa technique of suspending hides over smoking corncobs does not seem to have been used by the traders themselves.<sup>11</sup> In addition, chipped-stone end scrapers, a serrated fleshing tool, and grooved mauls or hammers were recovered either from the cabins or refuse pits. Such tools usually are associated with women's work in dressing hides. These nearly invisible members of the fur trade community probably also cooked, prepared the hide clothing preferred by many of the traders, and lightened the burden of the



Ring. SHSND 12621.31



Trade beads. SHSND 12621.311



Buttons. SHSND 12621


Artifacts unearthed during the 1954 excavation of Fort Floyd include ceramic doll legs that suggest the presence of a child, stock items for trading such as buttons, beads, and rings, and Catlinite pipes, likely made at the post. Droplets of lead indicated where men cast rifle balls.

loneliness of frontier men by serving as emotional as well as sexual companions.

We assume that bison, elk, deer, and antelope provided the bulk of the meat the fort's residents consumed, but the food bones they discarded revealed they also consumed many local birds and small mammals. It is noteworthy that the bones of bobcats, badgers, prairie dogs, domestic dogs, and even skunks were mixed together in the kitchen refuse. The domestic dogs and skunks hint that the personnel at the post were themselves acculturated by their contacts with Native Americans, probably their wives, who may have prepared some of their meals. Although they do not hibernate, skunks put on a thick layer of fat in the autumn to harbor them through the winter. For this reason many Native American tribes eagerly hunted them, and they were prized eating for the Assiniboines, Cheyennes, and some other plains tribes.<sup>12</sup>

Finds from the excavations allow us to enumerate some of the items Kipp carried in stock for the American Indian trade. Sewing material for women included cloth, thimbles, double-ended awls, straight pins, several varieties of bone and metal buttons, and a wide range of trade beads. Ornaments for either men or women consisted of finger rings, some with glass sets, a brass bell, and the beads that were primarily found beneath the flooring of the cabins. Most of the twenty elbow-shaped shale and Catlinite pipes recovered had been broken in manufacture. It seems likely they

*Inventory of Stock remaining on hand at Fort Floyd*  
April 29<sup>th</sup> 1829

  
 P. CHUTEAU MAFFITT  
 COLLECTION

Awls	2 No. Station Awls	per Sup.	156	26	
Awls	9 Half Awls		72	6.45	
	4 Chopping Awls		158	6	
	2 Tomahawks		35	7.6	13.50
Beads	1 1/2 Blue Beads		58	97	
	1/4 Bush Large round Blue Agate		155	41	
	1 1/2 " Small		52	5.95	
	12 " Small		72	8.75	
	1/2 " Dark Blue		75	3.25	
	1/2 " round White		110	1.65	
	10 " Blue Barleycorn beads		97	8.70	
	3 1/2 " Oblong White Agate		57	1.75	
	4 1/2 White Pigeon Egg		75	2.94	
	2 Bunches Cut Glass		112	2.34	
	8 " round Blue Agate		210	16.80	149.50
Bells	5 " High Bell	1/2 doz.	112	1.71	
Buttons	5 1/2 " 1/2 doz Buttons		165	5.77	
Cloth	1 1/2 " Sewing cloth 170 1 1/2 doz.		200	39.50	
	1 " " " 184 2 1/2 doz		177	40.35	
	1 " " " 124 23		141	45.05	
	1 " " " 177 19		185	35.15	
	1 " " " 178 15		156	33.45	
	2 1/2 " " " "		287	4	
	1 1/2 " " " 313 35		179	47.25	252.51
Cloth	2 " Blue Striped 2 narrow cuts		250	57	
	8 1/2 " " " "		125	11	
	1 1/2 " " " 1 in Box		1	26	
	1 1/2 " " " "		1	1	
	1 1/2 " Red Striped		143	16.19	
	4 " Fine Blue cloth		244	7.74	
			Total	106.55	415.57

Page one of an "Inventory of Stock" on hand at Fort Floyd, April 29, 1829, probably made by Bourgeois Honoré Picotte before his departure for Fort Tecumseh, where he arrived in May 1829. Missouri History Museum, St. Louis



Trade beads. SHSND 12621.321



Fort Clark II and the Mandan village of *Mih-tutta-hang-kusch*, as depicted by Karl Bodmer in the winter of 1833–34. Fort Clark II was built by James Kipp in 1831. *North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department*

were made at the post using Catlinite brought up from the famous pipestone quarry in southwestern Minnesota, as well as local shale.

Two inventories are known to exist for Fort Floyd, both of them dated April 29, 1829. A one-page inventory of the tools and equipment then in use at the post is accompanied by a three-page inventory of the ninety categories of trade goods on hand on that date.<sup>13</sup> Bourgeois Honoré Picotte must have made this inventory before he left for Fort Tecumseh, where he arrived in May 1829.

## IDENTIFYING THE SITE

A final report on the excavations appeared in a bulletin of the Smithsonian Institution's Bureau of American Ethnology. There the matter remained until 1994, when National Park Service archaeologist William J. Hunt Jr. reexamined the identity of the site.<sup>14</sup> Hunt was the principal investigator and reporter of the archaeology that had been carried out between 1986 and 1988 at Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site. These investigations led him to more closely examine the history of Fort Union, particularly with respect to its origins. In 1902, Hiram Chittenden had written that Fort Floyd had been

the original name of Fort Union, and his claim continued to be cited by historians for nearly a century.<sup>15</sup>

In their 1960 report, Woolworth and Wood depended for their identification of the White Earth River post on Reuben Gold Thwaites's edition of the journals of Prince Maximilian of Wied, a German naturalist who traveled the American West in 1833–34. The prince had gone up the Missouri River by steamboat, courtesy of Pierre Chouteau Jr.'s Upper Missouri Outfit, and reached Fort Clark on the steamer *Assiniboine*. James Kipp was the director at the post at the time, and the Thwaites edition identifies Kipp as the person who told Maximilian he had taken a fine selection of goods to the White Earth River. He'd built a fort there "a little on this side of the mouth of the river, and remained there during the winter, trading with the Assiniboines."<sup>16</sup> When Maximilian passed the mouth of White Earth River aboard the *Assiniboine* on June 22, 1833, the Thwaites edition stated only that Maximilian remarked, "At this spot there was, formerly, a fort, which was abandoned in 1829, when Fort Union was built."<sup>17</sup> The latter entry simply identifies the unnamed White Earth River post as the one built by Kipp in 1826.

Thwaites had published an English translation of Maximilian's original German book, but the book did not contain the name or location of Fort Floyd.<sup>18</sup> Woolworth and Wood therefore called the post "Kipp's Post" after its builder. This was not the first post that Kipp had built for the company, nor was it the last, for indeed he was the principal builder of forts for the Columbia Fur Company and the succeeding Upper Missouri Outfit. The reason was simple: In his native Canada, Kipp had been the foreman of carpenters for the engineer department at Kingston, and he'd continued his trade in Montreal as a carpenter, joiner, and mason before leaving for the West.<sup>19</sup>

A number of years after the "Kipp's Post" report was published, Joseph C. Porter, who was editing Maximilian's field journals for the Joslyn Art Museum, noted that the prince's original notes were far more specific. He had written, on passing the mouth of the White Earth River, "Fort Floyd stood several years ago at the place where we are now, where the present fur company had a post, which it abandoned."<sup>20</sup> Maximilian of course had to depend on the word of someone else for this information, and there was an

unimpeachable informant aboard the *Assiniboine*: Kenneth McKenzie, who had been at the post in 1829. Kipp's Post was thereby properly identified as Fort Floyd, and Porter passed this information along to Hunt, whose two published articles exposing this fact brought the matter to the attention of other fur trade historians.

Published references to the post on the White Earth River are sparse. The most extensive is the published account of fur trader Charles Larpenteur, a narrative that was edited by the prolific historian Elliott Coues:

About the year 1827 an outfit was made up and started for the mouth of the Yellowstone, Mr. McKenzie in charge. They did not reach far that year, but established a wintering post at the mouth of White river, halfway between Forts Union and Berthold—say 150 miles below the Yellowstone. After the post was finished Mr. McKenzie started for the States, and Mr. Honoré Picotte remained in charge.<sup>21</sup>

Coues used Larpenteur's original journals to prepare the above narrative, and it

appears that Coues himself added the remarks about the White Earth River post, for this information appears nowhere in Larpenteur's original field journals.<sup>22</sup> But the information on the White Earth River post is wholly inaccurate save for the fact Picotte had been a bourgeois there, and the source for Coues's information remains unknown. He must have consulted with some member of the fur trading community to elicit it, for Larpenteur was dead when Coues edited his manuscripts.<sup>23</sup>

### A SUMMARY HISTORY

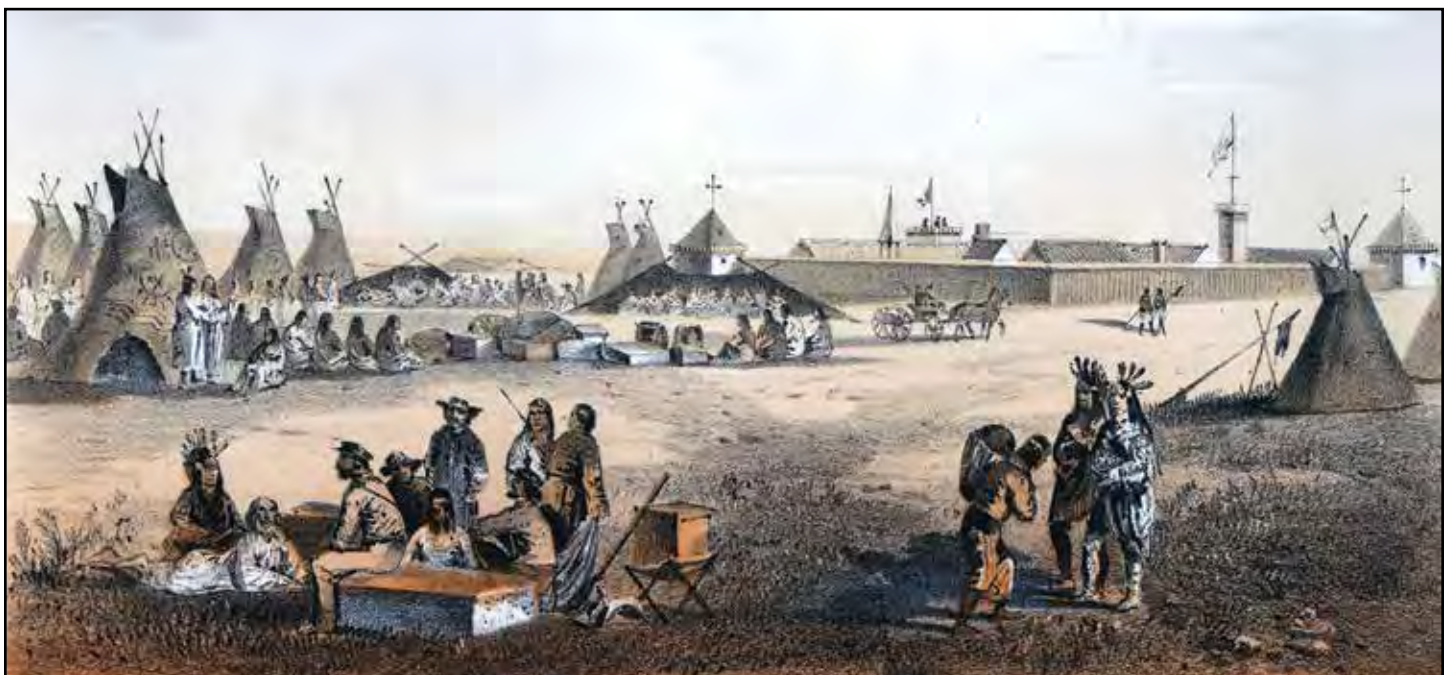
Having now established the identity of Fort Floyd (1826–30), we can elaborate on its brief history, based on new details revealed by recent research that rewrites the history of the Columbia Fur Company.<sup>24</sup>

Former employees of the Hudson's Bay and North West Companies, who had been thrown out of work by the merger of these two giant Canadian fur-trading firms in July 1821, founded Tilton and Dudley Company—better known as the Columbia Fur Company—in St. Louis in 1822. As British citizens, the group from the

Red River was prohibited by law from operating a fur company on their own in the United States, so William P. Tilton and S. S. Dudley became the American figureheads of the company. But its most important members would be Kenneth McKenzie, William Laidlaw, Daniel Lamont, Honoré Picotte, and James Kipp.

The company moved quickly and aggressively to compete with John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company on the Missouri and Upper Mississippi Rivers. The principal establishment of the new firm was Fort Washington, on the east bank of Lake Traverse in present-day southwestern Minnesota, although Fort Tecumseh, at the mouth of the Teton (Bad) River in central South Dakota, was the company's major post on the Missouri. Further downriver, the company established Fort Lookout (Kiowa), with other posts maintained as far south as Council Bluffs, Iowa.

James Kipp established Tilton's Fort for the company in 1823



Distribution of goods to the Assiniboines at Fort Union. An 1853 depiction by John Mix Stanley, artist for the railroad survey expedition led by Isaac J. Stevens. SHSND SA 00129-00171



Kenneth McKenzie, bourgeois of the Upper Missouri Outfit's Fort Union, whose wide-ranging influence and manners once led to his being widely called the "King of the Missouri." *SHSND 338.1 C449 Vol 2 opp p564*

a few miles downstream from the principal Mandan village of *Mih-tutta-hang-kusch*, but he was forced to abandon it shortly after because of hostilities with the Arikaras. The following year he established Fort Clark I closer to the village and, in 1826, William P. Tilton sent Kipp even further upriver, where he built Fort Floyd at the mouth of White Earth River to open trade with the Assiniboinés. Continuing his construction work for the company, master carpenter Kipp next erected Fort Clark II in 1831, a few yards south of the Mandan village.<sup>25</sup> The company was now successfully competing with the American Fur Company at posts all along the Missouri below the Mandans. The American Fur Company was well aware of the fact it had to rid itself of this dangerous competition and negotiated a merger with it, which took place on July 9, 1827. Conjoining the companies meant the forts on the Missouri now became the Upper Missouri Outfit of the American Fur Company Western Department, although the partners of the Columbia Fur Company remained in place as partners in the new organization, with McKenzie as its director.

Kipp, then, had taken an outfit of trade goods in 1826 and built Fort Floyd on the banks of the Missouri

several hundred yards east of the mouth of the White Earth River. This post marked the most westward expansion of the Columbia Fur Company. Kipp and his men spent the winter of 1826–27 there trading with the Assiniboinés, but he left the post in the spring due to illness, departing for Liberty, Missouri.<sup>26</sup> He took the season's returns of furs with him, leaving the post with an unspecified underling.<sup>27</sup> A few days later he arrived at Fort Clark I, where he drew a draft in his favor for \$625 on April 10, after which he and his colleague William Tilton traveled downriver together with the season's returns of both forts. Kipp had made it a short trip, for he was back upriver at the Mandan village when he and Jacob Halsey again traveled down to meet with Daniel Lamont, passing Jean Pierre Cabanné on September 7 at "Rocher bel Cour."<sup>28</sup> Not long after he left Fort Floyd, the post became an Upper Missouri Outfit post following the company's merger with the American Fur Company on July 9, 1827.

Kenneth McKenzie arrived at Fort Tecumseh in November 1827 as the agent of the new outfit, having traveled overland from Fort Washington. Honoré Picotte was then the director of Fort Tecumseh. When William Laidlaw arrived on the Missouri River shortly thereafter, he took over the management of Fort Tecumseh from Picotte. McKenzie then ordered Picotte to go upriver to manage Fort Floyd. When Picotte returned to St. Louis in the spring of 1829, Jacob Halsey replaced him for a brief time, after which McKenzie sent Francis A. Chardon to the fort to replace Halsey. Chardon remained there until at least May 1830. Sometime later the post was abandoned and it burned.

We know almost nothing of what took place at Fort Floyd during the approximately four years it was in operation, although we know the

names of its four directors. Sometime in the fall of 1828, Hugh Glass arrived at the post, having left the mountain men's rendezvous at Bear Lake. He traveled to the fort (as Fort Union was not yet under construction) in an attempt to arrange a trading deal with the Upper Missouri Outfit on behalf of the men in the mountains.<sup>29</sup> The deal was obviously unsuccessful, for Kenneth McKenzie, the only member of the firm who could have consummated a deal with him, was still downriver. McKenzie spent a little time at Fort Floyd in early February 1829, and in October when he was on his way upriver to take charge of Fort Union, he waited for the summer boat for an unspecified time; no other visitors to Fort Floyd are recorded.<sup>30</sup>

The principal interaction between the post's traders and their wives would have been with the Assiniboinés, and perhaps with other tribes that came to trade. Nonetheless, the artifacts recovered from its ruins illuminate—however faintly—the lives of the men and women who lived there. Such details are wholly lacking in the brief references to Fort Floyd. Happily, the post's remaining moveable effects and its ground plan, recovered more than half a century ago from its ruins, are now on record for the use of historians of the fur trade on the Upper Missouri.

With the establishment of Fort Union in late 1828, the importance of Fort Floyd diminished. It was abandoned and burned sometime in the spring of 1830, perhaps purposefully by Chardon to prevent the fort from being used by a competing company. There was no trace of furniture or other substantial equipment in its ruins, for the refuse present was essentially what one would expect to find following an orderly departure.

William Hunt points out that the White Earth was a satisfactory locale for trading with the Canoe band of the Assiniboinés, for the company established various wintering posts there until at least the early 1850s.<sup>31</sup> John Palliser spent some time in 1848 "at the White Earth River post, where I





Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site today, near Williston, ND. The National Park Service erected the replica fort following extensive excavations. The bourgeois house now houses the park headquarters and a museum devoted to the fur trade there.

Brian R. Austin, SHSND

availed myself of Owen Mackenzie's hospitable welcome, and remained in his log-house with another trader of the American Fur Company."<sup>32</sup> A less specific reference is Edwin Denig's statement that the Canoe Indians "are usually found at that time [in winter] either on White Earth River or above that point where trading houses are established."<sup>33</sup> The river's mouth was still recognized as a

profitable site for trading as late as 1883, for Edward S. Hall and his wife, Celeste Malnourie, established a post on its west bank for trade with the Assiniboines and Hidatsas that remained in operation until about 1895.<sup>34</sup>

We've seen that the names of Fort Floyd and Fort Union have long been associated, but the nature

of that association has now changed with the information provided in Prince Maximilian's field journals.<sup>35</sup>

## FORT UNION'S ARCHITECT

Fort Floyd having been successfully dismissed as the physical onsite forerunner of Fort Union leads us to the question: Who actually built Fort Union? There is no documentation that even hints as to who did so. Beginning in 1906, when Hiram Chittenden published his *History of the American Fur Trade of the Far West*, suspicion began to rest on James Kipp, who had built most of the posts for the Columbia Fur Company and the Upper Missouri Outfit. But Kipp was not the builder, so who was its architect?

It was perhaps mid-August 1828 when McKenzie arrived back upriver, reaching the Mandan post, Fort Clark I. In mid-September, he sent a group of men in the keelboat *Otter* from the Mandan post to the mouth of the Yellowstone River, where they began constructing Fort Union. On October 2, he wrote to Pierre Chouteau Jr. from the Vermillion River informing him of its construction.<sup>36</sup> On the day after Christmas he also wrote Chouteau that "the *Otter* arrived at the Yellowstone in sufficient time to build a fort and have all necessary preparations made for security." This letter is the basis for Chittenden's belief that the fort's initial construction began around October 1, 1828.<sup>37</sup> By February 25, 1829, McKenzie had returned to Fort Tecumseh.<sup>38</sup> We know from this correspondence that McKenzie visited Fort Union for the first time in late 1829, for he was downriver for all of 1828, so he could not have directed the construction of the "Yellow Stone Post."<sup>39</sup>

During the same time, James Kipp remained with the Mandans at Fort Clark I, removing him from the responsibility for building Fort Union. Honoré Picotte was at Fort Floyd from 1827 until departing for St. Louis in the spring of 1829. In the earliest surviving letter from the newly established Fort Union, dated May 5, 1830, McKenzie wrote that "Mr. Chardon [was] at Fort Floyd," so there is the strong possibility that Francis A. Chardon supervised the construction of the "Yellow

Stone Post” in the fall of 1828 before returning to Fort Floyd. Like James Kipp, Chardon came to be known as a fort builder.<sup>40</sup> None of the other principal figures of the company with the necessary skills were that far up the Missouri River, nor had any of them the experience to build such an elaborate post. Fort Union remained the most important post in the region until the fur trade was over.

The intertwined histories of Forts Floyd and Union have very different

endings. If anything remains of Fort Floyd, it lies on the bottom or on the shores of Lake Sakakawea with no monument to commemorate it. The National Park Service, however, has constructed a faithful replica of Fort Union on its original foundations. The Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site is visited annually by thousands of visitors and provides a vivid reminder of a once-thriving enterprise on the northern plains.



Thimble. SHSND 12621.24 a



Arrowhead. SHSND 12621.29

The artifacts recovered from the ruins of Fort Floyd help illuminate the lives of the men and women who lived there between 1826 and 1830.



Various pipes. SHSND 12621



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he is the author of *Steamboats of the Fort Union Fur Trade* (Fort Union Association, 1999) and editor of *The Original Journals of Charles Larpenteur* (Museum of the Fur Trade, 2007), in addition to penning multiple articles on the Upper Missouri fur trade.

## ENDNOTES

1. Hiram Martin Chittenden, *A History of The American Fur Trade of the Far West*, 2 vols. (New York: F. P. Harper, 1902; Stanford, Calif.: Academic Reprints, 1945), 1:327–28, 2:958. Citations refer to the Academic Reprints edition.
2. This article updates an earlier one in this journal by Alan R. Woolworth and W. Raymond Wood, “Excavations at Kipp’s Post,” *North Dakota History* 29, no. 3 (Summer 1962): 237–51.
3. Thad. C. Hecker, undated notes and correspondence 1930s–1950s, Records of Excavations and Surveys, 30226:10, State Historical Society of North Dakota, State Archives, Bismarck.
4. George F. Will and Thad. C. Hecker, “The Upper Missouri River Valley Aboriginal Culture in North Dakota,” *North Dakota Historical Quarterly* 9, nos. 1 & 2 (Winter 1944): 84.
5. G. Hubert Smith’s field notes for the site are in the collections of the Smithsonian Institution’s River Basin Surveys, housed in the National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Museum Support Center, College Park, Maryland.
6. Fort Berthold is fully described in G. Hubert Smith, “Like-a-Fishhook Village and Fort Berthold, Garrison Reservoir, North Dakota,” *National Park Service Anthropological Papers* 2 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1972).
7. W. Raymond Wood, William J. Hunt Jr., and Randy H. Williams, *Fort Clark and Its Indian Neighbors: A Trading Post on the Upper Missouri* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2011), 55–58.
8. This assertion is based on the statement that “the chief of the band of Rocks had desired him to build” there, in Charles Larpenteur, *Forty Years a Fur Trader on the Upper Missouri: The Personal Narrative of Charles Larpenteur*, ed. Elliott Coues, 2 vols. (New York: Francis P. Harper, 1898), 1:108. This statement is not in Larpenteur’s original journal; see Charles Larpenteur, *The Original Journals of Charles Larpenteur: My Travels to the Rocky Mountains Between 1833 and 1872*, ed. Michael M. Casler (Chadron: Museum Association of the American Frontier, 2007). Coues apparently drew on other fur trade sources when he edited Larpenteur’s journal, for there are numerous items in the book that do not appear in those journals.
9. William J. Hunt Jr., “Fort Floyd: An Enigmatic Nineteenth-Century Trading Post.” *North Dakota History* 61, no. 3 (Summer 1994): 16.
10. Edwin Thompson Denig, *The Assiniboine*, ed. J. N. B. Hewitt (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000), 176–81.
11. See C. W. Hoffman, “The Process of Tanning Skins by the Indians,” *North Dakota Historical Society Collections*, vol. 1 (1906), 455–56.
12. George Bird Grinnell, *The Cheyenne Indians: Their History and Ways of Life*, 2 vols. (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1962), 1:51, 1:248.
13. “Inventory of Stock Remaining on Hand at Fort Floyd 29 April 1829,” Chouteau-Maffitt Collection, A0274-90, Missouri History Museum (hereafter MHM), St. Louis.
14. Hunt, “Fort Floyd,” 7–20. See also William J. Hunt Jr., “At the Yellowstone . . . to Build a Fort: Fort Union Trading Post, 1828–1833,” in *Fort Union Fur Trade Symposium Proceedings* (Williston, ND: Friends of Fort Union, 1994), 7–23. Both articles proved invaluable in preparing this paper.
15. Chittenden, *Fur Trade*, 1:327–28, 2:958.
16. Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., “Travels in the Interior of North America in the Years 1832, 1833, and 1834,” by Prince Maximilian of Wied, trans. H. Lloyd, in *Early Western Travels, 1748–1846*, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites, 32 vols. (Cleveland: Arthur P. Clark, 1905), 23:228.
17. Thwaites, *Travels* 23:214.
18. *Ibid.*, 22:369; Prince Maximilian of Wied, *Reise in das Innere Nord-America in den Jahren 1832, 1833, und 1834*, 2 vols. and an atlas (Koblenz, Germany: J. Hölscher, 1839–41).
19. W. Raymond Wood, “James Kipp: Upper Missouri River Fur Trader and Missouri Farmer,” *North Dakota History* 77, nos. 1 & 2: 4.
20. Maximilian, *Reise*, 2:217–18.
21. Larpenteur, *Forty Years*, 1:108.
22. Larpenteur, *Original Journals*.
23. This misinformation was repeated in Washington Matthews, “Medical History of Post, Fort Buford, Dakota, from July 1868 to April 1873,” Washington Matthews Papers, vol. 9, National Archives: Military Records, Register New No. 198:5, Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian, Santa Fe.
24. These details are in Michael M. Casler and W. Raymond Wood, “The Rise and Fall of the Columbia Fur Company: Rethinking the Fur Trade on the Northern Great Plains,” ms. in preparation, 2015. Two possibilities exist for the origin of the fort’s name: it may have been named after Sergeant Charles Floyd of the Lewis and Clark Expedition or for Charles’s cousin, Virginia Congressman John Floyd.
25. Wood et al., *Fort Clark*, 72–76.
26. Maximilian, *Reise*, 3:120; Wood et al., *Fort Clark*, 56.
27. Maximilian, *Reise*, 3:120. Maximilian also states that Kipp did not return to the Upper Missouri until the spring of 1828.
28. Jim Hardee, “An 1824–1825 Columbia Fur Company Ledger,” *The Rocky Mountain Fur Trade Journal* 5 (2011): 118–49, contains the full text of the 1824–25 ledger from “Equipment Intended for the Upper Missouri for the Winter of 1827–28,” Fur Trade Collections, MHM; Cabanné to Chouteau, 8 September 1827, Fur Trade Collections, AMF #527, MHM. “Rocher bel Cour” is on the Lower Missouri but cannot be identified.
29. McKenzie to Chouteau, Fort Tecumseh, 15 March 1829, in Chittenden, *Fur Trade*, 959; the letter is now lost. The Arikaras killed Hugh Glass after he left Fort Cass in the winter of 1832–33. See Aubrey L. Haines, “Hugh Glass,” in *The Mountain Men and the Fur Trade of the Far West*, ed. Leroy R. Hafen, 10 vols. (Glendale, Calif.: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1968), 6:168–69.
30. Chittenden, *Fur Trade*, 1:330. The letter quoted by Chittenden has been lost, *ibid.*, 2:933. William Laidlaw to Pierre Chouteau Jr., Fort Tecumseh, 26 October 1829, E. V. Papin Collection, AMF #261, MHM.
31. Hunt, “Fort Floyd,” 18.
32. John Palliser, *Solitary Rambles and Adventures of a Hunter on the Prairies* (Edmonton: M. G. Hurtig, 1969), 165. Owen Mackenzie was the son of Kenneth McKenzie and a Crow woman.
33. Edwin Thompson Denig, *Five Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri*, ed. John C. Ewers (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), 81.
34. Lutie T. Breeling, untitled article in the *Mountrail County Promoter* (Stanley, ND), January 14, 1954.
35. Hunt, “Fort Floyd” and “At the Yellowstone.”
36. McKenzie to Chouteau, Vermillion River, 2 October 1828, cited in Chittenden, *Fur Trade*, 2:958.
37. McKenzie to Chouteau, Fort Tecumseh, 26 December 1828, letter (lost) cited in Chittenden, *Fur Trade*, 2:958.
38. McKenzie to Chouteau, Fort Tecumseh, 15 March 1829, letter (lost) cited by Chittenden, *Fur Trade*, 2:959.
39. Laidlaw to Chouteau, Fort Tecumseh, 13 August 1829, E. V. Papin Collection, AMF #206, MHM.
40. Chardon built Fort Jackson (1833–34) at the mouth of the Milk River; Fort Chardon (1844–45) at the mouth of the Judith River; and Fort Berthold I (1845–62), initially named Fort James after its co-founder, James Kipp.