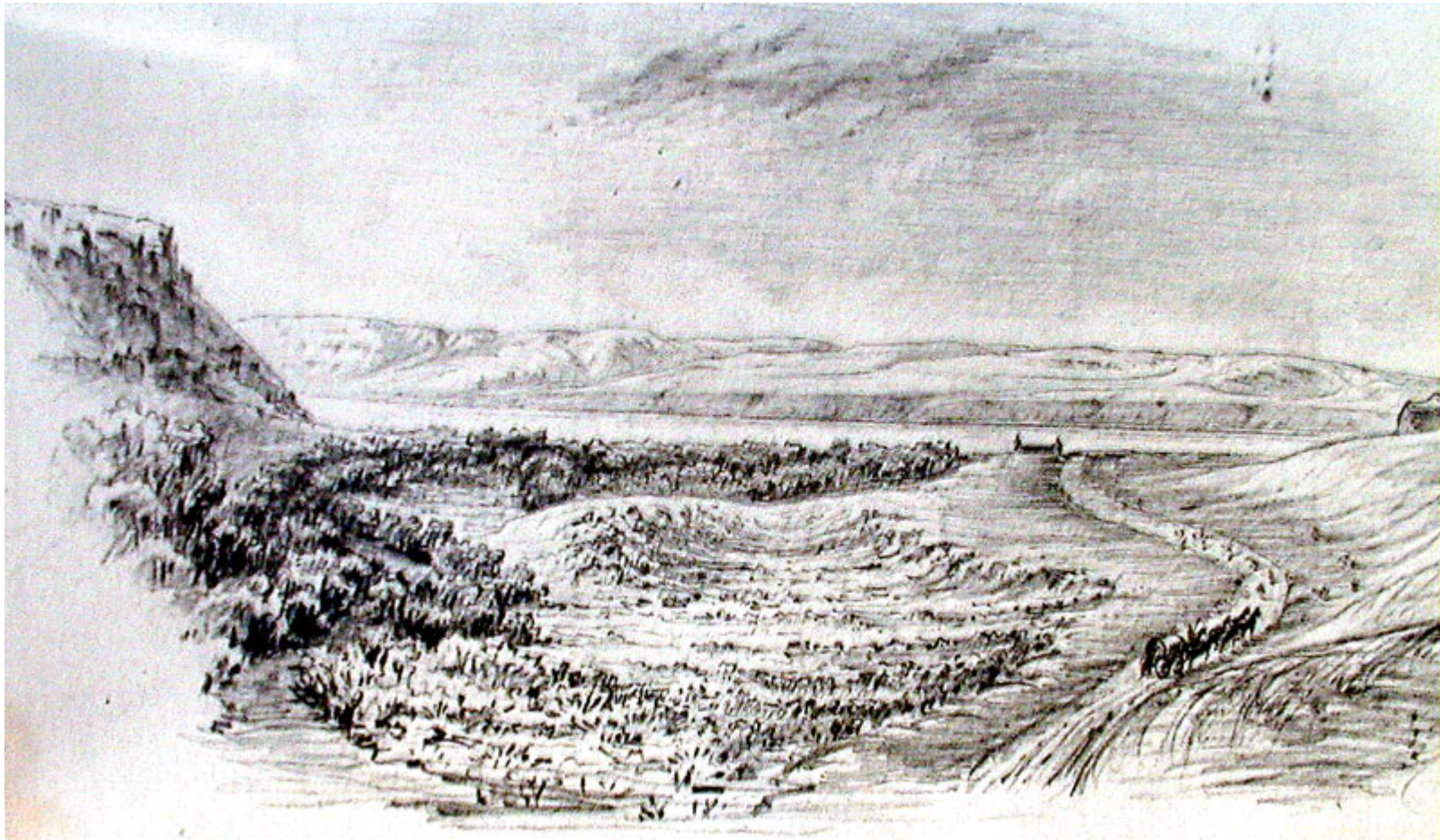


Snake River to SPOKANE VALLEY

Through Scablands and Battle Grounds



Snake River at the Mouth of Tucannon, Fort Taylor, 1858, Gustav Sohon

On July 4, 1859 Lt. Mullan's party crossed the Snake River at the mouth of the Tucannon River. Colonel George Wright established Fort Taylor there in 1858 during his punitive expedition north after the defeat of Lt. Col. Steptoe by Spokane, Palouse and Coeur d'Alene Indians. The construction crew crossed the Snake with the loss of one worker who drowned in the swift current, then followed the Palouse River and its tributaries north to the Spokane plains.

The Road ran between frequent basalt outcroppings as well as across great rolling prairies. Passing through the area of the Steptoe battlefield, it skirted to the north of the pyramid-shaped hill now known as Steptoe Butte.

To reach the east side of Lake Coeur d'Alene, in 1859 Mullan travelled east from the Spokane plains to build south of the lake and through the St. Joseph valley. He later abandoned that road in favor of a route following the Spokane River north of the lake. The eventual northern route passed along Hangman's Creek and by Horse Slaughter Camp where Col. Wright had punished tribesmen in his effort to end the Coeur d'Alene War. When Mullan encountered the Coeur d'Alenes, he carefully explained his mission and successfully sought and received assurances of friendly relations.