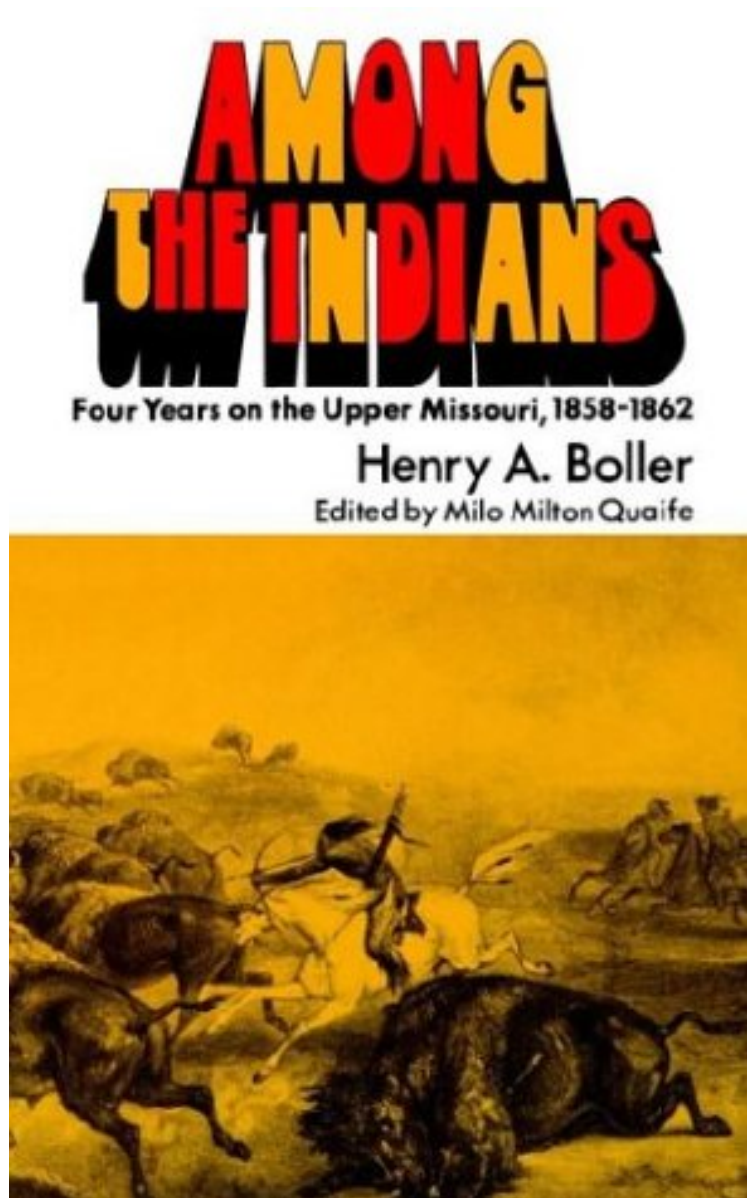


(Free and download) Among the Indians: Four Years on the Upper Missouri, 1858-1862

## Among the Indians: Four Years on the Upper Missouri, 1858-1862

Henry A. Boller

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**Henry A. Boller : Among the Indians: Four Years on the Upper Missouri, 1858-1862** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Among the Indians: Four Years on the Upper Missouri, 1858-1862:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good detail, indigestible style By Earnest Sludge This guy's high-handed, flowery style was often very off-putting. It was difficult to relate to any of the people described, the author

included. As I turned many of the pages I found myself asking, "So what? Who cares?" The author seems at pains to prove his erudition and classiness, which is bad, of course. You read in the introduction that Charles Larpenteur, an associate of Boller's who published a book of his own, considered Boller a "Blatherskite" (blabbermouth), and you can see why here. Of course, Larpenteur had problems with aiming too high in his own life and wound up being perpetually frustrated and bitter, but at least he was a fairly down to earth guy. For example, Boller uses the French word "eclat" a number of times: I don't really know what this word means and I don't want to. Boller's attitude toward the Indians he lived and traded with is often quite rank, patronizing and contemptuous. Boller mentions Washington Irving's "Captain Bonneville" book at one point and it seems clear that Boller was aiming for a similar smarmy, 19th-century Sunday-magazine style here, too. Unfortunately, he largely succeeds. There are quite a few of books about 19th century fur trading, many of which I have read, and I would recommend the interested reader to read any one of them in preference to this.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Real life

By Sandra Ballard

This is a well-respected, authoritative account of Indian life in the Upper Missouri River region in the mid-1800's. This is what is now the Ft. Berthold Indian Reservation in North Dakota. Sensing the "call of the wild" since childhood, Henry Boller left the U of PA in his senior year and traveled west to work in the fur trade. From his detailed notes, he has given us a picture of real life with a primitive people...told very straightforward...not necessarily for the faint-hearted. Everyday activities, vivid character sketches, and awesome descriptions of nature in her pristine form ("It is late, quite late, yet so pure is the atmosphere that one is still able to read by the light of the stars glittering in the calm, clear sky.") are contrasted with the stark, many times ugly, realities of man against nature, against his fellow man and against himself. It was a time when the old and the young sometimes got in the way and were left to die...maybe a sobering reality check for those of our day.

Although the American Fur Company dominated the Upper Missouri fur trade during the middle decades of the nineteenth century, a number of small, independent firms (known as the "Opposition") flourished briefly at this time. From 1858 until 1862, a young Philadelphian, Henry A. Boller, was one of the Opposition traders, serving first as clerk in Clark, Primeau and Company and then as a partner in Larpenteur, Smith and Company. His account of these years, based on his journals, presents a remarkably realistic picture of the daily life of the Indian as he existed more than a century ago and is recognized as the "most authoritative narrative of fur-trading among the plains Indians of the Upper Missouri, for the period" (U.S.iana). When it appeared in 1868, Boller's book was subtitled "Eight Years in the Far West, 1858-1866, Embracing Sketches of Montana and Salt Lake," and included descriptions of a return visit to Fort Berthold, the newly discovered Montana gold fields, and the Mormon capital. These concluding chapters are omitted in the present volume.