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Missouri River Convocation

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Missouri River Convocation

*Where earth told Navajo return to that sacred place
you come from*

The many-way blessings of a great
and good land.

MISSOURI RIVER CONVOCATION

God gave us the earth, and the fullness thereof . . .
I do not believe in donating to these indolent savages
the best portion of my territory,
and I do not believe in placing Indians
on an equality between the white man as landholder.

Edward Moody McCook, 1870,
Fifth Territorial Governor of Colorado

Certain moments in history are like a man waking at night
and counting the strokes wrong when he hears a clock strike.

Bernard DeVoto, *Across the Wide Missouri*

If scripture of the gift outright is written in stone
for all to see and honor in the law of nations
you may start with Lewis and Clark
at the mouth of the Missouri

Or at the source
with Arapaho Arikara Assiniboine Blackfoot
Cheyenne Crow Gros Ventre Iowa Mandan
Omaha Otoe Pawnee Sioux Shoshone

Up in Yellowstone country or the Medicine Bow
where snowmelt pools spill their jewels
into the heart of the continent
and every creature's

Heartbeat depends upon the rise
and fall of the river and all its tributaries
plover tern and sturgeon
we among them

To whom a greater sovereignty
the art of healing
is given.