NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

ARTHUR JOHNSTON HIS BOOK

In going over the library in the estate of James E. Richmond of Meadville, Pennsylvania, in February, 1943, the executrix, Miss Gail Richmond, found an old manuscript marked "Arthur Johnston his Book." This manuscript was inside the cover of a scrapbook which had belonged to his mother, Maria Powers Shryock Richmond, wife of the Hon. Hiram Lawton Richmond, who had collected several thousand volumes. It proved to be the record of a journey made by Johnston and others with six boatloads of lumber from Warren, Pennsylvania, to New Orleans, beginning in the winter of 1809-10. Unfortunately a number of the pages, which doubtless included references to Pittsburgh, were missing, and the log ended with the arrival of the party at a point a little below Natchez, but enough was left to warrant the preservation and publication of the diary, particularly in view of the paucity of similar records of traffic on the Allegheny River in those days.

The Hon. John E. Reynolds of Meadville, who has presented a microfilm copy of this journal to the Crawford County Historical Society, and a typewritten copy to the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, writes that nothing further has been learned about Johnston or his descendants, but that descendants of several other members of the crew are still to be found in or near Warren. "The boats," he says, "were evidently built on Conewango Creek above Warren and loaded at the mills at Warren." As Meadville sidelights he adds that "numerous early citizens of Meadville took boatloads of materials down the river for sale," and that "in 1810 when Dr. Thomas R. Kennedy built the first bridge across French Creek at Mercer Street, Meadville, lumber for the siding was sawed at his mill on Conewango Creek, rafted down the Allegheny River to Franklin, and from there taken up French Creek to Meadville by keelboat."
In the following rendition of the journal the original has been followed as closely as possible except that the line-breaks on its narrow pages have been disregarded.

Sunday 10th December 1809
Started with the boats from the mill for Orleans & Grounded 3 of them Got off one same day

Monday 11th Do
Brought off the other 2 & Loaded in the boards

Tuesday 12th
Set off from Warren with Jn° King, Erastus Gilson Jn° Neible George Morrison & myself for [Glernimin?] & about 1 Oclock Gilson & Neible grounded their boat at Tidiout the rest of us landed

Wednesday 13th
Morrison King & myself set off & lost them & Morrison grounded at Hemlock Island King & myself run 2½ miles below Hickry Town & landed at M' Davisons—at Master Davisons care taker

Thursday 14th
King & Theodore Scouten went back and got off Morrison

Friday 15th
I went back with 6 hans For Gilson & Neible & they got off & landed just below where they grounded

Saturday 16th
We cast off with the 2 boats & the raft which they had taken out to get to Davisons. I got over with the raft & Neible with his boat but Gilson grounded at the Whiteoak Bottoms.

Sunday 17th
Lay at Davison's

Monday 18th
Placed our boat in harbour the water being too Low to proceed and the weather unfavorable.

Tuesday 19th Dec.
Left the boats and set off for the Mills with 7 hans

Wednesday 20th
Arrived at the mills with the hans
5th of January 1810
The Canawang rose & we Loaded the 6th boat and run it to Warren Left the Mills about sunset.

Saturday 6th
Left Warren and arrived at the other 5 boats which Lay in harbor at M' Davisons within 3 miles of Hickry Town
Sunday 7th  
Set off with the 6 boats in Company Landed at Oil Creek

Monday 8th  
Set off and Landed in Millers Eddy

Tuesday 9th  
Landed within 3 miles of Freeport

[Pages 4 to 11 missing.]

Tuesday 20th February 1810
lay by the wind not permitting us to sail

Wednesday 21st
The wind abated & we set out by day break the day was pleasant & sailed with much pleasure passed Big Bone lick Creek & barr about 1 o'clock this lick is in Kentucky & there has been bones of most enormous size found there a Curious tradition of which by the Indians is handed down by their forefathers and delivered by a principal Chief of the Delaware Tribe to the Governor of Virginia during the American Revolution VIS That in ancient times a herd of these tremendous animals came to the Big Bone licks and began a universal destruction of the dear & bear Elks Buffaloes & other animals which had been Created for the use of Indians That the great Man above looking down and seeing this, was so enraged descended his lightening on Earth amongst them being seated on a neighbouring mountain on a rock of which his seat & the print of his feet are still to be seen—& the great bolts which he hurled amongst them made a final slaughter Except the big bull who presenting his forehead to the shafts, shook them off as they fell; but missing one at length, it wounded him in the side Whereon springing round he bounded over the Ohio, over the Wabash the Illinois and finally over the great lakes; where he is living at this day. We Continued running all night.

Thursday 22d February 1810
This morning being pleasant & the water rising rapidly we sailed on with pleasure. the wind rose about 2 o'clock & we landed 12 miles above the falls of Ohio & lay by all night.

Friday 23d
Set off at 5 o'clock in the morning. Landed at the fall about 9 o'clock—NB We then Engaged M' Nelson the pilot & set off to run the falls with the Comodores boat both McCommon & myself steering run on untill we came oposite the head of Barthoud* mill race where the boat began to rub very hard it then lost its headway we ware then drew on to the rocks where we stuck fast I then went a shore the water rose fast we rested easy with the Expectation of her going off very soon, return to the other boats we had but just arived when Dearmond
hove in sight with his boat which we left on the barr we assisted him to land. I then set off with the skiff through the falls to the boat with Dearmond, Scouten, Megrady. When we boarded her there was but the pilot & the Commodore aboard, the boat was leaking fast & would in all probability sunk had we not arrived at the time. Every man was then employed some pumping & stoping the leak which was accomplished very soon. she then began to move and went off instantly; passed through & landed she received very little damage.

Saturday 24th
We Commenced running & took the remaining five through safe we then set off about dusk this evening & Continued on all night.

Sunday 25th February 1810
We being all in Company sailed very cheerful the wind rose & we landed about 5 oclock in the evening at the head of flint Island

Monday 26th
We set out at 1 oclock in the morning but the wind rose at daybreak which caused us to land. Set of at 9 oclock on at night

Tuesday 27th
Continued on all day and all night.

Wednesday 28th
Continued on until evening landed lest we should come to hurricane Island in the night which is very dangerous. set out again at 9 oclock same night.

Thursday 1st of March
We Continued on though the wind was against us passed the head of hurricane Island about 2 oclock the wind increased and we landed on it

Friday 2d of March 1810
put out the wind still continued which gave us much labour to navigate our craft. landed 10 miles above the mouth of Cumberlan'd River at the head of Stewarts Island on the Indiana shore.
NB on Thursday night there fell a snow 2 inches deep

Saturday 3d
Set off the wind blew heavy all day passed the mouth of the Tenesee River about 12 or 1 oclock Passed Fort Massack 25 minutes after 3 in the afternoon landed about 8 miles below on the Indiana shore

Sunday 4th
Put off a few minutes after 12 at night with the Intintion to run into the Mississippi Early in the morning but the wind rose & beat to shore so heavy that caused us to land on Cash Island. Set off about 2 hours after the wind being a little abated and landed in sight of the Mississippi—
Monday 5th
Lay at the mouth of the Ohio the wind being too high to enter that great Noble stream (Mississippi)

Tuesday 6th March 1810
Lay by on account of the wind

Wednesday 7th
Put out and entered the Mississippi at 1 oclock P. M the wind being somewhat abated landed in sight of the Iron banks on the left shore

Thursday 8th
lay by the river being boisterous the wind high & the Ice run thick which came from the Missouri

Friday 9 March
Put out passed the Iron Banks & Chalk banks 6 miles below landed on the right shore

Saturday 10th
put out run a few miles & landed on account the wind

Sunday 11th
Set off the wind rose and we landed at New Madrid a small Town on the right bank of the Mississippi in upper Louisiana Teretory laid out by Co' George Morgan formerly of New Jersey now of Washington Penn

Monday & Tuesday 12 & 13
Lay by there being a severe storm & the waves run remarkable high

Wednesday 14th March 1810
Set off at 2 oclock P.M and run about 10 or 12 miles and landed on sand barr at the right shore—

Thursday 15th
Set out the morning clear and calm, this was the first pleasant day & free from wind we had since we entered this river landed, 3/4 of a mile above the mouth of bayo river on the right shore

Friday 16th
Set out this morning being Cloudy but warm the weather sensibly chang'd, it was cool & windy which was very disagreeable on the water from the 17th of February untill 16th of the Inst. we ware floating along at ease & discovered sand barr the day being and smoaky we were deceived in the draught of the water & to our great mortification grounded on it we Instantly made every exertion possible to get off but in vain we lay on it all night

Saturday 17th
Our hans all Collected with courage great began to lighten the boats & took out a few boards & got off Loaded & ready to start next morning
Sunday 18\textsuperscript{th} March 1810

We all set sail together again there came on a storm of wind and rain and we landed on the right shore just below the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Chickasaw Bluffs

Monday 19\textsuperscript{th}

Set off passed Island N° 35 on the left on which is a good landing entered the Devils race ground which is on the right of 1\textsuperscript{st} No 36 passed through safe. and passed the Devils elbow which is to the right of Is\textsuperscript{rd} No 38 landed on N° 40 the right side of it.

Tuesday 20\textsuperscript{th}

Put out & passed Fort Pickering which stands on the 4\textsuperscript{th} Chickasaw Bluffs on the left side of the river landed about 4 miles below on the left shore

Wednesday 21\textsuperscript{st}

Put out and run untill 2 oclock and landed on account of the wind

Thursday 22\textsuperscript{nd}

Set out run about 3 hours and landed, the wind being high put out same day

Friday 23\textsuperscript{rd}

Set out passed the Big Prairie which is on the right side of the river Landed about 6 miles below on the left shore

Saturday 24\textsuperscript{th}

Put out run all day Landed on the left shore

Sunday 25\textsuperscript{th}

Put out passed the mouth of White River which puts in on the right shore and 397 miles below the mouth of the Ohio Landed on the left shore

Monday 26\textsuperscript{th}

Put out passed the mouth of the Arkansas river which is a handsome water & navigable a considerable distance up it at the mouth of which we were Boarded by a number of Osage Indians whose appearance was friendly and peaceable, about 50 miles up this river they have a small village Called the Ozark village. landed at the head of I N° 80 & 81. under a sand bar on the left shore. (this river puts in on the right shore

Tuesday 27\textsuperscript{th}

Set out run to 1 N° 82 a distance of about 14 miles on which we landed about 10 oclock the wind being too high to proceed. About 12 or 1 oclock there rose a Tremendous storm of wind rain thunder & lightening & continued very severe for 4 hours it then abated

Wednesday 28\textsuperscript{th}

This morning being very foggy & the weather unsettled we did not set out untill 8 oclock run 30 miles and landed at the foot of 1 N° 85 on the right shore upper Louisanna Tierarchy
Thursday 29th
The wind being high we did not set out lay by all day

Friday 30th 1810
Put out run all day which has been a rare thing to us passed the grand lake which lies on the right shore 1 mile below No. 89. Landed 1 mile below 1, No. 93 after passing a long tedious bend on the left

Saturday 31st March
Set out very early Landed after running 30 miles and landing three different times lay in sight of 1 No. 98, 99 (this day very boisterous)

Sunday 1st of April 1810
Set out but soon lay too, the wind rose very high.

Monday 2d April
Set out run about 2 miles and Laned on the left shore nearly oposite the head of 1, No. 100 on the left of which is a sand bar that extends toward the left shore therefore do not attempt to land round the point above it set off after laying too about 3 hours passing this Island Dearmond boat & M' Howels being lash'd together were drove into the bend amongst the sawyers where the current beat powerfully they made shore & cable'd, without sustaining any injury. We all landed 2 miles below on the right shore and went to their assistance. When arrived We towed their boat up the shore to get them from amongst the sawyers and run them out safe and landed with the others

Tuesday 3d April 1810
Put off & Laned at the settlement of Palmira where the Comodore detain'd with Simeon Scoutens boat to dispose of some lumber

Wednesday 4th
Set out with the remainder of the boats for Natchez passed the grand Gulph about 1 o'clock Bruin' burgh at 3 which lies on the left shore. landed at one M' Freeland on the right shore 3 miles above the Petit Gulph

Thursday 5th
Set off Passed the Petit gulph and landed on account of the wind oposite the foot of 1 no. 113 on the left shore Within 30 miles of Natchez

Friday 6th April 1810
Put out early passed Coals Creek which puts in on the left shore, and arrived at the City of Natchez about 2 o'clock, where a young man the name of Johnathan Hunting was taken to the widow smiths on the bank being ill with an inflamatory fever for 8 or 9 days, a Physician was procured to attend him but on his first visit declared his disorder mortal, he expired the next day between 12 & 1 o'clock, though being without relations he was well taken care of by our boats crew and decently intered (he being in company with us from sycincinati)
Saturday 7th
lay in harbour which is a very disagreeable one bein polluted with filth of every kind

Sunday 8th April 1810
Set out and passed Ellis' Cliffs which is on the left shore & has a beautiful apearance landed at the 1st 116 & 117 on the left shore