

## TEACHER CYRUS SHEPHERD DIES

Frail schoolteacher Cyrus Shepherd contracted an infection of the leg [Autumn 1839] while teaching at the Indian Mission Manual Labor Training School at Champoeg when the condition worsened it was decided scar-faced Dr. William Bailey and Dr. Elijah White would amputate the limb despite the effort, Cyrus Shepherd died -- January 1, 1840 this amputation also marked Dr. Elijah White's last major work at the mission

## FARMING EXPANDS IN OREGON

(Since the [1820s] American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions had provided missionaries to the Sandwich [Hawaiian Islands] Kanakas [Hawaiians] had provided valuable supply of labor for the missionaries Kanakas held qualities that were greatly admired and appreciated they were willing to work hard, they were willing to accept low pay for their labor Kanakas' contact with Oregon missionaries had been equally positive there were jobs the Indians were not interested in performing, Kanakas took up the slack Kanakas did construction work for the Methodist missionaries of Oregon and they also worked on mission farms and in the kitchens Dr. Marcus and Narcissa Whitman, Rev. Henry and Eliza Spalding and Rev. Asa and Sara Smith all employed Kanaka laborers they praised the Islanders' energy and loyalty Dr. Whitman at Waiilatpu Mission and Rev. Henry Spalding at Lapwai Mission were early pioneers in the practice of diversified farming both families grew vegetable gardens Kanakas, however, did not readily adapt to their adopted culture for three reasons:

- they were small in number,
- most were single men determined eventually to return to their homeland,
- they suffered from racial prejudice directed toward them by white residents

Solomon H. Smith, ex-school teacher, took up land on the Clatsop Plains at the mouth of the Columbia River where he operated a profitable dairy farm he drove first herd of cattle from the Grande Ronde area to the Pacific Northwest coast

## DR. MARCUS AND NARCISSA WHITMAN EXPAND THEIR WAILLATPU MISSION

Dr. Whitman's original cabin, called the mansion house, was replaced by a T-shaped building

which served as a combination Indian school, hospital, church and free hotel  
Farming progress was well underway at the Waiilatpu station

aided by several Kanakas (Hawaiians) and a succession of eccentric helpers  
stranded adventurers, Indians and a Negro trapper

Dr. Whitman had developed fields for grain and potatoes, he had fenced pastures,  
and had constructed a sawmill, a shop and a buttery

Dr. Whitman even began an irrigation project -- winter [1839]-1840

he was probably the first white to divert water from streams for irrigation  
Indians were impressed with the magic that water worked on the land

Dr. Whitman added animal husbandry to his skills -- he acquired horses, cattle and pigs  
he had a handful of sheep imported from the Hawaii Islands

he taught the Indians how to be shepherds

despite losses of animals to severe cold, dogs, coyotes, Indian raids,  
and killing of sheep for food his herd continued to grow

until he had a flock of eighty sheep by 1840

#### HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY OPERATES ITS BUSINESS FROM VARIOUS TYPES OF POSTS

Trading posts were necessary not only as depots for collection, storage and communication

but also to provide transportation links and supply centers for Hudson's Bay Company trappers

There were upwards of twenty trading posts in Columbia District by 1840

these were composed of both forts and houses:

- “forts” had defenses such as a stockade and cannon,
- “houses” were log cabin trading locations where furs were taken in,
- “posts” might be either forts or houses

Hudson's Bay Company cattle numbered 3,000 and over 100 milk cows were pastured

accompanied by 2,500 sheep and 300 brood mares assured pack horses and riding horses alike

#### HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY OPENS FORT COLVILLE

Hudson's Bay Company replaced Fort Spokane which was ordered closed

by Governor-in-Chief George Simpson because it was too far from the Columbia River  
and was too expensive to maintain -- 1840

New post was built and named in honor of Andrew Colville of the English Board of Directors

Fort Colville was second only to Fort Vancouver as trading and agricultural center

Archibald McDonald served as the Factor in Charge

## HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY EXPANDS ITS EMPIRE

After a two year leave of absence taken in England [1838-1839]

Hudson's Bay Company's Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin returned to Fort Vancouver

While on furlough Dr. McLoughlin, had proposed to the company directors in London that a trading post be built along San Francisco Bay

he argued that such a post:

- would facilitate the supplying of the company's California trapping brigades;
- would be useful in developing markets for Columbia District lumber, wheat and salmon;
- would keep the Puget Sound Agricultural Company supplied with California sheep and cattle

Although Governor-in-Chief George Simpson objected vehemently to the idea

of establishing a purely mercantile post on foreign soil, London directors agreed with McLoughlin Chief Factor was given free rein to investigate further and then, if he felt justified, to go ahead with building the California fort

## DISCORD AMONG AMERICAN BOARD MISSIONARIES

Seeds of discord had been planted by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions when they selected people of incompatible temperament

all but Rev. Henry Spalding wrote letters of complaint

to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in Boston

ironically, it was Spalding at whom most of the ill-natured remarks were leveled:

- Asa Smith wrote that Rev. Henry Spalding should be dismissed,
- irritable William H. Gray also had no sympathy for Rev. Spalding,
- even Marcus Whitman believed Spalding was a detriment

Dr. Whitman and Rev. Spalding wanted to postpone American settlement efforts until the Indians were ready to accept the inevitable

Rev. Spalding and Rev. Elkanah Walker thought the Indians needed more time to adjust natives must be protected from the advance of the whites

Dr. Whitman soon became convinced his primary obligation was to the whites he believed there was no hope for the Indian way of life

thus he encouraged white settlement in the region -- even at the expense of the natives

Dr. Whitman believed that if he could help attract decent Christian people to the West, settlement of the area, which he considered inevitable, would be given a proper moral tone

Dr. Marcus Whitman and Rev. Henry Spalding began to argue more openly and bitterly over the proper emphasis in mission work to be placed upon Christianity or civilization and over whether or not the missionaries should assist white immigrants

to settle among the Indians

Rev. Spalding also was jealous of Whitman -- this resentment was felt at Waiilatpu Mission

Narcissa Whitman, in a letter to her father, wrote: **“The man who came with us [Henry Spalding] is one who never ought to have come. My dear husband has suffered more from him in consequence of his wicked jealousy and his great pique towards me than can be known in this world.”**<sup>1</sup>

Future of the work at Waiilatpu and Lapwai missions looked hopeless

#### AMERICAN BOARD MISSIONARIES LEAVE THE FOLD

In addition to the Whitman-Spalding feud there were hot words among the missionaries:

- about the location of the community sawmill,
- about the amount of education an Indian needed before he could be received into church membership,
- about the advisability of shifting Dr. Whitman, the group’s only doctor, to a more central location

Rev. Asa Smith and William H. Gray with their families and bachelor Cornelius Rogers

finally left the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions effort

William H. Gray became an agent for the Methodist missions

he was joined by his wife Mary at Chemeketa Mission near Salem -- 1840

Gray at his new home summarized the population of that day

as two hundred persons

one hundred thirty-seven are Americans and sixty-three are Canadians

Rev. and Mrs. Elkanah Walker and Rev. Cushing and Myra Eells at Tshimakain Mission

continuing their work among the Spokane Indians looked on -- reproving and distressed

#### WILLIAM H. GRAY ESTIMATES THE WHITE POPULATION OF OREGON-- 1840

William H. Gray then residing at Lapwai Mission estimated the population of Oregon

(including all of Oregon, Washington, Idaho and part of Montana) as around two hundred persons

approximately one hundred were Americans

thirty-six American men (twenty-five with Indian wives)

thirteen Methodist ministers and six Congregational ministers

three American physicians

thirteen Protestant lay members

thirty-three American women and thirty-two children

other nationalities were represented by approximately sixty-three French-Canadians

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<sup>1</sup> Oregon pioneer association *Transactions for 1891*, P. 129.

three Jesuit priests (including Father Pierre Jean De Smet) and one English physician

#### FIRE AT TSHIMAKAIN MISSION

Rev. Cushing and Myra Eells' cabin caught fire -- January 11, 1840

their efforts to save the structure were hampered by deep snow and temperatures below -10°

Spokane Indians helped drag out household and religious goods which were in boxes

but Eells lost nearly all their personal property including books, a clock, bedding and saddles

When Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Colville Factor Archibald McDonald heard of the tragedy

he sent six men to assist the missionaries -- they made the cabin habitable again

#### MOUNTAIN MEN SETTLE IN THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY

Many Americans in the Northwest were mountain men

these restless, semi-literates were squatters who came into a new area

made a little clearing in the wilderness, built cabins, settled for a while and then moved on rough, tough, and boisterous -- they were also very naïve in the ways of the civilized world

#### AMERICAN SHIP TRADES ON THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Congressman Caleb Cushing took his own Congressional Report [1839] seriously

his family's trading company sent their brig *Maryland* to the Columbia to trade for salmon -- 1840

Captain John H. Couch (pronounced "Kooch") sold goods directly from the *Maryland*

while she was tied up along the Columbia River where the Willamette River enters

he also recognized this location as a possible site for navigation up the Willamette River

(Although the venture failed financially, Captain Couch prevailed on the company owners

to send him back in another ship with goods for trade with the settlers)

#### AMERICAN INTEREST IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST GROWS

Citizens of both the United States and Great Britain authored articles and books

asserting their nation's rights to own the Pacific coast

State Department employee Robert Greenhow expanded his [1836] brief to Congress

and published *The History of Oregon, California, and the Other Territories on the North-West*

*Coast of North America* [1840] in which he argued

Spain had ceded all of his claims in the [1819] Treaty of Florida to the United States

further United States explorers, fur traders and settlers

represented a continuing American presence proving America's claim

Senate Committee on Oregon adopted Greenhow's document as its official report

4,000 copies were immediately reprinted as a book which sold in New York and London  
Greenhow's book greatly increased interest in Oregon

#### INDEPENDENT CONGREGATIONAL MISSIONARIES WANT TO TRAVEL WEST

Congregational ministers Rev. Harvey Clarke and his wife Emeline  
and Rev. Philo B. Littlejohn and his wife Adeline (Sadler) decided to travel west to open a mission  
but their [1839] start was so late they could not overtake the American Fur Company brigade  
traveling to the Fort Bonneville Rendezvous  
they decided to spend the winter at Quincy, Illinois  
where they convinced carpenter Alvin T. Smith and his wife Abigail (Raymond) Smith  
to join in their effort

#### DECLINE OF THE BEAVER TRADE

Over-trapping and changes in fashions from beaver hats to hats made of silk from China  
forecast a grim future for the fur industry  
Pierre Chouteau, head of the American Fur Company,  
knew the company's prosperity did not depend on beaver, but rather on the Indian trade  
Indians killed buffalo and brought the robes to permanent trading posts  
this drew Indians away from the rugged mountains  
to trade in the buffalo robes of the plains  
once the robes were acquired, they were packed to the Missouri River  
and loaded on steam boats to be shipped down river  
at a vast competitive advantage over Hudson's Bay Company  
Pierre Chouteau rightly saw the future of the American Fur Company  
was tied to the fortunes of his trading posts on the upper Missouri River  
in dealing with buffalo robes, not beaver pelts, as the measure of profit  
Chouteau dealt a fatal blow to the beaver trapping industry  
he simply quit backing the supply caravans to the rendezvous after 1840  
(this eventuality killed the rendezvous as an institution)

#### ROBERT "DOC" NEWELL AND JOE MEEK BECOME TIRED OF TRAPPING FOR A LIVING

Brothers-in-law Robert "Doc" Newell and Joe Meek were free trappers  
so called because they were not employees of the large fur trading companies,  
but rather worked on their own deep in the Rocky Mountains  
trapping beaver and other animals for their furs

which they traded for supplies at the yearly rendezvous  
both men were married to Nez Perce Indian sisters

Newell always introduced his wife by the name “Kitty”

they had a four-and-a-half-year-old son, Francis “Frank” Ermatinger Newell

Meek had a two-year old daughter, Helen Mar Meek, by his first wife who had left him

his second wife, whom he called “Virginia” was the sister of Kitty Newell

she had given birth to their son Courtney Walker Meek

Doc Newell and Joe Meek had growing families and they were tiring of the trapping life by 1840

it was becoming clear that the fur trade was finished as a commercial enterprise

Newell and Meek were **“anxious to make themselves permanent homes in some more agreeable country where they might find school and other advantages for their children”**<sup>2</sup>

#### NEWELL-MEEK PARTY STRIKES OUT FROM FORT DAVY CROCKETT

Robert “Doc” Newell and Joe Meek traveled with their families out of Fort Davy Crockett

(located in today’s Northwestern Colorado) -- February 7, 1840

Newell and Meek lead a group of adventurers on their way to the 1840 Rendezvous

included in the party were former American Fur Company trappers John Larison

and William Craig with their native wives

along with trapper/traders Michel Cere, William Doughty, Caleb Wilkens and Joe Walker

with their families

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET DEALS WITH HIS IMPATIENCE

Death of more than one hundred of his parishioners due to alcohol and fighting

at St. Joseph Mission (today’s Council Bluffs, Iowa)

caused the priest to seriously contemplate the lack of success with the Potawatomis

De Smet was impatient to serve the Flathead Indians who had requested the services of a priest

he became anxious about lack of response from his superior, Father Pierre Verhaegen

Father De Smet, a stocky and heavy-set but sympathetic and gracious man of few words,

resolved to travel as quickly as possible to St. Louis

to deliver the distressing information regarding the condition of the Potawatomis

and to request he be given a new assignment among the Flathead Indians

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET JOURNEYS TO ST. LOUIS

Motivated by the request for Catholic missionaries received from the Flathead Indians

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<sup>2</sup> Clinton A. Snowden, *History of Washington*, P. 24.

living in (Northern Idaho and Western Montana)

Father De Smet followed a Flathead Indian, Young Ignace (a.k.a. Francois Xavier) La Mousse, who was referred to by the natives as the “Bravest-of-the-Brave”

Young Ignace had spent the winter months at the Kickapoo mission in Kansas and would serve the Catholic missionary as a companion and guide together they made the necessary arrangements to journey to the Flatheads

De Smet and Young Ignace set out from St. Joseph Mission in Council Bluffs, Iowa on a winter trek through the barren desert country with a single volunteer companion -- February 1840 in a bold plan, they would try to cover the 700 miles to St. Louis on horseback in a few days they manage to reach St. Louis unharmed

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet confronted Father Pierre Verhaegen, his superior, with the depressing facts regarding the deplorable conditions at St. Joseph Mission he also asked for additional provisions to improve conditions there

Father Verhaegen was not willing to give up St. Joseph Mission he ordered De Smet to return to his post at St. Joseph as soon as possible

As De Smet prepared for his return trip to St. Joseph Mission, Father Verhaegen changed his mind Father Christian Hoecken was placed in charge of St. Joseph Mission

#### CHIEF FACTOR DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN WRITES TO HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY

Hudson’s Bay Company Chief Factor was ordered to transfer livestock from Fort Vancouver to the Puget’s Sound Agricultural Company farm at Nisqually

Ignoring these orders, Dr. McLoughlin wrote to Governor George Simpson -- March 1840f he explained that he had not transferred the livestock because driving the cattle north from Fort Vancouver in the winter would have resulted in the loss of many animals he stated he would move them after an inventory at the fort was completed (presumably that spring)

#### THREE INDEPENDENT CONGREGATIONAL MISSIONARY COUPLES TRAVEL WEST

Rev. Harvey and Emeline Clarke, Rev. Philo B. and Adeline Littlejohn and carpenter Alvin T. and Abigail Smith

left Quincy, Illinois for Independence, Missouri -- March 1840 their intended field of labor was in the interior of the West

where they would serve as self-supporting laborers for the Congregational Church

They traveled westward in two wagons

one wagon was shared by the Clarkes and the Little Johns



and the second wagon belonged to Alvin Smith  
Along the way bachelor trappers Henry Black and Pleasant Armstrong  
joined the Congregational missionaries on their journey west

#### BOOK PRINTER OSCAR HALL RETURNS TO THE MISSION IN THE SANDWICH ISLANDS

Oscar Hall had successfully delivered a hand-operated Ramage printing press  
to Dr. Marcus Whitman at Waiilatpu Mission  
Hall decided to return to the American Board of Commissioners' Honolulu Mission  
accompanied by his invalid wife Sarah and three-month-old daughter  
they left Waiilatpu -- March 1840

#### NEWELL-MEEK PARTY FINALLY REACHES FORT HALL

Robert "Doc" Newell and Joe Meek finally arrived at Fort Hall -- March 23, 1840  
these brothers-in-law were accompanied by their families and several traveling companions  
their journey should have taken about ten days but it became an ordeal forty-five days long  
as they were forced to travel through heavy snow

#### FOUR OREGON DRAGOONS REACH FORT HALL

Oregon Dragoons Amos Cook, Francis Fletcher, Joseph Holman, Ralph Kilbourne and James L. Trask  
had spent the winter at Fort Davy Crockett  
(in today's Northwestern Colorado)  
according to Joseph Holman, (dictating from his deathbed in [early spring 1880])  
they traveled together to Fort Hall

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET BEGINS HIS JOURNEY TO THE FLATHEAD INDIANS

Father De Smet and Flathead Indian Young Ignace La Mousse set out from St. Louis  
on a 250-mile journey along the Missouri River  
bound for Westport (today's Kansas City, Missouri) -- March 27, 1840  
beginning their travels by steamboat up the Mississippi River  
they soon switched to horseback as Father De Smet purchased three horses and three mules

#### U.S. SENATE MAKES A PROPOSAL REGARDING OREGON

Senate Select Committee addressing Senator Lewis F. Linn's proposals on annexing Oregon  
reported a plan -- March 31, 1840  
this provided for granting to each male inhabitant of Oregon over eighteen years of age

one thousand acres of land

#### ROBERT "DOC" NEWELL AND JOE MEEK CONTINUE TO THE 1840 RENDEZVOUS

Brothers-in-law Newell and Meek and their families set out from Fort Hall

They were joined by several traveling companions

former Oregon Dragoons Amos Cook, Francis Fletcher, Joseph Holman, Ralph Kilbourne  
and James L. Trask

former American Fur Company trappers John Larison and William Craig and their native wives  
trapper/traders Michel Cere, William Doughty, Caleb Wilkens and Joe Walker

#### PREPARATIONS ARE MADE AT WESTPORT, MISSOURI FOR THE LAST RENDEZVOUS

American Fur Company, for one last time, provided the necessary trade goods for the annual event  
although their main source of income had rapidly shifted away from the beaver trade

Andrew Drips was in Westport, Missouri where he was placed in command

of the final company supply caravan to the 1840 Rendezvous

that was to be held (for the last time) at Fort Bonneville on the Green River

Jim Bridger formed a partnership with Henry Fraeb

together they planned on driving their own supply outfit to the Fort Bonneville Rendezvous

Andrew Drips, with American Fur Company leader Pierre Chouteau's backing,

hired Jim Bridger and Henry Fraeb and their supply train

#### OTHER OREGON DRAGOONS REACH THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY

William Blair had spent the winter at Lapwai Mission

did not arrive at Fort Vancouver from Fort Walla Walla until spring 1840

Robert Shortess had spent the winter with Dr. Marcus and Narcissa Whitman at Waiilatpu Mission

Captain Shortess continued alone down the Columbia River to the Dalles

he made his way over the Cascade Mountains to the Willamette Valley -- spring 1840

#### HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY PLACES OUTPOSTS IN RUSSIAN AMERICA

Hudson's Bay Company Governor-in-Chief George Simpson negotiated with the Russians

he leased the interior of Russian-America (Alaska) for trapping purposes

if the area south of the Columbia River might be lost to the Americans

Simpson would grab a handhold to the north

#### JAMES DOUGLAS HAD BEEN IN THE COLUMBIA DISTRICT FOR A DECADE

James “the Black Scot” Douglas, second in command of Fort Vancouver after Dr. McLoughlin,  
had arrived in the Columbia District at age thirty [in 1830]  
when he was sent to Fort Vancouver as a clerk

Serious, intelligent and conservative, he quickly won Dr. McLoughlin’s confidence  
his escalation up the ranks of Hudson’s Bay Company was rapid

During Chief Factor Dr. McLoughlin’s leave of absence while visiting England [1838-1839],  
it was James Douglas who was put in charge of the Columbia District for Hudson’s Bay Company  
Now he was entrusted to negotiate and implement the Alaskan contracts  
“the Black Scot” sailed out of Fort Vancouver to Sitka -- April 1840

#### FATHER FRANCIS BLANCHET EXTENDS HIS AREA OF INFLUENCE

Catholic priest visited the Indians of Puget Sound traveling as far as Whidbey Island -- spring 1840  
there he erected a cross, taught the Indians, baptized children,  
and reconciled two hostile tribes engaged in war  
(Blanchet later united the Catholic missions at the Dalles, Walla Walla, Colville, Okanogan,  
Cowlitz, Nisqually and Vancouver Island into one administrative unit)

#### HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY’S JAMES DOUGLAS MEETS WITH THE RUSSIANS

In Sitka, “the Black Scot” Douglas was received with “the most polite attention”  
by the Russian authorities of the Russian-American Company  
he held his own with the hard-drinking Russians  
he danced handsomely at a lavish ball with the beautiful blonde Finnish wife  
of Russian Governor Adolf Etholin  
and arrived clear-eyed at the next morning’s meeting

Douglas out-negotiated the Russians

he took over Fort Stikine for the Hudson’s Bay Company -- 1840  
at the mouth of the Stikine River (Wrangell Island, Alaska)  
(formerly, when it was built by the Russian-American Fur Company [1834]  
this post had been called Redoubt St. Dionysius)

Fort Stikine was in need of strong leadership

but Douglas could leave only William Glen Rae -- Dr. McLoughlin’s unstable son-in-law  
Rae was a tall, handsome Scotsman weighing at least 230 pounds, and very much a gentleman  
subordinate to Rae was young John McLoughlin, Jr. the Chief Factors even more unstable son

#### JOHN McLOUGHLIN, JR. IS GIVEN LEADERSHIP STATUS

Dr. John McLoughlin's son John, Jr. had not been raised by his father  
but rather by relatives in the East  
nearing maturity, he had been sent to Paris for a medical education  
under Dr. McLoughlin's surgeon brother  
this arrangement failed and the youth was shipped to Montreal  
where he ran up extravagant debts

For the next three years [1836-1839] under his father's watchful eye,  
John, Jr. functioned with reasonable diligence at Fort Vancouver  
Now he was to be rewarded by being made his brother-in-law's chief assistant at Fort Stikine

#### HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY CHIEF FACTOR JAMES DOUGLAS SAILS FURTHER NORTH

Having concluded negotiations at Fort Stikine  
"the Black Scot" traveled another hundred miles north  
to the neighborhood of the Taku River  
there, (south of today's Juneau) he built still another fort -- Fort Taku (or Durham)  
on land leased from Russian-American Fur Company -- 1840  
Taku became the furthest outpost from Fort Vancouver in Hudson's Bay's chain of forts

#### HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY'S JAMES DOUGLAS SAILS SOUTH FROM RUSSIAN-AMERICA

Completing the British company's business in Russian-America (Alaska)  
James Douglas left Fort Taku (near today's Juneau)

#### WESTERN EMIGRATION SOCIETY IS ESTABLISHED TO JOURNEY TO OREGON

Young John Bidwell had left his 160-acre farm in Iowa for a vacation in St. Louis  
upon returning home he discovered his farm had been taken over by a squatter  
with a reputation as a gunman -- even local lawmen would not intervene  
to complicate matter, John was under the age of twenty-one  
and, therefore, ineligible to claim land  
John Bidwell moved to St. Louis and contemplated moving to California  
he published in the St. Louis newspaper accounts that he intended to take a large wagon train  
from the Missouri River to California -- 1840  
his idea was very popular and soon the emigration society had the names of 500 people  
who wanted to take part in this momentous opportunity  
Missouri shopkeepers fearing a rapid decline in customers mounted a campaign to stop the idea  
local newspapers published stories about the dangers of traveling overland to California

a great deal of publicity was given to Thomas Farnham's *Travels in the Great Western Prairies* in his book, the Oregon Dragoon described in detail

many hardships that people would face on the journey

John Bidwell's Western Emigration Society put their plans on hold for a year

(Bidwell later admitted the party included no one who had ever been to California)

#### AMERICAN FUR COMPANY SUPPLY TRAINS SET OUT FOR THE RENDEZVOUS

Andrew Drips, captain of the American Fur Company caravan,

determined to set off from Westport, Missouri bound for the Rendezvous -- April 29, 1840

with fifty travelers, fifty wagons and sixty loaded mules

#### FATHER DE SMET AND YOUNG IGNACE CONTINUE THEIR JOURNEY

By a stroke of good luck, Father Pierre-Jean De Smet and his companion

and guide Young Ignace La Mousse were allowed to join Andrew Drips'

American Fur Company caravan as they prepared to journey to the last Rendezvous

at Fort Bonneville along the banks of the Green River

Father De Smet found himself in the company of exotic travel companions and seasoned hunters

such as Jim Bridger and Henry Fraeb

Father De Smet purchased three horses and three mules for use on the journey

#### CONGREGATIONAL MISSIONARIES REACH INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI

Rev. Harvey and Emeline Clarke, Rev. Philo B. and Adeline Littlejohn

and carpenter Alvin T. and Abigail Smith accompanied by trappers Henry Black

and Pleasant Armstrong reached Independence, Missouri from Quincy, Illinois

Time was taken to complete final preparations for the Westward journey

they hired Moses "Black" Harris for a terribly high price to guide them to Oregon

(today almost nothing is known of Moses "Black" Harris prior to his entry into the fur trade

he was probably a native of Union County, South Carolina

he was nicknamed "Black" because of the dark coloration of his skin

when the Baltimore artist Alfred Jacob Miller painted Harris [in the 1830s],

he observed that Harris "**was wiry of frame, made up of bone and muscle with a face**

**composed of tan leather and whipcord finished up with a peculiar blue black tint, as if gun powder had been burnt into his face.**"<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Kernan Turner, *Moses "Black" Harris Leaves Mark in Oregon*, <http://archive.ijpr.org/Feature,asp?FeatureID-14523>, *January 11, 2010*.

Harris probably was a member of William Ashley's first brigade to the mountains [1822]  
These three Congregational missionaries started westward from Independence, Missouri

#### AMERICAN FUR COMPANY CARAVAN IS JOINED BY ANOTHER FAMILY

Joel Walker and his family joined the American Fur Company caravan -- May 6, 1840  
they traveled in two light wagons and were headed for Oregon to make new lives for themselves

#### JOEL PICKENS WALKER FAMILY IS THE FIRST FAMILY OF EMIGRANTS TO OREGON

From the Osage country of Missouri, Walker and his family are distinguished as being the first family  
to cross the plains with the definite purpose of making a new home in Oregon

Joel Walker was the brother of renowned mountain man Joseph Walker

he had spent his youth on the Santa Fe Trail before settling into farming in Missouri

Walker's family was composed of his wife Mary (Young) Walker

Joseph, about age 12, John, about age 6, Isabella, age unknown, Newton, age unknown

(later another daughter, Louisa Walker, was born [January 1841 near Salem])

Martha Young, the unmarried sister of Mary (Young) Walker accompanied the family

#### AMERICAN FUR COMPANY SUPPLY CARAVAN MOVES SLOWLY FROM WESTPORT

During the first ten days the convoy made only sixteen miles a day --

heat was suffocating and Father Pierre-Jean De Smet did not feel well

Plagued by bouts of malaria, soon the priest's fever ran so high

that sitting upright in the saddle became problematic -- he could no longer stay in the saddle

only solution was to lie down on top of the sacks and bales in one of the wagons

lacking suspension springs, De Smet was brutally jostled by the ride

he found himself tossed **"in the most singular positions; now my feet would be in the air, now I would find myself hidden like a thief between boxes and bundles, cold as an icicle or covered with sweat and burning like a stove ... During three days when my fever was at its highest, I had no water but what was stagnant and dirty."**<sup>4</sup>

Young Ignace La Mousse, despite the difficulties of the journey, was surely filled with happiness

as he reflected on the prospect of bringing a Black Robe to his people

he and Father De Smet made special note of the buffalo, antelope, prairie dogs and wolves

all in abundance as the crossed the Great Plains along parts of (the future Oregon Trail)

#### CONGREGATIONAL MISSIONARIES JOIN THE AMERICAN FUR COMPANY CARAVAN

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<sup>4</sup> Pierre-Jean De Smet, *Life, Letters and Travels of Father Pierre-Jean De Smet*, P. 203

Rev. Harvey and Emeline Clarke, Rev. Philo B. and Adeline Littlejohn  
and carpenter Alvin T. and Abigail Smith with trappers Henry Black and Pleasant Armstrong  
overtook the spring caravan of the American Fur Company led by Andrew Drips  
so little comment about the missionaries was made by the traders as to suggest,  
like many who went before, they held themselves aloof from the sinful mountaineers  
One missionary who did not hold himself aloof was Father Pierre-Jean De Smet  
and his Flathead Indian companion Young Ignace La Mousse  
both men quickly established friendly acquaintance with the packers

#### AMERICAN FUR COMPANY CARAVAN REACHES THE PLATTE RIVER

Two miles wide, the river is very shallow (one to seven feet deep) along its course  
strewn with islands and sand banks, the Platte is barely navigable  
pioneer stories noted it was “a mile wide and an inch deep”  
and that it was so full of silt it was said to run “bottom side up”  
Members of the caravan traveled westward along the beautiful North Platte River bank  
as the ground rose in elevation the climate became more tolerable  
along the river bank bison and other animals roamed and plants grew in abundance  
Joel Walker killed a buffalo  
this was first time several members of the caravan watched meat dressed to be preserved  
Father Pierre-Jean De Smet started to recover near the Grand Island of the North Platte  
(but he will continue to feel feverish until September)  
the Jesuit priest eventually proved to be a hardy traveler and a splendid companion  
(in the next three decades, Father De Smet would travel thousands of miles through the West  
ministering to many tribes, winning their affection and respect  
as the premier Black Robe of them all)

#### DELEGATION OF NORTHERN CHYENNE INDIANS TRAVELS TO THE RENDEZVOUS

Pierre Gaucher, an Iroquois Indian missionary to the Northern Cheyennes,  
had been Young Ignace’s traveling companion on the eastward journey to St. Louis [1838]  
they had alerted the natives regarding the anticipated arrival  
of Black Robes (Catholic priests)  
After hearing this good news from Pierre Gaucher a band of ten Flathead Indian men  
set out for the Green River Rendezvous following the same trail used by Gaucher  
to meet the party of Catholic Missionaries expected there

## MEMBERS OF THE PEORIA PARTY STOP AT FORT WALLA WALLA

Oregon Dragoons Joseph Holman and Amos Cook arrived at Fort Walla Walla together -- May 1840

Dragoon Francis Fletcher also arrived -- but separately from Holman and Cook

accompanying Fletcher are thought to be William Doughty and Courtney M. Walker

(who resigned his position as clerk at Fort Hall to relocate to the Willamette Valley)

Dragoon Ralph L. Kilbourne reported traveling early in the journey with William Doughty,

but they separated -- Kilbourne may also have arrived at Fort Walla Walla in May

## SHIP *LAUSANNE* ARRIVED BRINGS REV. JASON LEE BACK TO THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Rev. Jason Lee and his bride Lucy reached the mouth of the Columbia River aboard the *Lausanne*

along with forty-six volunteers recruited by the Methodist Mission Society

these recruits made up the "Great Reinforcement" -- May 21, 1840

Solomon H. Smith guided Rev. Daniel Lee to the mouth of the Columbia River to meet the ship

after some delays at the mouth of the Columbia, *Lausanne* reached Fort Vancouver -- June 1, 1840

## "GREAT REINFORCEMENT" ARRIVES BY SHIP

Forty-six volunteer members of the "Great Reinforcement" led by Rev. Jason Lee and his bride

arrived at Mission Bottom to assist the Methodist missionaries in Oregon -- 1840

Great Reinforcement was composed of a few men with a good education

and some with legislative experience

in addition to a considerable number of lay-helpers for the mission effort

this was the most notable company yet to reach the Columbia River

(although there is some variation in the list of participants in the Great Migration

at a minimum those listed below were participants)

Fifty recruits including Rev. Jason Lee on his return west were aboard the *Lausanne*

six adult Methodist missionaries and their families hoped to lead a mission:

- Rev. Jason Lee and his bride Lucy (Thompson) Lee,
- Rev. Joseph H. Frost, his wife Sarah (De Bell) and son,
- Rev. Gustavus Hines and his wife Lydia Elvira (Wheelock) their son  
and Lydia's sister Mrs. C.N. Perry,
- Rev. William H. Kone and his wife,
- Rev. G.P. Richards with wife and three children,
- Rev. Alvin F. Waller and his wife Elepha (White) two children,

five other ministers had additional skills to offer the mission movement:

- Rev. Lewis Hubbell Judson, wheelwright his wife Elmira (Roberts) Judson,



and children daughters Adelia, Helen and son Leonard,  
•wheelwright Rev. Lewis Hubbell Judson, his wife Elmira (Roberts) and three children  
were accompanied by his sister Adelia Judson  
•Rev. James Olley carpenter  
•Rev. Josiah L. Parrish blacksmith, harness maker, wagon maker and tool maker  
his wife Elizabeth (Winn) and three children,  
•Rev. John P. Richmond. M.D., and his wife America (Walker Talley) and four children,  
four teachers were members of the Great Reinforcement:

- Miss Chloe Aurelia Clarke (later married William Holden Willson),
- Miss Almira Phelps (married Joseph Holman),
- Miss Elmira Phillips (married William Wakeman Raymond),
- Miss Maria T. Ware

three farmers traveled on the *Lausanne*:

- William W. Raymond and wife Almira,
- Henry B. Brewer and wife,
- David Carter

additional skills were provided by Rev. Jason Lee's recruits:

- stewardess Miss Orpha Lankton
- Thomas Adams the Chinook Indian who traveled East with Rev. Jason Lee
- accountant George Abernathy, accompanied by his wife Ann (Pope) and two children,
- Dr. Ira Leonard Babcock. M.D. traveling with his wife Ann (Abell) and their son,
- steward: Henry B. Brewer and his wife
- cabinet maker Hamilton "Cow" Campbell, his wife Harriet (Biddle) and daughter Mary

single women were enthusiastically received in Oregon:

- Miss Orpha Lankton (later married McKinney),
- Miss Nancy Hawkins,
- Miss Elizabeth Winn (married Rev. Josiah L. Parrish)

others were looking to improve their lives or the lives of natives:

- Alvin Thompson Smith (later married Abigail Raymond who traveled overland),
- William Wakeman Raymond (later married Elmira Phillips)

Also significantly aboard *Lausanne* was machinery for a grist (coarse-ground flour) mill and a sawmill  
both belonged to the Methodist mission

## REV. JASON LEE PROPOSES A SECOND METHODIAST MISSION BE BUILT

Rev. Jason Lee had built the original Methodist station

at Mission Bottom on the Champoege Plain  
in the absence of Jason Lee, leadership for this mission was provided  
by Dr. Elijah White along with his wife Sarepta and their two sons  
Because of floods and an unhealthy climate at Mission Bottom site  
Jason Lee proposed to move his church headquarters from Mission Bottom  
to a great Indian Council Grounds or Peace Grounds  
Calapooya Indians who originally inhabited the region had given it the name "Chemeketa"  
meaning "meeting or resting place" (near today's Salem, Oregon)

#### AMERICAN FUR COMPANY BRIGADE REACHES FORT LARAMIE

Travelers journeyed on along the banks of the North Platte River  
Andrew Drips' supply train crossed the Laramie River -- June 4, 1840  
Oregon Dragoon Robert Moore joined the caravan west of the Laramie River  
along with George Davis -- a drifter in search of land  
American Fur Company supply train reached Fort Laramie (Wyoming)  
(this was originally known as Fort William when built [1834])  
Fort Laramie became increasingly important  
after abandonment of the rendezvous fur trade system --1840  
at Fort Laramie Father Pierre-Jean De Smet discovered Iroquois missionary Pierre Gaucher  
who had guided a small group of Northern Cheyenne Indians to the Rendezvous  
De Smet and Young Ignace were given a warm welcome as the Cheyenne chief  
requested the priest and the Flathead Indian have dinner  
Father Pierre-Jean De Smet was delighted to have the opportunity to offer a lesson  
on the Ten Commandments and Catholic Creed with the assistance of Young Ignace  
to this receptive audience of Northern Cheyennes  
(twenty days will be needed to reach South Pass and the continental divide)

#### AMERICAN FUR COMPANY SUPPLY TRAIN CONTINUES TOWARD THE 1840 RENDEZVOUS

Leaving Fort Laramie Andrew Drips' supply train and accompanying travelers  
passed by Red Butte, the Sweetwater River and Independence Rock -- June 10, 1840  
Father De Smet calls this rock: "the great register of the desert"  
because many westbound travelers engrave their name in the soft stone of the rock  
Travelers continued along the banks of the North Platte  
passing by Red Butte, Sweetwater River and Independence Rock  
Father De Smet calls this rock "the great register of the desert"

because many westbound travelers engraved their names in the soft stone of the rock  
(Twenty days will be needed to reach South Pass and the continental divide)

#### FIRST WEDDING IN OREGON

Rev. Daniel Lee and Miss Marie Ware married at Chemeketa -- June 11, 1840  
in a ceremony performed by Rev. Jason Lee -- theirs was the first wedding performed in Oregon

#### HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY SUPPLIES ARRIVES AT FORT HALL

Hudson's Bay Company's supply brigade under the guidance of Francis Ermatinger  
arrived at Fort Hall from Fort Vancouver -- June 13, 1840

Nathaniel Wyeth's old post had become the chief refuge for trappers and travelers  
in the Snake (Shoshone) Indian Country  
(later the post became an important stop on the Oregon Trail)

#### MEMBERS OF THE GREAT REINFORCEMENT RECEIVE THEIR ASSIGNMENTS

General Meeting of the missionaries was held at Mission Bottom -- June 13, 1840  
construction of a new primary mission called Chemeketa (later Salem) was agreed to  
to supersede Mission Bottom at Champoeg

Rev. Gustavus Hines was assigned to the original station at Champoeg  
members of the Great Reinforcement brought the population at Mission Bottom to forty adults  
it became possible to enlarge the scope of the mission effort serving both natives and whites  
along both religious and secular lines

Several branch missions were established and assignment made by Rev. Jason Lee:

Rev. Jason Lee and his bride Lucy led the second attempt at a Methodist mission  
construction was begun on a mission house at Chemeketa  
mechanics were sent to build a grist mill and a saw mill on Chemeketa (Mill) Creek  
(near present-day Broadway and "D" streets in Salem)

Lee's house and several other pre-territorial buildings were preserved  
and are now open to the public on the grounds of the Willamette Heritage Center)  
missionaries applied the name "Salem" to the new mission -- 1840

an Anglicized form of the Hebrew word "Shalom" meaning "peace"

In addition to Jason Lee's new Chemeketa (Salem) Mission others stations were opened:

- Clatsop Plains Mission (near Astoria) was started on south side of the mouth of the Columbia  
along the lower Skipanon River under the leadership Rev. Joseph H. Frost  
with his wife Sarah and son

- they remained at Fort George (Astoria) until a residence could be built with the help of Clatsop Indians and provided food as well;
- Rev. Alvin F. Waller was assigned by Rev. Jason Lee to lead the Methodist mission effort to labor for the Indians at Willamette Falls and vicinity (today's Oregon City)  
Rev. Waller proposed to build his mission house out of lumber prepared by Dr. John McLoughlin for establishing his own claim to the site;
  - Wascopam Mission at Celilo Falls (at today's The Dalles, Oregon)  
(use of a "capitol T" for "The Dalles" indicates the town; not the cascades rapids)  
Wascopam Mission was led by Rev. Daniel Lee and his bride Miss Marie Ware Lee  
Henry B. Brewer his wife and family had arrived on the *Lausanne* with Rev. Jason Lee they began a farm at Wascopam Mission;
  - Indian Mission Manual Labor Training School got new leadership after Cyrus Shepherd's death  
Hamilton "Cow" Campbell and his wife Mrs. Harriet (Biddle) took charge of the school they met with only limited success and for all practical purposes  
the Indian Mission Manual Labor Training School died with Cyrus Shepherd as no successor was able to even approach his results;
  - Tualatin Plains Mission is opened by the Methodist missionaries  
Rev. Gustavus Hines and his wife Lydia, son and Rev. William Kone and his wife opened a station on the Tualatin Plains  
(when this effort ended in failure Rev. Hines and Rev. Kone were appointed to open a mission on the Umpqua River (near today's Roseburg, Oregon)  
this mission also ended in failure and Rev. Hines was brought back to teach at the Indian Mission Manual Labor Training School  
and to preach at the "old mission" at Mission Bottom);
  - Nisqually Mission (near Tacoma) was constructed  
Rev. Jason Lee sent north two carpenters to a site a short distance from Fort Nisqually to build a cabin to be occupied by a Methodist missionary  
Dr. John P. Richmond was assigned to lead the effort on Puget Sound

#### DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN GENEROUSLY ASSISTS THE METHODISTS

Before going on leave of absence to London [1838], Dr. McLoughlin had claimed two square miles of land twenty-five miles upstream from the mouth of the Willamette River along East side of the river at Willamette Falls (where Oregon City is today)  
water-power rights to Willamette Falls had been the motivation  
what was in doubt was whether Dr. McLoughlin was acting on his own

or serving as an agent of Hudson's Bay Company  
no American resident believed McLoughlin's arguments that he was acting for himself  
they assumed he was fronting for Hudson's Bay Company because of United States laws  
that forbade corporations from acquiring land in this country by preemption

#### DR. McLOUGHLIN'S LAND CLAIM AT WILLAMETTE FALLS IS CHALLENGED

Rev. Alvin F. Waller and his wife Elepha were dispatched by Rev. Jason Lee  
to establish a Methodist church and store at Willamette Falls -- June 1840

this branch mission was to be dedicated to bringing salvation to native salmon fishers  
Methodist mission took up a claim of six hundred-forty acres north of Dr. McLoughlin's claim  
Methodist missionaries did not officially attempt to deprive McLoughlin of any of his land  
some of the missionaries were opposed to any such action  
but others were of a different mind as they saw that if any of Dr. McLoughlin's land  
was obtained it would be a personal gain

so they readily proceeded to press the opportunity  
Rev. Alvin F. Waller asked if he might acquire the lumber Dr. McLoughlin had previously milled  
for use in establishing his own claim to the site

which had laid unused since before McLoughlin's furlough to London ([838-1839])  
these timbers were to be used in the construction of McLoughlin's own house  
which had never been more than just started [1838]

ignoring the obvious irony, Waller planned to build a church and mission house of his own  
on McLoughlin's "land claim" using the Chief Factor's lumber

At the request of Rev. Jason Lee, Dr. McLoughlin loaned the Methodist Mission  
some of the squared timbers to build a mission house  
these were never replaced or paid for by the missionaries

#### AMERICAN FUR COMPANY CARAVAN BECOMES FRUSTRATED BY WEATHER

Andrew Drips was in command of the final American Fur Company Rendezvous supply caravan  
as if to mark the end on an era, snow began to fall in the Rocky Mountains -- June 26, 1840

#### FATHER MODESTE DEMERS ACCOMPANIES HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY BRIGADE

Father Blanchet and Father Modeste Demers at St. Paul's Catholic Church on French Prairie  
handled the enormous load in Oregon by themselves as they rode from settlement to settlement  
winning new converts  
their success led to bitter charges against them by angry Methodist missionaries sharing the region

Hudson's Bay Company brigade started from Fort Vancouver

bound for the upper reaches of the Columbia River -- June 29, 1840

Father Demers accompanied the brigade and visited forts Walla Walla, Colville and Okanogan

#### MOUNTAIN MEN GATHER AT FORT BONNEVILLE FOR THE ANNUAL RENDEZVOUS

Robert "Doc" Newell, his brother-in-law Joe Meek and their families accompanied by Caleb Wilkins,

George W. Ebberts, William Doughty, John Larison and William Craig among other

well-known American Mountain Men had gathered at Fort Bonneville (Wyoming)

(alternatively known as "Fort Nonsense" or "Bonneville's Folly")

on Green River for the annual Rendezvous -- late June 1840

This was the fifteenth successive Rendezvous (except for 1831 when supplies did not arrive)

once again, for the second year in succession, the rendezvous took place at the favorite site

#### FLATHEAD NATIVES ARRIVE AT THE FORT BONNEVILLE RENDEZVOUS

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet and Young Ignace La Mousse were several hundred miles

from the home of the Flathead Indians which was their goal

they were surprised by the arrival of ten members of the Flathead tribe

who had come to escort them safely across the Teton Mountain Range

they awaited the Catholic missionary on banks of the Green River

some of the Indians had traveled more than eight hundred miles

also, the Flathead delegation had to fend off their worst enemies -- the Blackfoot

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet found this to be encouraging evidence of the Indians' desire

for learning about Christianity

#### AMERICAN FUR COMPANY CARAVAN REACHES THE FORT BONNEVILLE RENDEZVOUS

Andrew Drips arrived at the 1840 Fort Bonneville Rendezvous from Westport with trade goods

his supply caravan had reached the Green River at the mouth of Horse Creek -- June 30, 1840

As he entered camp Drips noted those in attendance for what was to be the last of the big rendezvous

(and its very sorry shadow of its former magnificence)

Andrew Drips was accompanied by divergent groups of emigrants

- Joel Walker's family;

- three independent missionary Congregational couples hoping to convert the Indians

Rev. Harvey and Emeline Clarke, Rev. Philo and Adeline Littlejohn

and carpenter Alvin T. Smith and his wife Abigail;

- Catholic priest Father Pierre-Jean De Smet seeking the Flathead Indians

accompanied by Young Ignace La Mousse;  
•several other trappers, traders and adventurers

#### SHOSHONE (SNAKE) INDIANS ARRIVE AT THE 1840 RENDEZVOUS

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet noted the arrival of the Shoshone Indians to the Rendezvous grounds

**“Three hundred of their warriors came up in good order, and at full gallop into the midst of our camp. They were hideously painted, armed with clubs, and covered all over with feathers, pearls, wolves' tails, teeth and claws of animals, outlandish adornments, with which each one had decked himself out according to his fancy. Those who had wounds received in war, and those who had killed the enemies of their tribe, displayed their scars ostentatiously and waved the scalps they had taken on the ends of poles, after the manner of standards.”<sup>5</sup>**

#### ROBERT “DOC” NEWELL AND JOE MEEK CHANGE OCCUPATIONS

Mountain Men Robert “Doc” Newell, Joe Meek and Caleb Wilkins realized

that their trapping days in the mountains were over

they resolved to try their luck in the Willamette Valley in Oregon

Joe Meek captured the mood at the close of the 1840 Rendezvous: **“Come, we are done with this life in the mountains--done with wading in beaver-dams, and freezing or starving alternately--done with Indian trading and Indian fighting. The fur trade is dead in the Rocky Mountains, and it is no place for us now. If ever it was. We are young yet, and have life before us. We cannot waste it here; we cannot or will not return to the States. Let us go down to the Willamet [sic] and take farms.”<sup>6</sup>**

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN De SMET RECOVERS HIS HEALTH AT THE RENDEZVOUS

Father De Smet asked his Ten Flathead escorts to allow him a few days rest

near the rendezvous campsite

during the interval De Smet became acquainted with the peculiar community of mountain men

he also conversed with other Indians present: Northern Cheyennes and Shoshones (Snakes)

as well as Utes and Paiutes

Father De Smet met with incredibly good fortune

he unexpectedly met a former compatriot -- Jean-Baptiste De Velder from Ghent, Austria

#### JEAN-BAPTISTE DE VELDER’S STORY

Jean-Baptiste De Velder had spent thirty years in North America

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<sup>5</sup> William N. Bishcoff, S.J., *The Jesuits in Old Oregon*, P. 17.

<sup>6</sup> Robert Utley, *A Life Wind and Perilous*, P 176.

but before his arrival in America he was formerly a French soldier in the army of Napoleon  
he had taken prisoner in Spain

by the troops of English Field Marshal Arthur Wellesley, First Duke of Wellington  
De Velder was shipped to an English colony

where somehow he managed to escape to an American vessel and entered the United States  
For fourteen years De Velder worked as a trapper in the Rocky Mountains

he was well acquainted with the region and its inhabitants

he had been gone so long from Europe he had almost completely forgotten his native tongue  
Jean-Baptiste De Velder spontaneously offered his services as a guide and interpreter

to his old acquaintance Father Pierre-Jean De Smet

De Smet immediately accepted this proposal as a godsend

#### INDEPENDENT CONGREGATIONAL MISSIONARIES MAKE A WISE DECISION

Congregational missionaries Rev. Harvey and Emeline Clarke, Rev. Philo and Adeline Littlejohn  
and carpenter Alvin T. Smith and his wife Abigail needed a guide to direct them

as far as Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Hall

During the Rendezvous, the three independent missionary couples expressed their disappointment  
in their guide, Moses "Black" Harris

they had killed very little game on the plains and became short of provisions at the rendezvous  
they learned high to continue Moses "Black" Harris demanded a price they thought was too  
they actively made preparations to start out without a guide

they laid in a supply of antelope and dried buffalo meat

which were purchased from the Indians with trinkets

At the rendezvous, the three Congregational missionaries hired Robert "Doc" Newell  
to serve as pilot to Fort Hall instead of the formerly-employed Moses "Black" Harris

Harris grew so angry that he took a drunken potshot with his rifle at Doc Newell

his shot missed very wide, but the other trappers expelled Harris from the Rendezvous  
Rev. Harvey and Emeline Clarke and Rev. Philo and Adeline Littlejohn

sold their wagon to Robert "Doc" Newell

Preparations were completed when Andrew Drips turned the American Fur Company supply train  
back toward St. Louis

#### 1840 RENDEZVOUS COMES TO AN END

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet celebrated mass and his great fortune -- Sunday, July 5, 1840



he preached for the Indians and the trappers at the Rendezvous as he later reported: **“On Sunday, the 5th of July, I had the consolation of celebrating the holy sacrifice of mass sub dia [in the open air]. The altar was placed on an elevation and surrounded with boughs and garlands of flowers; I addressed the congregation in French and in English, and spoke also by an interpreter to the Flatheads and Snake Indians. It was a spectacle truly moving for the heart of a missionary to behold an assembly composed of so many different tribes, and prostrating themselves with equal submission before the Sacred Host. The nature of the congregation and the majesty of the desert concurred to render the Mass solemn. The Canadians sang hymns in French and Latin, and the Indians in their mother tongue; all distinctions, all tribal strifes disappeared before an universal sentiment that of Christian affection. Oh! truly it was a Catholic ceremony! This place since has been called the Prairie of the Mass.”**<sup>7</sup>

#### METHODIST MISSIONARIES ATTEMPT TO MOVE ONTO DR. McLOUGHLIN’S LAND

No adverse claim was made against Dr. John McLoughlin’s land holdings until July 1840

less than thirty days after the arrival of the *Lausanne*

when some members of the Methodist mission began to plan

to take away Dr. McLoughlin’s land and water power rights

Rev. Waller proceeded to build his mission house divided into two apartments

one served as a dwelling and the other as a storeroom for the mission’s goods

defeating both McLoughlin’s and Hudson’s Bay Company’s proposed land claim

may have seemed a patriotic duty to the Rev. Waller

Rev. Waller completed construction on the branch Methodist mission station -- 1840

it was opened under Waller’s leadership with loud protests from the Chief Factor

#### GEORGE ABERNATHY -- METHODIST BUSINESSMAN AT WILLAMETTE FALLS

American George Abernathy was a steward of the Methodist missions 1840-[1841]

he had been appointed financial manager and treasurer

he suggested that a missionary mercantile business be opened business at Willamette Falls

to help with distribution of donated missionary supplies shipped in on the *Lausanne*

Methodist missionaries established a store ostensibly for themselves but actually it for use by everyone

Abernathy served as the first manager of the mission store

#### BARTER AND TRADE IS THE ONLY ECONOMIC SYSTEM USED IN OREGON

Indians had long used barter and trade as the system of exchange in the Pacific Northwest

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<sup>7</sup> William N. Bishcoff, S.J., *The Jesuits in Old Oregon*. P. 18.

natives exchanged natural products among themselves: food, tools, shells, blankets, robes,  
beaver pelts, sea otter skins canoes and horses according to their needs  
natives and explorers, trappers, missionaries and settlers

exchanged natural products, goods and robes, beaver pelts and sea otter skins

Hudson's Bay Company added manufactured goods to these natural products

natives, trappers, missionaries and settlers soon became dependent on the company

Hudson's Bay Company had made some provision for the livelihood of their trappers and traders

but no company nor outside agency assumed any responsibility for pioneer farmers

farmers were adept at tanning hides, forging tools, tinkering and building homes

families did most of their own food processing and a variety of foods were produced:

wheat, oats, potatoes, hay for livestock, poultry, eggs, apples, peaches, pears, vegetables,  
beans and peas

they dried fruit, made cider, rendered lard, cured bacon and beef, salted pork,  
dried and smoked fish, and made cheese

wool was at first spun, woven, and made into garments in the home

buckskin was sewn into clothing

Oregon residents were, like other settlers, industrious, resourceful and self-reliant

but they were not entirely self-sufficient

many things were needed from the outside were articles that could best be secured by trade

people were greatly in need of more and better farm machinery,

Americans possessed small but growing numbers of cow, horses and sheep

but they were greatly in need of more and better farm equipment

#### METHODIST MISSION SOCIETY GROWS CONCERNED

Methodist Mission Society in the East began to receive complaints

rumors had been received from the Pacific Northwest

that colonization efforts had surpassed mission work

natives certainly would not turn to Christianity if missionaries turned to farming

Corresponding Secretary Rev. Nathan Bangs wrote to Rev. Jason Lee: **"We have nothing to do with planting a colony in Oregon. Our business is to send the Gospel to those who may be there, either now or hereafter, whether natives or otherwise.... But with colonizing companies, we have no connection...."**<sup>8</sup>

#### DR. BABCOCK REPORTS THE TRADEGY FACING THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY INDIANS

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<sup>8</sup> Dryden, Cecil, *History of Washington*, P.89-90.

Dr. Ira L. Babcock his wife Ann and son had arrived aboard the *Lausanne*  
with the Great Migration -- 1840

They were living at Wascopam Mission when he estimated  
fifty Indians of the Willamette Valley died of the fever as disease continued to take its grim toll

#### CHIEF FACTOR JOHN McLOUGHLIN PURCHASES SHEEP IN CALIFORNIA

Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin sent clerk Alexander Simpson and James Steel an English farmer  
to California to purchase more sheep for the Puget Sound Agricultural Company -- summer 1840  
this was Dr. McLoughlin's effort to diversity the business of Hudson's Bay Company

#### PIONEER SETTLEMENT AT CHEMEKETA GROWS QUICKLY

Missionaries settled near the Methodist mission at Chemeketa (today's Salem, Oregon)  
some taught the children of their own families and a continually changing group of Indian children  
other ministers and laymen all farmed several hundred acres and tended herds of cattle and horses  
lay workers (not ordained by the church), including George Abernethy,  
also had an active influence on the development of the region

Missionaries were joined by a number of Rocky Mountain trappers -- 1840

Chemeketa expanded to contain more than a hundred people

This colony developed into a truly American settlement

strong anti-Catholic and anti-Hudson's Bay Company feelings among Americans began to foment

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET TRAVELS TO SERVE THE FLATHEAD INDIANS

Time had come for him to leave the 1840 Rendezvous

and journey to the home of the Flathead Indians at Pierre's Hole (near today's Driggs, Idaho)

Father De Smet with Young Ignace, Jean-Baptiste De Velder set out after the rendezvous

in a north-westerly direction across the Teton Mountain Range

traveling with ten Flathead Indians and ten French-Canadian trappers

Father De Smet, his companions and the Flathead delegation would have to proceed with caution

De Smet's party traveled through a small valley, Jackson's Little Hole,

and crossed a range of lofty snow-covered mountains to reach Jackson's Hole and the Snake River  
they had to cross this swift river using bullboats

they followed a pass through the southernmost part of the Teton Mountains

#### ROBERT "DOC" NEWELL'S LEADS AN EXPEDITION FROM THE RENDEZVOUS

Robert "Doc" Newell led sixty-four travelers westward from the Fort Bonneville Rendezvous

three independent Congregational missionary couples were traveling with Doc Newell  
Joe Meek drove the Clarke-Littlejohn wagon from the Rendezvous to Fort Hall  
Henry Black, a former trapper, was hired to drive the light wagon for ailing Alvin T. Smith  
carpenter Alvin T. Smith noted: **“These mountain men made us an escort to Fort Hall.”**<sup>9</sup>  
emigrant Joel Walker, Mary his wife and their four children, and Mary’s sister Martha Young  
made use of one of Walker’s light wagons  
Walker’s other light wagon was driven to Fort Hall by Caleb Wilkins  
Caleb Wilkins was a Mountain Man who first came west  
with Nathaniel Wyeth and Captain Benjamin Bonneville [1832-1834]  
assorted former Mountain Men, traders and adventurers completed the entourage  
including trappers John “Jack” Larison, William “Bill” Craig joined the expedition  
Oregon Dragoon Ralph C. Kilbourne accompanied by trapper William Doughty and family  
Independent Congregational missionaries noted there were no disagreements  
and the trip went pleasantly enough except for the prolonged weariness of the journey

#### METHODIST MISSIONARY BUILDS THE FIRST AMERICAN HOME ON PUGET SOUND

New arrivals Dr. John P. Richmond, his wife America and four children were reassigned  
from Methodist Champoeg (Mission Bottom) to Nisqually Mission  
where he would serve as leader near Hudson’s Bay Company’s Fort Nisqually  
Bachelor William H. Willson who was to be responsible for the non-religious activities  
at the Methodist Mission led a missionary party to the southern end of Puget Sound  
where a station was already under construction near Hudson’s Bay Company’s Fort Nisqually  
Rev. Dr. John P. Richmond with his wife America and their three children  
traveled north from Champoeg by canoe to Puget Sound  
they were accompanied by Miss Chloe Clark who was to serve as teacher  
Richmond Party arrived the station already built near Fort Nisqually -- July 10, 1840  
they were warmly welcomed by William Kittson the Hudson’s Bay Agent at Fort Nisqually  
they survived primarily by drawing on the Hudson’s Bay Store at Fort Nisqually  
Dr. Willson completed the building of the mission house in three weeks  
Dr. Richmond’s family became the first Americans to reside on Puget Sound  
although relations with Hudson’s Bay Company were friendly this was the first United States’  
settlement north of the Columbia River and West of the Cascade Mountains  
(in what is now western Washington)  
this also was the first American encroachment on presumed British land

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<sup>9</sup> Elwood Evans, *History of the Pacific Northwest: Oregon and Washington*, Vol. 1, P. 219.

Miss Chloe Clark opened a school which served both Protestant and Catholic people at Fort Nisqually eventually fifty pupils were enrolled

Dr. J.P. Richmond had some accomplishments at Nisqually Mission:

- he and his family were the first Americans to live along Puget Sound,
- he delivered the first Fourth of July speech in the Pacific Northwest
- his wife, America, gave birth to the first white girl born on Puget Sound

(however, efforts to convert the natives to Christianity proved futile and the post closed [1842])

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET REACES PIERRE'S HOLE IN THE TETON MOUNTAINS

Eight days after setting out from the Fort Bonneville Rendezvous

journey's end was reached in the twenty-five-mile-long Bitterroot Valley

at the foot of the impressive Teton mountains (near today's Driggs, Idaho) -- July 12, 1840

Father De Smet and Young Ignace were delighted to discover more than 1,500

Flatheads, Pend d'Oreilles and Nez Perce camped there, awaiting their appearance

this large number of natives traveled 180 miles to meet their promised missionary

Chief of the Flatheads, Big Face, welcomed Father De Smet with great enthusiasm

Father De Smet wrote of his reception, **“The poles were already set up for my tent, and upon my arrival men, women, and children, sixteen hundred souls in all, came to shake hands with me and bid me welcome. The old men cried for joy, and the children expressed gladness by gambols and screams of delight.**

**“These kind Indians conducted me to the tent of the Great Chief, a patriarchal person called Big Face, who, surrounded by his council, received me with great cordiality. ‘Black Robe’, he said, ‘welcome to my nation. Our hearts rejoice, for today the Great Spirit has granted our petition. You have come to a people poor, plain, and submerged in the darkness of ignorance. I have always exhorted my people to love the Great Spirit. We know that all that exists belongs to Him and that everything we have comes from His generous hands.**

**“From time to time, kind white men have given us good advice, which we have striven to follow. Our ardent desire to be instructed in what concerns our salvation has led us on several occasions to spend a deputation of our people to the Great Black Robe [the Bishop] of St. Louis to ask him to send a priest.**

**“Speak, Black Robe! We are your children. Show us the path we must follow to reach the place where abides the Great Spirit. Our ears are open. Our hearts will heed your words. Speak, Black Robe! We will follow the words of your mouth.”<sup>10</sup>**

For four days the natives stayed camped while Father De Smet taught his faith

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<sup>10</sup> John Terrill, *Black Robe*, P. 108.

## ROBERT "DOC" NEWELL'S PARTY ENCOUNTERS TROUBLE

For several days Indians had been traveling and camping near the Newell Party  
at night natives' horses were turned out near the missionaries' stock  
Just before reaching Fort Hall, the Congregational missionaries  
became less anxious concerning their animals -- they thought they were out of the Indian country  
one morning the missionaries found several of their horses were missing  
Caleb Wilkins, who spoke the native language somewhat and understood Indian ways well,  
talked to one of the neighboring Indians and suggested he could find the horses if he desired  
when Wilkins received a rude reply from the native, the mountain man knocked him down  
as the Indian got up, Wilkins told him to go and find the horses  
this native rode off and very soon returned with the animals

## FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET TRAVELS TO THE HEADWATERS OF THE MISSOURI RIVER

Father De Smet broke his camp at Pierre's Hole -- July 16, 1840  
he set out on the trail which began near Henry's Fork on the Snake River  
with more than a thousand Native American men, women and children under Chief Big Face  
who along with their supplies, prancing horses, barking dogs accompanied the priest  
northward to the headwaters of the Missouri River

## FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET TEACHES THE INDIANS

For three weeks the expedition covered approximately ten miles a day  
they crossed the continental divide between Henry's Lake  
and Red Rock Lake close to Red Rock Creek  
Father De Smet and his companions continued along the Beaverhead River  
(close to today's Dillon, Montana) traveling toward the Jefferson River  
As the throng of Indians moved slowly toward their home, they stopped for daily instruction  
Indians were so glad to finally have their own Black Robe that even the ill natives made sure  
they were carried to the meeting place so they might not miss any opportunity to learn  
at these daily gatherings, De Smet taught the Apostle's Creed  
and prayers of the Catholic Church  
he promised a new silver medal to the first person who could recite all the prayers perfectly  
very shortly thereafter an elderly Flathead recited without one error, all of the prayers  
he was promptly awarded the medal and made a catechist  
he proved to be such a successful teacher that within ten days

large groups of men and women could be heard throughout the camp  
memorizing the prayers as they went about their daily tasks  
En route, each Sunday along the trail the Indians constructed an altar of willow branches  
for the celebration of Holy Mass  
with great reverence, all knelt and joined in the prayers, each in his own language:  
Iroquois, Flathead, Nez Perce, and Latin

#### NEWELL PARTY REACHES FORT HALL

Robert "Doc" Newell successfully completed his piloting task -- July 20, 1840  
from the Fort Bonneville Rendezvous (in Wyoming) to Fort Hall  
(located northeast of the present site of Pocatello, Idaho)  
Fort Hall, at that time, was the farthest point west that wagons had reached  
it was regarded as sheer madness to attempt to travel further west with wagons from Fort Hall  
through the lava wastelands of the Snake River country to the Columbia River  
Independent Congregational missionaries found their animals so reduced  
they decided to speed their journey by switching to pack mules  
they also exchanged some items with Hudson's Bay Company Factor Francis Ermatinger  
for a supply of flour

#### DR. McLOUGHLIN BECOMES CONCERNED ABOUT HIS WILLAMETTE FALLS LAND

It was reported to the Chief Factor that the Methodists intended to take (or "jump") his claim  
McLoughlin notified Rev. Jason Lee, Superintendent of the Methodist mission -- July 21, 1840  
of the fact that possession of the Willamette property had been taken in [1829]  
and also it was McLoughlin's intention to hold this land as a private claim  
McLoughlin gave Jason Lee a general description of the land **"From the upper end of the falls  
across to the Clackamas river, and down where the Clackamas falls into the Willamette, including  
the whole point of land, and the small island in the falls on which the portage was made."**<sup>11</sup>  
this was the island known locally as Governor's Island in honor of McLoughlin  
Dr. McLoughlin concluded his letter to Rev. Jason Lee: **"This is not to prevent your building the  
store, as my object is merely to establish my claim."**<sup>12</sup>

#### JOEL WALKER FAMILY LEAVES FORT HALL

Joel and Mary Walker and their four children and Mary's sister Martha

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<sup>11</sup> Hubert Howard Bancroft, *History of Washington, Idaho, and Montana*, Volume XXIX, P. 204.

<sup>12</sup> Hubert Howard Bancroft, *History of Washington, Idaho, and Montana*, Volume XXIX, P. 204.

set out from Fort Hall following the well-beaten trail to Fort Boise -- July 21, 1840  
as they transported their possession by pack horse train into Oregon

#### ROBERT "DOC" NEWELL ACCEPTS A WAGON IN PAYMENT FOR HIS SERVICE AS GUIDE

"Doc" Newell was compensated by the independent Congregational missionaries for his services  
he accepted as payment the wagon belonging to Rev. Harvey Clarke and Rev. Philo B. Littlejohn  
and a double harness -- July 21, 1840

Carpenter Alvin T. Smith's wagon was sold to Hudson's Bay Company Factor Francis Ermatinger,  
who at the time, was in charge of Fort Hall, in exchange for eight pack-horses worth of goods  
to be delivered to Fort Walla Walla by the Hudson's Bay Company caravan  
Smith reserved the option to buy back the wagon at Fort Walla Walla for \$80

Joel Walker abandoned both of his light wagons at Fort Hall in favor of pack horses

Walker gave his second wagon to Caleb Wilkins in payment for his services as a driver

#### OTHER EMIGRANTS LEAVE FORT HALL

Three independent Congregational missionaries, Rev. Harvey and Emeline Clarke,  
Rev. Philo B. and Adeline Littlejohn and carpenter Alvin T. and Abigail Smith  
packed their baggage and supplies and departed on horseback following the trail  
from Fort Hall bound for Fort Boise -- July 22, 1840

they had two tents to sleep in and so were protected from severe weather

ladies had side-saddles and easy-riding ponies and made the journey very comfortably

Mrs. Abigail Smith and Mrs. Adeline Littlejohn had horses that paced easily,

but usually they traveled at a walk

Mrs. Emeline Clarke rode a more spirited mount

Oregon Dragoon Robert Moore and trapper John Green accompanied them

as did several Mountain Men interested in settling in the Willamette Valley of Oregon

#### CONGREGATIONAL MISSIONARIES ACQUIRE THE SERVICES OF GUIDES

Congregational missionaries were only one day out of Fort Hall -- July 23, 1840

when trappers Henry Black and Pleasant Armstrong agreed to guide the party

beyond Fort Boise to the Whitman Mission of Waiilatpu

Joel Walker and his family accompanied by the mountain men were soon overtaken

#### EMIGRANTS SPLIT INTO TWO GROUPS

Congregational Missionaries and Mountain Men had differing ideas about keeping the Sabbath



missionaries were determined to live up to their principles

Missionaries and their wives accompanied by their guides Henry Black and Pleasant Armstrong stopped for a Sunday rest as they neared Fort Boise -- August 2, 1840

most of the mountain men could not be induced to stop and rest for the day

Joel Walker and his family sided against the ministers and their wives

Walker, his family, and most of the mountain men continued on leaving the missionaries behind

(toward the end of their journey, the Walker party paid a price for not keeping the Sabbath

they were denied entry to Wascopam Mission because they did not strictly keep the Sabbath)

#### JOEL WALKER FAMILY ARRIVES AT WAILATPU MISSION

Joel and Mary Walker along with their four children and Martha Young

arrived at Dr. Marcus Whitman's Waiilatpu Mission -- early August

at the time, Dr. Whitman and Narcissa were away visiting the Spalding mission at Lapwai

Almost immediately after their arrival at Waiilatpu Joel Walker and his family

accompanied by several mountain men continued on to Fort Walla Walla

#### INDEPENDENT CONGREGATIONAL MISSIONARIES SET A SLOWER PACE

After keeping the Sabbath and following the route of Joel Walker and his family

independent Congregational missionaries reached the Hudson's Bay Company Fort Boise

eight miles below the mouth of the Boise River -- August 4, 1840

From Fort Boise to Dr. Marcus Whitman's mission at Waiilatpu

there was an obvious trail established by Indians and maintained by fur company men

occasionally Indians would travel with the missionaries until the horses disappeared

after that, the ministers and their wives were left alone

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET SERVES THE FLATHEAD INDIANS

In an effort to build up enough food provisions for the coming winter months

Chief Big Face and his thousand followers reached the area

where Prairie and Mountain Indians met to hunt bison -- August 6, 1840

in the next seventeen days the Flatheads killed and processed about 500 animals

After their successful buffalo hunt the Indians prepared to return to their homelands

Father De Smet explained to the Indians the advantages of a fixed home

that would provide a sense of security if each (spring) was set aside for planting time

and (autumn) for harvest time

Indians began to look for a good valley that could be their future home where they could raise crops

## INDEPENDENT CONGREGATIONAL MISSIONARIES ARRIVED AT WAILATPU MISSION

Trappers Henry Black and Pleasant Armstrong guided the Congregational missionaries successfully to the Dr. Marcus Whitman's mission -- August 14, 1840

these people who had traveled under such difficult circumstances for so long dispersed:

- Rev. Harvey Clarke and his wife Emeline went to Kamiah Mission to work with the Rev. Asa Smiths among the Nez Perce natives;
- Rev. Philo B. Littlejohn; Adeline (Sadler) Littlejohn stayed with the Whitmans (they moved to the Willamette Valley, September [1841] and to Lapwai in [1842]);
- carpenter Alvin T. Smith and his wife Abigail stayed with the Rev. Spalding at Lapwai

## IT IS DECIDED TO TAKE THE WAGONS THROUGH TO FORT BOISE

Robert "Doc" Newell remained at Fort Hall with his two wagons as did Caleb Wilkins with his wagon

Doc Newell decided to attempt the journey to the Willamette Valley by wagon

in this he received warm encouragement and aid from Fort Hall's Factor Francis Ermatinger

who would greatly benefit from a wagon road connecting his post

with the Hudson's Bay Company posts of Fort Boise and Fort Walla Walla

Ermatinger hired a German named Nicholas to drive the Alvin T. Smith wagon

(this may be Nicholas Stansbury a frequent visitor to Fort Hall or Nicholas Altgier)

Caleb Wilkins also decided to drive his wagon, newly received from Joel Walker,

he was accompanied by his Nez Perce wife

During this time Joe Meek, Osborn Russell and two other trappers

occupied their time with a hunting trip

## FIRST WEDDING ON PUGET SOUND

William H. Willson and Miss Chloe Clark became acquainted while working at Nisqually Mission

they were married at Fort Nisqually -- August 16, 1840

in a ceremony performed by Dr. John P. Richmond who was also a Methodist minister

this was the first marriage of white Americans (in present day Washington state)

Mr. and Mrs. Willson moved to Willamette Falls where he undertook the study of medicine

William Willson was a man of especially cheerful nature

his optimistic disposition made him a favorite with all of his acquaintances

## FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET WRITES TO FATHER FRANCIS BLANCHET

Father De Smet was surprised to learn of the presence of Father Modeste Demers at Fort Colville

Father De Smet wrote a letter to Father Demers -- August 23, 1840  
this letter was to be given to Father Francis Blanchet  
who remained at St. Paul's Mission in the Willamette Valley near Fort Vancouver

#### CLATSOP PLAINS MISSION ENJOYS SOME SUCCESS

Once Rev. Joseph H. Frost's Clatsop Mission was in operation

Rev. Frost and his missionaries feared that any outright refusal of sleeping facilities to any guests could lead to a violent confrontation  
soon a small structure was made to house visiting natives who had until then slept on the floor of the mission

Rev. Frost returned to the Willamette station to request assistance

Rev. William H. Kone and his wife was assigned to accompany him  
as the mission planned at Umpqua had been forfeited

#### WILLAMETTE FALLS GROWS INCREASINGLY AMERICAN

Hudson's Bay Company's Dr. John McLoughlin had helped American missionaries and settlers  
he provided food, supplies and protection

Willamette Falls became one of the centers of population in the Pacific Northwest

American missionaries actively worked Dr. McLoughlin's claim along the Willamette River

Dr. William Holden Willson practiced medicine and carpentry there

Lewis H. Judson self-educated missionary was a blunt and stubborn man  
he joined in the colonizing effort

Rev. Josiah L. Parrish, after leaving the mission on the Clatsop Plains

continued his trade as a blacksmith at Willamette Falls

he became active in local political affairs

James O'Neil, one of Wyeth's men and member of Willamette Cattle Company

noted the relationship among inhabitants at Willamette Falls: **"...the white people live without any forms of law; but in general are very honorable in paying their debts, and give notes and bonds. They have no sheriff, constables, fees, nor taxes to pay. They profess to be very hospitable to strangers, and kind to one another. No breaking each other up for debts. Here are no distilleries, no drunkenness, nor much swearing. They seem, indeed, to be a very happy people."**<sup>13</sup>

#### SALEM EVANGELICAL UNITED BRETHERN CHURCH BEGINS

Rev. Jason Lee's new Methodist mission at Chemeketa

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<sup>13</sup> Joseph Williams, *Narrative of a Tour...to Oregon Territory*, 1841-2, P. 57.

eventually overtook the Willamette Mission at Mission Bottom in importance  
When Rev. Jason Lee's headquarters was moved from Mission Bottom  
the Methodist Church of Salem was formally organized in Chemeketa -- 1840  
Rev. Jason Lee was one of thirteen charter members  
of the Salem Evangelical United Brethren Church  
Rev. David Leslie became the first pastor

#### METHODIST MISSIONARY EFFORT CHANGES IN CHARACTER

It became increasingly obvious that attention was focusing less on the Indians and more on farming  
as the whole aspect of the missionary effort changed:

- Indian population also was in rapid decline,
- missions assumed a secular character,
- several missionaries turned to farming to make a living -- others returned to the East

#### INDIAN MISSION MANUAL LABOR TRAINING SCHOOL IS MOVED FROM CHAMPOEG

Location of the Willamette Mission site at Mission Bottom attracted few children  
Indian Mission Manual Labor Training School closed in preparation to being moved  
Training School was transferred temporarily to Wallace House  
which had been built by Astor's Pacific Fur Company about three miles north of Chemeketa  
Construction was begun on new 3½ story \$10,000 structure at Chemeketa  
intended to be the replacement home for the Indian Mission Manual Labor Training School

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET SEEKS HELP FOR A MISSION TO THE FLATHEADS

After reaching Flathead Country, Father De Smet was convinced the Flatheads needed a mission  
but the Catholic priest needed to obtain necessary help -- both people and money  
Father De Smet decided to try to return to St. Louis before the winter to report to his superiors  
with the hope of acquiring the means to locate a permanent mission among the Flathead Indians

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET SETS OUT ON THE LONG TRIP TO ST. LOUIS

Father De Smet bid farewell to the Flathead natives -- August 27, 1840  
he and trapper Jean-Baptiste De Velder left for St. Louis  
with an escort of twenty young Flathead braves  
They traveled the trail that had been followed by William Clark (Lewis and Clark [1804-1806])  
on his homeward trip to the Yellowstone River  
it was a vague path along the Gallatin River, over Bozeman Pass

that crossed Yellowstone desert with its endless plains and deep canyons  
this trail ran through the country of the Crows and the hostile Blackfoot Indians  
at the confluence of the Yellowstone and the Bighorn they visited a large Crow Indian village  
Father De Smet later noted this was the happiest time of his life

as he rode he undoubtedly reflected on the parting words of Chief Big Face: **“Black Robe, may the Great Spirit accompany you on your long and dangerous journey; morning and night we will pray that you may safely reach your brothers in St. Louis, and we will continue to pray thus until you return to your children of the mountains.**

**When the snows of the winter will have disappeared from the valleys, and when the first green of spring begins to appear, our hearts, which are now sad, will once more rejoice. As the meadow grass grows higher and higher we will go forth to meet you. Farewell, Black Robe, farewell.”**<sup>14</sup>

From the Crow Village, Father De Smet and Jean-Baptiste De Velder  
traveled to American Fur Company’s Fort Alexander on the Rosebud River

#### DR. ELIJAH WHITE BREAKS WITH REV. JASON LEE

Rev. Jason Lee and Dr. Elijah White continually argued over the mission’s purpose and direction  
each exerted his leadership -- although not in the same direction

Dr. White publicly broke with Rev. Jason Lee because of friction over policy  
regarding the best ways and means of carrying forward the objects of the mission -- 1840

Dr. White resigned his position as doctor with the Methodist Willamette Mission (Mission Bottom)  
and was virtually driven out of the colony by the missionaries

Dr. Elijah White departed Oregon by ship bound for the United States

#### HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY’S JAMES DOUGLAS ARRIVES AT FORT VANCOUVER

Completing his journey from Fort Taku (near today’s Juneau)

James Douglas reached Fort Vancouver -- September 1840

Douglas reported to Dr. McLoughlin that he had placed William Glen Rae in charge of Fort Stikine  
and John McLoughlin, Jr. was named second in command

In his report to the chief factor, Douglas recommended constructing even more forts in the north  
this was good news to Chief Factor Dr. McLoughlin as it provided support for his belief

that conducting coastal trade using posts was superior to using ships  
passing on Douglas’ recommendation to Governor-in-Chief George Simpson

would be a distinct pleasure indeed for the chief factor

Douglas, too, found good news at Fort Vancouver

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<sup>14</sup> John Terrill, *Black Robe*, P. 112-113.

during his absence he had been elevated to Chef Factor  
this was the highest possible rank for field service with Hudson's Bay Company  
he was now equal to John McLoughlin in every respect except seniority  
Black Scot had achieved this distinction at the relatively youthful age of thirty-seven

#### MORE SHEEP ARRIVE IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Hudson's Bay Company Clerk Alexander Simpson and English farmer James Steel  
bought seven hundred ewes which were loaded on the *Columbia* at San Francisco Bay,  
these were delivered to Fort Vancouver -- September 1840  
Number of sheep at Nisqually rose steadily until there were a little less than one thousand sheep  
pastured at the post -- 1840

#### JOEL WALKER FAMILY REACHES THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY

Joel Walker, his wife Mary and their children  
Joseph about age twelve, John, son about six, Isabella and Newton both age unknown  
were accompanied by Mary's unmarried sister Martha Young  
also traveling with the Walker family were several mountain men  
They reached the Willamette Valley and the end of their journey -- September 13, 1840  
they were the first pioneer family to cross the continent for the sole purpose of taking up farming  
by the end of this month, they had planted a crop from seed provided  
with the aid of Dr. John McLoughlin  
Ewing Young hired Joel and his son Joseph for occasional work  
and Martha Young as a seamstress and laundress  
(Joel Walker wintered in the Willamette Valley and moved on to California the next fall)

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET AND JEAN-BAPTISTE DE VELDER CONTINUE ON

Father De Smet decided to dismiss his Flathead escort as he and trapper Jean-Baptiste De Velder  
continued their trip east to the St. Louis -- September 13, 1840  
While they no longer had an escort, they were not alone  
De Smet and Velder encountered evidence of small groups of Blackfoot Indians everywhere

#### OREGON DRAGOON ROBERT MOORE REACHES THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY

Oregon Dragoon Robert Moore had traveled from Fort Hall  
he arrived at the Columbia River on his own and established a farm  
he named "Robin's Nest" on the west bank of Willamette Falls (at today's West Linn)

Moore purchased his land from the local natives -- 1840  
in the agreement the Indians retained their homes and fishing rights  
on Moore's 1000-acre property that stretched from one-half mile

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET AND JEAN-BAPTISTE DE VELDER REACH FORT UNION

The Catholic priest and his companion  
arrived at the confluence of the Yellowstone and the Missouri rivers  
there they visited another American Fur Company outpost  
Fort Union (North Dakota) -- September 20, 1840  
For three days they enjoyed the hospitality of the master of the fort, James Kipp  
he advises to them to descend the Missouri River in a canoe  
as autumn was fast approaching and they still needed to travel more than 2,000 miles  
however, since neither of De Smet nor De Velder had any canoeing skills  
both men preferred to continue on horseback  
even though they knew it would double their travel time

#### PREPARATIONS ARE UNDERTAKEN AT FORT HALL TO DRIVE THREE WAGONS WEST

Joe Meek, Osborn Russell and two other trappers returned to Fort Hall  
from their hunting trip -- September 22, 1840  
"Doc" Newell made final preparations for an effort to drive three wagons to the Willamette Valley  
he induced his brother-in-law Joe Meek to join him in the adventure  
Newell and Meek knew it would be difficult to get a wagon through to the Columbia River  
but they thought it might be more convenient for Newell's Nez Perce wife,  
their new-born son Marcus Whitman Newell and their five-year-old son  
Francis "Frank" Ermatinger Newell  
Joe Meek's Nez Perce wife Virginia deserted him taking their son Courtney Walk Meek with her  
leaving him to care for his two-year-old daughter by his first marriage Helen Mar Meek

#### FATHER DE SMET AND JEAN-BAPTISTE DE VELDER LEAVE FORT UNION

Father De Smet and his traveling companion trapper Jean-Baptiste de Velder set out overland  
with American Fur Company traders traveling to Arikara Indian Country -- September 23, 1840  
three days later they met a village of friendly Mandan and Gros Ventres natives -- September 26

#### ROBERT "DOC" NEWELL LEADS THE WAGONS FROM FORT HALL

Robert "Doc" Newell had assembled the small party of Mountain Men and their families

who had also decided to carve out a new future in Oregon  
Doc Newell, his Indian wife Kitty and family, and Joe Meek along with his daughter  
loaded their scanty possessions into Newell's wagon purchased from the Clarke-Littlejohns  
Joe Meek would drive this wagon  
Caleb Wilkins accompanied by his Nez Perce wife had decided to drive the wagon  
he had acquired from Joel Walker  
Nicholas (Stansbury or Altgier) was hired to drive Francis Ermatinger's wagon  
that had been purchased from Alvin T. Smith  
William "Bill" Craig and John "Jack" Larison were engaged to drive a small herd of cattle  
other travelers probably included Oregon Dragoon Ralph Kilbourne, and William Doughty  
Doc Newell led the three wagons toward Dr. Whitman's Waiilatpu Mission -- September 27, 1840

#### PETITION OF 1840 IS WRITTEN BY REV. DAVID LESLIE AND OTHERS

American's feelings opposed to British leadership grew stronger each year  
trade system then in use kept Indians dependent on Hudson's Bay Company  
respect for Company men shown by the Indians was resented by Americans  
Rev. David Leslie and Philip L. Edwards authored another petition -- fall 1840  
this was the second to be sent to Congress  
it held more urgency than the earlier [1838] Oregon Memorial written by Rev. David Leslie  
This 1840 Petition pointed to attacks on settlers by savages  
and "**others [Hudson's Bay Company] that would do them harm**"  
Rev. Leslie stated the only means of protection, other than force of arms, was "**self-constituted tribunals, originated and sustained by the power of an ill-instructed public opinion.**"  
it asked Congress "**for the civil institutions of the American Republic**"  
and prayed "**for the high privileges of American citizenship; the peaceful enjoyment of life; the right of acquiring, possessing, and using property; and the unrestrained pursuit of rational happiness.**"<sup>15</sup>

Rev. David Leslie's 1840 Petition was signed by sixty-three people living in the vicinity of  
Rev. Jason Lee's Chemeketa (Salem) Mission  
Thomas J. Farnham was dispatched to carry the 1840 Petition to Washington City by sea

#### FATHER DE SMET REACHES FORT CLARK

Catholic priest and his traveling companion Jean-Baptiste De Velder  
continued from Fort Union to Fort Clark (North Dakota)

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<sup>15</sup> W.H. Gray, *History of Oregon*, P. 194-196.



here the American Fur Company traders set up business  
De Smet, De Velder and a Canadian trapper who joined them continued toward St. Louis  
Fort Pierre (South Dakota), their next stop, was reached ten days later -- October 6, 1840

#### DOC NEWELL SWITCHES TO PACK MULES

In a few days, the Snake River Plain persuaded Doc Newell the venture had been a ghastly mistake  
teamsters Joe Meek, Caleb Wilkins and Mr. Nicholas agreed  
they found the continued crashing of the sagebrush under and around the wagons,  
which was in many places higher than the mules' backs, was brutal for both man and beast  
they were quite sorry they had undertaken the job  
Jack Larison concurred although he, like Robert "Doc" Newell, was on horseback  
Seeing the animals fail forced the mountain men to lighten the loads  
loading families and outfits onto mules, Newell and his companions removed the wagon beds  
they pushed forward with only the running gear, bare chassis and wheels of the wagons  
bouncing over the black lava rock and sagebrush  
Beyond Fort Boise and the Snake River, the Blue Mountains proved equally disheartening

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET AND JEAN-BAPTISTE DE VELDER ENTER SIOUX COUNTRY

Father De Smet left Fort Pierre accompanied by tapper Jean-Baptiste De Velder  
and a Canadian trapper  
After traveling for five days they reach Sioux Indian Country -- October 11, 1840  
it did not take long for the Sioux Indians to intercept the small party of intruders into their country  
Canadian trapper with Father De Smet and Jean-Baptiste De Velder  
informed the natives that one of the intruders was a French Black Robe  
for these Indians it is their first time to meet anyone who is familiar with the "Great Spirit"  
their aggressiveness was replaced by exuberant joy  
Father Pierre-Jean De Smet was transported to the Sioux village on a buffalo robe

#### FATHER DE SMET AND JEAN-BAPTISTE DE VELDER CONTINUE ON TO ST. LOUIS

De Smet and two companions left the Sioux Indian village  
next traveled to Fort Vermillion (located near Burbank, South Dakota)  
where De Smet learned of new hostilities between Yankton Sioux and Potawatomis  
at St. Joseph Mission -- his former home

#### AMERICANS BEGIN CONSTRUCTION ON THE SCHOONER *STAR OF OREGON*

Little group of American young men had conceived of an adventurous project  
to build a tiny homemade schooner constructed of Oregon timber to sail to California  
and to exchange the schooner for livestock and drive the herd to Oregon  
Joseph Gale, the only mariner of the lot, headed the effort  
he was a onetime sailor who had quit the sea to trap with Ewing Young in California [1831]  
he had migrated to Oregon with Ewing and Hall Jackson Kelly  
he had migrated to Oregon with Ewing and Hall Jackson Kelly  
Gale was assisted by skilled ship's carpenter Felix Hathaway and six less skilled laborers  
John Canan, Ralph Kilbourne, Pleasant Armstrong, Henry Woods, George Davis  
and Jacob Green  
*Star of Oregon* would be the first vessel constructed on the Willamette River  
Gale's crew began construction on the east side of Swan Island (today's Portland)  
keel of the fifty-three foot eight-inch-long schooner with a ten-foot nine-inch beam  
was laid -- autumn 1840  
her frame was made of oak with planking 1¼ inches thick

#### FATHER NICOLAS POINT ARRIVES IN AMERICA

French Jesuit Nicholas Point had been born in Rocroi-- an ancient fortress town in northeastern France  
he received an education as an architect and draftsman before training for the priesthood  
After emigrating to America, he was assigned to the College of Grand Coteau in Louisiana  
Father Point arrived in Westport, Missouri -- November 1, 1840  
while waiting for Father De Smet Father Point built a small church  
for the local community in Westport (Kansas City. Missouri)

#### RUNNING GEAR OF THE WAGONS ARRIVED AT WAILLATPU

Robert "Doc" Newell and his party reached the Whitman Mission  
with William Craig and Jack Larison and the small herd of cattle -- early November 1840  
Joe Meek, Caleb Wilkins and Mr. Nicholas had found a way  
to move their wagons (such as they were) across the desert and through the mountains  
between Fort Boise and Waiilatpu  
they managed to pull the running gear of one wagon by mule and horse  
all the way to the mission -- even if the wagon bed was missing  
they also had managed to preserve the running gears of the other two wagons

Doc Newell noted, **“In a rather rough and reduced state, we arrived at Dr. [Marcus] Whitman’s mission station, in the Walla Walla valley, where we were met by that hospitable man, and kindly made welcome, and feasted accordingly.”**<sup>16</sup>

Dr. Whitman shook Newell heartily by the hand and Mrs. Whitman welcomed them all  
Indians walked around and stared at the wagons, or what they called “horse canoes”

Newell continued: **“On hearing me regret that I had undertaken to bring the wagons, the Doctor said: ‘Oh, you will never regret it; you have broken the ice and when others see that wagons have passed, they too, will pass and in a few years the valley will be full of our people’.”**<sup>17</sup>

(Dr. Marcus Whitman’s words to Newell proved prophetic as thousands of wagons  
did follow in their tracks filling the valleys of Oregon and Washington with settlers)

Their only reward for the effort was that they had broken the first track through the sage  
and demonstrated the potential for a road development later

if one wagon could cross the Blue Mountains other wagons could pass through as well

#### FATHER DE SMET AND JEAN-BAPTISTE DE VELDER DEPART FROM FORT VERMILLION

After leaving Fort Vermillion, the Catholic priest and two trapper companions  
met a solitary Iroquois in a canoe -- November 10, 1840  
ice patches started to appear on the Missouri River

#### ROBERT “DOC” NEWELL MAKES A DECISION AT WAILLATPU

Robert “Doc” Newell’s party broke up at Waiilatpu Mission  
two of the mountain men, William Craig and John Larison quit the adventure with the wagons  
they parted company with Doc Newell and drifted to the country  
near Lapwai on the Clearwater River to be near their wives’ people in Nez Perce country  
where they stayed with the people of their wives

Doc Newell, Joe Meek and Caleb Wilkins spent a day or two at the Waiilatpu Mission

“Doc” Newell’s five-year-old son Francis “Frank” Ermatinger Newell

and their new-born son Marcus Whitman Newell were too ill to travel on

Joe Meek’s Nez Perce wife had deserted him leaving him to care

for his two-year-old emaciated vermin-infested daughter Helen Mar Meek

all three children were left for Narcissa Whitman to clean up, care for, and tutor during the winter

#### ROBERT “DOC” NEWELL’S PARTY LEAVES WAILLATPU

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<sup>16</sup> Clinton A. Snowden, *History of Washington*, Vol. 2, P. 24.

<sup>17</sup> Clinton A. Snowden, *History of Washington*, Vol. 2, P. 25.

Three wagons (or at least their running gear) had journeyed from Fort Hall (in Idaho)  
two of the wagons' running gear were left at the mission station  
Robert "Doc" Newell and Joe Meek took leave of their children and the kind missionaries  
accompanied by Caleb Wilkins they proceeded slowly along the desert track  
toward Fort Walla Walla on the Columbia River  
Joe Meek drove the running gear of the wagon formerly belonging to missionary Alvin T. Smith  
as this was the largest and heaviest of the wagons  
With the rainy season looming ahead however, Doc Newell was fearful  
that this late in the year he would not be able to get his wagon's running gear  
over the Cascade Mountains to the Willamette Valley

#### WILLIAM CRAIG AND JOHN LARISON MOVE TO LAPWAI MISSION

Leaving Robert "Doc" Newell and his wagons at the Whitmans' Waiilatpu Mission  
trappers William "Bill" Craig and John "Jack" Larison turned up at Lapwai Mission  
much to Rev. Henry Spalding's annoyance -- November 20, 1840  
Mountain Man William Craig caused considerable trouble  
when he constructed his homestead quite near the mission  
and undermined the unpopular Spalding's missionary efforts among the Indians

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET ARRIVES AT ST. JOSEPH MISSION

Traveling by canoe down the Missouri River Father De Smet, Jean-Baptiste De Velder  
and a Canadian trapper reached St. Joseph Mission  
(today's Council Bluffs, Iowa) -- November 20, 1840  
Happily the men could rest at Father De Smet's former assignment  
St. Joseph Mission was currently being run by Fathers Christian Hoecken and Felix Verreydt  
sadly, the number of Potawatomi families living near the mission had been reduced to fifty

#### ROBERT NEWELL, JOE MEEK AND CALEB WILKINS ARRIVE AT FORT WALLA WALLA

Newell, Meek and Wilkins were kindly received Fort Walla Walla by Pierre C. Pambrun,  
chief trader of the Hudson's Bay Company post  
Joe Meek had successfully driven the running gear of the wagon now belonging to Francis Ermatinger  
To Robert Newell, the leader of the effort, must be ascribed credit  
for bringing the first wagons from Fort Hall to Fort Walla Walla  
Doc Newell, Joe Meek, and Caleb Wilkins  
were the first to reach the Columbia River overland by wagon

they established the practicability of wagon travel from the western frontier of Missouri,  
via the Rocky Mountains to the Columbia River  
they had opened to wagon traffic the final leg of what became known as the Oregon Trail  
Francis Ermatinger's wagon running gear was left at Fort Walla Walla

#### ROBERT "DOC" NEWELL AND JOE MEEK VENTURE DOWN THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Doc Newell, Joe Meek and Caleb Wilkins were determined to seek new homes and new occupations  
and to settle in Oregon's fertile Willamette Valley  
At Fort Walla Walla they loaded their supplies and stock aboard a Hudson's Bay Company bateau  
for the journey down the Columbia River to Fort Vancouver  
leaving their wagons' running gear and parts behind at Fort Walla Walla  
Robert 'Doc' Newell, Joe Meek and Caleb Wilkins subsisted for weeks on dried salmon  
on several occasions they were forced to swim their stock  
across the Columbia and Willamette rivers

#### DR. ELIJAH WHITE LEAVES THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Dr. White publicly broke with Rev. Jason Lee because of friction over policy  
Dr. White carried his complaints regarding Rev. Jason Lee' administration  
to the Methodist Mission Society in Utica, New York  
he believed the most honorable course open to him was to state his reason for leaving in writing  
and then carry the complaints and Lee's responses to the Methodist Mission Society  
although this may have been a proper course, the bitterness of White's attack raised concerns  
Dr. White sailed away from Oregon on the *Lausanne* -- December 2, 1840  
bound for the Hawaii and the United States  
Rev. Jason Lee was left in control of the Methodist effort in Oregon

#### THOMAS J. FARNHAM CARRIES REV. LESLIE'S SECOND PETITION TO CONGRESS

Thomas J. Farnham arrived in Washington City (Washington, D.C.) -- early December  
after leaving Oregon he had traveled to the Sandwich Islands  
then continued via California and Mexico, to the United States capital city  
where he delivered the Petition of 1840 to Congress  
Farnham published a popular account of the Pacific Northwest and California, *Peoria Party*,  
and also *Travels in the Great Western Prairies* where the Oregon Dragoon  
described in detail many hardships people would face on the journey West  
these were widely read -- they swelled the tide of popular interest in the West

and did a great deal to maintain that enthusiasm

Oregon Dragoon Robert Shortess in his book, *Pictorial History of Oregon and California*,

said of Thomas J. Farnham's character: **"Instead of raising the American flag and turning the Hudson's Bay Company out-of-doors, he accepted the gift of a suit of clothes and a passage to the Sandwich Islands, and took a final leave of Oregon."**<sup>18</sup>

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET LEAVES ST. JOSEPH'S MISSION

After three weeks of rest at St. Joseph Mission Father De Smet set out on horseback for Westport, Missouri -- December 14, 1840

he was on a mission to acquire the support necessary to open a Catholic mission among the Flathead Indians in their homeland

#### NEWELL, MEEK AND WILKINS ARRIVE IN THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY

Robert "Doc" Newell, Joe Meek and Caleb Wilkins

did not arrive in the Willamette Valley until December 15, 1840

when they reached the region just above the falls of the Willamette River where Tualatin River flows in from the west -- December 15, 1840

Trapper William Doughty was already settled in his own home in the community which was composed of former-trappers including Ewing Young, George Ebbert Joel Walker and his family, and Courtney M. Walker

Doc Newell, Joe Meek and Caleb Wilkins fell in with their old comrades from Rocky Mountain days to increase the American population and add to the confusion over the lack of a government they managed to eke out a meager living through the winter at Willamette Falls

It is said that Joe Meek once in Oregon took to wearing a bright red sash

in imitation of the French-Canadian trappers employed by the Hudson's Bay Company because the Company enjoyed good relations with most of the Indian tribes whose lands were claimed on behalf of the British Empire,

Meek hoped the Indians would think he was a Quebec trapper and leave him alone when he was exploring the countryside

Doc Newell, Joe Meek and Caleb Wilkins settled on the Tualatin Plains in 1840

Meek stayed on Tualatin Plains (near present day Hillsboro)

(Newell later moved to the Willamette Falls

both Newell and Meek went on to play significant roles in Northwest history)

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<sup>18</sup> William Denison Lyman, *The Columbia River*, P. 164.

## CHIEF FACTOR JAMES DOUGLAS JOURNEYS TO CALIFORNIA

Once again James Douglas, now Chief Factor, was delegated  
to work out the details of an agreement with another entity

Douglas this time was sent to negotiate with the Mexican government -- December 1840  
to develop trade prospects, buy cattle, and negotiate the opening of trade with California  
Douglas and a party of thirty-six men traveled aboard the Hudson's Bay Company bark *Columbia*  
carrying a cargo of goods to Monterey for sale in California

## FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET ARRIVES IN WESTPORT

Catholic priest reached Westport (today's Kansas City, Missouri) -- December 22, 1840  
in this outpost lived twenty-three families mostly retired French-Canadian and Iroquois trappers  
with their wives and metis children  
he also found several additional priests interested in accompanying him into the wilderness  
but funds to support their work were lacking

After a brief rest, Father Pierre-Jean De Smet set out once again  
this time bound for St. Louis, Missouri in quest of support for a new mission to the Flatheads

## PUGET SOUND AGRICULTURAL COMPANY OFFICIALLY BEGINS OPERATION

Both the Cowlitz and Fort Nisqually properties  
were legally transferred from Hudson's Bay Company to the Puget Sound Agricultural Company  
British government granted Puget Sound Agricultural Company a deed of settlement  
dated December 23, 1840

Land was rapidly put into production at Cowlitz Farm  
six hundred acres had been plowed -- soon to increase to over one thousand acres  
It was evident colonists were needed to develop the territory's agricultural potential  
Hudson's Bay Company directors were politically committed to encouraging settlement  
however, Hudson's Bay Company was averse to any

## FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET ARRIVES IN ST. LOUIS

Completing his journey from Flathead Country in the Rocky Mountains  
Father De Smet stepped through the gate of St. Louis University -- January 1, 1841  
he had been absent for nine months (279 days) and had traveled more than 4,300 miles  
When Father De Smet arrived in St. Louis he found 154 Jesuits active in Missouri  
sixteen of them had been born in the United States  
in addition, there were forty-five Irishmen, forty-two Belgians, sixteen Dutchmen,

thirteen Germans, eleven Italians, nine Frenchmen and two Spaniards

#### CHIEF FACTOR JAMES DOUGLAS MEETS WITH THE MEXICAN GOVERNOR OF CALIFORNIA

Traveling from Fort Vancouver aboard the Hudson's Bay Company bark *Columbia*

the Black Douglas led thirty-six Hudson's Bay Company men composed of hunters and drovers  
who were to drive the herd of livestock he hoped to purchase back to the Columbia River

Hudson's Bay Company Chief Factor James Douglas arrived in Monterey, California

to meet with the Mexican government in Monterey, California -- January 1, 1841

relation between Hudson's Bay Company and the Mexican California government  
had been friendly but not close

Douglas was to try to obtain additional privileges for the company trapping brigades in California  
and permission from the Spanish government to establish a trading post on the California coast

Douglas was courteously received and hospitably entertained by Spanish Governor Juan B. Alvarado  
he found the Mexican authorities ready to grant him the concessions desired

#### GOVERNOR-IN-CHIEF GEORGE SIMPSON BECOMES SIR GEORGE SIMPSON

Britain's Queen Victoria honored the Hudson's Bay Company leader

in recognition of his for help in putting down the ([1837] Canadian rebellion

and for his long-standing efforts to see New Caledonia (British Columbia)  
and the Arctic region explored -- January 1841

Sir George was also busily planning for an expedition that would take him around the world  
in the interest of business

#### U.S. SENATOR LEWIS F. LINN SUPPORTS AMERICANS IN OREGON

Dr. Lewis F. Linn was the junior Democratic U.S. Senator from Missouri

he was the most steadfast friend the Pacific Northwest had in congress

he was becoming increasing belligerent toward Great Britain

He introduced a "Joint Memorial" into Congress -- January 8, 1841

asking to occupy, settle, and extend certain American laws in Oregon

including constructing a string of army posts from Fort Leavenworth to the Rockies  
thus some American Law and Order would be applied to the West

Sen. Linn's Joint Memorial contained a provision for granting 640 acres of land

to every white male inhabitant of Oregon eighteen years old or older  
who should cultivate the same for five years

in neither the Linn Resolution [1839] nor the Linn Joint Memorial 1841 was any difference made



between American citizens and British subjects or other aliens regarding the right to take land  
Sen. Linn stated in a Senate speech that the settlers of the Pacific Northwest **“would be numbered with the dead before the British government would amicably settle a question of this nature.”** If the United States had a right to the territory, then **“he was not the man to say it should be abandoned to any power on earth.”**<sup>19</sup>

Congress still took no action

#### RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT ATTEMPTS TO SELL FORT ROSS

At about this time, the Russians tried to extend their holdings to a huge tract of California land ranging from the Sacramento River on the east to San Francisco Bay on the south

Mexican government refused to give their consent

thus the Russians decided to abandon their holdings in California

Russian Czar Nicholas I ordered Fort Ross (Sacramento, California) vacated

#### WILLAMETTE VALLEY SETTLEMENT HELD A DIVERGENT GROUP OF PEOPLE

Native Americans in the Willamette Valley, who rapidly decreased in numbers due to disease, were at first confound and then threatened by the ever-increasing invaders

Approximately five hundred settlers made their homes in the Willamette River

and along its western tributaries by 1841

about half of the 125 families were French-Canadian and the balance were Americans

French-Canadians distinguished themselves linguistically, religiously and socially from Americans

their spoken French was retained from old Quebec

although it was modified in many ways during the previous two hundred years

their spoken language remained basically the vernacular of French King Louis XIV

while very verbal, these people were mostly illiterate

their Catholic faith and loyalty to the Hudson’s Bay Company

also set them apart from American pioneers

many had Indian or metis (half-breed) wives

Catholic priests led by Father Francis Blanchet were more tolerant of native customs and beliefs

enjoyed great success in dealing with the Indian

American settlers consisted of several different groups:

- there were about thirty Mountain Men and their Indians families

these restless, semi-literate people were squatters who came into a new area,

made a little clearing in the wilderness, built cabins, settled for a while and then moved on

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<sup>19</sup> Oscar Osburn Winther, *The Great Northwest*, P. 142.

- rough, tough and boisterous, they were also very naïve in the ways of the civilized world;
- five Methodist missionaries under the leadership of Rev. Jason Lee his nephew Rev. Daniel Lee, Cyrus Shepard, Philip L. Edwards, and Courtney M. Walker had been among the very earliest devout Christians to make an effort to convert the Indians they were reinforced in their efforts by three groups of people:
    - first group was led by Dr. Elijah White aboard the *Diana* [May 18, 1837];
    - second group was led by Rev. David Leslie aboard the *Sumatra* [September 7, 1837];
    - Great Reinforcement led by Rev. Jason Lee on his return to Oregon [June 1, 1840]
  - three independent Congregational missionaries and their wives;
  - also a small number of American pioneers such as ex- sailors, explorers, adventurers, a few immigrants who had traveled overland or by ship, remnants of Nathaniel Wyeth's two expeditions, seasonal businessmen and tourists

#### CHEMEKETA METHODIST CHURCH IS ORGANIZED

Rev. Jason Lee was one of thirteen charter members and Rev. David Leslie became the first pastor of the Chemeketa Methodist Church (today's First United Methodist Church in Salem) when a small chapel was built at the Indian Mission School to accommodate the growing number of settlers --1841

#### CONSTRUCTION IS BEGUN ON A NEW INDIAN SCHOOL AT CHEMEKETA

Indian Mission School at Mission Bottom, now known as the Indian Manuel Labor Training School barely struggled along with discouraging and deteriorating results after the death of Cyrus Shepherd [1840]

Relations with the natives had deteriorated and plans were made to move the Indian Manuel Labor Training School from Mission Bottom to Wallace House about three miles north of Chemeketa

Indian Manuel Labor Training School was located at the old William Wallace House -- 1841 construction was begun on a new building to house the Indian Manuel Labor Training School this 3½ story \$10,000 structure was considered to be the largest on the Oregon coast

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET RAISES MONEY FOR HIS MISSION

Father Superior Pierre Verhaegen, Father De Smet's superior, approved establishment of a permanent mission to be located among the Flathead Indians in the Rocky Mountains

Father De Smet would receive the assignment as head of the Rocky Mountain Mission

but, once again, funding was a problem

To raise money for his new missionary effort (during the first four months) of 1841

Father De Smet printed a few thousand pamphlets and went on what he referred to

as “a begging tour to New Orleans” -- there he raised \$1,100

after his pilgrimage to New Orleans, he was a self-proclaimed “beggar for God”

part of the money collected was set aside for the unfortunate Potawatomi Indians

living at St. Joseph Mission (today’s Council Bluffs, Iowa)

who were to be relocated once again

part of the sum was offered to a new school for Potawatomi girls

which opened at Father De Smet’s request and was operated

by seventy-two-year-old Mother Philippine Duschene

with the remainder Father De Smet was able to begin his effort among the Flathead Indians

living in the Rocky Mountains

#### JAMES DOUGLAS STRIKES A BARGAIN WITH THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT

Fort Ross, formerly a Russian outpost in California was offered by the Mexican government

to the Hudson’s Bay Company for \$30,000

Douglas did not think the company wanted to own property under the control of Mexico

and he was not willing to buy the fort as personal property at that price

However, Chief Factor James Douglas did successfully negotiate an agreement with the Mexicans:

- Douglas gained additional privileges for company trapping brigades in California

Douglas employed thirty additional California fur trappers

and agreed to pay the Mexican government a duty on each pelt taken;

- Douglas gained trading privileges for Hudson’s Bay ships under the proviso that their captains

go through the formality of taking out Mexican citizenship papers;

- Douglas gained permission to establish a trading post

and develop commercial rights on the California coast;

- Douglas acquired the right to purchase at a fair price sheep and cattle

needed for the Hudson’s Bay Company farms on the Columbia River

Accompanied by a dozen of his men, James Douglas left Monterey

they journeyed went overland to Yerba Buena (the Spanish name for San Francisco)

along the way they were well entertained at local rancheros

#### FATHER FRANCIS BLANCHET AND CHIEF FACTOR McLOUGHLIN FAVOR BRITISH RULE

Father Blanchet considered his Catholic flock of 700-800 French-Canadians

to be well served by Hudson's Bay Company authority  
he wanted no interference from another power source which was certain to be dominated  
by Methodists who were who were pro-American and contemptuous of Catholic teachings  
this opinion was, of course, firmly bolstered by Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin  
who also did not subscribe to any proposed government

Blanchet met with Chief Factor McLoughlin to discuss the work of the Code of Laws Committee  
both knew Rev. Jason Lee had been the driving force

Lee wanted the missions to control the approximately one-hundred-fifty  
Americans living in the Willamette Valley

Dr. McLoughlin did not subscribe to the proposed government

Father Blanchet firmly bolstered by John McLoughlin considered his flock well served  
by Hudson's Bay Company authority

Blanchet wanted no additional supervision in the region as it was certain to be dominated  
by Methodists who were contemptuous of Catholic teachings

Blanchet proposed a looser system with the post of a judge and not a governor  
who would serve as the highest position responsible to law and order in Oregon

Father Blanchet refused even to call more than one formal meeting of the Committee of nine  
thus they failed to write a constitution

Father Francis Blanchet had stopped the American "power grab"

#### WILLAMETTE MISSION HAD GROWN INCREASINGLY SECULAR

With few Indians left in the Willamette Valley to convert and little financial reward forthcoming  
many of the large mission staff occupied itself chiefly with agricultural and economic affairs  
some missionaries tried to open a store, but trade was complicated by the lack of money  
others farmed hundreds of acres and maintained herds of cattle and horses  
in the region around Champoeg (Mission Bottom) and Chemeteka (Salem)

Several missionary leaders moved to Willamette Falls

George Wood Ebbert sold his possessory rights at Champoeg for 100 bushels of wheat  
it required three years for him to collect the full amount

Methodist mission remained, however, the only organized entity south of the Columbia River  
thus it played an influential role in all the affairs of the Willamette Valley

#### CHIEF FACTOR JAMES DOUGLAS DOES BUSINESS IN YERBA BUENA (SAN FRANCISCO)

Douglas purchased from Jacob P. Leese for the price of \$4,800 -- half in coin and half in goods  
a sandy piece of real estate with a house on Monterey Street

where Hudson's Bay Company was to locate their Yerba Buena trading post

(in what is today the heart of the San Francisco business district)

this acquisition amounted to two-thirds of a city block

this house was a large wooden two-story building occupied by Leese and his family

(in what is today the heart of the San Francisco business district)

In Yerba Buena, Douglas also purchased 661 head of cattle and 3,670 sheep

these animals were to be driven by the Hudson's Bay Company men to the Sacramento Valley

where they were made ready for their long overland drive to Fort Vancouver

After about two weeks in Yerba Buena, James Douglas returned to Monterey on the *Cowlitz*

soon he continued north by ship to Fort Vancouver

to submit to the company his plans for a trading establishment at Yerba Buena

#### RUSSIAN-AMERICA COMPANY SELLS ITS PROPERTY IN CALIFORNIA

Swiss immigrant Captain John A. Sutter arrived in California [1839]

he became a Mexican citizen and official and managed to accumulate fortune enough wealth

to acquire Fort Ross from the Russian-America Company for \$30,000

Czar Nichols (I) ordered his subjects to vacate Fort Ross (Sacramento, California)

he secured a large land grant, 48,839 acres, from the Mexican government

in the Sacramento valley and named his land claim "Nueva Helvetia" -- 1841

(Helvetia was the old name for Sutter's native country of Switzerland)

John Sutter started an immense ranch on the Sacramento River

(very near the site of the present California state capital)

#### FORT ROSS BECOMES SUTTER'S FORT

John Sutter relying mainly on his Kanakas (Hawaiians) laborers built a strong fort of adobe

on the site of present-day Sacramento, California

his Kanakas also built the first frame houses in Sacramento, a mill and a tannery

they cleared land for farming and fought for Sutter in skirmishes with the local Indians

Sutter (now known as "Captain" of the Swiss Guard) acquired permission from Mexican authorities

to recruit Native Americans

he organized a 200-man Indian army clothed in czarist uniforms procured from Russian traders

commanded by a German<sup>20</sup> with staff officers from Europe

Captain John Sutter began a varied and successful operation raising a wheat crop

operating his distillery, a hat factory, and a blanket company

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<sup>20</sup> James Loewen, *Lies My Teacher Told Me*, P. 100.

he raising cattle and grain on a large scale and also traded with the Indians for furs  
he employed a few Americans on his estate and furnished supplies to others  
Sutter's Fort quickly became one of the most notable places in California

#### UNITED STATES AND MEXICAN RELATIONS

Both the United States and Mexico expressed feelings of uneasiness toward one another  
Mexican government was not strong during this period  
several revolutions in California were attempted -- Americans usually participated  
and [after 1836] there was the perpetual question of America annexing Texas into the Union

#### PIONEERS IN THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY HAVE CONCERNS REGARDING THEIR SAFETY

Ewing Young's Willamette Cattle Company and the herds of settlers  
suffered through the winter from the ravages of wild beasts  
grizzlies, black bears, cougars and wolves roamed freely in the Willamette Valley  
destruction of their livestock gave cause for alarm among the Willamette Valley settlers  
Methodist missionaries saw the formation of a local government as a solution to the problem  
they called for a meeting to be held at the Champoege Mission for the purpose of discussing  
necessary steps for the formation of laws and the election of officers to carry them out

#### PROVINCE OF CANADA COMES INTO EXISTENCE

British Parliament had passed the *Act of Union* [July 23, 1840]  
this Act was proclaimed by Queen Victoria -- February 10, 1841  
parliaments of Upper Canada (Ontario) and Lower Canada (Quebec and Labrador)  
were merged into a single Legislative Council (upper chamber)  
and Legislative Assembly (lower chamber)  
*Act of Union* was necessary to meet two needs:  
•Upper Canada was nearly bankrupt and needed the stable tax base  
of the more populated Lower Canada to fund its transportation needs;  
•unification would undermine the majority French-Canadian vote by granting  
Quebec, Ontario and Labrador each an equal number of seats in the federal government  
Canadian government was to be led by an appointed Governor General  
who was accountable only to the British Crown and the King's Ministers

#### CHIEF FACTOR JAMES DOUGLAS RETURNS TO FORT VANCOUVER

Hudson's Bay Company Chief Factor James "the Black Scot" Douglas returned from California

to Fort Vancouver -- February 1841

Douglas reported his negotiation successes with the Mexican government including purchase of land for a post in Yerba Buena (San Francisco)

Delighted by events in California, Dr. McLoughlin summoned his son-in-law William Glen Rae to return to Fort Vancouver to take charge of the Hudson's Bay Company Yerba Buena post

William Glen Rae immediately left Fort Stikine and traveled to Fort Vancouver

in preparation for taking charge of the operation in California

Red River Chief Factor Duncan Finlayson was placed in command of Fort Stikine

#### PUGET SOUND AGRICULTURAL COMPANY CONTINUES TO FUNCTION

Hudson's Bay Company's farming policy was to maintain agriculture at company fur-trading posts however, farming at forts and posts was not reduced

locations capable of producing dairy, beef, grain and other products continued production

Fort Vancouver supplied the post's own needs and generated a surplus for the shipping trade

Nisqually Farm under the direction of Dr. William Fraser Tolmie

who served as the head of the Puget Sound Agricultural Company

returned to England for a two year visit -- 1841- [1843]

Chief Trader Alexander Caulfield Anderson was placed in charge of Fort Nisqually

Cowlitz Farm became the home of seven families, thirty-eight people in all,

who moved to the Hudson's Bay Company farm on the Cowlitz River -- 1841

Dr. John McLoughlin would only lend Hudson's Bay Company cattle to the settlers

he knew the offspring might be butchered and slow production of the herd

Puget Sound Agricultural Company's objectives became strictly economic in nature

as the company sold its produce to the Hudson's Bay Company

which then marketed and distributed the farm products

Company farms at Nisqually and Cowlitz were devoted to fulfilling agricultural contracts

production of grain and other crops increased steadily at Cowlitz Farm

livestock production and processing, particularly sheep and cattle, grew rapidly at Nisqually

an export trade in wool, hides, tallow, and other agricultural goods developed

Annual yield was not sufficient to fill Puget Sound Agricultural Company's contracts

with the Russian-American Company or other export markets

Puget Sound Agricultural Company harvests were supplemented

by production from the Hudson's Bay Company post farms -- primarily Fort Vancouver

and through Company purchases of wheat from settlers retired in the Willamette Valley

Hudson's Bay Company directors in London told Governor Sir George Simpson they wanted

departmental accounts between Hudson's Bay Company and Puget Sound Agricultural Company more clearly distinguished -- 1841  
even so, it is not clear if the debt owed the Hudson's Bay Company for its initial transfer of livestock, agricultural materials, tools and labor was ever completely repaid by the Puget Sound Agricultural Company

#### METHODISTS AND OTHER AMERICANS MEET AT CHAMPOEG

Rev. Jason Lee and the members of the Methodist mission were the driving force behind the effort to create a local (American) government in the Pacific Northwest

Champoeg was the principal American settlement in the Willamette Valley

settlers there held a meeting at the original Methodist mission site at Mission Bottom

that was presided over by Rev. Jason Lee -- February 7, 1841

discussion at the meeting quickly turned to the need for a government

Jason Lee advocated the selection of a committee **"...[F]or the purpose of consulting upon steps necessary to be taken for the formation of laws, and the election of officers to execute them."**<sup>21</sup>

There were difficult questions to deal with in organizing any form of government:

- controversy existed over what geographical area to include;
- the real possibility of war between the United States and Great Britain which still existed due to the disagreement on boundary lines was an issue discussed by everyone in Oregon;
- questions of who would be involved in the government caused great concern  
suspicions and hostilities were rampant among both American settlers and British subjects;

Little was accomplished other than to recommend that all of the Americans

consider the possibilities of electing a governor and other government officers

#### EWING YOUNG'S DEATH OCCURS LEAVING NO KNOWN HEIRS

Ewing Young was by now a respected American pioneer stockman

who possessed a large herd of cattle following the successful cattle drive

of the Willamette Cattle Company from California ([837]

he had taken over practically the whole Chehalem Valley

it was noted that **"...because of his untiring activity, Ewing Young's establishment during these years served for the community as virtually a market place, a store, a bank and a factory as well as the largest farm."**<sup>22</sup>

many of the Oregon inhabitants were involved with Young's businesses as creditors or debtors

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<sup>21</sup> William Denison Lyman, *The Columbia River*, P. 189.

<sup>22</sup> Robert M. Utley, *A Life Wild and Perilous*, P. 212.



Ewing Young became very ill after a particularly bad bout of indigestion related to an ulcer  
five days later he died five at age forty-one -- February 9, 1841

#### EWING YOUNG'S FUNERAL IS CONDUCTED BY REV. JASON LEE

Ewing Young was the richest settler in the region

his funeral service was conducted by Rev. Jason Lee at the Champoeg Mission at Mission Bottom

Ewing Young was buried near his cabin under an oak tree -- February 15, 1841

(near today's Newberg, Oregon)

Young had died intestate (without a last will and testament)

he also had no known heirs to inherit his estate

(people in Oregon did not know about his Indian wife in Taos, New Mexico

or of the son, Joaquin Young, he had by her)

Young's death highlighted the nearly total absence of government in the region

and demonstrated the need for a probate judge to administrator or dispose of Young's ample estate

under normal circumstances, unclaimed property usually went to the government

but there was a problem in the Pacific Northwest -- there was no government

Young's estate included his land claim, promissory notes, personal property,

a brickyard and mills near Chehalem Creek (present-day Newburg, Oregon)

and six hundred head of cattle belonging to the Willamette Cattle Company

which needed immediate care

At the close of the funeral service Rev. Jason Lee asked all those present to remain

to discuss plans for the final distribution of Ewing Young's property

because there was no American court of law in Oregon for disposing of his estate

it was decided to call another meeting at Chemeketa (Salem)

to be held on [February 17] at the Indian Manual School

#### WILLAMETTE VALLEY SETTLERS ARE CALLED TO A MEETING

Ewing Young's large herd of wandering and untended livestock

was preyed upon by wolves and mountain lions

Young's former neighbors were very interested in dealing with the problem

of predatory animal attacking the Willamette Cattle Company's stock and their herds

Notices were posted informing Willamette Valley settlers of a meeting to be held

at Chemeketa (Salem) in the Indian Manual Labor Training School

to discuss a means of protecting themselves and their cattle and horses

against numerous predatory animals, wild bears, cougars and wolves in the valley

Americans, Protestants, British, French-Canadians, Catholics, independents and metis  
were all welcome to attend

#### REV. JASON LEE PRESIDES OVER THE CHEMEKETA (SALEM, OREGON) MEETING

Rev. Lee called the meeting to order at Chemeketa's Indian Mission Manual Labor Training School  
to discuss the problem of predatory animals attacking the settlers' herds -- February 17, 1841

Rev. Gustavus Hines, another member of the Methodist mission, was elected secretary  
in fact, most of those in attendance were the members of the Methodist mission

Rev. Jason Lee quickly turned the discussion to dealing with Ewing Young's estate  
Young's death made the adoption of laws and a judicial system to administer them  
even more urgent than before

Jason Lee in a short address to the collected body suggested a single code of criminal laws  
that would apply to all Oregon pioneers not employed by the Hudson's Bay Company,  
he also proposed the election of a governor, supreme judge with probate powers,  
an attorney-general, a clerk of the courts and public recorder, a treasurer,  
two overseers of the poor, three constables, three justices of the peace  
and three road commissioners

This initial proposal was rebuked by Catholic Father Frances Blanchet who counter-proposed  
a smaller governmental system with the post of judge, not a governor, as the highest position

Those attending the Chemeketa Meeting passed Jason Lee's resolutions

they also nominated a committee to develop a single code of criminal laws  
and to nominate men for various governmental offices

Rev. Jason Lee, Rev. Gustavus Hines were elected to a "Committee of Arrangement"  
along with American George W. LeBreton who was named chairman

Americans did not want Hudson's Bay Company  
deciding on the disbursement of Ewing Young's estate

Arrangements were made to hold another meeting to hear the report of the Committee of Arrangement  
at Methodist missionary Rev. David Leslie's house on French Prairie near Champoege

Chemeketa Meeting was adjourned to give the Committee of Arrangement a chance  
to prepare a report to be delivered to the members of the community the next day

American Mountain Men took little interest in the struggle

between Jason Lee and his missionaries on one hand

and Dr. John McLoughlin and Father Francis Blanchet on the other hand

#### COMMITTEE OF ARRANGEMENT HOLDS ITS MEETING

At the close of the Chemeketa Meeting Committee of Arrangement Chairman George W. LeBreton called to order his meeting with Rev. Jason Lee and Rev. Gustavus Hines -- February 17, 1841 committee members set to work compiling a single code of criminal laws but found the task overwhelming they turned to the issue of how to probate Ewing Young's estate Committee of Arrangement members were successful in nominating officers:

- Rev. Jason Lee was the one name considered for the governorship;
- Methodist missionary Rev. David Leslie was nominated as chairman of meeting; to be held the next day in his home near Champoeg
- two secretaries: Americans Rev. Gustavus Hines and Sidney Smith were nominated

#### METHODISTS HOLD A SECOND MEETING WHICH RESULTS IN FORMING A GOVERNMENT

Champoeg Meeting which followed the previous day's Chemeketa Meeting was held at Rev. David Leslie's house on French Prairie near Champoeg -- February 18, 1841 Rev. Gustavus Hines served as secretary and American Sidney Smith also took a few notes Champoeg Meeting was well attended nearly all of the adult Americans living south of the Columbia River were joined by several French-Canadians

Minutes of the previous [February 17] meeting were presented and accepted thus the choosing a "Committee of Arrangement" composed of Chairman George W. LeBreton, Secretary Rev. Gustavus Hines and Rev. Jason Lee to frame a constitution and nominate officers was approved by those present it was then moved and carried that the report of the Committee of Arrangement be taken up and disposed of article by article

Three-man Committee of Arrangement gave its recommendations:

- they proposed that a supreme judge, with probate powers, be chosen to officiate this motion was made and carried;
- it was moved and carried that a clerk of the court, or recorder, be chosen;
- it was moved and carried that a sheriff be chosen;
- it was moved and carried that three magistrates be chosen;
- it was moved and carried that three constables be chosen;
- it was moved and carried that a treasurer be chosen;
- it was moved and carried that a militia major and three captains be chosen

Following the report of the Committee of Arrangement it was moved and carried to proceed to choose the people to fill the various offices by ballot

officers were nominated and elected at the meeting to serve a two-year term in office:

- Rev. Jason Lee was the only name considered for “governor”

but it seemed unwise to elect the head of the Methodist mission to the office  
rather, the office of governor was deferred;

- Dr. Ira Babcock, physician at the Champoeg Mission (Mission Bottom),

was elected “Supreme Judge with probate powers” under the laws of New York state  
he was lawmaker, judge and held all executive powers

he became the final authority over Americans in the colony

as no copy of New York laws existed in the Pacific Northwest at that time

Ewing Young’s estate be probated under New York (American) law

- George W. LeBreton was elected “Clerk of the Court and Recorder of Public Documents”

he was a merchant who had arrived in Oregon with Captain John H. Couch [1840];

- William Johnson, a British subject, was elected High Sheriff

he had deserted the British navy in Boston and joined the American navy;

Those in attendance next passed a motion that the remainder of the officers

be nominated from the floor and be chosen by hand vote:

- elected as Magistrates (Justices of the Peace) were blacksmith Hugh Burns,

wheelwright Lewis H. Judson and carpenter Alvin T. Smith

- three Constables, merchant J.C. Bridges, American Fur Company trader Lewis Ebberts

and Hudson’s Bay Company employee Xavier Laderoute were elected;

- John Howard, farmer, carpenter, and tavern keeper, was chosen militia major

William McCarty who farmed (at today’s Chinook, Washington),

Charles McKay who arrived with the Hudson’s Bay Company Red River emigrants,

and fur trapper Solomon H. Smith were chosen captains

Finally, a resolution was offered to provide for a nine-man “Code of Laws Committee”

to draft a constitution and code of by-laws to govern the community south of the Columbia River

to be presented to a public meeting at Champooick for acceptance [on July 5]

nine members of the Code of Laws Committee were elected:

- four French-Canadian Catholics: Father Francis Blanchet who was appointed chair,

Etienne Lucier, David DonPierre and Mr. Charlevon (or Chanlevo)

Father Blanchet was named chairman of the committee

as the Methodists hoped to secure the French-Canadian Catholic influence

and to harmonize political differences

- three Methodist ministers: Rev. Gustavus Hines who served as secretary, Rev Jason Lee,

and Rev. Josiah Parrish

- two American pioneers: farmer William Johnson and Robert Moore who had journeyed west with Thomas Jefferson Farnham's Oregon Dragoons [1839]

Code of Laws Committee was a first small step to establishing a civil government in Oregon divisions along national lines were inevitable

these feeling were now intensified by religious rivalry

Several additional motions were introduced and passed during the Champoeg Meeting:

- it was moved and carried that the services of the legislative committee be paid \$1.25 per day and that the money be raised by voluntary subscriptions;
- it was moved and carried that the militia major and captains be instructed to enlist men to form companies of mounted riflemen;
- it was moved and carried that an additional magistrate and constable be chosen Charles Campo was chosen as an additional magistrate Francois X. Matthieu was chosen as an additional constable;
- it was moved and carried that the legislative committee shall not sit over six day

Champoeg Meeting was then adjourned but then a question arose

concerning when the newly-appointed officers should commence their duties

the meeting was again called to order and it was moved and carried that the old officers

remain in office until the laws are made and accepted or until the next public meeting

With a partial territorial government thus organized the Champoeg Meeting adjourned

to meet again (the first Tuesday in June) at Saint Paul's, Mission

where Catholic Father Blanchet resided

this would allow the nine-man Code of Laws Committee time to write a report

## RESULTS OF THE CHAMPOEG MEETING

Movement toward a government independent of the Hudson's Bay Company had begun

it was played out against a background of bitter rivalry

between Methodist minister Jason Lee and Catholic Father Francis Blanchet

even aside from doctrinal conflict, the two men clashed on the issue of government

(In later years Oregon pioneers, probably inaccurately, looked back on the Champoeg Meeting

prompted by Ewing Young's death as the catalyst for a sequence of exercises in democracy

that led to formation of a provisional [temporary] government)

## HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES

There seems to have been no clearcut separation between the accounts

of Hudson's Bay Company and the Puget Sound Agricultural Company

Fort Vancouver was the Columbia Department's principal depot  
and by far its largest farming operation:

- Fort Vancouver's plains were used to pasture Puget Sound Agricultural Company sheep, and probably cattle,
- Fort Vancouver grain and other agricultural products,  
not listed on the accounts of the Puget Sound Agricultural Company,  
were used to fulfill contracts with the Russians and to send to other markets
- Fort Vancouver dairies were established and operated  
to fulfill the Russian American Company contract
- a sheep farm listed on Fort Vancouver's account books in the early 1840s,  
also was listed on the accounts of the Puget Sound Agricultural Company

Hudson's Bay Company books in practice carried the accounts of officers and servants  
who worked Puget Sound Agricultural Company's farms  
and the equipment used on those farms  
division between Puget Sound Agricultural Company activities at the post  
and Fort Vancouver's own farming to supply in-country and shipping needs  
is not clear

Hudson's Bay Company directors in London told Governor-in-Chief Sir George Simpson  
they wanted departmental accounts between the two companies  
more clearly distinguished -- 1841  
even so, it is not clear if the debt owed the Hudson's Bay Company  
for its initial transfer of livestock, agricultural materials, tools and labor  
was ever completely repaid by the Puget Sound Agricultural Company

#### FORT LANGLEY ON THE FRASER RIVER DIVERSIFIES

Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Langley had been built 1827  
to secure British claims to the Fraser River if Fort Vancouver was lost to the Americans  
Fort Langley had become a major export port for salted salmon in cedar barrels  
as well as cedar lumber and shingles shipped to the Hawaiian Islands  
Gardening and limited farming was conducted under the direction  
of Fort Langley Factor James McMillan who first specialized in potatoes -- 1841  
but he also produced turnips, radishes, carrots, and red and white currant  
(Additional crops were grown at the Fraser River post  
McMillan obtained a glass for devising a hotbed  
for seedling melons, cucumbers, pumpkins, gourds and cabbages

Fort Langley also became a grain-raising center yielding wheat, oats, barley, and peas  
quantities of pork, beef and butter were produced  
Fort Langley and other posts made shipments of grain, flour, salted beef, hams, and butter  
to the Russians in Alaska)

#### HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY PRESUMES CONTROL OF THE COLUMBIA DISTRICT

Charter of the Hudson's Bay Company gave it complete governmental power  
over all British citizens in the Columbia District  
and if that was not sufficient, the company's economic dominance made up the shortfall  
As British citizens, the company retirees on French Prairie  
looked to John McLoughlin for law and order, from which he shrank not in dispensing

#### CHIEF FACTOR JOHN McLOUGHLIN EXPANDS HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY'S OPERATION

Hudson's Bay Company constructed a sawmill in the Willamette Valley -- 1841  
this mill was operated at mouth of Champoege Creek by former Astorian Tom McKay  
who had accompanied his father Alexander McKay to the West  
(Alexander McKay had been killed in the explosion of the *Tonquin* [June 18, 1811])  
after only a few months of operation the sawmill washed away  
(it was rebuilt four miles upstream [1843])

#### HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY GOVERNOR GEORGE SIMPSON RETURNS TO NORTH AMERICA

Hudson's Bay Company's Governor George Simpson left London for America -- March 3, 1841  
on a two-year West coast tour via Canada, Columbia District and Siberia  
due to failing eyesight Simpson was accompanied by a young secretary  
Edward Martin Hopkins

#### HARRISON SERVES THE SHORTEST TERM AS PRESIDENT IN AMERICAN HISTORY

William Henry Harrison was elected President of the United States [1840]  
with John Tyler as his Vice President  
Harrison was a hero of the Indian Wars having defeated Shawnee Chief Tecumseh ([811])  
At Harrison's inauguration the weather was cold and wet -- March 4, 1841  
to display his young and vigor the sixty-eight-year-old Harrison wore neither hat nor coat  
he rode to his inauguration on horseback rather than in the closed carriage offered to him  
he delivered an 8,445-word speech that took two hours to read  
he rode in his inaugural parade and attended three balls that night

Harrison became ill with a cold which worsened -- nine days later he was dead  
Harrison's vice president, John Tyler, was sworn into the presidency  
Harrison's term of office, one month, was the shortest in American history  
his only official act was to call Congress into special session

#### WILLAMETTE FALLS IS COVETED BY METHODIST MISSIONAIRES

Rev. Alvin F. Waller was the leader the Methodist mission effort at Willamette Falls  
Methodist missionaries under Waller's leadership formed the Island Milling Company  
almost all of the members of the company board of directors  
belonged to the Methodist mission  
Island Milling Company took possession of a site on Governor (later Abernethy) Island  
in competition to Dr. McLoughlin's milling operation [begun in 1832]  
Carpenter Felix Hathaway in the employ of the Methodist mission  
was assigned to begin building a combined sawmill and gristmill on the island in the Willamette  
even though Dr. John McLoughlin had claimed the island for himself  
(or, perhaps, it was his company's claim -- the matter was never made clear)  
Hathaway also began to build a house on the East side of the river  
on the very site of McLoughlin's land  
When Chief Factor John McLoughlin showed concern regarding this encroachment on his land  
Rev. Waller stopped his building operations  
he assured Dr. McLoughlin that no wrong was intended  
to enforce his intent, McLoughlin had a small house of his own constructed on the island -- 1841

#### RIVALRY BETWEEN METHODISTS AND CATHOLICS INCREASES

Conflict between Methodist minister Jason Lee and Catholic priest Francis Blanchet increased  
aside from doctrinal disputes, the two leaders clashed on the issue of local government  
Catholics supported the efforts of Dr. McLoughlin and Hudson's Bay Company  
Jason Lee seemed to have regarded his own missionary movement useful  
less for its stated purpose than for cutting the tentacles of the Hudson's Bay Company  
south of the Columbia River  
Methodist mission, as the only American organization in the Willamette Valley,  
took the lead in the movement toward establishing a local government  
independent of the Hudson's Bay Company

#### KAMIAH MISSION AMONG THE NEZ PERCE INDIANS RECEIVES REINFORCEMENTS



Congregational minister Rev. Asa Smith and his ailing wife Sarah accompanied by Rev. Cushing and Myra Eells and layman Cornelius Rogers enjoyed little success working among the Nez Perce Indians. In an effort to bolster their efforts three independent Congregational missionaries were assigned to Kamiah:

- Rev. Harvey Clarke and his wife Emeline,
- Rev. Philo B. Littlejohn and his wife Adeline
- Mr. Alvin T. Smith and his wife Abigail,

Even with these reinforcements Kamiah achieved little in the way of conversions to the Christian faith. Cornelius Rodgers served as a teacher at the mission but he also had left Kamiah.

### THREE MOUNTAIN MEN ESTABLISH A PERMANENT HOME

Robert "Doc" Newell, Joe Meek and Caleb Wilkins soon moved from Willamette Falls a short distance up the Tualatin River to the Tualatin Plains northwest of Willamette Falls (near present day Hillsboro, Oregon) -- spring 1841.

Doc Newell proved to be a good enough risk to borrow seed, draft animals and implements from the Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Vancouver.

Crude and pushy Joe Meek had no such good fortune with the British company; however, he and his second wife Virginia also settled on the Tualatin Plain because the Hudson's Bay Company enjoyed good relations with most of the Northwest Indians whose lands the Company claimed on behalf of the British Empire.

Meek took to wearing a bright red sash in imitation of the French-Canadian trappers employed by the company.

Joe hoped that the Indians would think he was a Canadian trapper and leave him alone when he was exploring the countryside.

### OREGON-BUILT SCHOONER *STAR OF OREGON* IS UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Several American settlers had undertaken construction of a small sailing schooner they called the *Star of Oregon*.

Felix Hathaway quit the project due to lack of pay,

and frustration over the lack of needed building materials -- spring 1841.

Although wood was plentiful in Oregon, construction of a ship required cordage cloth for sails, and other materials were available

only from the Hudson's Bay Company store.

Chief Factor John McLoughlin refused to sell to the Americans.

Hathaway, an experienced ship's carpenter,  
also received a more promising business opportunity  
keel of the tiny schooner had been finished only to just above the water line  
Joseph Gale, Pleasant Armstrong, John Canan, George Davis, Thomas J. Hubbard  
Ralph Kilbourne and Henry Woods continued to work on the project

#### GOVERNOR-IN-CHIEF GEORGE SIMPSON RETURNS TO NORTH AMERICA

Once arriving in North America from London, Governor Simpson made his way overland  
via Halifax, Boston and Montreal before continuing by canoe to York Factory  
to return to the Columbia District to inspect his domain on his way around the world  
Governor Simpson's crossing of the continent from York Factory was as fast  
as his earlier journeys had been  
but this time he devoured the miles mostly on horseback rather than in a canoe  
and on this trip he traveled with more splendor than ever

#### ROBERT "DOC" NEWELL RETRIEVES HIS WAGONS

Newell journeyed from the Tualatin Plains back up the Columbia River  
to Fort Walla Walla -- April 1841  
to retrieve his son Francis Ermantinger Newell from the Whitmans  
and one of the wagons which he had left behind  
Doc Newell took his wagon apart and rather than driving it on its own wheels  
he shipped it down Columbia in a Hudson's Bay Company bateau  
hiring gangs of Indians to help him carry the parts across the portages  
Newell's wagon reached Fort Vancouver on a boat rather than its own wheels  
Doc Newell reassembled the vehicle -- then he drove it into the Willamette Valley  
he had successfully brought the first wagon across the plains and mountains  
and into the Willamette Valley over the future Oregon Trail  
to his mind it was a symbol of achievement as well as a representation of the future

#### DR. ELIJAH WHITE CIRCULATES HIS COMPLAINTS ABOUT REV. JASON LEE

Rushing to the United States, Dr. White, slight of frame, springy-heeled, smooth talking  
with exuberant blue eyes began an enthusiastic publicity campaign  
he took his complaints regarding Rev. Jason Lee  
to the Methodist Mission Society in Utica, New York -- April 1841  
he complained of the cost and sustainability of the mission

it had cost upward of \$100,000 to that point  
members of the Mission Society became very concerned  
regarding the state of the Methodist missions among the Indians  
Dr. Elijah White followed by the *Lausanne's* Captain Josiah Spaulding  
visited Congress with inaccurate and unbecoming tales about the British monopoly  
these stories were hard to reconcile with the generous treatment  
both Yankees received from Dr. John McLoughlin and the Hudson's Bay Company

#### EWING YOUNG'S ESTATE IS PROBATED

Dr. Ira Babcock acting as Supreme Judge

took on the appointment as administrator for Ewing Young's estate -- April 15, 1841

Supreme Judge Dr. Ira Babcock ruled under New York law

that Ewing's Young's estate was ready for distribution

Judge Babcock administered Young's estate to the satisfaction of the whole community

Mountain Man Joe Meek exercised his very loud voice at three public auctions

which netted a worth of \$3,734.26 for Ewing Young's worldly estate

these funds were to be held by the probate committee until such time as an heir could be found

this was the first official act of the as yet nonexistent government

(Joaquin Young, from New Mexico, eventually came forward

and was able to prove his lineage

Ewing Young's estate, minus some amount which had been used to build a jail,

was provided to him)

#### KAMIAH MISSION ON THE CLEARWATER RIVER REMAINS UNSUCCESSFUL

Congregationalist missionaries, although recognizing the difficulties facing them,

held tenaciously to the idea of preparing the natives for the day

when white settlers would pour into the fertile lands of the Pacific Northwest

work of teaching and converting Indians at the mission proved to be laborious and slow

American Board missionaries William and Mary Gray and Cornelius Rogers

were assigned to Kamiah Mission

Rev. Asa and Sarah Smith had spent two years at Kamiah operating the mission

and learning the Nez Perce language

(here Asa Smith had written an Indian dictionary of the Nez Perce language [1839])

Rev. Smith at first was tolerated by Indians but then was asked by the natives to pay for everything

finally the natives ordered him to leave

Rev. Asa and Sarah Smith left Kamiah Rev. as a result of discontent

among both Indians and the other missionaries -- April 19, 1841

Rev. and Mrs. Smith had become disillusioned and Sarah suffered from poor health

the couple moved to Lapwai Mission (before moving on to the Willamette Valley to farm)

William H. Gray and his wife Mary moved back to Waiilatpu Mission from Kamiah Mission

(Gray's irritable personality soon led them to depart from Waiilatpu to Chemeketa (near Salem)

Gray built a neat, rectangular adobe house situated 400 feet east of the main mission house

there he was joined by his wife but Gray and his wife lived in it only a short time)

(Rev. Harvey Clarke and his wife Emeline remained at Kamiah through [September 1841]

before they settled on Tualatin Plains and later moved to Forest Grove, Oregon)

#### LIEUTENANT WILKES EXPEDITION ARRIVES AT THE MOUTH OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER

(United States Exploring Expedition [also known as the "U.S. Ex. Ex." or the "Wilkes Expedition"]

under the command of U.S. Naval Lieutenant Charles Wilkes had been funded by Congress

at the request of President Andrew Jackson [1836]

this expedition to explore and survey the waters surrounding the United States.

was of major importance to the advance of science and geography

Wilkes Expedition was composed of five ships

flagship USS *Vincennes* (780 tons) sloop *Peacock* (650 tons), brig USS *Porpoise* (230 tons),

store-ship USS *Relief* and two schooners, USS *Sea Gull* (110 tons)

and USS *Flying Fish* (96 tons)

Naval Lieutenant Wilkes and his men sailed from Hampton Roads Virginia [August 18, 1838]

they visited the Madeira Islands and Cape Verde Islands before reaching Brazil and Argentina

they continued on to Tierra del Fuego, Chile and Peru where the USS *Sea Gull*

and her crew of fifteen were lost during a storm [1839]

U.S. Ex. Ex. continued on to Australia and entered the Antarctic Ocean where they discovered

the Antarctic continent -- part of which was later named "Wilkes Land"

Fiji was reached before the Wilkes Expedition reached the Hawaiian Islands

Naval Lieutenant Charles Wilkes had spent two years, seven months and eighteen days

on his around-the-world expedition)

While in Hawaii, Wilkes sought instructions regarding crossing the sandbar of the Columbia River

from Captain Josiah Spaulding master of the *Lausanne*

who had safely delivered the Great Reinforcement to Oregon [1840])

U.S. Naval Lieutenant Charles Wilkes sailed the *Vincennes* to the mouth of the Columbia River

where he arrived during a storm -- April 20, 1841

Wilkes Expedition's 650-ton *Peacock* and her tender *Flying Fish* were not yet in sight  
they were still en route to the Pacific Northwest from the South Seas  
store ship *Relief* as always lagged far behind  
*Sea Gull* had been lost in a storm navigating Cape Horn [April 28, 1839]

while visiting the Pacific Northwest Lieutenant Wilkes was primarily interested in two tasks:

- evaluating American prospects in the Pacific Northwest,
- furthering American colonization

#### NAVAL LIEUTENANT WILKES REMAINS OUTSIDE THE COLUMBIA RIVER'S MOUTH

During an attempt to enter the Columbia River in a storm pilot Josiah Spaulding  
barely avoided wrecking the *Vincennes* off Point Grenville

For a week Wilkes remained unwilling to risk his ship in such dangerous waters

Wilkes described in his own words **“the terror of the bar...one of the most frightful sights that  
can possibly meet the eye of the sailor.”**<sup>23</sup>

When the *Peacock* and *Flying Fish* failed to rendezvous with him at the Columbia River

Wilkes began to fear that they might have come to grief somewhere in the Pacific Ocean

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET LEAVES ST. LOUIS

On his journey to return to the Flathead Indians Father De Smet took the riverboat *Oceanea*  
from St. Louis upriver to Westport, Missouri (today's Kansas City, Missouri) -- April 24, 1841  
his traveling companions were:

Father Gregorio Mengarini -- an Italian priest, a skilled doctor, musician and linguist  
Brother Charles Duet and Brother Willem Claessens who was skilled as a carpenter  
both were Belgians

and Brother Joseph Specht who was a blacksmith from Germany

Father De Smet was never a resident priest

rather he served as a traveling evangelist, organizer and fund-raiser

#### LIEUTENANT CHARLES WILKES SAILS NORTH FROM THE MOUTH OF THE COLUMBIA

Failure of the *Peacock*, *Flying Fish* and *Relief* left Wilkes with only half of his resources available  
for the task ahead but Wilkes decided to press on with his work regardless

he left a coast watcher at the river's mouth to await the arrival of his three other ships

Wilkes sailed the sloop-of-war *Vincennes* and brig *Porpoise* of the U.S. Ex. Ex.

northward from the mouth of the Columbia River -- April 28, 1841

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<sup>23</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 204.

## FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET ARRIVES IN WESTPORT, MISSOURI

Water level of the Missouri River was low and the *Oceanea* was forced to navigate with care from St. Louis it took the steamer several days to reach Westport, Missouri carrying Father De Smet with his travel companions Father Mengarini and three lay-brothers After a brief pause in Westport, three Catholic priests and four lay-brothers began making arrangements for the long, tiring and perilous journey to the Flathead Indians

## CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES JOURNEY WEST TO THE FLATHEAD INDIANS

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet with Father Gregory Mengarini and three lay-brothers Charles Duet, Joseph Specht, and William Claessens immediately start making arrangements they purchased five carts with the necessary mules and horses Father De Smet and his traveling companions set out from Westport, Missouri -- April 30, 1841 these Catholic travelers were soon joined by another Catholic priest, Father Nicolas Point he had left his College of Grand Coteau in Louisiana position and waited in Westport to join in the Catholic missionary effort at the College of Grand Coteau Father Point had dispute with fellow student Peter De Vos that was so serious it had resulted in Father Point's reassignment to the Rocky Mountain Mission to serve under Father De Smet who was Superior of the Rocky Mountain Mission

This time, however, the three Catholic priests and three lay-brothers were unable to travel with the American Fur Company caravan fur trade had declined and the annual rendezvous system has been abandoned By a stroke of good fortune the missionaries met Thomas "Broken Hand" Fitzpatrick an "unemployed" mountain man who agreed to guide the little party to the Green River Fitzpatrick hired experienced French-Canadian trappers to accompany them such as John Gray, Jim Baker and William Mast

## LIEUTENANT CHARLES WILKES ENTERS THE STRAIT OF JUAN DE FUCA

U.S. Naval Lieutenant Charles Wilkes spent an anxious, rainy evening cautiously entering the Strait of Juan de Fuca -- May 1, 1841 next day the *Vincennes* and *Porpoise* of the "U.S. Ex. Ex." swept up the strait their crews were awed by the vast forests and cloud-veiled shores While in the strait *Vincennes* was boarded by the crew of a large canoe one of the Indians wore corduroy pants and a scarlet coat with a hood

he spoke enough English for Wilkes to direct him to carry a letter  
to Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Nisqually  
requesting the services of a pilot and interpreter  
Lieutenant Wilkes sailed into Discovery Bay located on the Olympic Peninsula -- May 2  
(between Sequim and Port Townsend, Washington)  
they anchored in Discovery Bay where Captain George Vancouver stayed forty-nine years before  
while the land looked much as it had then, the natives had experienced considerable change  
Wilkes spent a week investigating and charting the area inside the Strait of Juan de Fuca

#### HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY EXPANDS TO CALIFORNIA

Dr. John McLoughlin had sent successful trapping brigades into California

Dr. McLoughlin appointed his son-in-law William Glen Rae  
(recently returned to Fort Vancouver from Fort Stikine, Alaska)  
to establish a post at Yerba Buena (San Francisco)

Yerba Buena post opened -- May 1841

William Glen Rae (as time would show) was not the sort of man to be turned loose  
among the petty intrigues of California politics

#### JOHN BIDWELL'S WESTERN EMIGRATION SOCIETY COMPLETES THEIR PREPARATIONS

More than 500 people were waiting in Missouri for the momentous crossing of the continent -- 1841

John Bidwell had delayed crossing the continent bound for California for almost a year  
as a result of the campaign by St. Louis merchants to stop the westward movement  
and keep business there

after waiting and planning for a year in seventy adults and children led by John Bidwell  
formed the "Western Emigration Society"

twenty-one-year-old John Bidwell took charge of eleven wagons

as they left St. Louis, Missouri for this first effort to cross the continent by a wagon train

Bidwell regrouped his wagons on the banks of the Kaw River (today's Topeka, Kansas)

there final preparations were begun for the long, dangerous trek overland to Fort Hall  
(Bidwell later admitted the party included no one who had ever been to California)

John Bartleson, fifty-four years old headstrong and overbearing, had arrived in St. Louis  
where he placed himself in charge of a group of twenty-five wagons

#### WESTERN EMIGRATION SOCIETY SETS OUTFROM ST. LOUIS

Young John Bidwell and his followers in eleven wagons of the Western Emigration Society

left St. Louis on this first effort by a wagon train to cross to the Pacific coast -- May 8, 1841  
they followed the well-marked Santa Fe Trail to Sapling Grove  
near Westport (today's Kansas City) Missouri  
here the Santa Fe Trail branched west toward Oregon and California

#### SEVEN CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES ARE SET OUT FROM WESTPORT, MISSOURI

Father De Smet and his six companions were led on horseback by their guide Tom Fitzpatrick  
they started their long westward trek on an unmarked road to the Green River  
with five two-wheel carriages, each drawn by a pair of mules -- May 10, 1841  
on this trip Father De Smet and Thomas Fitzpatrick start a lifelong friendship

#### WESTERN EMIGRATION SOCIETY REACHES SAPLING GROVE

John Bidwell's Western Emigration Society reached Sapling Grove  
near Westport (Kansas City, Missouri)  
where an excellent spring provided wood, water and grass  
there final preparations were undertaken to travel to California

#### VINCENNES AND PORPOISE SAIL ON TO FORT NISQUALLY

Having navigated the Strait of Juan de Fuca Lieutenant Wilkes arrived in Puget Sound  
*Vincennes* and *Porpoise* anchored off Fort Nisqually -- May 11, 1841  
this Hudson's Bay Company post was located near Sequelitchew (Chambers) Creek  
Wilkes did not know what kind of reception he would receive  
from the Hudson's Bay Company men at Fort Nisqually

#### LIEUTENANT WILKES ESTABLISHES HIS HEADQUARTERS AT FORT NISQUALLY

Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Nisqually Chief Trader Alexander Caulfield Anderson  
welcomed Charles Wilkes and his men  
as did William Henry McNeill the captain of the Company steamship *Beaver*  
Lieutenant Wilkes was pleased to receive the hospitality of the Hudson's Bay Company  
he used the Fort Nisqually area as a base for both maritime and land explorations  
Charles Wilkes developed a cooperative relationship with the Hudson's Bay Company employees  
he was dependent on advice and supplies from them and they greatly assisted in Wilkes' efforts  
Chief Trader Anderson assisted in the construction of two log cabins  
where trees had been cleared and were used for fuel  
one cabin was an observatory on top of the hills to the south of Sequelitchew (Chambers) Creek



within hailing distance of the ships

here scientific instruments and clocks used to determine and check longitude and latitude  
were housed

the other cabin was for the use of the chart makers

Lieutenant Charles Wilkes reported that Hudson's Bay Company men  
had been able to rescue three Japanese sailors -- 1841

(these sailors were eventually sent on to England to find their way home)

In his official report Wilkes echoed the words of Captain Vancouver in his glorification of the region:  
**“Nothing can exceed the beauty of these waters and their safety; not a shoal exists... that can in any way interrupt their navigation by a seventy-four gun ship. I venture nothing in saying there is no country in the world that possesses waters equal to these.”**<sup>24</sup>

Impressions of the local scene were recorded

two artists traveling with the Wilkes Expedition, Joseph Drayton and Alfred A. Agate,  
sketched Indian portraits, native tools, canoes and costumes  
naturalist Titian Ramsay Peale, the son of famous naturalist and artist Charles Wilson Peale,  
recorded his impressions of the region

Wilkes also made drawings of local scenes

While at Fort Nisqually, U.S. Naval Lieutenant Wilkes sent a letter to the Secretary of the Navy:

**“I shall continue my operations in the waters of this Territory and keep parties engaged in the interior during the time we remain; obtaining as much knowledge of the country as possible, being well aware of the importance of accurate information for the use of the government relative to the value of the country, pending the settlement of the boundary question.”**<sup>25</sup>

#### CHILES PARTY JOINS THE BIDWELL WAGON TRAIN

Two days later a small group of five people headed by Joseph B Chiles -- May 12, 1841  
Chiles' Party caught up with the westbound Western Emigration Society wagon train  
at Sapling Grove where they added their numbers to the Bidwell Wagon Train

#### BIDWELL AND BARTLESON WAGON TRAINS UNITE

John Bartleson had led twenty-five wagons in the wake of John Bidwell's eleven wagons  
Bidwell's wagon train was overtaken as Sapling Gove near Independence, Missouri  
It is decided to united the two wagon trains as more than seventy men, women and children  
John Bartleson insisted on being elected Captain and threatened to leave if he was ignored

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<sup>24</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 168.

<sup>25</sup> James A. Crutchfield, *It Happened in Washington*, P. 28.

it was obvious “Captain” Bartleson knew little more about crossing the Plains the next man  
but he was elected anyway -- it was primarily a self-appointment  
young John Bidwell served as secretary and kept a daily journal of the adventure  
Bartleson-Bidwell Wagon Train was composed of sixty-four men, five women and several children  
barely eighteen years old Nancy Kelsey, the wife of Benjamin Kelsey,  
carried their six-month-old daughter Annin in one arm and led a horse with the other  
she was later remembered for her heroic, patient and kind character

#### CONDITIONS HAVE CHANGED AT WAILLATPU

Although a blacksmith shop and a gristmill had been erected at Lapwai to serve all the stations,  
it became evident to Dr. Marcus Whitman that the central location of Waiilatpu  
required that similar facilities be constructed there  
Construction on the gristmill on the south side of the mission grounds was completed  
it could grind about 1½ bushels of wheat per hour  
Lapwai’s blacksmith equipment was moved -- 1841  
and a small adobe sixteen by thirty-foot shop was built  
half-way between the mission house and another residence  
adobe bricks were taken from the first mission house which was torn down  
near this shop a corral was also built

#### WESTERN EMIGRATION SOCIETY LEARNS OF ANOTHER GROUP GOING WEST

John Bidwell heard that a company of Catholic missionaries led by Father Pierre-Jean De Smet  
were on their way from St. Louis to the Flathead Country  
with an old mountain man for a guide  
if the wagon train waited for a day, the missionaries would catch up  
Members of the Western Emigration Society decided to wait at Sapling Grove  
until the Catholics could arrive there -- May 14, 1841

#### THOMAS “BROKEN HAND” FITZPATRICK AGREES TO GUIDE THE WAGON TRAIN

Thomas “Broken Hand” Fitzpatrick agreed to guide Bartleson-Bidwell wagons to the Green River  
hiring the guide was a monumental decision  
young John Bidwell later claimed that was a most important factor in the party's survival  
without the guidance of Tom “Broken Hand” Fitzpatrick  
the trip would have been disastrous  
only his experience demonstrated how to deal with the Indians,

find, kill and cure food and point the proper route

#### LIEUTENANT WILKES ESTABLISHES FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH THE INDIANS

Numerous Pacific Northwest Indians were encountered by the Wilkes Expedition  
among these were the Sequatchew Nisquallies who lived near the Hudson's Bay Company post  
and the American missionaries serving the local Indians

While surveying in Puget Sound, Wilkes met Chief George of the Tatouche Tribe  
and took an image of the native using a camera lucida  
(an optical device used as a drawing aid by artists)

Wilkes and his men enjoyed peaceful relations with native people  
Indian guides provided key assistance to the overland parties  
however, the racism so common in that era sometimes  
marred the descriptions of Native Americans in the Expedition reports

#### METHODIST MISSIONARIES LIVING NEAR FORT NISQUALLY MEET WITH WILKES

Naval Lieutenant Charles Wilkes and his men encountered the American missionaries  
from the Nisqually Methodist Mission established [in 1839] near Fort Nisqually  
this mission was the home of the first United States citizens to settle in the region  
Methodist missionary Reverend Doctor John P. Richmond was the group's leader  
assisted by William Holden Willson and his wife Chloe Aurelia Clark Willson  
both the missionaries and Wilkes Expedition members supported the strengthening  
of American influence in the Pacific Northwest

#### CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES AND BARTLESON-BIDWELL WAGON TRAIN COMBINE

At Sapling Grove, Father Pierre-Jean De Smet guided by Thomas "Broken Hand" Fitzpatrick  
joined the members of the Bartleson-Bidwell Wagon Train Western  
composed of thirty-six wagons and five solid-wheel carts  
as seventy-four people started from Sapling Grove -- May 15, 1841

Leaders of the caravan required the emigrants to observe an almost military discipline  
orders must be obeyed: to wake-up, to leave, to halt, to take meals, to set-up camp,  
to sleep and to keep watch

after sunset the campsite was very vulnerable

an unbroken circle of wagons must be guarded all night

even the otherwise peaceful missionaries stood watch

During the whole trip there was only one casualty -- this due to an accidental but fatal shot

two couples were married and the Jesuits said mass in their tent  
Missionaries increasingly admired the knowledge and know-how of the Mountain Man  
who serve as their guide

#### HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY CHIEF TRADER PIERRE CHRYSOLOGUE PAMBRUN DIES

Chief Traders Pierre Chrysologue Pambrun died at Fort Walla Walla -- May 15, 1841  
of injuries from fall off a horse  
American Board of Commissioners Missionaries at Waiilatpu, Lapwai and Kamiah  
lost a good friend

#### WILKES SENDS EXPLORING EXPEDITIONS INTO PUGET SOUND

Although Oregon (Columbia District) was still jointly occupied by the United States and Great Britain  
Wilkes decided that his orders gave him complete authority to do whatever exploration he wished  
From Fort Nisqually Lieutenant Charles Wilkes divided the expedition into several surveying parties  
they undertook an extensive survey of the region  
their work added some detail to the earlier charts of British Captain George Vancouver  
Wilkes spent a month on the *Vincennes* investigating the inland waters of Puget Sound  
he noted the easy anchorage to be found in Puget Sound  
these island-studded water highways overlooked by the stupendous bulk of Mount Rainier  
were more to his liking than the terrifying crossing the Columbia River sandbar  
Lieutenant Cadwalader Ringgold aboard the *Porpoise* also investigated the region  
*Porpoise* and two of *Vincennes* longboats were sent north to chart Admiralty Inlet  
the north arm of Port Orchard was found to connect with Admiralty Inlet  
*Vincennes'* launch, first cutter and two boats under command of Lieutenant A.L. Case  
surveyed the eastern arm of Hood Canal and the intricacies of Puget Sound above The Narrows

#### LIEUTENANT WILKES NAMES GEOGRAPHIC FEATURES OF PUGET SOUND

To strengthen America's claim, Charles Wilkes named 261 locations in Puget Sound  
fifty-one in (Pierce County) alone

Lieutenant Ringgold named Commencement Bay as the beginning point of their survey  
based on Ringgold's report Wilkes named Bainbridge Island  
in appreciation of the cooperative attention provided by Hudson's Bay Company employees  
Wilkes named the two large islands just north of Fort Nisqually:

- Anderson Island for Hudson's Bay Company employee Alexander Caulfield Anderson
- McNeil's Island in honor of William Henry McNeill

captain of the Hudson's Bay Company steamship *Beaver*  
(Wilkes misspelled McNeill's name, dropping one "l,"  
and eventually the possessive form was eliminated)

Wilkes also named Pitt Island, Day Island, McNeil Island, Harstine Island, Heron Island,  
Fox Island, Maury Island which honored William L. Maury the nephew of a Navy scientist  
Gig Harbor was named when Lieutenant Cadwalader Ringgold became separated  
from the other boats during a rain squall -- his party took refuge in a sheltered harbor  
this group named the harbor in honor of the little boat which safely carried them  
Quartermaster Harbor between Vashon and Maury Islands honored his petty officers as a group  
Port Ludlow was designated to honor Lieutenant Augustus Ludlow killed in an [1813] battle  
Port Madison, Point Monroe and Point Jefferson honored former U.S. presidents

Like British Captain George Vancouver before him, Charles Wilkes spent a good deal of time  
near Bainbridge Island where he noted the bird-like shape of Eagle Harbor

Wilkes expedition named other geographical features:

Pickering Passage, Hart Passage, Hale Passage honors Horatio Hale the expedition's linguist,  
Drayton Passage, Dana Passage named for geologist James Dwight Dana  
and Agate Passage between Bainbridge Island and the Kitsap Peninsula  
was named for draftsman Alfred T. Agate

(much to the confusion and frustration of generations of rock hounds)

Hammersley's Inlet honored midshipman George Hammersly, Henderson Inlet, Case Inlet,  
Carr Inlet, Eld Inlet named for Lieutenant Henry Eld, Totten and Budd Inlet near Olympia  
named for master cartographers George M. Totten and Thomas A. Budd

Elliott Bay was probably named for Midshipman Samuel Elliott  
who was a member of the *Porpoise* survey crew that charted the bay  
although the unpopular ship's chaplain Jared Elliott and ship's boy George Elliott  
also were members of the expedition

Wilkes named Point Defiance, Point Treble, Green Point, Otso Point and Point Fosdick  
continuing his fascination with winged creatures he named Bill Point and Wing Point

Wilkes also named Toliva Shoal off Fox Island and Oro Bay on Anderson Island  
an indifferent speller, the lieutenant made slight effort to correctly honor those he named  
Ketron Island honored helpful Hudson's Bay Company carpenter William Kittson  
Colvos Passage honored George Musolas Colvocoresses

a Greek immigrant serving aboard the *Vincennes*  
mistaking the dogwood trees flowering above a cove on the Kitsap Peninsula for apple trees,  
he named the place Apple Tree Cove

Wilkes Expedition made naval explorations through Agate Passage -- May 1841

he mentioned the existence of an Indian home, Old Man House, constructed [1792]:

Wilkes made note: **“Near this passage is the place where the Roman Catholic missionaries have established a station for teaching the surrounding tribes. A large cross is erected and there is a building one hundred and seventy-two feet by seventy-two wide, which was found to contain many crude images.”**<sup>26</sup>

In the course of their investigation of Puget Sound, the United States Exploration Expedition scientists gathered thousands of specimens of plant and animal life they thoroughly mapped and charted all of the places they visited Wilkes decided to share his information with the local representatives of Hudson’s Bay Company who were generous with their support of the expedition

#### CATHOLICS LEAVE FORT HALL TO SERVE THE FLATHEAD NATIVES

Thomas “Broken Hand” Fitzpatrick along with ten or eleven French-Canadians, Mountain Man John Gray and a young Englishman named Mr. Romaine and another man named Mr. Baker guided the Catholics missionaries to Flathead Chief Big Face’s village Fathers Pierre-Jean De Smet, Gregorio Mengarini and Nicolas Point with Brother Charles Duet, Brother Joseph Specht and Brother Willem Claessens accompanied by the escort of Flathead warriors led by Young Ignace La Mousse left Fort Hall and turned north on their way to Henry's Fork of the Snake River

#### NAVAL LIEUTENANT WILKES SENDS OUT A PARTY TO INVESTIGATE OVERLAND

Wilkes dispatched Naval Lieutenant Robert E. Johnson of the *Porpoise* with a six-man expedition eastward to traverse most of what is now (Washington State) Wilkes allotted eighty days for the trip traveling with Johnson would be naturalist Charles Pickering, botanist William Brackenridge, Thomas Waldron of the *Porpoise*, Marine Sergeant Simeon Stearns and a servant Pierre Charles, a French-Canadian employee of Hudson’s Bay Company, served as guide he was accompanied by Peter Bercier a local young man who spoke English and several native languages Lieutenant Johnson and his men began making preparations in a remarkably short time horses were tested and acquired from local Indians, riding saddles and pack saddles had to be made along with saddle blankets, reins

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<sup>26</sup> Charles Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States' Exploring Expedition: During the ...*, Volume 1, P. 286.

and lashings for equipment and supplies  
for much of the equipment Johnson were indebted to the kindness  
of Chief Trader Alexander Caulfield Anderson and Captain William Henry McNeill  
however some of the necessities were made on board the ships  
following a pattern loaned by Hudson's Bay Company  
Johnson and his men set out on horseback from Fort Nisqually -- May 19, 1841  
they were allegedly to take scientific observations,  
but more importantly they were to size up the value of the Pacific Northwest  
to guide Congress in its dispute with Great Britain

#### HULL OF THE *STAR OF OREGON* LAUNCHED

Partially completed tiny schooner splashed into the Willamette River -- May 19, 1841  
this was the first vessel constructed on the Willamette River  
hull was worked up the river to the Willamette Falls to be outfitted for sea  
Motives of the would-be sailors were not clear:

- at first they told Dr. McLoughlin, when buying supplies from the Vancouver store,  
that they were building a ferryboat to ply the Willamette River
- on still another occasion they had talked of going to California for cattle  
to further weaken the economic dominance of the Hudson's Bay Company
- it may have been fear of Chief Factor McLoughlin's disapproval  
that had led them to ask certain French-Canadians to front for them  
in buying needed canvas, cordage and other materials at the Hudson's Bay Company store

#### U.S. NAVAL LIEUTENANT CHARLES WILKES LEAVES PUGET SOUND ON HORSEBACK

Lieutenant Wilkes, himself, prepared to lead an expedition of his own  
overland from Fort Nisqually to Fort Vancouver

Wilkes Party consisted of *Vincennes* Purser Richard Waldron, artist Joseph Drayton,  
two servants, two Indian guides and a French-Canadian guide  
they traveled on horseback with four pack horses down the Cowlitz Trail  
linking Fort Nisqually to Cowlitz Farm

they crossed the portage to the Cowlitz River, rented a canoe and paddled downriver

regarding the Cowlitz River area Wilkes noted in his report: **"The park scenery increased in beauty, and it was almost impossible to realize that we were in a savage and wild country, and that nature, not art, had perfected the landscape. Beautiful lakes, with greensward [green turf] growing to the water edge, with deer feeding fearlessly on their margin, and every tint of flower...strewn in**

**profusion around; in galloping along we could hardly but expect to see some beautiful mansion as a fit accompaniment to such scenery.”<sup>27</sup>**

While passing Cowlitz Farm Wilkes noted: **“They have here six or seven hundred acres enclosed, and under cultivation, with several large granaries, a large farm-house, and numerous out-buildings to accommodate the dairy, workmen, cattle, etc. The grounds appear well prepared, and were covered with a luxuriant crop of wheat. At the farther end of the prairie was to be seen a settlement, with its orchards, etc., and between the trees, the chapel and parsonage of the Catholic Mission [St. Frances Xavier] gave an air of civilization to the whole.”<sup>28</sup>**

Wilkes’ party explored the mysterious Mima Mounds -- May 21, 1841

Wilkes thought the mounds might be Native American burial sites, but he found only earth inside  
Native American legends said a falling star dropped them like pebbles onto the earth  
(geologists and others have since developed several dozen hypotheses, including glacial  
freeze-and-thaw cycles, erosion, the interplay between wind and vegetation,  
an earthquake or two, a tsunami, and perhaps a volcanic eruption)

#### LIEUTENANT ROBERT E. JOHNSON’S SIX MAN PARTY REACHES THE PUYALLUP RIVER

From Fort Nisqually Lieutenant Johnson and his five traveling companions crossed Puyallup River  
and began an ascent of the Cascade Mountains following a clear path -- May 21, 1841

camp was made that night at the junction of the Puyallup and Uptascap (Carbon) rivers

During the attempt to climb the west side of the Cascades large trees had to be felled across the river  
and the packs carried across by the men while the horses swam to the other side

For several days their route following the Indian trail lay through forests of spruce trees

they continued following an old Indian trail around the northern flank of Mount Rainier

miles of paths were cut through thickets of brush and fallen timber

steep grades of slippery clay had to be climbed as horses slipped

and became entangled in roots of every shape and size

horse with their packs sometimes became wedged between trees

on several occasions horses reached the top of a hill but were so exhausted they fell backward

and somersaulted back to the bottom where their loads had to be rearranged

and the effort to reach the top made again

although they were assisted by local Indians

none of members of Johnson’s party were happy to proceed

this discontent increased as horses and men climbed the steep hills

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<sup>27</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 168.

<sup>28</sup> Oscar Osburn Winther, *The Great Northwest*, P. 75.



falling was a common occurrence

#### JOHNSON'S EXPEDITION CONTINUES TOWARD THE SUMMIT OF THE CASACDES

Lieutenant Robert E. Johnson was greeted with the discovery that his expedition's horses had wandered away searching for better forage -- May 24, 1841 when they were found the party set out along the Indian trail to the Smalocho (White) River where conical hills thickly covered with gigantic pine trees hampered their progress Exhausted horses and Indians who had carried the burdens of packs made camp Johnson diverted the Indians' fatigue by conducting a shooting contest for a knife this excitement provided the desired effect on the natives

#### JOHNSON'S EXPEDITION CONTINUES THEIR STRUGGLE UP THE CASCADE MOUNTAINS

When Naval Lieutenant Robert Johnson and his six men reached the upper (Greenwater) river a bridge had to be constructed across the swift deep water both men and horses suffered from lack of food Johnson and his men reached a plain that was identified as "Little Prairie" -- May 26, 1841 because this was the last place where food could be assured the horses were rested for the day as Indians carried forward some of the loads in an effort to relieve the pack animals Guide Pierre Charles and Purser Richard Waldron each carrying fifty pound packs were sent forward with the Indian, naturalist Dr. Charles Pickering and botanist William Brackenridge Lieutenant Johnson remained in camp at Little Prairie Waldron crossed the summit of Nahchess Pass (today's Naches Pass) and continued down the east side they became the first American party to cross Nahchess Pass over the Cascade Mountains snow on the east side was ten feet deep and the men sank to their ankles which indicated the horses would have problems when they crossed the summit Waldron made camp on the east side of the mountains

#### LIEUTENANT JOHNSON CONTINUES TOWARD THE SUMMIT OF THE CASCADES

Johnson at Little Prairie received a messenger from Purser Richard Waldron -- May 27, 1841 Johnson set out with the remainder of his expedition about 11:00 A.M. May 27 he met guide Pierre Charles who had returned across Nahchess Pass with the Indians who had accompanied Waldron learning of the snowy conditions ahead Johnson pressed on taking only the strongest horses camp was made a mile beyond Waldron's camp 5:30 P.M. As the snow was rapidly melting Johnson decided to press forward

although the prospect of failure loomed large

#### BARTLESON-BIDWELL WAGON TRAIN CONTINUES WEST

Bartleson -Bidwell Wagon Train led by Tom "Broken Hand" Fitzpatrick was joined by Joseph Williams, a protestant preacher who was apparently traveling on his own to Oregon -- May 27, 1841

#### NAVAL LIEUTENANT CHARLES WILKES ARRIVES AT FORT VANCOUVER

Lieutenant Wilkes traveling overland from Fort Nisqually with *Vincennes* Purser Richard Waldron, artist Joseph Drayton, two servants, two Indian guides and a French-Canadian guide reached Astoria, American John Jacob Astor's Pacific outpost at Astoria now operated by Hudson's Bay Company

Continuing on horseback up the Columbia River Wilkes and his traveling companions arrived at Fort Vancouver -- May 28, 1841

they received a friendly greeting from chief factors Dr. John McLoughlin and James Douglas during the following week Wilkes and his men were well entertained they received a great deal of information regarding the region surrounding the Hudson's Bay Company headquarters

#### LIEUTENANT ROBERT E. JOHNSON CONTINUES HIS TRAVELS

In order to take advantage of the snow made firm by a frost the night before Naval Lieutenant Johnson and his men departed at dawn -- April 28, 1841

haste was necessary as provisions were running low during the ascent some of their supplies had been lost in the river crossings they rapidly traveled across the worst part of the trail along a narrow ridge until they reached a plain about a mile long and half a mile across

During their descent on the east side of the Cascade Mountains the snow was much deeper but the horses managed well

when camp was made that night the men accidentally set fire to the moss-covered trees which forced the expedition to move farther upwind

Lieutenant Johnson following the party missed the trail and lost his way for three or four hours when he discovered his party's camp he saw it was located across the river from his location

he attempted to cross the river on a log but slipped and fell into the water he saved the chronometer but the watch he used to accurately establish their longitude stopped it was no longer reliable

Indians and horses alike were exhausted from their mountain crossing

it was time for Johnson to pay the Indians for the services they had provided

which had been far in excess of what had been contracted as they crossed the mountains twice because it was necessary to retain all of the blankets Johnson's expedition had brought with them

to buy horses Johnson proposed the Indians receive credit at Fort Nisqually in lieu of blankets

the natives readily agreed and even gave up the blankets they had received in payment

two local Indians were sent back to Nisqually rather than continue with Lieutenant Johnson's party

they were trusted with the botanical specimens that had been collected

and with the care of the horses the expedition had left behind

#### NAVAL LIEUTENANT ROBERT E. JOHNSON AND HIS MEN PRESS ON

Indians loaded with ninety pound packs again took up the march through the snow -- May 29, 1841

river banks on the east side of the Cascades were lined with a great variety of trees: poplars,

dogwood, several species of willow trees, alder, two species of maple and a few yew trees

several species of underbrush slowed their progress

occasionally small trees bent over by the weight of snow were stepped on and broken

forcing the traveler to extract himself and his heavy burden

from the hole in the snow beneath the branches

Spipen (Naches) River was reached and camp was made about 3:00 p.m. -- April 29, 1841

around the river this region was mountainous and woody

with a narrow strip of meadow stretching along the river's bank

Purser Richard Waldron sent Lachemere, one of the Indians, down the river

to inform the local Indian chief they were in the vicinity and wished to procure horses

#### NAVAL LIEUTENANT JOHNSON'S EXPEDITION CONTACTS THE YAKIMA INDIANS

Lieutenant Robert Johnson accompanied by Purser Thomas Waldron, Marine Sergeant Simeon Stearns

scientists Charles Pickering and William Brackenridge, a servant,

guides Pierre Charles and Peter Bercier and several Indians who carried ninety pound packs

they continued over rough country that required a great deal of caution

because of the steepness of the climb in places while in other places the land was marshy

and became impassable

They met two Indians who informed them the chief of the Yakima people was a short distance ahead

he was waiting to meet them with several horses

Old Tidias, the chief, was met about noon-- May 30, 1841

he was a tall, strait, thin and balding man with long black hair down his back

he greeted Johnson in a grave but dignified manner and agreed to sell some horses

#### WILLAMETTE SETTLERS MEET AT ST. PAUL'S CATHOLIC MISSION

On the first Tuesday in June settlers from around the Willamette Valley gathered at the new building near St. Paul's Catholic Church -- June 1, 1841

Nine-man Code of Laws Committee members announced the committee had not met

thus there was no report to make Chairman Father Francis Blanchet

Committee Chairman Father Blanchet sent a letter to the meeting

asking he be relieved of his duties as Chairman of the Committee of nine

clearly signaling to his Catholic constituency that he would no longer be involved

in the creation of a local government

scar-faced Dr. William Bailey was chosen to replace Francis Blanchet

on the Code of Laws Committee and served as its chairman

Code of Laws Committee members were instructed to meet (on the first Monday in August [2])

and to report their accomplishments to the inhabitants of the Willamette Valley

in a meeting to be held (the first Tuesday in October [5])

committee members also were instructed to meet with U.S. Naval Lieutenant Charles Wilkes

and with Dr. John McLoughlin to discuss writing a constitution and code of laws

for the community

Rev. Jason Lee, the governorship no longer within his reach, seems to have lost all interest

he had attempted to detach the French-Canadian settlers from Hudson's Bay Company control

now it was obvious that purpose was unattainable -- at least for the present

#### LIEUTENANT ROBERT E. JOHNSON AND HIS EXPEDITION CONTINUE TOWARD THE EAST

After a day's delay waiting for horses that did not arrive Johnson and his men set out to the east

they entered a far different terrain than they had seen before -- June 1, 1841

long sloping hills covered with a scanty growth of pine trees gave proof

they would be forced to travel what the Yakima Indians called a "hungry road"

many dry riverbeds were passed and the soil produced nothing but long thin grass

occasionally small valleys of luxurious grass and larger pine trees were seen

reaching a ridge Johnson's expedition fell in with a number of local Indians digging camas root

#### NAVAL LIEUTENANT JOHNSON'S EXPEDITION REACHES THE YAKIMA RIVER

Yakima River was too deep for horses to cross with their packs

rubber rafts were used to float the packs across the water -- June 2, 1841

Twenty Yakima Indians led by Chief Kamiayah, the son-in-law of old Tidias, were seen  
these Indians were living in temporary huts consisting of mats spread on poles  
they had a number of fine horses but would not part with them at any price

Kamiayah was the most handsome Indian they had met with but he proved surly in his manners

#### BARTLESON-BIDWELL WAGON TRAIN CROSSES (NEBRASKA)

These Catholic missionaries and wagon train members led by Tom "Broken Hand" Fitzpatrick  
were among the very first travelers on Oregon Trail

Between Sapling Grove and the Big Blue River Nicholas Dawson, traveling alone  
was suddenly surrounded and disarmed by a significant number of Cheyenne Indians

Tom Fitzpatrick stayed calm and the Native Americans remain friendly  
they even return Dawson's belongings

Near the South Platte River they met a very large number of bison

these frightened animals stampede and the moving herd threatened to overrun the wagons  
and to trample the emigrants

shooting a few bison did the trick as the course of the racing animals was altered  
yet another potentially dangerous situation was averted

in the following days the bison became a fixed item on the menu

Daytime temperature ran very high and turned even higher

emigrants were caught up by a violent hurricane

and they barely escaped from the destructive forces of a waterspout

Near the Lower California Crossing (today's Brule, Nebraska) they crossed the South Platte River  
as the caravan followed the southern bank of the North Platte River past Chimney Rock  
and Scott's Bluff

#### LIEUTENANT ROBERT JOHNSON'S EXPEDITION REACHES THE COLUMBIA RIVER

U.S. Naval Lieutenant Robert E. Johnson purchased three more horses

five members of the expedition now had horses while three others continued to walk

During their travels Marine Sergeant Simeon Stearns who was entrusted with the barometer  
broke the instrument as he was setting it up

it was no longer possible to accurately determined their elevation

Johnson and his seven men reached the Columbia River

about three miles below the Pischous (Wenatchee) River -- early afternoon June 4, 1841

here the arid land was destitute of even scattered trees with no vegetation along the river bank

## LIEUTENANT WILKES TAKES PLANS TO TRAVEL THROUGH THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY

Wilkes' party set off up the Willamette River in a boat provided by Dr. McLoughlin -- June 4, 1841  
on this trip Lieutenant Wilkes met American Able Seaman Joseph Gale  
who was overseeing the construction of the sailing ship *Star of Oregon*  
they said Dr. John McLoughlin refused to sell sails, cordage, and other materials  
as Hudson's Bay Company had the only such supplies in Oregon  
they appealed to Lieutenant Wilkes

## RED RIVER (WINNIPEG, MANITOBA) SETTLERS MOVE TO COLUMBIA DISTRICT

In an attempt to bolster British claims to the area north of the lower Columbia River  
French-Canadian shepherds, dairymen, farmers and their families anticipated farming at Nisqually  
based on unsanctioned reassurances provided by Red River Chief Factor Duncan Finlayson  
Finlayson indicated that after settlement of the international boundary issue  
as Finlayson proposed, crops raised by the settlers would be used partially for company profit  
and partially to repay start-up loans issued by the Hudson's Bay Company to the colonists  
British colonists' new lands would be sold to them rather than leased  
eventually the settlers would gain ownership of the land they farmed  
Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin completed arrangements for families of Canadian skilled laborers  
living at the Canadian Red River Settlement (Winnipeg, Manitoba) to journey overland  
to Fort Nisqually to settle North of Columbia River  
there they were to farm for Hudson's Bay Company on half shares  
Twenty-one families composed of 116 Canadian men, women and children  
left Red River Settlement under the leadership of James Sinclair  
to journey to Fort Vancouver -- June 5, 1841  
their goods were packed in Red River carts which served them well  
until they reached the Rockies

## FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET ENCOUNTERS BLACKFEET INDIANS

En route the Catholics and their Flathead escort suddenly come upon fifty Blackfoot Indians  
conflict was avoided when the Flatheads explained that the purpose of their expedition  
was to escort the Black Robes to their final destination  
Above Lake Henry the Catholics crossed the continental divide to traveled west  
to the Beaverhead River

## NAVAL LIEUTENANT WILKES CONTINUES THROUGH THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY

Middle and Upper Willamette River region was composed of unwooded prairies rich in grass which was so extensive and tall that wandering cattle were often obscured and a man on horseback moved with only his head and shoulders above the grassy sea this prairie was described by Wilkes: **“...these hills are clothed to the very tops with grass and afforded excellent pasturage for cattle.... The prairies are at least one third greater in extent than the forest; they were again seen carpeted with the most luxuriant growth of flowers of the richest tints of red, yellow, and blue, extending in places a distance of 15 to 20 miles.”**<sup>29</sup>

Indians burned off the countryside (each fall):

- to remove seedling trees thus retaining the rich grasses,
- to round up game for killing,
- and to roast pods of tar-weed for food

On his way up the Willamette River Valley Wilkes met Rev. Jason Lee camped along the river bank Lee's camping conditions did not meet the disciplinary standards appreciated by Wilkes who noted sarcastically that these missionaries obviously were used to such accommodations before they left the United States

#### *STAR OF OREGON PROJECT IS IN TROUBLE*

George Davis and Henry Woods dropped out of the effort

which reduced the number of partners to five

Ralph Kilbourne and Joseph Gale did most of the remaining work

while Thomas J. Hubbard did the blacksmithing

John Canan and Pleasant Armstrong remained with the project

(although work continued off and on until [October] construction was stopped for the [winter])

#### *MOTIVES OF THE WOULD-BE SAILORS ARE NOT CLEAR*

Only one of the Americans, Joseph Gale, had ever been on the ocean

At first, Joseph Gale and his fellow boat-builders Lieutenant Charles Wilkes

that they were tired of Oregon

there were no white women there to marry and they wanted to go to California

Earlier, however, they had told Dr. McLoughlin, when buying supplies from the Vancouver store,

that they were building a ferryboat to ply the Willamette River

On still another occasion they had talked of going to California for cattle

to further weaken the economic dominance of the Hudson's Bay Company

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<sup>29</sup> Howard McKinley Corning, *Dictionary of Oregon History*, P. 268.

They also said they wished to travel **“to the ports of California for the purpose** [still another one!] **of hunting Sea Otter”**<sup>30</sup>

It may have been fear of McLoughlin’s disapproval that had led them, shortly before Wilkes’ arrival, to ask certain French-Canadians to front for them at the store in buying the cordage and canvas they needed

#### NAVAL LIEUTENANT WILKES VISITS CHAMPOEG

At Champoeg (ten miles south of Salem today) were four or five cabins further up river Wilkes noted: **“...many small farms of from fifty to one hundred acres, belonging to the old servants of the [Hudson’s Bay] Company, Canadians, who settled here; they all [appeared] very comfortable and thriving.”**<sup>31</sup>

Lieutenant Charles Wilkes passed a few more farms

before reaching the first of the buildings belonging to the Methodist Champoeg Mission

At Champoeg Mission (Mission Bottom) Wilkes was entertained by George Abernethy whose family was one of four living in the hospital constructed by Dr. Elijah White

**“A well-built edifice with a double piazza in front...perhaps the best building in Oregon.”**<sup>32</sup>

Wilkes rode five miles to the mill where he found **“the air and stir of a new secular settlement; ...the missionaries [had] made individual selections of lands to the amount of one thousand acres each, in the prospect of the whole country falling under our laws.”**<sup>33</sup>

#### NAVAL LIEUTENANT WILKES VISITS ST. PAUL’S CATHOLIC MISSION

Twelve miles above Champoeg dwelt the Catholic Father Francis Blanchet

who was **“settled among his flock...doing great good to the settlers in ministering to their temporal as well as spiritual wants.”**<sup>34</sup>

Eight members of the Code of Laws Committee elected to draft a “Code of Laws”

met with Dr. John McLoughlin who was decidedly opposed to the plan for a government and adopting a constitution and laws -- he advised them not to organize of a government

Five members of the Code of Laws Committee members met with Naval Lieutenant Charles Wilkes concerning the propriety of forming a government

Lieutenant Wilkes advised that the attempt was premature

as a government would be a conflict with the existing Joint Occupation Agreement

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<sup>30</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 205.

<sup>31</sup> Joseph Schafer, *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, P. 139.

<sup>32</sup> Joseph Schafer, *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, P. 139.

<sup>33</sup> Joseph Schafer, *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, P. 139.

<sup>34</sup> Joseph Schafer, *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, P. 139.



it would be better for them to wait for the added strength of the United States government to embrace them before they took any significant action  
Code of Laws Committee members decided Lieutenant Wilkes' advice was sound  
their anticipated [August 2] meeting was cancelled and the committee was disbanded  
thus the American residence's experiment to implement  
an independent government failed due to continued pressure  
from British interests and cautions from Lieutenant Charles Wilkes  
Although the effort to implement a government independent of the Hudson's Bay Company had failed  
Dr. Ira Babcock had been elected Supreme Judge with probate powers  
he administered the estate of Ewing Young to the satisfaction of all concerned  
and remained at least the figurehead of an independent American legal system

#### LIEUTENANT WILKES REACHES THE CHEMETEKA METHODIST MISSION

Wilkes impression of the American missionaries did not match his opinion of the British subjects  
in his report to Congress he judged his countrymen to be "**low, vulgar and unclean,**"  
he compared their settlements unfavorably with the Canadians' habitations  
which were reported to be cheerful and industrious

Wilkes became convinced the missionaries were more interested in building up the country  
than in laboring among the few remaining Indians as he noted in his official report: "**...the missionary field was over-crowded; ...the missionary field was but small, and insufficient for the expenses which have been lavished on it...[other] various characters [were] settled there [the Willamette Valley]. They generally consist of those who have been hunters in the mountains, and were still full of the recklessness of that breed. Many of them, although they have taken farms and built log houses, cannot be classed among the permanent settlers.**"<sup>35</sup>

#### NAVAL LIEUTENANT CHARLES WILKES RETURNS TO FORT VANCOUVER

After visiting settlements and pioneers in the Willamette Valley Wilkes returned to Fort Vancouver where he visited Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin

Wilkes stated that as an American officer he would be personally be responsible for all bills as well as the good conduct of the party of Americans building the *Star of Oregon*  
Dr. McLoughlin relented -- cordage, canvas, paints, and oils were purchased  
paid for by the shipbuilders with wheat and furs of different kinds  
from his own supplies Wilkes provided navigating instruments, an American flag, compass,

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<sup>35</sup> Patricia Kohnen, *Oregon Trail Timeline 1841-1843*, <http://www.oregon.com/attractions/museumshistory>

anchor, anchor chain and a spyglass  
Wilkes presented Able Seaman Joseph Gale with informal Master's Papers  
authorizing the *Star of Oregon* to sail along the Pacific coast

#### LIEUTENANT ROBERT E. JOHNSON EXPEDITION EXPLORES THE OKANOGAN REGION

Johnson's party turned upriver and traveled by horseback through the Okanogan region  
they reached the Hudson's Bay Company post of Fort Okanogan  
and investigated the Grand Coulee area,  
Fort Colville just above Kettle Falls was reached -- June 15, 1841  
however, they missed both Lake Chelan and the Methow River

#### LIEUTENANT CHARLES WILKES RETURNS TO FORT NISQUALLY

Disappointed by the failure of the *Peacock* to make its appearance at the Columbia River  
Naval Lieutenant Wilkes rejoined the *Vincennes* at Fort Nisqually -- June 16, 1841  
With the return of Wilkes *Vincennes* and *Porpoise* moved to the Strait of Juan de Fuca  
and continued their survey work there

#### LIEUTENANT ROBERT E. JOHNSON'S EXPEDITION CONTINUES THEIR INVESTIGATION

Setting out from Fort Colville, Johnson and his six men journeyed up the Spokane River  
to Tshimakain Mission where they met Mary Walker, the hardy wife of Rev. Elkanah Walker  
Mary stayed up late that night sharing her passion for natural history with Johnson and his men  
she succeeded in securing fresh horses for them from the Spokane Indians -- June 1841  
When Lieutenant Johnson reached the vicinity of Spokane Falls where he recorded the story  
of the [1800] eruption of Mount St. Helens as told by an old chief sometimes called Cornelius:  
**“Cornelius, when about ten years of age, was sleeping in a lodge with a great many people, and was suddenly awakened by his mother, who called out to him that the world was falling to pieces. He then heard a great noise of thunder overhead, and all the people crying out in terror. Something was falling very thick, which they at first took as snow, but on going out they found it to be dirt; it proved to be ashes, which fell to the depth of six inches, and increased their fears, by causing them to suppose that the end of the world was actually at hand....”**<sup>36</sup>

#### GOVERNOR SIR GEORGE -IN-CHIEF STOPS AT FORT COLVILLE

Governor Simpson traveled the regular saddle route to Fort Colville  
on his arrival at the Hudson's Bay Company trading post he recorded in his journal

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<sup>36</sup> James A. Crutchfield, *It Happened in Washington*, P. 27.

that he had **“performed a land journey of about 1,900 miles in 47 days out of which he had traveled but 41, having been detained 6 en route.”**

#### LIEUTENANT ROBERT JOHNSON’S EXPEDITION CROSSES INTO (TODAY’S IDAHO)

Lieutenant Johnson and his seven-man expedition next journeyed  
to Coeur d’Alene and Tshimakain Mission  
From Tshimakain Mission they traveled to Rev. Henry Spaulding’s Lapwai Mission  
on the Clearwater River (near today’s Lewiston, Idaho) -- June 1841  
After a brief visit at the mission Johnson’s party moved on to Waiilatpu Mission  
where they met Dr. Marcus and Narcissa Whitman

#### BARTLESON-BIDWELL WAGON TRAIN CROSSES (WYOMING)

Caravan of wagons and carts reached Fort Laramie (Wyoming) -- June 22, 1841  
this post was originally known as Fort William when built in [1834]  
(Fort Laramie became increasingly important  
after abandonment of the rendezvous fur trade system [1840])  
After a short pause at Fort Laramie the party resumed their westward course  
near (today’s Casper, Wyoming) they crossed the North Platte River  
which was so deep that horses and the mules were forced to swim  
in the swift current a wagon was overturned and as a result a mule was drowned  
Caravan continued along the banks of the Sweetwater River  
and visited Independence Rock

#### NAVAL LIEUTENANT ROBERT E. JOHNSON SPLITS HIS EXPEDITION INTO DIVISIONS

Joseph Drayton, an artist, decided to explore the Blue Mountains -- June 1841  
he made sketches and secured data for a map of the Columbia River  
and the region surrounding Fort Walla Walla  
these notes composed nearly 100 pages of the Wilkes’ Report  
Horatio Hale, philologist (historical linguist) traveled alone from Waiilatpu  
back to Tshimakain and Fort Colville by way of Palouse River valley and an old Indian Trail  
along the way he studied Indian language and culture  
Johnson and his five remaining traveling companions set out for Nahchess Pass in the Cascades

#### NAVAL LIEUTENANT CHARLES WILKES CELEBRATES IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

In spite of his probable contempt for his fellow Americans,

U.S. Naval Lieutenant Wilkes was determined to assert the American claim to the region  
Because July 4, 1841 fell on a Sunday Wilkes staged a celebration with all of the pomp and flourish  
he could muster on July 5

Charles Wilkes noted in his report he decided to grant his men a break from their work:

**“Wishing to give the crew a holiday on the anniversary of the Declaration of our Independence, and to allow them to have a full day’s frolic and pleasure, they were allowed to barbecue an ox, which the [Hudson’s Bay] Company’s agent had obligingly sold me.”**<sup>37</sup>

at dawn Wilkes fired twenty-six shots from their brass howitzers – one shot for each state  
sailors laughed at the sight of fur traders rushing to Fort Nisqually to investigate  
in the morning the expedition members marched to the music of pipes and drums inland  
to Fort Nisqually where they gave three cheers outside of the post

but few Hudson’s Bay Company employees responded with cheers of their own  
This celebration of Independence Day, the first held in the Pacific Northwest,  
saw a great deal of American nationalism

Wilkes’ sailors continued on to a prairie near Lake Spootslyth (American Lake)

where about five hundred people including one hundred marines, American missionaries,

Hudson’s Bay Company workers and Native Americans were all present

uniformed men from the ships marched in drill formation

after a prayer from Rev. Dr. John P. Richmond of the American Methodist Mission

two howitzers fired a salute

Sergeant of Marines Simeon Stearns read the Declaration of Independence

Rev. Richmond in his oration declared that **“Upon Fourth-of-July, especially, we are irresistibly impelled to entertain the belief that the whole of this magnificent region...is destined to become one of the physical ingredients of our beneficent [American] Republic.”**<sup>38</sup>

Rev. Richmond noted that the whole of the Pacific Northwest would be peopled

by **“our enterprising countrymen”**

Wilkes purchased an ox for barbecuing from Fort Nisqually’s Alexander Caulfield Anderson

everyone engaged in a day full of playing games for football and baseball, eating food

dancing on a door laid on the ground while a sailor played the fiddle

and listening to speeches

Naval Lieutenant Charles Wilkes’ event concluded with a dinner

for high-level representatives of the Expedition, missionaries and Hudson’s Bay Company

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<sup>37</sup> Elwood Evans, *History of the Pacific Northwest: Oregon and Washington: Embracing ...*, Volume 1, P. 227.

<sup>38</sup> Ezra Meeker, *Pioneer Reminiscences of Puget Sound: The Tragedy of Leschi ...*, P. 523

Sequalitchew Chief Koquilton described the celebration: **“The Bostons [American] soldiers asked the Indians to go with them to select a place to have a big feast.... Early in the morning the Boston soldiers shot off their big guns about ten times. The guns made a great noise.... The soldiers marched out. They were dressed in Sunday clothes, all in white. One soldier went in front carrying a flag, and the men following him had drums and horns and were making music. The soldiers marched in four lines. They all stepped as one man. They hauled the pans and dishes and all other things out in a Hudson’s Bay cart. The carts were made at the fort [Nisqually]. The wheels were made of a large log; holes were made in the center for axles. [After the meal] footracing and horse-racing took place. Captain Wilkes named the big lake American Lake. The Indian name was Spootsylth.”**<sup>39</sup>

#### U.S. NAVAL LIEUTENANT ROBERT E. JOHNSON RETURNS TO FORT NISQUALLY

Lieutenant Johnson re-crossed Nahchess Pass on his way back to Fort Nisqually -- July 15, 1841

Johnson’s journey of a thousand miles was without any material accident except to the instruments  
Johnson and his men had crossed a route never before taken by white men  
ending conjecture about the nature of the land of (northern Washington and Idaho)  
they had been awed by the immense country they had seen but not favorably impressed

#### NAVAL LIEUTENANT CHARLES WILKES PLANS ANOTHER EXPEDITION

Lieutenant Wilkes planned to have Lieutenant Johnson lead a second expedition  
to explore the Cowlitz River Valley down the Chehalis River to Grays Harbor  
then along the coast back to the Columbia River

but Wilkes learned that while exploring (Eastern Washington)

Johnson had rewarded a Hudson’s Bay Company employee who helped him  
with a bowie-knife pistol -- this cut-and-shoot weapon was government issue  
upset with this gift of government property Wilkes wrote new orders for Johnson that stated  
no government property was to be disposed of **“except through absolute necessity”**<sup>40</sup>  
and then the officer who accompanies Johnson must agree the action is appropriate  
Johnson protested that the order made him subject to veto by an inferior officer

Wilkes ordered Johnson to go below deck to think things over for five minutes  
when Johnson reappeared he was wearing an Indian spruce root hat

Wilkes would not listen to Johnson as **“...he was dressed very unofficerlike... and showed marked disrespect in his manner and dress to the rules of the Ship and Navy.”**<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Lancaster Pollard, *A History of the State of Washington.*, P. 67-68

<sup>40</sup> Murray C. Morgan, *Murray’s People*, a collection of essays: *The Ms. Chief and the Big Trees.*

again Johnson was sent below -- this time with orders to be ready to leave in five minutes  
he reappeared “**..in some temper and in the same dress.**”<sup>42</sup>

Wilkes had Johnson arrested on the spot

Midshipman Henry Eld was placed in command of the expedition

Wilkes named Midshipman George Colvocoresses as second-in-command

(when the expedition returned to the United states [1842] Johnson was court-martialed  
on charges of illegally disposing of government property and of disobeying a proper order  
he was acquitted on both counts)

#### NAVAL LIEUTENANT CHARLES WILKES SENDS OUT ANOTHER EXPLORING PARTY

Wilkes dispatched another overland party this one led by Midshipman Henry Eld -- July 16, 1841  
they traveled and mapped the route from Eld Inlet (named by Lieutenant Wilkes) to (Black Lake)  
besides midshipmen Eld and George Colvocoresses the surveying expedition consisted of  
Marine Sergeant Simeon Stearns, Privates George Rogers and Samuel Dinsman,  
sailors Thomas Ford and Henry Waltham, a metis interpreter called Joe,  
and the expedition's civilian horticulturalist William D. Brackenridge  
canoes purchased from the Indians at the Nisqually River were rotten and leaky  
the party's bread was soaked and spoiled on the first day's paddle  
to the southern extremity of Puget Sound

#### NAVAL LIEUTENANT CHARLES WILKES LEAVES FORT NISQUALLY

Wilkes Expedition left Fort Nisqually and Southern Puget Sound -- July 17, 1841  
United States Exploring Expedition sailed north to investigate the San Juan Islands  
Wilkes had some British charts but may not have been aware of the Spanish names and charts  
he gave new names to nearly every coastal feature not already named on the charts he had  
to honor American heroes of the War of 1812 and members of his crew  
many of these names were ignored on later charts and British and Spanish names retained  
Wilkes naming of locations honoring American naval officers Chauncey, Shaw, Jones,  
Decatur, Blakely, Perry, Sinclair, Lawrence, Gordon and Percival all remained

#### MIDSHIPMAN HENRY ELD REACHES THE CHEHALIS RIVER

Midshipman Eld held negotiations with an unusual Indian chief for horses and for porters  
to carry their canoes and gear across the portage

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<sup>41</sup> Murray C. Morgan, *Murray's People*, a collection of essays: *The Ms. Chief and the Big Trees*.

<sup>42</sup> Murray C. Morgan, *Murray's People*, a collection of essays: *The Ms. Chief and the Big Trees*.

to a tributary of the “Chickeeles” (Chehalis) River -- July 17, 1841  
this chief was a woman who deeply impressed the Americans  
she appeared to exercise more authority than any other chief they had met  
her horses were remarkably fine animals; her dress was neat,  
and she was surrounded by indications of Indian opulence  
her character and conduct elevated her status above her villagers  
although her husband was present, he seemed to fall under her authority

After portaging to the Chehalis River Midshipmen Eld and Colvocoresses accompanied by  
Marine Sergeant Simeon Stearns, Privates George Rogers and Samuel Dinsman,  
sailors Thomas Ford and Henry Waltham, Joe the metis interpreter  
and horticulturalist William D. Brackenridge set out by canoe

Eld’s canoe trip down the “Chickeeles” (Chehalis) and “Sachal” (Willapa) rivers proved difficult,

**“...the turns were sometimes so short that the larger canoe would be in contact with thickets on the banks at both ends”<sup>43</sup>**

mosquitoes added to their exasperation

however, they were impressed by the magnificence of the trees as expedition members reported:

**“Some of these had been burnt, and in consequence had fallen. Mr. Eld thus had an opportunity of measuring them. One that was not selected as the largest, for there were many of equal if not greater length and diameter was measured, and the part that lay in one piece was found to be two hundred feet long; another piece of the same tree was twenty-five feet long and at the small end still ten inches in diameter.**

**“Allowing twelve feet for the portion destroyed by fire, Mr. Eld thought twenty-five feet ought to be added for its top; which makes the whole tree when growing 260 feet. Others were believed to exceed this, both in height and diameter.”<sup>44</sup>**

#### TARDY SHIPS OF THE UNITED STATES EXPLORING EXPEDITION REACH THE COLUMBIA

Sloop-of-war *Peacock* under Lieutenant William L. Hudson and her tender *Flying Fish*

reached Cape Disappointment at the mouth of the Columbia River -- July 17, 1841

they were a month and half late for their rendezvous with Lieutenant Charles Wilkes

both ships had sailed from the Western Pacific Ocean after charting new islands,

correcting positions for known islands, disproving reports of some others

and continuing their scientific studies

Hudson knew he was very late in arriving at the mouth of the Columbia

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<sup>43</sup> Murray C. Morgan, *Murray’s People*, a collection of essays: The Ms. Chief and the Big Trees.

<sup>44</sup> Murray C. Morgan, *Murray’s People*, a collection of essays: The Ms. Chief and the Big Trees.

he had experienced Wilkes' wrath before when he tried to second-guess  
the commander's specific instructions on other occasions

Lieutenant Hudson arrived in clear weather and had as good conditions as could be expected  
in the unimproved channel over the sandbar of the Columbia

Hudson had with him the instructions for navigating the bar that Wilkes had obtained  
from Josiah Spaulding master of the *Lausanne*

Hudson was not surprised to find treacherous conditions  
as these waters had a reputation for shipwrecks  
but he had no reason to doubt his instructions

#### PEACOCK SPENDS THE NIGHT OUTSIDE OF THE BAR OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Lieutenant William L. Hudson wrote regarding the night before he attempted to enter the Columbia:  
**"...and throughout the night experienced light airs and calms, accompanied by a dense fog. On the morning of the [July] 18th, between seven and eight o'clock, the fog cleared off, with the wind from the southward and eastward. Cape Disappointment was then about nine miles distant. At nine they sounded in forty fathoms water; at ten, fifteen. It being Sunday, Captain Hudson as usual performed divine service, which being finished at 11:50, they again tacked to stand in...."**<sup>45</sup>

After breaking off his first attempt to enter, Hudson steered the *Peacock* toward a portion of the water  
that appeared clear and smooth -- but here the water was too shallow  
*Peacock's* keel hit bottom and stuck

#### PEACOCK RUNS INTO TROUBLE AT THE MOUTH OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Columbia River's current and tides began to force the *Peacock* onto a shoal (now called Peacock Spit)

Lieutenant William Hudson ordered the sails taken in and prepared to drag the ship off by kedging  
(towing the ship's anchors out a distance and then winching the ship toward them  
by winding the chains on the capstan)

Weather in the sound defeated him before he could complete the plan

sea began to lift and drop the ship causing leaks -- crewmen manned the pumps

All day and all night they fought to save the ship -- July 18, 1841

at dawn the tide receded so much that a canoe manned by Chinook Indians  
and carrying a pilot was able to come on board

*Peacock* launched its boats and filled them as much as they could with charts, books and papers

boats made two trips between ship and shore,

but eventually the scientific specimens on board had to be abandoned

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<sup>45</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 169.



## HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY GOVERNOR SIMPSON OVERTAKES THE RED RIVER SETTLERS

Twenty-one families migrating from the Canadian Red River Settlement

had traveled more than one-third of the way to Fort Vancouver

before they were overtaken by Governor-in-Chief Sir George Simpson -- July 19, 1841

Governor and his party traveled with the colonists for part of two days and the night between

Simpson hurried on after advising the migrants they should change their route to travel by boat

this advice was ignored

## WRECK OF THE *PEACOCK*

Surging currents rose again toward noon and overwhelmed the ship -- July 19, 1841

Lieutenant Hudson and some of crew remained on board during the evacuation

they tried to save as much as they could

by throwing light items overboard to be carried ashore by the tide

even at that valuable artifacts, plants, stuffed animals and birds and notes were lost

Lieutenant William Hudson was the last to leave the ship -- 5 p.m. July 19, 1841

## ADJUSTMENTS ARE MADE BY THE CREW OF THE *PEACOCK*

Lieutenant William L. Hudson's ship had broken into pieces by the next day -- July 20, 1841

no lives had been lost in the wreck of *Peacock* thanks to a canoe rescue by John Dean,

an African American servant of the *Vincennes* purser, and a group of Chinook Indians

Dean also rescued artist Alfred Agate along with his paintings and drawings

but some men had sustained significant injuries including broken bones

and now they had no quarters in which to live

some people from the Methodist mission at Astoria brought the shipwrecked sailors

tents and supplies to make them comfortable

sailors dubbed their little tent city "Peacockville"

In spite of the loss of the ship, the injuries sustained and the hardship suffered by the shipless crew, everyone pressed on with their assignments

scientists immediately went into the field and began making collections

Alfred Agate made drawings of the local Chinook Indians

and the tomb of Chinook chief Concomly (who had welcomed Lewis and Clark

and later helped Pacific Fur Company traders build Astoria

Clark spelled the chief's name Com-com-moly)

sailor James D. Saules, an English-speaking Negro native of Peru, was the cook on the *Peacock*

Saules took up squatter's rights on a promontory (near today's Fort Canby)  
known by the early settlers as Saules Point

#### BARTLESON-BIDWELL WAGON TRAIN CONTINUES WEST

Thirty-six wagons and five solid-wheel carts reached South Pass -- July 24, 1841  
more than one hundred pioneers crossed over the continental divide  
between the Green and Bear rivers  
they stopped to rest on the banks of the Green River

This year the traditional rendezvous grounds looked very empty and quiet  
American fur trade had virtually ended by this year

future transcontinental immigrants would come in search of land -- not pelts  
only people at the old rendezvous site to welcome the weary travelers  
where Henry Fraeb and a few remaining trappers  
and a small group of emigrants returning to the United States from the West

#### LIEUTENANT CHARLES WILKES LEARNS OF THE WRECK OF THE *PEACOCK*

Lieutenant Wilkes who was conducting a survey of the San Juan Islands  
did not receive word of the loss of the *Peacock* until July 27, 1841

With the loss of the *Peacock* Naval Lieutenant Charles Wilkes  
discontinued his survey of the San Juan Islands

Loss of the *Peacock* reinforced Wilkes' belief that the Columbia River  
was not a safe entry to the region and that Puget Sound provided much better access  
therefore, any United States claim to Oregon must include Puget Sound

#### LIEUTENANT WILKES SAILS FOR THE COLUMBIA RIVER

When Wilkes was finally able to assemble his ships  
he sailed *Vincennes* and *Porpoise* south toward the Columbia River -- August, 2 1841  
he never returned to Puget Sound

#### U.S. NAVAL LIEUTENANT CHARLES WILKES IS FORCED TO CHANGE HIS PLANS

Wilkes had expected to dispatch the *Peacock* and *Flying Fish* to survey up the Columbia River  
as far as the Dalles where another exploring party was to be sent across the Rocky Mountains  
to scout a route for immigrants coming into Oregon  
however, the wreck of the *Peacock* eliminated that possibility

## MIDSHIPMAN HENRY ELD'S EXPEDITION REACHES GRAYS HARBOR

Midshipman Eld's eight-man canoe expedition down the Chehalis River  
made the first American crossing across the Olympic Peninsula -- August 1841  
they mapped the crossing between Puget Sound and Grays Harbor  
they were unimpressed with Grays Harbor because of the narrow entrance and its shallow bottom  
which made it suitable only for small vessels  
Eld named the northern part of the harbor "Useless Bay"  
because it was particularly filled with shoals (shallow water) that had no channels

## U.S. NAVAL LIEUTENANT CHARLES WILKES REACHES THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Lieutenant Wilkes and his United States Exploring Expedition  
arrived at the Great River of the West -- August 6, 1841  
he was not willing to risk the *Vincennes* on the Columbia River bar  
Wilkes took command of the brig USS *Porpoise* which was better suited to river exploration  
*Porpoise* became the new flagship of the U.S. Ex. Ex.  
Lieutenant Cadwallader Ringgold took command of the *Vincennes*

## VINCENNES IS SENT TO CHART THE OREGON AND CALIFORNIA COAST

U.S. Naval Lieutenant Charles Wilkes sent USS *Vincennes*  
to chart the Oregon and northern California coastlines  
*Vincennes* was to stop at Yerba Buena (San Francisco) and await Wilkes' arrival  
while sending a boat up the Sacramento River meet an overland expedition  
which was then being organized by Wilkes

## BARTLESON-BIDWELL WAGON TRAIN SPLITS

Emigrants arrived at Soda Springs on the Beaver River  
(in present day southeastern Idaho) -- August 10, 1841  
At Soda Springs the Bartleson-Bidwell Wagon Train split  
young John Bidwell with thirty-six members of the wagon train  
kept to the original plan to travel southwest to California  
considering this journey far too dangerous Thomas "Broken Hand" Fitzpatrick  
attempted to persuade them to give up the California project but to no avail  
remaining thirty-two members of the former Bartleson-Bidwell Train  
were discouraged by recent prospects  
they decided not to venture into the unknown to California without a trail or a guide

Tom Fitzpatrick agreed to guide the American emigrants remaining with John Bartleson and the Catholic missionaries to Fort Hall (Idaho) about forty miles away

#### BIDWELL WAGON TRAIN PROCEEDS TO CALIFORNIA WITHOUT A GUIDE

At Soda Springs young John Bidwell led thirty-one men and Mrs. Nancy A. Kelsey (undoubtedly the first women to see the Great Salt Lake or reach California by this route) southwest into uncharted territory to reach California -- August 11, 1841

Their information was tragically limited -- they knew only that California lay to the west even Tom Fitzpatrick was not much better informed with no guide, no compass and only the sun to direct them

from now on they would have to rely entirely only on their own resources

John Bidwell's wagon train headed south along the Bear River and then west along the north shore of the Great Salt Lake they were forced to abandon their wagons in the heat of the desert west of the lake they reached the Walker River and ascended over the Sierra Nevadas

in the same region crossed by Jedediah Smith [1827]

reaching California their first stop was at the ranch owned by John Marsh

Bidwell kept a detailed journal of the route they traveled

he carried with him a book on celestial navigation

he listed landmarks and recorded the surrounding geography

(his journal became a comprehensive guide for future travelers)

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET TRAVELS ON ALONE

At Soda Springs Father De Smet hurried ahead of his other traveling companions to meet the Flathead people he believed were waiting for him at Fort Hall -- August 11, 1841 there was no road from Soda Springs to Fort Hall

but only a rude trail used by trappers and Indians leading in that direction

#### RED RIVER MIGRATION REACHES THE UPPER COLUMBIA RIVER

Members of the Red River migration struggled onward

as they followed Governor-in-Chief George Simpson's trail all the way to Fort Colville

Their progress had been much more difficult through the Rocky Mountains

than even the route undertaken by American pioneers

they abandoned their carts and packed their supplies on their oxen and other spare animals until they reached the upper Columbia River -- August 12, 1841

## LIEUTENANT WILKES PURCHASES A SHIP TO REPLACE THE LOST *PEACOCK*

Charles Wilkes visited Astoria where he was supposed to rendezvous with his two South Sea ships, the store-ship *Relief* and schooner *Seagull* they were not in evidence -- in fact, they were both lost at sea

To take their place U.S. Naval Lieutenant Wilkes purchased the 250-ton merchant brig *Thomas W. Perkins* from the Hudson's Bay Company and renamed it *Oregon*

Wilkes gave of Lieutenant William L. Hudson, former master of the *Peacock*, the task of outfitting her but when preparations were completed, Hudson suggested the command be given to someone else

Hudson may have done this after sensing Wilkes' displeasure, but also, command of a ship as small as a brig usually went to an officer of lower rank and experience than Hudson

Wilkes was only too happy to oblige Hudson and gave command of *Oregon*

to Lieutenant Overton Carr who had been serving as his executive officer on *Vincennes*

Hudson became an extra officer on the *Vincennes*

## VINCENNES ARRIVES AT YERBA BUENA (SAN FRANCISCO)

Lieutenant Cadwallader Ringgold sailed the *Vincennes* into the bay at Yerba Buena -- August 14, 1841

he soon moved to better anchorage north across the bay at Whaler's Harbor (Sausalito Bay)

an observatory was set up on shore

Ringgold accompanied by some officers, sailors and naturalist Dr. Charles Pickering

took provisions for thirty days and set off in six boats with an Indian guide to survey to region

they planned to meet Midshipman Henry Eld's expedition along the Sacramento River

Lieutenant Hudson was placed in command of the *Vincennes*

## FLATHEAD INDIANS ARRIVE AT FORT HALL

Flathead Indian Old Ignace La Mousse and his Catholic family and friends

from Chief Big Face's village had traveled more than three hundred miles

to escort the expected Catholic priests to their home

they were willing to sacrifice even their lives to bring the Christian faith to their people

Old Ignace's son Young Ignace La Mousse (sometime known as Francois Xavier)

was known to the Flathead warriors as the "Bravest-of-the-Brave"

Young Ignace and the main body of Indian escorts arrived at Fort Hall

on the banks of the Snake River -- August 14, 1841

these Flathead Indians waited patiently at Fort Hall for the arrival of the Black Robes

they knew were coming

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET REACHES FORT HALL

Hurrying ahead of his companions, Father De Smet arrived at Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Hall on the day of the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin -- August 15, 1841

Catholic missionary Father De Smet was very warmly welcomed by Chief Trader Francis Ermatinger and by the Flathead delegation awaiting his arrival

Father De Smet was still more than three hundred miles from the home of the Flathead Indians and he realized he had left St. Louis 115 days before

#### WAGON TRAIN LED BY TOM FITZPATRICK REACHES FORT HALL

Thirty-two American emigrants led by John Bartleson

with their wagons guided by Tom "Broken hand" Fitzpatrick -- August 17, 1841

Fathers Gregorio Mengarini and Nicolas Point with Brother Charles Duet, Brother Joseph Specht and Brother Willem Claessens accompanied the wagon train

#### MIDSHIPMAN HENRY ELD'S EXPEDITION JOURNEYS SOUTH OVERLAND

Midshipmen Henry Eld and George Colvocoresses accompanied by Marine Sergeant Simeon Stearns, Privates George Rogers and Samuel Dinsman, sailors Thomas Ford and Henry Waltham

civilian horticulturalist William D. Brackenridge and a metis interpreter called Joe

traveled from Grays Harbor along the coastline to Willapa Bay

and on to the Columbia River where they found that sandbars, extreme tidal action and treacherous mudflats and shoals would hamper commercial development

#### BAD NEWS AND GOOD AWAITS THE EMIGRANTS AT FORT HALL

Members of the Bartleson Wagon Train knew that Tom "Broken Hand" Fitzpatrick had been engaged by Father De Smet to lead his party to the Flathead people

thus the services of the Mountain Man were to come to an end

Bad news was delivered when it was reported -- August 20, 1841

that portion of the Bidwell wagon train that had chosen to attempt to go to California had been attacked by Indians

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet wrote a letter to Dr. John McLoughlin at Fort Vancouver informing the Hudson's Bay Company Chief Factor of the event

Good news was received when Hudson's Bay Company Chief Trader Francis Ermatinger agreed to guide the American emigrant party to Fort Vancouver by way of Waiilatpu Mission and deliver Father De Smet's letter personally to the Chief Factor

## CATHOLIC PRIEST PROCEED NORTH FROM FORT HALL

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet, Father Gregorio Mengarini and Father Nicolas Point arrived with Brother Charles Duet, Brother Joseph Specht and Brother Willem Claessens traveled north toward their planned destination with the Flathead Indians

## . REMAINING AMERICAN IMMIGRANTS LEAVE FORT HALL

Plans were implemented at Fort Hall and the American pioneers pressed on thirty-six pioneers left their nine wagons at Fort Hall and proceeded on horseback much like the Joel Walker family (who traveled to Oregon the year before) little is recorded regarding the remainder of their journey to the Willamette Valley

## GOVERNOR-IN-CHIEF SIR GEORGE SIMPSON ARRIVES AT FORT VANCOUVER

Governor Simpson appeared in the Columbia District to inspect his domain on his west coast Chief Factor James Douglas welcomed Simpson to Fort Vancouver -- August 25, 1841 Simpson and his superiors realized the many settlers coming to the Columbia District might result in Fort Vancouver being on U.S. soil

During his inspection of vast region under his control Governor Simpson kept detailed notes: **“About sunset we called at the Company’s saw and grist mills, distant six miles from the Fort, while the Company’s schooner *Cadboro*, that was lying there, honored us with a salute, which served also as a signal of our arrival to the good folks of Vancouver. Being anxious to approach headquarters in proper style, our men here exchanged the oar for the paddle, which, besides being more orthodox in itself, was better adapted to the quick notes of the voyageurs' song. In less than an hour afterwards, we landed on the beach, having thus crossed the continent of North America at its widest part, by a route of about five thousand miles, in the space of twelve weeks of actual traveling...”**<sup>46</sup>

## LIEUTENANT CHARLES WILKES ANCHORS AT FORT VANCOUVER

*Porpoise* and *Oregon* reached Fort Vancouver -- end of August 1841  
North American Governor-in-Chief for the Hudson’s Bay Company Sir George Simpson had only recently arrived at the company’s headquarters  
both Governor Simpson and Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin warmly greeted Lieutenant Wilkes and the United States Exploring Expedition  
Wilkes dined with Governor Simpson and Dr. McLoughlin  
as befitted Simpson’s position, Wilkes was sumptuously entertained

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<sup>46</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 176.

and amiable relations were established

Governor Simpson pumped the American explorer's injudicious subordinates for information

Governor Simpson learned of Wilkes' intention to recommend the United States press  
its claims north to 54° 40' North

this area, of course, embraced the very region where Simpson's companies  
were busily putting down their newest roots

Hudson's Bay officers offered every assistance and warm hospitality to the U.S. Navy party

Dr. McLoughlin and second-in-command Chief Factor James Douglas

entertained Wilkes and his crew for the next week

long after-dinner conversations with brandy and cigars were mutually enjoyed

McLoughlin and Douglas freely provided information about the region

Wilkes was quite favorably impressed with the discipline and order maintained at the post

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET IS REUNITED WITH HIS FLATHEAD FRIENDS

In a sheltered valley, the Catholic missionaries meet Chief Big Face-- August 30, 1841

he was leading the same Flatheads people that Father De Smet had visited the year before

Once again the Catholic missionary received a very warm welcome -- this reception lasted two days

#### CHIEF BIG FACE MOVES HIS FLATHEAD INDIAN VILLAGE

Chief Big Face moved his whole Indian village -- during the month of September

from the Beaverhead River Valley by way of Hell's Gate (near today's Missoula, Montana)

to the valley of the Bitterroot Mountains where the natives had found a good location

for their new permanent settlement and crop raising efforts

that Father De Pierre-Jean De Smet had encouraged them to develop

during his visit the year before

#### HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY GOVERNOR-IN-CHIEF GEORGE SIMPSON VISITS THE OCEAN

After visiting the Hudson's Bay Company headquarters for a short time

Governor Simpson accompanied by Chief Factor James Douglas

paddled downriver -- September 1, 1841

Simpson made note in his journal: **“On the 1st of September my party, now strengthened by the accession of Mr. [James] Douglas, took leave on the beach of Commodore Wilkes and his officers, with mutual wishes for safety and success; and by eleven in the forenoon we were under way in a large and heavy bateau with a crew of ten men...to call at the Company's dairy.... At the dairy we**



**found about a hundred [sic] cows... and there were also two or three hundred cattle that were left... under the charge of three or four families that resided on the spot....<sup>47</sup>**

**“About sunset we called at the Company’s saw and grist mills, distant six miles from the Fort, while the Company’s schooner *Cadboro*, that was lying there, honored us with a salute, which served also as a signal of our arrival to the good folks of Vancouver. Being anxious to approach headquarters [Fort Vancouver] in proper style, our men here exchanged the oar for the paddle, which, besides being more orthodox in itself, was better adapted to the quick notes of the voyageurs’ song. In less than an hour afterwards, we landed on the beach, having thus crossed the continent of North America at its widest part, by a route of about five thousand miles, in the space of twelve weeks of actual traveling....”<sup>48</sup>**

That night was again spent at Fort Vancouver

#### GOVERNOR-IN-CHIEF SIR GEORGE SIMPSON JOURNEYED TO COWLITZ RIVER AREA

Governor George Simpson set out from Fort Vancouver -- September 2, 1841

**“...We were toiling up the Cowlitz... the current was so powerful that our rate of progress never exceeded two miles an hour.**

**“During the whole of our day’s course, the shores were silent and solitary, the deserted [Indian] villages forming melancholy monuments of the generation that had passed away.**

**“Our bateau carried as curious a muster of races and languages as perhaps had ever been congregated within the same compass in any part of the world. Our crew of ten men contained Iroquois, who spoke their own tongue; a Cree half-breed of French origins, who appeared to have borrowed his dialect from both his parents; a North Briton, who understood only the Gaelic of his native hills; Canadians, who, of course, knew French; and Sandwich Islanders, who jabbered a medley of Chinook, English, and their own vernacular jargon. Add to all this that the passengers were natives of England, Scotland, Russia, Canada and the Hudson’s Bay Company’s territories, and you have the prettiest congress of nations, the nicest confusion of tongues, that has ever taken place since the days of the Tower of Babel.”<sup>49</sup>**

#### MIDSHIPMAN HENRY ELD’S EXPEDITION ARRIVES AT FORT VANCOUVER

Continuing their investigation south from Grays Harbor to the Columbia River

Midshipman Eld and the eight members of his expedition reached Fort Vancouver

Eld reported the success of his expedition to Lieutenant Wilkes who was at Fort Vancouver

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<sup>47</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 177.

<sup>48</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 176.

<sup>49</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 178.

## LIEUTENANT CHARLES WILKES MAKES A QUICK TRIP TO THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY

While at Fort Vancouver, Wilkes made a side trip to the Willamette Valley -- September 1841  
at this time, there were about forty Americans in the Willamette Valley  
(like Naval Lieutenant William A. Slacum before him [1836])

Wilkes, as a representative of the United States Government,  
found occasion to intervene in the affairs of the American colonists)

Wilkes told the American settlers in the Willamette Valley that the time  
had not yet come to try to establish a civil government under the American flag  
Wilkes then returned to the Hudson's Bay Company headquarters at Fort Vancouver

## GOVERNOR-IN-CHIEF SIR GEORGE SIMPSON CONTINUES ON TOWARD PUGET SOUND

Hudson's Bay Company Governor George Simpson noted: **“Between the Cowlitz River and Puget Sound -- a distance of about sixty miles -- the country, which is watered by many streams and lakes, consists of an alternation of plains and belts of wood. It is well adapted both for tillage and for pasturage, possessing a genial climate, good soil, excellent timber, water power, natural clearings and a seaport, and that too within reach of more than one advantageous market. When this tract was explored a few years ago, the Company established two farms upon it, which were subsequently transferred to the Puget Sound Agricultural Association, formed under the Company's auspices, with the view of producing wheat, wool, hides and tallow for exportation.**

**“On the Cowlitz Farm there were already about a thousand acres of land under the plough, besides a large dairy, an extensive park for horses, etc.; and the Crops of this season had amounted to eight or nine thousand bushels of wheat, four thousand of oats, with due proportions of barley, potatoes, etc. The other farm [near Fort Nisqually] was on the shores of Puget Sound, and, as its soil was found to be better fitted for pasturage than tillage, it had been appropriated almost exclusively to flocks and herds; so that now, with only two hundred acres of cultivated land, it possesses six thousand sheep, twelve hundred cattle, besides horses, pigs, etc.... The farm at Vancouver contains upward of twelve hundred acres under cultivation, which have this year produced four thousand bushels of wheat, three thousand five hundred of barley, oats, and peas, and a very large quantity of potatoes and other vegetables.... There are, moreover, fifteen hundred sheep, and between four and five hundred head of cattle.”<sup>50</sup>**

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<sup>50</sup> Lancaster Pollard, *A History of the State of Washington*, P. 61.

**“In addition to these two farms, there was a Catholic mission [St. Francis Xavier] with about a hundred and sixty acres under the plough. There were also a few Canadian settlers, retired servants of the Hudson’s Bay Company...”<sup>51</sup>**

**“Of the aborigines there are but three small tribes in the neighborhood, the Cowlitz, the Checaylis and the ‘Squally, now all quiet, inoffensive and industrious people; and as a proof of their character, they do very well as agricultural servants, thereby forming an important element in estimating the advantages of the district for settlement and cultivation.’<sup>52</sup>**

#### CONGRESS PASSES THE PREEMPTION LAND ACT OF 1841

This legislation passed Congress and was signed by President John Tyler -- September 4, 1841  
it replaced the land acts of [1820 and 1830]

This Act accommodated settlers who had established themselves illegally on land before government surveyors could plat the land into claiming plots when the land was eventually surveyed and made ready for public sale, the “squatter” had the right to appear at the local land office and purchase up to 160 acres of their illegal holdings for \$1.25 per acre to pre-empt or prevent any subsequent claims as long as the settler could show proof of a dwelling and improvements to the land

However, in Oregon there was the added problem that the land was not “public land” United States government, as agreed to in the Joint Occupation Treaty, did not own the land thus land claims would remain in doubt until some nation acquired jurisdiction over the region

#### LIEUTENANT CHARLES WILKES ORGANIZES A FINAL EXPLORATION PARTY

Wilkes decided to concentrate on the little-known area of southern Oregon and northern California this expedition was placed under the command of Lieutenant George F. Emmons who would lead eighteen men from the crew of the wrecked *Peacock* mineralogist James Dana and naturalist Titian Ramsay Peale also were included in the expedition as were botanist William Rich along with Artist Alfred A. Agate -- all were instructed to keep a detailed journal traveling with the Emmons expedition was pioneer Joel Walker who had decided to emigrate from Oregon to California with his family local trappers and other Oregonians brought the total number to thirty-nine

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<sup>51</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 178-179.

<sup>52</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P 180.

about seventy-six animals were taken along

While this expedition was underway the remainder of the U.S. Ex. Ex. would complete their surveys and travel by ship to meet Lieutenant Emmons' expedition in California

#### LIEUTENANT GEORGE F. EMMONS RECEIVES HIS INSTRUCTIONS

According to the orders from Naval Lieutenant Charles Wilkes

Lieutenant Emmons was to keep his expedition armed day and night  
notes and journals should be full and written clearly enough to be well understood by others  
without the necessity of explanation

Lieutenant Wilkes' further instructed Emmons to:

- abandon his horses if it became too difficult to proceed;
- avoid hostile contacts with the Indians but if the expedition was attacked  
then the natives must not only be repulsed but punished;
- procure all possible information regarding Hudson's Bay Company forts and stations;
- gather the names of tribes, numbers, manners, customs, habits, character and disposition;
- record all incidents that may occur to the expedition;
- gather information regarding the timber, kinds and quality of soil, climate, et cetera;
- settlers en route were to be noted and inspected regarding their physical and living conditions  
and where they were previously from

Dr. McLoughlin, in a gesture of goodwill and kindness, provided Lieutenant Emmons a letter addressed to the Hudson's Bay Company agent in Yerba Buena (San Francisco) asking that all assistance possible be provided to the Americans

#### LIEUTENANT GEORGE F. EMMONS' EXPEDITION TRAVELS UP THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Lieutenant Emmons departed from Fort Vancouver up the Columbia as far as the Willamette River before journeying south exploring, mapping and describing as much as possible the Willamette and Sacramento valleys

Emmons' expedition was to rejoin the boats from the United States Exploring Expedition at the most inland point of navigation to be found on the Sacramento River if no such point existed Emmons was to meet the *Vincennes* at Yerba Buena (in late October)

#### GOVERNOR-IN-CHIEF SIMPSON AND HIS PARTY ARRIVE AT FORT NISQUALLY

Once again he wrote in his journal: **“After crossing the ‘Squally River, we arrived at Fort Nisqually on the evening of our fourth day from Fort Vancouver. Being unwilling to commence our voyage on a Sunday [September 5], we remained here for six and thirty hours inspecting the farm**

**and dairy and visiting Dr. Richmond, an American missionary stationed in the neighborhood. The surrounding scenery is very beautiful....”<sup>53</sup>**

#### GOVERNOR-IN-CHIEF SIR GEORGE SIMPSON VIEWS PUGET SOUND

He reported in his journal: **“At noon on Monday, the 6th of September, we embarked on board of the *Beaver* steamer, Captain McNeill.... Starting under a salute of seven guns, we pushed along against a strong breeze till we anchored about five in the afternoon to enable the engineer to repair some damage which the machinery had sustained; but the job being completed by nine, we then steamed on all night.**

**“About seven in the morning we passed along the inner end of Fuca’s Straits, the first of the numberless inlets of this coast that was ever discovered by civilized man. The neighboring country... is well adapted for colonization, for in addition to a tolerable soil and a moderate climate, it possesses excellent harbors and abundance of timber. It will doubtless become in time the most valuable section of the whole coast above California.”<sup>54</sup>**

#### MEMBERS OF LIEUTENANT GEORGE EMMONS’ EXPEDITION BECOME ILL

Lieutenant Emmons’ party started south through Oregon along the banks of the Willamette River they had hardly begun when they were forced to camp for nearly five weeks

almost every member of the party, including the scientists, became ill with “ague and fever”

(ague in modern terms is seen as a catchall reference for a wide range of conditions including malaria, but in medical terms of the day it meant a fever with chill)

Emmons’ party was delayed long enough for scientists James Dana and William Brackenridge along with Midshipmen Henry Eld and George Colvocoresses joined them

Throughout their journey the scientists made new discoveries

while the midshipmen carried out meteorological observations

#### AMERICAN IMMIGRANTS ARRIVE AT WAILATPU MISSION

Hudson’s Bay Company Chief Trader Francis Ermatinger guided thirty-two weary American pioneers on their way to Oregon to the Whitmans’ Waiilatpu Mission

Narcissa Whitman made a note in her journal of that a party of immigrants

passed through the rapids of the Dalles on their way to the Willamette Valley -- September 1841

Waiilatpu will be their last stop on the trail before they reach Fort Vancouver

and, ultimately, the Willamette Valley

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<sup>53</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 181.

<sup>54</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 181.

## CANADIAN RED RIVER COLONISTS JOURNEY DOWN THE COLUMBIA RIVER

At about the same time, 116 Red River (Winnipeg) colonists from Canada passed down the Columbia River on their way to settle on tenant farms belonging to the Puget Sound Agricultural Company

## HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY AGRICULTURE

Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin notified London that sheep and cattle were en route from the south bank of the Columbia River to Nisqually Farm -- September 1841  
Although the order to move these animals had been received before the arrival of Governor Simpson the effort had been delayed by (spring) floods and the need to keep herders at Fort Vancouver to work the annual (summer) harvest

## LIEUTENANT GEORGE EMMONS' EXPEDITION SET OUT AGAIN TO REACH CALIFORNIA

Lieutenant Emmons' overland expedition was headed south up the Willamette River toward California -- September 7, 1841  
(they almost traced the route of today's Interstate 5) to the Umpqua River  
their travels were beset with troubles as rugged trails, unruly horses, illness, broken scientific instruments, threatening Grizzly Bears and menacing Indians much to the dismay of the naval officers the scientists kept wandering off to investigate a variety of interesting discoveries  
at the same time the scientists ridiculed the navy men who continued their navy vocabulary even on dry land as they "steered east by south" and traveled at a rate of "two knots an hour"

## HUDSON'S BAY POST OPENS AT YERBA BUENA (SAN FRANCISCO)

Jacob P. Leese did not give up his Yerba Buena property on Monterey Street until Hudson's Bay Company agent, Dr. John McLoughlin's son-in-law, William Glen Rae, arrived on the company ship *Cowlitz* with a large stock of goods worth at least \$10,000

Rae took possession and made use of Leese's house for a store -- September 1841

Rae successfully opened the new Hudson's Bay Company post and was the factor in charge  
Foods were sent from England to the Hudson's Bay Company's station on the Columbia River then transshipped to Monterey to make entry at the customhouse before going on Yerba Buena where Rae kept a large, miscellaneous assortment of English goods

Hudson's Bay Company traded in the same way that other merchants did along the coast,  
they sent out their little launches and schooners to collect hides and tallow  
and to deliver goods to locations around San Francisco Bay  
Hudson's Bay Company had no large vessels trading up and down the coast

#### END OF THE OREGON TRAIL -- 1841-[1843]

Looking down on the Columbia River Gorge from high up (on today's Rowena Loop)  
where the Columbia River cuts through the Cascade Mountains can be seen  
for three years this was the end of the Oregon Trail as an overland route [1841-1843]

West end of the gorge was dreadfully unsuitable for a wagon road:

- Columbia River was hemmed in by steep slopes and cliffs of hard, volcanic rock,
- climate was cold, wet and windy,
- only areas that were reliably flat enough to permit wagons to pass  
were soggy bottomlands that were subject to seasonal flooding

Rev. Daniel Lee's Trail which resulted from driving fourteen head of cattle  
from the Willamette Valley to Wascopam Mission [1838]

could not be traveled by wagons as it was far too difficult, dangerous and narrow  
here, just downriver from the Dalles, wagons were loaded on rafts or bateaux  
and floated down to Fort Vancouver to continue on to the Willamette Valley

When -- and if -- the pioneers emerged from the Columbia River Gorge,  
they floated downriver to the British fur trading post at Fort Vancouver

Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin was under instructions to discourage American settlers  
but the "Great White-Headed Eagle" as he was called by the natives

could not ignore the plight of the onrushing immigrants

he extended credit to many penniless pioneers,

(and he was still owed thousands of dollars at the time of his death [1857])

Dr. McLoughlin encouraged the Oregon Trail travelers to head south to the Willamette Valley  
in part to keep American influence from spreading throughout the extensive territory

claimed by Great Britain under the auspices of the Hudson's Bay Company

but also because he had a stake in the city he founded at Willamette Falls [1829]

#### GOVERNOR-IN-CHIEF SIR GEORGE SIMPSON VISITS RUSSIAN-AMERICA

With U.S. Naval Lieutenant Charles Wilkes revelation of the American's intention  
to press the claim of the United States to all land north to 54° 40' North

Governor Simpson hurried northward to Sitka aboard the company steamer *Beaver*

to see how the Hudson's Bay Company roots were taking hold  
he inspected the farms, the coastal trade and the Russian transactions with the Russians

#### GOVERNOR-IN-CHIEF SIR GEORGE SIMPSON CHANGES LEADERSHIP AT FORT STIKINE

When he reached Fort Stikine aboard the steamer *Beaver*

Governor-in-Chief Simpson removed Fort Stinine's one strong leader, Roderick Finlayson,  
who had been in command since the departure of William Glen Rae  
this arrangement left young John McLoughlin, Jr. alone in command  
of twenty ill-disciplined Iroquois and French-Canadian half-breeds  
at an isolated station surrounded by unruly Indians

John, Jr. had a poor opinion of his own changes

shortly after Simpson's departure he wrote pessimistically to a friend, **"I am still amongst the living of this troublesome post though report says that I am going to be dispatched to the Sandy Hills."**<sup>55</sup>

#### LIEUTENANT CHARLES WILKES SURVEYS THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Using the brig USS *Porpoise* as his base of operation Lieutenant Wilkes carried out  
a hydrographic survey of the Columbia River from its mouth to the Cascades -- September 1841  
Wilkes led the way as the expedition moved upriver -- his gig was constantly ahead of the other boats  
*Porpoise* and *Oregon* followed the boats upriver, occasionally running aground  
on one occasion, they became stuck on opposite sides of the river

Assistant Surgeon Silas Holmes, who possessed an acerbic wit, commented that the ships  
**"formed excellent buoys, pointing out the dangers on either side"**<sup>56</sup>

Ships served as home bases -- crews dispatched in the ships' boats did most of the hydrographic work  
fear of malaria dictated the working schedule

"Falling damps" or night dew was the suspected source of the disease  
(it is now known malaria is caused by a parasite carried by infected mosquitoes.)  
survey boats did not leave the ships before 9 a.m.

before departing, surveyors put on clean and dry clothing, breakfasted  
and took time to smoke

Wilkes required that the boats return at least an hour before sunset  
both ships spread awnings fore and aft as shelters from nighttime moisture

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<sup>55</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P 213.

<sup>56</sup> William S. Hanable, *United States Exploring Expedition Surveys the Columbia River during August and September 1841*, Essay 5625, *HistoryLink.org*, December 12, 2003



Wilkes sent Lieutenant William M. Walker with four boats to conduct upriver charting as far as the falls of The Cascades Rapids -- about 160 to 165 miles from the river's mouth  
Lieutenant Oliver Hazard Perry took four more boats to survey the Willamette River up to the falls when sailors left a campfire unattended below Mount Coffin (east of today's Albany, Oregon) it set fire to trees where Indians had placed their dead in canoes  
Wilkes attempted to placate the Chinooks with presents, explaining that the conflagration was an accident (later Wilkes said that there probably would have been trouble, were the Indians not so weakened by malaria and smallpox)  
Lieutenant Perry concluded that sea-going vessels should go no farther than Fort Vancouver where the Columbia River was at least fourteen feet deep at all seasons

#### LIEUTENANT GEORGE EMMONS' EXPEDITION REACHES OREGON'S UMPQUA RIVER

Continuing south across Oregon, Naval Lieutenant Emmons and his thirty-nine-member party arrived where the south fork of the Umpqua River turned east -- late September they continued southeast along the Oregon-California Trail toward the Siskiyou Mountains  
Members of the expedition were still traveling in southern Oregon as they reached the region surrounding the Klamath River (south of present-day Ashland, Oregon) they were still miles from the Sacramento River where it was anticipated that Emmons' expedition would be meeting the *Vincennes* sometime (during the last of September)

#### FLATHEAD VILLAGE RESETTLED

Big Face's village had been moved to the Bitterroot Valley as had been suggested by Father De Smet  
Father Pierre-Jean De Smet together with his fellow Jesuit missionaries Fathers Gregory Mengarini and Nicolas Point, and three Lay Brothers, Charles Duet, Brother Joseph Specht and Willem Claessens arrived in the Bitterroot Valley on the east bank of the Bitterroot River -- September 24, 1841 they carried with them their belongings and supplies in three carts and a wagon these were the first vehicles to enter the region

#### LIEUTENANT GEORGE EMMONS' EXPEDITION REACHES OREGON'S KLAMATH RIVER

Camp was made on the north bank of the Klamath River by the thirty-nine members of Emmons' party here light-colored salmon were abundant -- but it was noted they were not good tasting they were in geological terrain that was exciting to mineralogist James Dwight Dana

as the party moved south between Cascade Mountain volcanoes  
Crossing the Klamath River the men spent five hours traveling south across a broad, undulating prairie  
with a stupendous mountain Dana named "Shasty Peak" (Mount Shasta) ahead  
artist Alfred A. Agate took time to sketch the imposing peak

#### ST. MARY'S MISSION IS ESTABLISHED IN THE VALLEY OF THE BITTERROOT MOUNTAINS

Jesuit priests Fathers Pierre De Smet, Nicolas Point, Gregory Mengarini,  
along with Brothers Charles Duet, Joseph Specht, and William Claessens  
brought the first two-wheeled carts (into what would become Montana)  
Father De Smet thought this location along the Bitterroot River would be a good place  
to build a permanent Catholic mission  
they constructed a huge cross in honor of Our Lady of Mercy  
in a beautiful, elevated spot in the shadow of St. Mary's Peak of the Bitterroot Mountains  
(by today's Stevensville, Montana) -- September 29, 1841  
this symbolic gesture noted the creation of the first Jesuit Rocky Mountain Mission  
they had laid the foundation for the first white settlement (in what was to become Montana)  
In the neighborhood of St. Mary's Mission other Indian families set up their winter camp  
among them are Pend O'reille, Nez Perce, Kalispel, Kootenai  
and Coeur d'Alene bands -- even some Blackfoot families  
Catholic priests Nicolas Point and Gregory Mengarini and Lay Brothers Charles Duet,  
Joseph Specht and Willem Claessens baptized hundreds of Flatheads and Pend O'reilles

#### LIEUTENANT GEORGE EMMONS' PARTY REACHES THE SISKIYOU MOUNTAINS

Naval Lieutenant Emmons led his expedition into the Siskiyou Mountains -- September 30, 1841  
they traveled south along the Siskiyou Trail and recorded the first scientific notes  
regarding northern California and Shasty Peak as the mountain became lost  
in the haze of Indian fires

#### LIEUTENANT CHARLES WILKES RETURNS TO FORT VANCOUVER

On the return trip down the Columbia River Wilkes became ill but continued to work  
*Porpoise* and *Oregon* reached the mouth of the Columbia -- September 30, 1841  
they were joined by the *Flying Fish* which had served as tender for the *Peacock*  
Lieutenant Wilkes informed Hudson's Bay Company Governor-in-Chief Simpson that he intended  
to recommend the United States claim the Oregon as far north as 54°40 north  
(approximately today's southern boundary of Alaska)

(Wilkes intentions probably influenced Hudson's Bay Company officials to remove accumulated stores at Fort Vancouver to a new post Sir George later wrote to the British Foreign Office informing them the land south of the Columbia was not worth contesting he recommended Great Britain should not **"consent to any boundary which would give the United States any portion of the Territory north of the Columbia; as any boundary north of that stream would deprive Great Britain of the only valuable part of the territory, the country to the northward of the Straits of De Fuca not being adapted for agriculture, or other purposes connected with colonization."**<sup>57</sup>)

#### ST. MARY'S MISSION ON THE BITTERROOT RIVER ACHIEVES GREAT SUCCESS

Construction was begun by Father Pierre-Jean De Smet along the Bitterroot River

this was the first Catholic mission to serve the Indians of the Rocky Mountains -- October 1841

Father De Smet Nicolas Point and Gregory Mengarini along with Lay Brothers Charles Duet,

Joseph Specht and Willem Claessens worked with the unspoiled tribes of the interior

Father Point became immersed in the responsibilities of establishing a mission

he genuinely loved the natives and was very happy working among the Flatheads

Catholic missionaries tailored their expectations to meet the capacities of the people

they demanded only the simplest expressions of faith

within the first two months, 600 men, women and children had been baptized

by Fathers Pierre-Jean De Smet, Nicolas Point and Gregory Mengarini

including the chiefs of the Flatheads and Pend d'Oreilles

Father De Smet wrote: **"A band of Spokanes received me with every demonstration of friendship and were enchanted to hear that the right kind of Black-robos intended soon to form an establishment in the vicinity. I baptized one of their little children who way dying.**

**It was in these parts that in 1836 a modern Iconoclast named [Rev. Samuel] Parker broke down a cross erected over the grave of a child by some Catholic Iroquois, telling us emphatically in the narrative of his journey that he did not wish to leave in that country an emblem of idolatry. Poor man! -- not to know better in this enlightened age! Were he to return to these mountains he would hear the praises of the holy name of Jesus resounding among them; he would hear the Catholics chanting the love and mercies of God from the rivers, lakes, mountains, prairies, forests and coasts of the Columbia....Were he who destroyed that solitary, humble cross now to return, he would find the image of Jesus Christ crucified borne on the breast of more than 4,000 Indians; and the smallest**

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<sup>57</sup> Herbert Hunt and Floyd C. Kaylor, *Washington, West of the Cascades: Historical and Descriptive*, P. 92-92.  
58 W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 188.

**child would say to him: ‘Mr. Parker, we do not adore the cross; do not break it because it reminds us of Jesus Christ who died on the cross to save us -- we adore God alone.’”<sup>58</sup>**

Before (winter) set in, a small chapel was completed

#### LIEUTENANT GEORGE EMMONS’ PARTY IS ATTACKED BY INDIANS

Emmons expedition following the Siskiyou Trail crossed (Shasta Valley)

they passed through a mixed coniferous forest on the west side of Shasty Peak-- October 3, 1841

Emmons’ expedition suddenly was set upon by a group of Indians

while on the run botanist William Dunlop Brackenridge grabbed

what he considered the trip’s most exciting find

a handful of three-foot long weird-looking leaves and a long seed stalk (cobra lily)

was added to the botanical collection

(later this plant became known as *Darlingtonia californica*)

#### LIEUTENANT GEORGE EMMONS’ EXPEDITION CONTINUES ALONG THE SISKIYOU TRAIL

Camp was made (in today’s Castle Grags State Park) -- October 4, 1841

although lead botanist William Rich was too ill to care

botanist Brackenridge collected forty different species of plants

while zoologist Titian Ramsay Peale discovered animals and birds unfamiliar to him

mineralogist James Dwight Dana filled his field book with complicated geological notes

describing the nearby mountains, ridges and canyons

For the next week the expedition traversed old mountain masses

whose slopes were covered by coniferous forests

during the trying trek pack horses fell into creeks and soaked supplies of sugar, tea and gunpowder

while the dramatic geologic scenery amazed Dana

Lieutenant Emmons followed the Siskiyou Trail

as they emerged from the mountains they encountered Shaste (Shasta) Indians

who were friendly and eager for trade

when artist Alfred Agate tried to draw portraits of them, they believed he was a medicine man

who was trying to place a spell on them

Emmons’ men soon reached the head of the Dangerous River which fed into the Sacramento River

they generally followed the Sacramento south to their rendezvous point

veering east only when the terrain was easier

## RED RIVER SETTLERS ARRIVE AT FORT WALLA WALLA

After leaving Fort Colville and traveling down the Columbia River by boat  
the Red River migration arrived at Fort Walla Walla -- October 4, 1841

## MAIN BODY OF RED RIVER (WINNIPEG) SETTLERS ARRIVE AT FORT VANCOUVER

This attempt to begin a British colony in the Pacific Northwest  
was composed of 116 Canadian men, women, and children in twenty-one families  
Chief Factor James Douglas took charge of the Canadians  
while Governor-in-Chief Sir George Simpson was in Russian-America  
he led a small number of the Red River colonists to a possible site for their new homes  
location where he chose to settle them at Nisqually was a majestic spot  
featuring the breath-taking beauty of mounts St. Helens and Rainier  
shown grandly above the pine forests of the nearby foot hills

## MOST OF THE RED RIVER SETTLERS REMAIN AT FORT VANCOUVER

Although Chief Factor James Douglas had already selected a settlement location at Nisqually  
and had shown it to an advance party of colonists  
main contingent of French-Canadian families waited at Fort Vancouver for a number of weeks  
while Chief Factor John McLoughlin completed arrangements  
for them to journey north of Columbia River to settle

## U.S. NAVAL LIEUTENANT CHARLES WILKES SAILS FROM FORT VANCOUVER

Taking on supplies United States Exploring Expedition left Fort Vancouver -- October 9, 1841  
to sail south to California's Yerba Buena where the *Vincennes* was to be met  
along with the men of Naval Lieutenant George Emmons' expedition  
then continuing on to Hawaii, the Philippines and Singapore  
before continuing around Cape of Good Hope and across the Atlantic to New York

Lieutenant Wilkes became ill but continued to work

U.S. Exploring Expedition stopped to investigate the Cowlitz River  
after surveying sixteen miles up the Cowlitz, Wilkes began his return trip to the Columbia  
on the way back to the *Porpoise* Wilkes' gig hit a snag with such an impact  
two of the boat's crew were knocked down while low-hanging branches  
ensnared and nearly strangled the expedition's commander nearly ending his life  
*Porpoise* and *Oregon* reached the mouth of the Columbia River where they joined the *Flying Fish*

## RED RIVER COLONISTS WERE DIVIDED INTO TWO GROUPS

According to Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin's plan

fourteen Red River Valley Canadian families composed of seventy-eight people were sent to the Puget Sound Agricultural Company's Nisqually Farm thirty-eight people in seven families moved to Puget Sound Agricultural Company's farm on the Cowlitz River

Generous terms for the immigrant Canadian settlers had been arranged by Dr. McLoughlin these included plows and other farming tools, loans of pigs, cattle and working oxen, and the loan of seed for cultivation

## RED RIVER VALLEY COLONISTS ARE NOT HAPPY WITH THEIR NEW ARRANGEMENTS

Canadian colonists at Nisqually Farm and Cowlitz Farm were not happy with the opportunities offered McLoughlin's proposal did not allow for them to purchase of land -- but only to lease the land and they were to farm on half shares for the Puget Sound Agricultural Company: they could keep one-half of any increase in livestock or agricultural produce and Puget's Sound Agricultural Company would take the remaining half if they moved across the Columbia River to the south side they could take out a squatter's claim as the Americans were doing in the Willamette Valley this was much more appealing

## LIEUTENANT GEORGE EMMONS' EXPEDITON ENTERS THE SACRAMENTO VALLEY

Several hours after leaving camp with the mountainous country behind them the members of the expedition looked across gravel slopes of oak trees and rough, jagged, scraggly bushes into the broad Sacramento Valley with volcanic Mount Lassen and the snow-crested Sierra Mountains to the east -- October 10, 1841

there were numerous very friendly Indians in the countryside who were busy gathering and drying acorns

Continuing south across the green countryside through open groves of oak they were astonished by the abundance of game

elk, Pronghorn sheep, Black-tailed deer, wolves, Grizzly Bears and beaver activity on the side creeks were seen

California Condors, Turkey Vultures, Common Ravens, flocks of Red-winged Blackbirds, Great Blue Herons, Great and Snowy egrets, Sandhill Cranes, Mallards and other ducks, Double-breasted Cormorants and curlews were present in great numbers

## CONCERNS OF AMERICAN RESIDENTS IN OREGON GROW

Americans worried that if the Puget Sound Agricultural Company became self-sufficient as a result of the Red River colonists and Hudson's Bay Company no longer needed American wheat to fulfill its Russian contracts and if Chief Factor John McLoughlin ever decided, for whatever reason, not to sell them ammunition or cloth or hardware, as he was already declining to sell livestock, then what then would the Americans do?

## ADDITIONAL AMERICAN TRAVELERS TO OREGON LEAVE FORT HALL

Twenty-four settlers who had followed in the wake of the Bartleson-Bidwell Wagon Train they trickled through Waiilatpu on their way to the Willamette Valley by mid-October 1841

Narcissa Whitman wrote in a letter to her parents: **“Doubtless every year will bring more & more into this country.... These emigrants are nearly destitute of every kind of food when they arrive here we are under the necessity of giving them provisions to help them on. Our little place is a resting spot for many a weary, way-worn traveler and will be as long as we live here. If we can do good that way, perhaps it is as important as some other things we are doing.”**<sup>59</sup>

Mary Ann Bridger, the six-year-old daughter of Mountain Man Jim Bridger

came to live with the Whitmans sometime in 1841 (perhaps with this group)

Whitman's mission will be their last stop on the overland route before they reach Fort Vancouver ultimately they will dissolve into the Willamette Valley with scarcely a ripple

## LIEUTENANT GEORGE EMMONS' EXPEDITION REACHES THE SACRAMENTO RIVER

Emmons' expedition crossed the Feather River just above its confluence with the Sacramento River here they almost lost their guide to quicksand -- October 18, 1841

Human bones strewn in all directions marked the site of an Indian village

where some fifteen hundred Indians had died of an epidemic [summer 1833]

## LIEUTENANT EMMONS PARTY ARRIVES AT NEW HELVETIA

George Emmons' expedition crossed the American River

they reached Captain John Sutter's New Helvetia settlement -- October 19, 1841

this was a thriving agricultural settlement on the American River

George Emmons and his party dined with Captain John Sutter who since his arrival [1839]

held a Spanish appointment as governor of the district

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<sup>59</sup> Transactions of the Fifteenth Annual Reunion of the Oregon Pioneer Association for 1887, Portland Oregon, Volumes 15-19.

Sutter claimed “supreme power” over the land

Sutter had just recently purchased the Russians’ Fort Ross north of San Francisco  
(Later, the surveying data gathered by the expedition would be useful to prospectors  
making their way to the California central valley in search of gold)

#### U.S. NAVAL LIEUTENANT CHARLES WILKES ARRIVES IN SAN FRANCISCO BAY

Lieutenant Wilkes sailed the *Porpoise* into San Francisco Bay -- October 19, 1841

(newly acquired *Oregon* appeared a few days later)

With the arrival of Wilkes all onshore and shipboard frivolities among the *Vincennes* crew ended  
survey work was begun as a map of “Upper California” and the waters entering the bay was drawn  
while the remainder of Lieutenant Emmons’ Expedition was making its way to the ships  
Wilkes took exception to the survey of San Pablo Bay  
done by Lieutenant Cadwalader Ringgold’s  
Ringgold’s crew was sent out again for nine days in the *Vincennes*’ launch  
to repeat the survey

#### LIEUTENANT GEORGE EMMONS PARTY SPLITS UP AT NEW HELVETIA

Lieutenant George Emmons, assistant surgeon Dr. John Whittle who was sick  
and artist Alfred A. Agate were able to leave Captain John Sutter’s settlement  
in the boat of an American who had some Indian trappers with him -- October 21, 1841  
traveling down the Sacramento River they encountered the launch from USS *Vincennes*  
carrying Lieutenant Cadwalader Ringgold and his survey party  
they boarded the launch for the remainder of the trip to Yerba Buena (San Francisco)  
(they reached the *Vincennes* at Whaler’s Harbor tired, dirty and bearded [October 24])

#### THRITTEEN MEMBERS OF LIEUTENANT EMMONS’ EXPEDITION SET OUT OVERLAND

Naval Lieutenant George Emmons’ overland party left Sutters’ Fort

led by Spanish guide named Romero -- about noon October 21, 1841

their route was strait down the San Joaquin Valley in warm, dry weather

Expedition members included Midshipman Henry Eld and Midshipman George Musolas Colvocoresses,  
botanist William Rich, who was now feeling better, and naturalist Titian Ramsay Peale  
botanist William Brackenridge decided to accompany the land party rather than travel by boat  
because he would travel through a landscape never before seen by naturalists

#### WILKES OVERLAND EXPEDITION CONTINUES ACROSS THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY



While crossing a rapid stream naturalist Titian Ramsay Peale spotted the largest grizzly track he had seen during the entire trip -- October 22, 1841

Mineralogist James Dwight Dana was intrigued by the bluffs of alternating soft sandstone and clay at (Carquinez Strait where Interstate 80 crossed the Sacramento River today) studying the layers of rock ranging from one inch to four feet thick dipping at an angle from thirty-five degrees to sixty-five degrees

Dana remarked that this was an area of numerous faults  
(in fact, the Calaveras Fault crosses here)

Thirty-two miles were made on this second day -- October 22, 1841

that night Peale added a raccoon and a coyote to his collection

as well as a few of the hundreds of Mallards populating the many small ponds around the camp

#### GOVERNOR-IN-CHIEF SIR GEORGE SIMPSON RETURNS TO COLUMBIA DISTRICT

Governor Simpson returned to Fort Vancouver from his visit to Russian-America -- October 22, 1841

Simpson believed Hudson's Bay Company would maintain control of the Columbia District

as he noted: **“The United States will never possess more than a nominal jurisdiction, nor long possess even that, on the west side of the Rocky Mountains. On behalf of England, direct arguments are superfluous; for, until some other power puts a good title on paper, actual possession must be held to be of itself conclusive in her favor.”**<sup>60</sup>

Governor Simpson had determined the future of the entire Pacific Northwest in his own mind for years Simpson had argued that the coastal trade should be by ship signing contracts with the Russians seemed to favor Simpson's plan to use vessels instead of forts and trading posts

#### GOVERNOR-IN-CHIEF GEORGE SIMPSON CHANGES HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY POLICY

Simpson decided to close all the coastal posts except Fort Simpson

and to rely on the *Beaver* for coastal trade as American competition had virtually disappeared

Abruptly, Sir George swept aside plans to rely on trading forts and posts

during his trip to Sitka (Alaska) the governor had become convinced that the country

between the Alaskan panhandle and the Rocky Mountains was not as extensive as supposed ships calling at the annual salmon-catching fairs of the natives

would be adequate, in his opinion, to handle the trade

peremptorily, Governor Simpson ordered Chief Factor McLoughlin to cancel all preparations for additional posts and to start abandoning those already established

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<sup>60</sup> Lancaster Pollard, *A History of the State of Washington*, P. 61.

Nor was that all the governor demanded

Simpson had long felt that Fort Vancouver's position on the Columbia was too exposed for safety on his way north to Sitka Simpson had taken time to investigate a substitute site on the southern tip of Vancouver Island that was first discovered by the captain of a company ship this location was later highly praised by James Douglas as it offered a fine harbor, open fields and readily available timber

Governor Simpson noted: **"It will,"** Simpson wrote the committee, **"doubtless become, in time, the most valuable section of the whole coast above California"** <sup>61</sup>

Governor Simpson directed McLoughlin to locate a new post on the site but this was to be not a mere coastal trading stockade but a fort that would be designed to supersede the great bastion of Fort Vancouver itself Chief Factor McLoughlin did not agree he deeply resented the fact that he had not been consulted Simpson consented that Fort Stikine be maintained

#### CHIEF FACTOR DR. McLOUGHLIN SUPPORTS THE ORIGINAL COMPANY TRADING POLICY

Dr. McLoughlin was convinced that trade should be handled by additional forts and trading posts ships were vulnerable to loss at sea and susceptible to harassment and problems with the Indians crews had to be well trained and skilled -- they were expensive and unreliable To Dr. McLoughlin, Governor Simpson's directives were repudiation of nearly twenty years' struggle to make Fort Vancouver the paramount power of the Pacific Northwest and to extend the power of Hudson's Bay Company so commanding to the north that American ships would scarcely dare to risk competing anywhere in the region not for thirteen years had Governor-in-Chief Simpson set foot in the Columbia District moreover, Simpson had not even bothered to consult McLoughlin about the changes although McLoughlin would be responsible for their success or failure it was a bitter insult on the strength of one characteristically headlong trip Simpson presumed to wave aside the painfully garnered experience of the fort's veterans and substitute his own impulsive plans instead

#### OVERLAND EXPEDITION SUCCESSFULLY CROSSES THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY

Thirteen-man expedition completed crossing the San Joaquin River -- 11:00 A.M. October 25, 1841

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<sup>61</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 211.

their Spanish guide called a halt for the day at a large lagoon filled with ducks and geese  
along the shore were Sandhill Cranes and Pronghorn sheep  
he warned that the west side of the San Joaquin Valley would be a very long journey  
without water or grass

Midshipman Henry Eld using what limited power he possessed to command the group  
disregarded the guide's advice -- he ordered the men to push on  
after more than ten hours they finally reached the cold foothills  
at the edge of an impenetrable swamp  
they had traveled about thirty miles without water, wood, or grass for the horses  
they saw only one desolate person all during their trek

#### GOVERNOR SIMPSON AND CHIEF FACTOR McLOUGHLIN STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL

Governor-in-Chief Simpson and Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin were in complete disagreement  
about how the Columbia District should be administered  
McLoughlin noted the Red River migration showed immigrants could reach the Columbia District  
and Americans were even more inclined to attempt the journey than were French-Canadians  
Simpson argued the Chief Factor encouraged the potential American invasion as he was too friendly  
he accused Dr. McLoughlin of losing the Willamette Valley for the Hudson's Bay Company  
by feeding and clothing the missionaries and settlers  
and generally treating them as human beings

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET SETS OUT TO BUY PROVISIONS

Father De Smet left St. Mary's Mission with ten Flathead braves -- October 28, 1841  
to visit Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Colville on the Columbia River just above the Kettle Falls  
approximately 125 miles to the west  
his purpose for this trip was to buy extra provisions for the winter and spring  
food, clothing, sowing-seed, tools, agricultural implements, cattle and other working animals  
were urgently need by the Jesuit missionaries  
as was his custom, Father De Smet evangelized along the way  
this trip focused his attention on the Kalispels and Pend d'Oreille Indians

Because his time was limited on this trip he devised a unique method of instruction:

**“With the help of his interpreter he translated into Indian the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary, the Ten Commandments, with the Acts of Faith, Hope, Charity, and Contrition. He then made his Indian pupils stand in a circle, insisting that they should always take the same places. When they were thus arranged, he would teach to one the First Commandment, to another the Second, and so**

**on. As to prayers he made each one learn by memory a different sentence of the same prayer, so that, everyone reciting what he had memorized, the whole would be rendered. This took him about three days, and all, young and old, soon knew the commandments and the prayers by heart.”<sup>62</sup>**

#### OVERLAND EXPEDITION NOW LED BY MIDSHIPMAN ELD ARRIVES IN YERBA BUENA

Thirteen men of the overland expedition now led by Midshipman Henry Eld continued south they arrived at Yerba Buena (San Francisco) wearing buckskins -- October 28, 1841

they were unshaven and dirty after many days of travel

everyone in the village had the impression they were a party of trappers

Eld recorded that one man persisted in speaking Spanish to him

and refused to believe he was an American

After their arrival their faithful horses were sold at a public auction -- a painful scene for the travelers

#### WILKES EXPEDITION SAILED FROM YERBA BUENA

United States Exploring Expedition set sail from San Francisco Bay -- October 31, 1841

loss of the *Peacock* and the addition of *Oregon* made it necessary

to reorganize officers, crewmen and scientists

artist Alfred Agate found himself assigned to the *Vincennes*

Naval Lieutenant Charles Wilkes sailed for Hawaii in order to acquire supplies

to replace those lost with the *Peacock*

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET RECEIVES A LETTER FROM DR. McLOUGHLIN

Father De Smet and his ten Flathead Indian traveling companions continued on their way toward Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Colville

While resting in a Kalispel Indian camp eight Indians in two canoes

emerged from Flathead Lake -- Sunday November 9, 1841

one of them was Charles, the Flathead interpreter De Smet had used the previous year

Charles was now employed by the Hudson's Bay Company

his little party brought a message from Dr. John McLoughlin dated the (end of September),

written in response to Father De Smet's letter to the Chief Factor

McLoughlin invited the priest to visit at Fort Vancouver

Charles continued toward St. Mary's Mission on the Bitterroot River

and Father De Smet resumed his travels toward Fort Colville

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<sup>62</sup> L.B. Palladino, S.J., *Indians and Whites in Northwest*, P. 46.

## GOVERNOR SIR GEORGE SIMPSON ATTEMPTS TO INTIMIDATE DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN

Governor-in-Chief Simpson accused McLoughlin of losing the Willamette valley for the Company by feeding and clothing the missionaries and settlers and generally treating them as human beings. However, the governor found he could neither frighten his subordinate Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin nor impress him with his position. Dr. McLoughlin reminded Governor Simpson the Treaty of Joint Occupation gave American missionaries and settlers on the Columbia River the same rights as British fur traders and even British governors. Still, Simpson was boss.

## HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY LEADERS CONTINUE ON TO HAWAII

Imperious and stubborn though Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin could be even toward his boss, McLoughlin seemed to have swallowed his wrath toward Governor-in-Chief Sir George Simpson at least for the time being. Governor Simpson, the Chief Factor and his metis daughter Eloise all sailed on the *Cowlitz* to San Francisco Bay to inspect the company's newest post, Yerba Buena (San Francisco) that had been placed in the charge of William Glen Rae, McLoughlin's erratic son-in-law and Eloise's husband.

## FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET ARRIVES AT FORT COLVILLE

After leaving Flathead Lake, Father De Smet and his ten native traveling companions stopped in another Kalispel village before they reached Fort Colville -- November 15, 1841. As usual, Father De Smet was made to feel very welcome by Archibald McDonald, who was the Hudson's Bay Company person in charge. Father De Smet was informed that he could buy some of the much-needed provisions such as seeds, but there were not any cattle for sale.

## UNITED STATES EXPLORATION EXPEDITION ARRIVES IN HAWAII

Wilkes' squadron arrived in Hawaii -- November 17, 1841 and stayed for only ten days. During this time they saw their first Japanese people and artist Alfred A. Agate made sketches. On leaving Hawaii, *Vincennes* and *Flying Fish* went in search of Strong's Island and the Ascension Islands, which Wilkes believed it was particularly important to locate. Wilkes sent *Porpoise* and *Oregon* to investigate the currents off the coast of Japan, which he believed would be similar to the Gulf Stream in the Atlantic Ocean.

and continued to Wake Island the Philippines, Sulu Archipelago, Borneo and Singapore  
(Wilkes squadron would rendezvous in Singapore before continuing their homeward voyage  
visiting Polynesia and the Cape of Good Hope  
at the conclusion of their four year expedition Naval Lieutenant Charles Wilkes and his crew  
had explored 280 islands, mostly in the Pacific Ocean,  
and over 800 miles of Oregon had been mapped  
of no less importance, a staggering amount of data and specimens were collected  
over 60,000 plant and bird specimens were collected during the expedition  
including seeds of 648 species and 254 live plants gathered at the end of the journey

#### FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHOWS INTEREST IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Federal government finally gave a response to the settlers' "Oregon Memorial"

Philip L. Edwards' Petition of [1838] -- the first petition sent to Congress

President John Tyler gave a speech opening the new Session of Congress -- December 6, 1841

he stated he supported a plan for a chain of army posts from Council Bluffs to the Pacific Ocean

Congress ignored the presidential request

Secretary of State Daniel Webster

represented the principles of the conservative elements of the New England seaboard

he was inclined to yield to Great Britain in regard to the Pacific Northwest

he supported the lack of attention to the Pacific Northwest by Congress

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET RETURNS TO ST. MARY'S MISSION

Priest, accompanied by his entourage of ten Flathead braves, retraced their steps using the same road  
forty-two days later Father De Smet returned safe and sound to his post

St. Mary's Mission on the Bitterroot River -- December 8, 1841

there a difficult winter was spent among the Flathead Indians as supplies again ran low

#### RED RIVER COLONISTS MOVE TO THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY

Most of the Red River settlers chose to move south of the Columbia River to Oregon for free land  
soon only two or three Canadian families remained at the Puget Sound Agricultural farms

Cowlitz Farm was abandoned by the new colonists

American pioneers led by Rev. Jason Lee's Great Reinforcement

quickly dominated the area around Nisqually Farm and Cowlitz Farm

#### KAMIAH MISSION IS CLOSED

Kamiah Mission was a failure from the start through no fault of the missionaries although it was located among the Nez Perce Indians  
it was too close to Flathead and Iroquois Indians  
who wanted Catholic priests to teach them rather than accept protestants  
Protestant missionaries formally dissolved the mission and became settlers -- end of December 1841  
Rev. Philo B. Littlejohn and his wife Adeline returned to Lapwai Mission  
to continue to assist Rev. Spalding  
Alvin T. Smith, his wife Abigail moved to the Willamette Valley to farm  
Rev. Harvey L. Clark moved to the Tualatin Plains where he started a missionary school  
just north the Tualatin Plains (in what is now Forest Grove, Oregon)  
Kamiah Mission had been maintained for only two years

#### HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY LEADERS AT YERBA BUENA (SAN FRANCISCO)

Governor-in-Chief Sir George Simpson, Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin  
and his daughter Eloise, wife of Yerba Buena factor William Glen Rae  
arrived at the Company's California post -- December 30, 1841

Eloise kept house and entertained the important personages  
who called upon her handsome, mannerly, hard-drinking husband

After the Hudson's Bay Company leaders reached Yerba Buena, Simpson noted in his journal: **"Mrs. Rae describes the company's house as about thirty by eighty feet with a big hall in the middle, on one side of which was the store and on the other the dwelling, with a dining room and sitting room in front and in back, four bed rooms, and a kitchen back of all. Davis says that Rae and Spear were the chief entertainers, there being no hotels. Rae was a Scotsman of fine presence, a *bon-vivant* and hard drinker, but subject to periods of great depression. He disliked Americans and, it is said, boasted when in his cups that 'it had cost the company seventy-five thousand pounds to drive the Yankee traders from the Columbia and that they would drive them from California if it cost a million.'** The large capital of the Hudson's Bay company gave them an advantage over the traders in Yerba Buena but the business did not prosper under Rae's management."

#### SPOKANE INDIANS AT TSHIMAKAIN MISSION BECAME APATHETIC

Message of Christian charity and forgiveness delivered by the Protestant missionaries  
seemed to have little impact on the native people -- winter 1841

Rev. Cushing Eells rode hundreds of miles to reach different bands of natives  
leaving his wife Myra and six-month-old son Edwin to maintain Tshimakain Mission  
all to little avail as attendance at schools fell off

Indians resumed their dances, incantations and gambling  
Rev. Elkanah and Mary Walker and Rev. Cushing and Myra Eells at Tshimakain Mission  
looked on -- reproachful and distressed

#### SPOKANE GARRY RETURNS TO HIS FORMER LIFESTYLE

Spokane Garry suffered from lack of encouragement and support for his missionary work  
which had not been provided by either Hudson's Bay Company or the American missionaries  
old Indian people refused his ideas -- young Indian people ridiculed him  
many Indians converted to the Catholic faith in spite of his Garry's efforts  
Governor Sir George Simpson found Garry living on the Columbia Plateau had reverted "to the tepee"  
he was "unkept and unclean, his hands full of filthy gambling cards"

#### MISSOURI U.S. SENATOR LEWIS F. LINN PROPOSES OREGON TERRITORY BE CREATED

United States Government anticipated increasing numbers of settlers migrating west  
Rev. David Leslie's second [1840] Petition to Congress was delivered by Thomas J. Farnham  
to Missouri's junior Democratic U.S. Senator Lewis F. Linn  
in response Senator Linn proposed Oregon Territory be created by Congress  
in the region South of 49° North latitude -- January 2, 1842  
Senator Linn's proposed legislation went beyond his earlier [1841] proposal  
to occupy, settle and extend certain American laws in the Pacific Northwest  
Senator Linn proposed eligible American male immigrants over eighteen years of age  
could claim one Section (640 Acres) of public land free of charge  
prospects for passage of the Linn Bill were so favorable, emigrants began gathering  
along Missouri River to come West for free land

#### DR. ELIJAH WHITE RECEIVES A UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENT

Dr. Elijah White was busily occupied in the United States  
reporting his complaints regarding Rev. Jason Lee to the Methodist Mission Society  
and providing inaccurate and unbecoming tales about Hudson's Bay Company to congress  
As a result of his reports Dr. White was appointed by the Indian Bureau  
to the position of "sub-Indian Agent for Oregon"  
he was instructed to take with him as many emigrants as could be gathered for the journey west  
where he would become the first resident United States official to reside on the Pacific Coast  
(although he was never confirmed by Congress)



## SIMPSON AND McLOUGHLIN CONTINUE THEIR INSPECTION TOUR IN CALIFORNIA

Hudson's Bay Company's Governor Sir George Simpson and Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin visiting their company post at Yerba Buena operated by William Glen Rae

Dr. McLoughlin's son-in-law

Governor-in-Chief Simpson again announced he was opposed to Chief Factor McLoughlin's plan to expand the Hudson's Bay Company's presence in California:

- Mexican red tape exasperated him,
- California beaver prospects were disheartening,
- Simpson did not like the location of the Yerba Buena post

Brusquely Simpson directed McLoughlin to wind up the California business within two years

Simpson set out to visit Vallejo at Sonoma

and was warmly entertained at Monterey and Santa Barbara

## MISSOURI U.S. SENATOR THOMAS HART BENTON JOINS IN SENATOR LINN'S PROPOSAL

Addressing the dispute with Great Britain in the Senate -- January 12, 1842

Missouri's senior Democratic U.S. Senator Thomas Hart Benton stated: **“They [the British] have crossed the 49th degree, come down upon the Columbia, taken possession of it from the head to the mouth, fortified it and colonized it, monopolized the fur trade, driven all our traders across the mountain, killed more than a thousand of them [by instigating the Indians] ... Peace is our policy. War is the policy of England, and war with us is now her favorite policy. Let it come rather than dishonor!”**<sup>63</sup>

## REV. JASON PLANS A NEW SCHOOL FOR MISSIONARY CHILDREN AT CHEMEKETA

Rev. Jason Lee's new Methodist mission was still under construction at Chemeketa (Salem, Oregon) preaching was conducted at the Chemeketa home of Rev. Jason and Lucy Lee

Members of the community of Chemeketa began to discuss the merits of developing a school specifically for the children of missionaries

Rev. Jason Lee held a meeting at his home -- January 17, 1842

it was decided that action should be taken to establish a new school

## EVANGICAL UNITED BRETHERN CHURCH OPENS IN CHEMETEKA

Evangelical United Brethren Church congregation met for services in a room at the Oregon Institute

Methodist mission families subscribed funds privately

to establish the Oregon Institute to provide education for their children -- 1842

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<sup>63</sup> Oscar Osburn Winther, *The Great Northwest*, P. 144.

## PROTESTANT MISSIONARIES BECOME INCREASINGLY FRUSTRATED

American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions missionaries under Dr. Marcus Whitman faced a great deal of frustration in dealing with the native peoples

internal squabbles and conflicts only enhanced the loneliness of life on the frontier among people unlike themselves;

Methodist missionaries under Rev. Jason Lee were frustrated by the high Indian death rate efforts to convert the Indians to Christianity by these missionaries usually resulted in failure disheartened and disgruntled Methodist missionaries wrote home to the Mission Society complaining of Jason Lee's leadership

financial accusations were leveled against Lee

he was too focused on cattle speculation and ignored missionary and native needs

he requested too large a salary

he failed to fully report financial transactions and accounts

this frustration combined by the rivalry between Jason Lee and Dr. Elijah White

led many of the Methodists to turn more and more to farming

## AMERICAN GEORGE ABERNATHY IS A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSMAN

George Abernathy retained an adjacent narrow strip of land (Green Point) next to McLoughlin's land Abernathy distributed goods among the Methodist missionaries and other settlers

by extending credit and negotiating bartering exchanges of goods and crops

due to the lack of circulating currency he invented and "Abernathy rocks" for making change

these were pieces of flint inscribed with his initials

backed by his high standing in the community

Abernathy also led the way in building a gristmill and sawmill

that could supply goods needed for barter

and supervised the Methodist missionaries' granary

Abernathy took a piece of land along the northern edge of Dr. John McLoughlin's property

(later he became a leading businessman in Oregon and its local governor)

## PACIFIC NORTHWEST REMAINS UNDER HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY CONTROL

It was customary for American settlers to seek the advice of Hudson's Bay Company regarding the best place to locate

British government hoped to establish the international boundary along the Columbia River

Willamette Valley was always pointed out to immigrants as the most desirable location

as yet, no Americans had settled North of Columbia River

#### AMERICANS IN OREGON ARE ILL AT EASE WITHOUT A GOVERNMENT

Robert “Doc” Newell dated his own interest in forming a local government from 1842 when Rev. Jason Lee led the drive for a government independent of Hudson’s Bay Company

Robert “Doc” Newell and Joe Meek had become substantial residents

they were eager to exercise their leadership

On the Tualatin Plain where both Newell and Meek lived an Indian took all of the possessions from the household of one of the Protestant missionaries Newell had piloted from the Green River to Fort Hall [in 1840] with Joe Meek, Caleb Wilkins and others

Newell caught and punished the offender

this incident led Doc Newell to ponder the need for law and the machinery to enforce it in

he became involved in the push for (an American) government

Newell’s motives also may have owed as much to a shrewd assessment of economic possibilities that could become available under the new regime

#### AMERICANS CONTINUE TO AGITATE FOR A LOCAL MEETING TO DISCUSS LEADERSHIP

Americans invited the French-Canadians to unite with them in organizing a temporary government to provide law and order south of the Columbia River

This idea was opposed by British Hudson’s Bay Company and Catholic influences

131 British subjects remained passive

as they were apprehensive that it might interfere with their allegiance the British

#### SIMPSON AND McLOUGHLIN INSPECT THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS OPERATION

From Yerba Buena (San Francisco), California the badly strained party composed of

Hudson’s Bay Company Governor Sir George Simpson and Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin sailed to inspect the company’s store and warehouses at Honolulu

There the tempers of the two men boiled over

each sending off to London a blistering report in support of his own policies

Then, no longer speaking to one another, they separated

Dr. McLoughlin returned to the great fort on the Columbia River

which he thought Governor-in-Chief Simpson was destroying

Simpson sailed northward for further consultation with the Russians

#### PLANS ARE MADE FOR OPENING A NEW SCHOOL FOR MISSIONARY CHILDREN

Two weeks after the Chemeketa community meeting had the home of Rev. and Mrs. Jason Lee  
a board of trustees for a new school for the children of missionaries  
was appointed -- February 1, 1842

Dr. Ira Babcock was named head of the planning committee to find a location for the new school  
wheelwright Rev. Lewis Hubbell Judson drew up a code of conduct and prospectus  
for the new school

this new school was given the name "Oregon Institute"

Methodist missionaries turned their efforts toward laying out a town and selling building lots  
to finance the proposed new school

#### METHODIST MISSIONARY REV. DAVID LESLIE FACES TRAGEDY

Mary Leslie, the wife of Rev. Leslie, became ill and died -- February 1842

she was the first person buried in (Salem's) Pioneer Cemetery -- then part of the Leslie's farm

Rev. Leslie faced the prospect of raising daughters Satira, Helen, Aurelia, Mary and Sarah alone

Feeling unable to raise five daughters on his own in a region as remote as Oregon,

Rev. David Leslie decided to take his girls to the Hawaiian Islands

to be raised at the Methodist mission where there was a school for girls

where his five daughters could attend

#### DR. WHITMAN ADDS TO HIS MILLING OPERATION AT WAILATPU MISSION

Dr. Marcus Whitman constructed a more efficient gristmill to replace the original

with this mill, Whitman was able to produce enough flour to supply

other American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions stations

and to sell the surplus to the immigrants of 1842

In addition, some of the Cayuse Indians began to bring their grain to the mill for grinding

#### GOVERNOR-IN-CHIEF SIMPSON SENDS INSTRUCTIONS TO DR. McLOUGHLIN

Shepherds at the outlying stations were lodged in small wooden houses on wheels

these portable houses were prefabricated at Fort Vancouver and shipped to Fort Nisqually

aboard the Hudson's Bay Company sailing schooner *Cadboro*

houses and sheep could be moved from area to area

at night the animals were penned up to protect them from wolves

Governor Sir George Simpson was so pleased with the results of Puget Sound Agricultural Company  
importing cattle and sheep from California that he informed Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin

that no more livestock were needed -- March 1, 1842 **“We had it at one time in contemplation to get some more cattle and sheep conveyed from California to the Columbia River,”** Simpson wrote, **“but I think that now we have a sufficient number of these animals, if they be properly attended to, and . . . no further step should be taken towards procuring any more sheep or cattle from California.”**<sup>64</sup>

#### DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN RETURNS TO FORT VANCOUVER

Hudson’s Bay Company Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin returned to Fort Vancouver from Hawaii he was still not on speaking terms with his boss, Governor Sir George Simpson who was in Sitka conducting an inspection of Hudson’s Bay Company operations in that region  
Dr. McLoughlin was informed of Rev. Jason Lee’s effort to create an American government

#### GOVERNOR-IN-CHIEF SIMPSON LOOKS FOR A REPLACEMENT FOR FORT VANCOUVER

Hudson’s Bay Company Governor-in-Chief Sir George Simpson felt confident that the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel would become the international boundary leaving Fort Vancouver out in the cold  
Simpson feared the British government would give up all claim to land north of the Columbia River unless the Company was firmly established there  
but only a limited supply of furs remained in the Columbia River area  
Governor Simpson was anxious to ensure Hudson’s Bay Company would maintain a presence on Vancouver Island and in British Territory  
he ordered Chief Factor James Douglas who was posted at Fort Vancouver to make a reconnaissance trip to the southern tip of Vancouver Island to find an acceptable harbor -- March 1842

#### FIRST BRITISH SETTLEMENT ON VANCOUVER ISLAND

Hudson’s Bay Company Chief Factor James Douglas with a party of forty employees discovered the location for a post on Vancouver Island -- March 15, 1842  
Construction on a fort located at the Songhees Indian settlement of Camosack (Camosun) (200 yards northwest of the present-day Empress Hotel on Victoria’s Inner Harbor)  
local Songhees people were paid one Hudson’s Bay blanket for every forty pickets they cut  
once the location was enclosed necessary warehouses and buildings were constructed  
Songhees people soon established a village across the harbor from the fort  
(this was later moved to the north shore of Esquimalt Harbor)  
At first there was some confusion regarding the name of post

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<sup>64</sup> George Simpson, *An Overland Journey Round the World during the Years 1841 and 1842*. Vol. 1, P. 108.

Chief Trader Charles Ross built the fort and called it Fort Albert (after Queen Victoria's husband) however, the post was known locally as Fort Camosun (this post was renamed Fort Victoria [December 1843])

#### REV. JASON ONCE AGAIN FACES TRAGEDY

Jason Lee's second wife, Lucy Thompson Lee died -- March 20, 1842  
only three weeks after giving birth to their daughter Lucy Anna Maria  
Rev. Jason Lee placed his daughter in the care of Rev. Gustavus Hines and his wife Lydia who raised Lucyanna as their own child

#### AMERICAN BOARD MISSIONAIRES CONTINUE TO BICKER

All but Henry Spalding wrote letters to the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions finding fault with their fellow missionaries -- spring 1842  
ironically, it was Rev. Spalding at whom most of the ill-natured remarks were leveled principally by William Gray and Rev. Asa Smith  
but on occasion even Dr. Whitman could be overbearing when his temper flared

#### PACIFIC NORTHWEST BOUNDARY DISPUTE CHALLENGES THE U.S. AND BRITAIN

Congress was being pressed to do something about the Pacific Northwest boundary  
Americans in the Pacific Northwest remained without personal or civil protection -- 1842  
British cabinet members wanted to be rid of what they saw as "the Oregon problem"  
Eighteen years after British Foreign Secretary George Canning had failed to deal successfully with then-Secretary of state John Quincy Adams [1824]  
newly-elected Conservative British Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel  
and British Foreign Secretary Lord Aberdeen (George Hamilton-Gordon)  
proposed a new round of British-American negotiations  
Prime Minister Peel and Foreign Secretary Lord Aberdeen were both anxious  
to avoid a political rupture with the United States  
American Secretary of State Daniel Webster believed an opportunity for agreement  
to resolve the issues facing the Pacific Northwest existed  
although he complained about the proposed boundary along the Columbia River  
Webster was concerned the United States could lose access to a good port on the Pacific  
and this, in fact, would leave the United States without any seaport on the Pacific  
Negotiations were scheduled to take place with the new John Tyler government in Washington, D.C.  
British Foreign Secretary Lord Aberdeen sent Lord Ashburton (Alexander Baring)

to the United States as Special Commissioner -- April 4, 1842  
Special Commissioner Lord Ashburton's primary purpose  
was to settle the northeastern boundary between Maine and Canada  
and to resolve all causes of dispute between the two nations -- including Oregon  
Foreign Secretary Lord Aberdeen seemed to have not concerned himself with the Oregon problem  
he instructed Special Commissioner Lord Ashburton to follow in the footsteps  
of British Foreign Secretary George Canning regarding the western boundary  
and demand the international boundary was to follow the Columbia River  
from its mouth to 49° north and then along that parallel to the Rocky Mountains  
Lord Ashburton met with Secretary of State Daniel Webster in Washington, D.C. -- 1842  
Ashburton stated it would be impossible for the United States  
to colonize Oregon **"for many years to come"**  
Ashburton rejected the American offer of a boundary along 49° from the Rockies to the sea  
each of the three times it was proposed by Secretary of State Webster

#### ARMY CORPS OF TOPOGRAPHICAL ENGINEERS IS CHARGED WITH MAPPING THE WEST

United States Army Corps of Topographical Engineers was a small, elite branch of the U.S. Army  
led by highly professional yet politically astute Colonel John J. Albert  
Officers of the Topographical Engineers knew more than how to shoot azimuths,  
translate their figures onto maps that correlated topography to latitude and longitude  
and read the stars in the field  
they charged themselves with exploring and mapping the West  
and devoted their talents to fulfilling the nation's promise of continental expansion  
United States Army Corps of Topographical Engineers were responsible  
for much of the exploration and mapping of the American West  
Corps of Topographical Engineers, unconfined by strictly military limits,  
developed a proud spirit of solidarity and dedication to their mission  
they reaped the cream of the West Point graduating classes  
and the most famous of this group was John Charles Fremont  
who led three separate exploration and surveying expeditions to the west

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET DECIDES TO VISIT FORT VANCOUVER

In a letter dated the [end of September 1841] Dr. John McLoughlin had invited Father De Smet  
to pay a visit to Fort Vancouver  
Leaving Father Gregorio Mengarini assisted by Father Nicholas Point

in charge of the religious practices of the natives at St. Mary's Mission

Father De Smet set out for Fort Colville -- April 13, 1842

with Charles, a Flathead Indian guide, and three other natives

following his customary method of travel, the priest visited

the Kootenai Indians on the St. Regis River,

and Kalispels on the Pend O'reille River

Father De Smet crossed the Bitterroot Mountains and entered the fertile Spokane River valley

which provided a home to the Coeur d'Alene Indians

Indians there gathered to meet him near the present site of Coeur d'Alene

Father De Smet's visit with the Coeur d'Alene Indians lasted only two days,

but he noted in his journal: **“Never has a visit to the Indians given me such consolation, and nowhere have I seen such unmistakable proof of true conversion, not even excepting the Flatheads in 1840.”**<sup>65</sup>

De Smet promised the natives he would attempt to provide a Black Robe to serve them

After proceeding on Father De Smet and Charles waited a complete month

at Fort Colville as the Columbia River was too rough

and the water level had to drop considerably before they were able to navigate

#### LIEUTENANT JOHN CHARLES FREMONT -- AMERICAN EXPLORER

John Charles Fremont was born to Mrs. Anne Beverley Whiting Pryor

and Charles Fremont [January 21, 1813]

(John later added the final “t” to his last name)

his parents never married -- his father died when John was thirteen

John's early education was primarily provided by attorney John W. Mitchell

until Fremont entered Charleston College until he was expelled for irregular attendance

he was appointed as a teacher of mathematics aboard the sloop USS *Natchez*

he refused a professorship of mathematics in the United States Navy

John was appointed a second lieutenant in the United States Army Corps of Topographical Engineers

he assisted and led many surveying expeditions through the western United States and beyond

he assisted Jean Nicholas Nicollet with mapping the region

between upper Mississippi and Missouri rivers [1834]

John C. Fremont, although not a West Pointer, had acquired all the necessary

technical and scientific abilities -- equally important he was a romantic

he was thrilled by western wonders and along with his fellow citizens

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<sup>65</sup> E. Laveille, S.J., *The Life of Father De Smet 1801-1873*, P. 144.



he was patriotically roused by his vision of the West's grandeur  
he welcomed the opportunity to play his part in promoting the nation's destiny  
finally, not the least of his qualifications, he married seventeen-year-old Jessie Benton [in 1841]  
daughter of "Old Bullion" himself -- U.S. Senator Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri  
she provided inspiration for Fremont's ambitions of glory,  
stability to his action-oriented temperament,  
and the vocabulary to phrase his soaring thoughts into compelling prose  
which she wrote in his name  
Jessie Benton's parents strenuously opposed the marriage but had to bow to her iron will  
an ambitious young army officer could hardly find a more influential farther-in-law  
than Senator Benton

#### GOVERNOR-IN-CHIEF SIR GEORGE SIMPSON RETURNS TO RUSSIAN-AMERICA

On his previous visit to Russian-America Governor Simpson had removed from Fort Stikine  
its one strong man, Roderick Finlayson [1841]  
this move had left young John McLoughlin, Jr. in unsupported command at an isolated station  
of twenty ill-disciplined Iroquois and French-Canadian half-breeds  
surrounded by unruly Indians  
When Simpson, swinging north again, neared the fort -- April 25, 1842  
he found the flag at half mast  
John McLoughlin, Jr. had just been murdered by his own men

#### GOVERNOR SIR GEORGE SIMPSON INVESTIGATES THE MURDER AT FORT STIKINE

Simpson conducted a hasty and superficial investigation into the death of John McLoughlin, Jr.  
he arrived at the conclusion that the employees at Stikine wanted him to reach  
in a letter to the young man's father the governor wrote brutally -- April 27, 1842: **"From all I  
can collect, the whole conduct & management of Mr. McLoughlin was exceedingly bad, and his  
violence when under the influence of liquor, which was very frequently the case, amounting to  
insanity, ... The occurrence having taken place within Russian Territory, no legal steps against the  
parties can be taken by me; but my belief is, that any Tribunal by which the case could be tried,  
would find a verdict of 'justifiable Homicide'."**<sup>66</sup>

#### DR. McLOUGHLIN ORDERS IN INVESTIGATION INTO HIS SON'S DEATH

When Governor Sir George Simpson informed the Chief Factor of the death of his son at Stikine

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<sup>66</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 213.

the grief stricken father refused to accept the report's charges of incompetence or its conclusion of justifiable homicide that had been written by Maritime Trade Factor John Work

John Work had sent three men involved in the murder south on the *Beaver*

but there was a long delay in their arrival for which McLoughlin blamed Work

McLoughlin also criticized Work for his lack of initiative in taking depositions

and in forwarding very slowly young McLoughlin's

correspondence and other documents to Fort Vancouver

Chief Factor McLoughlin sent Chief Factor James Douglas to Fort Sitka

to conduct his own investigation into the death of John McLoughlin, Jr.

through a series of good fortunes, the "Black Scot" won a confession

from an Iroquois named Pierre Kanaquasse who had been a participant

Kanaquasse stated that young John McLoughlin had not been given to drink or licentiousness

but he had been a weak leader unable to control or discipline his men

in defiance of young John's orders

his men had repeatedly brought Indian prostitutes into the barracks at night

and had stolen supplies from the storehouses with which to pay them

when young McLoughlin had threatened to expose them for their misdeeds

the crew had coaxed him into one of his rare bouts with the bottle

they then provoked a drunken brawl as a cover for killing him

Dr. John McLoughlin's relationship with John Work was further strained when the Chief Factor

sent a severe report regarding John Work's use of the steamer *Beaver* to compete with Americans

McLoughlin sent detailed instructions indicating how he wanted the *Beaver* operated

John Work felt he was being treated in a condescending and reprehensible manner

With his son triumphantly vindicated, Chief Factor Dr. McLoughlin now threw his full energies

into two related purposes:

- punishing the perpetrators,

- crushing Governor-in-Chief Sir George Simpson whom he blamed for the murder

on the grounds that if Duncan Finlayson had been left at Stikine

the tragedy would not have occurred

## LIEUTENANT JOHN CHARLES FREMONT RECEIVES ORDERS TO EXPLORE THE WEST

United States Government anticipated increasing numbers of settlers migrating to the West

Missouri's two United States Senators were strong advocates for the Pacific Northwest

Thomas Hart Benton and Lewis F. Linn envisioned and arranged for financing

for an exploration expedition by the United States Army Corps of Topographical Engineers

Senator Benton dictated the orders for Lieutenant John C. Fremont and Colonel Albert signed them  
his orders directed him simply to survey the Platte and Sweetwater rivers as far as South Pass  
hardly anyone needed a guide on the Platte and Sweetwater rivers as far as South Pass  
fur company caravans had followed the path for seventeen years  
and Oregon and California emigrants had already begun to rut it with their wagon wheels  
in fact, Fremont did about whatever he pleased when he got out on his own  
Lieutenant Fremont hired a melancholy artist and map maker -- Georg Carl Preuss  
who was a surveyor for the Prussian government before he immigrated to the United States [1834]  
where he became known as Charles Preuss  
Charles Preuss turned out to be a brilliant cartographer  
who helped Fremont produce maps of the American west  
what they achieved was unsurpassed in their time

#### DR. ELIJAH WHITE RECRUITS SETTLERS FOR OREGON

Dr. White was instructed by the Methodist Mission Society to return to the West  
taking with him as many emigrants as could be gotten together -- spring 1842  
Because he would be returning to Oregon  
the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions' Prudential Committee  
requested that he deliver new orders and letters to Dr. Marcus Whitman at Waiilatpu Mission  
Dr. White began an enthusiastic publicity campaign as he toured and lectured through the middle states:  
•he interviewed pioneers in Missouri and elsewhere,  
•he wrote newspaper announcements of their exploits.  
•he gave speeches in churches and various meeting places.  
•he delivered passionate street-corner talks  
Oregon sub-Indian Agent Dr. Elijah White soon collected one hundred thirty men and their families  
who were primarily from Missouri, Illinois and Arkansas  
along with their herds of cattle and horses  
this wagon train was actually a collection of eighteen open wagons and carts, horse-riders  
and pack animals  
Mountain Men like Stephen Meek, brother of Joe Meek, was looking for work to occupy him  
with nothing to do and alone in Independence, Missouri Stephen Meek  
and his companion Andrew Bishop joined the emigrant train bound for Oregon

#### ANOTHER COVERED WAGON TRAIN SETS OUT FOR OREGON

Following in the wake of Joel Walker's family [1840] and the Bartleson-Bidwell Party [1841]

Dr. Elijah White who was returning to Oregon was elected captain of the caravan of 110 emigrants who were driving eighteen wagons  
James Coates piloted the emigrant wagon train along the portion of the route with which he was familiar on its way to Fort Laramie  
They set out from Elm Grove near Independence, Missouri -- May 16, 1842  
this was the first large immigrant wagon train to the West

#### CHRISTOPHER “KIT” CARSON MEETS JOHN C. FREMONT

Kit Carson had left home in rural present-day Missouri at age sixteen 1825]  
he became a mountain man and trapper in the West until he journeyed down the Missouri River to settle in St. Louis -- there however, he quickly tired of civilization  
he longed to return to the mountains

Carson boarded a steamer in St. Louis that would take him up the Missouri River to Independence, Missouri and the start of the road to Santa Fe -- 1842  
coincidence intervened to change Carson’s life decisively  
and also influence the course of western history for the next quarter century  
on the steamer’s deck Kit Carson met

United States Army Corps of Topographical Engineers Lieutenant John C. Fremont  
this handsome young officer explained that he was bound for the frontier  
to organize a government exploring expedition to the Rocky Mountains  
seizing the opening, the unemployed mountain man **“informed him that I had been some time in the mountains and thought I could guide him to any point he would wish to go. He explained that he would make inquiries regarding my capabilities of performing that which I promised. He done so.”**<sup>67</sup>

#### LIEUTENANT JOHN C. FREMONT’S EXPEDITION TO THE WEST

Lieutenant Fremont’s scientific exploration and reconnaissance expedition of twenty-five men left St. Louis, Missouri shortly after the 1842 caravan of emigrants  
guided by (later legendary) Western scout Christopher “Kit” Carson  
Together they surveyed the future route of the Oregon Trail -- 1842-[1843]  
from the Missouri River they set out along the Santa Fe Trail  
until they crossed the Kansas River to the north side (probably near today’s Topeka, Kansas)  
they continued on to Fort Saint Vrain (Colorado) on the South Platte River  
crossed to the North Platte River headed toward Fort Laramie (Wyoming)

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<sup>67</sup> Robert Utley, *A Life Wind and Perilous*, P. 187.

## FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET RESUMES HIS JOURNEY TO FORT VANCOUVER

At Fort Colville where he had been waiting for a month for the river's waters of fall

Father De Smet and his four companions decided to continue their trip to Fort Vancouver in a boat Hudson's Bay Company had recently built for Peter Skene Ogden who led the company's voyageurs down the Columbia River -- May 30, 1842

## WAILLATPU MISSIONARIES HOLD A DIFFICULT MEETING

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions missionaries set about cleaning their own house

Rev. Elkanah Walker attended the annual meeting of American Board missionaries led by Dr. Whitman -- May 31, 1842

irascible Asa Smith was encouraged to resign as the others held an emotional lovefest

Dr. Whitman wrote: **"Had a hard session to day, and there was so much bad feeling manifested that I said that I thought it was an abomination for us to meet to pray."**

an entry for the following day reads: **"Mr. Eells and I took a long ride in the rain and felt that all hope was gone."**<sup>68</sup>

## PETER SKENE OGDEN'S CANOE RUNS INTO DIFFICULTY

Two days after setting out from Fort Colville

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet, Charles his Flathead traveling companion, Ogden and his voyageurs reached a series of impressive rapids caused by large rock formations in the middle of the Columbia River -- June 2, 1841

Father De Smet, feeling a bit insecure, and asked to disembark

he preferred to climb the obstacles on the shore

suddenly Ogden's boat was taken in a swirl

engulfed by the powerful torrent, it rapidly sank

when the boat reappeared five people were missing

survivors of this catastrophe including De Smet, Ogden and Charles

gathered what they could and continued their voyage

further downstream they stopped at two Hudson's Bay Company forts

Fort Okanogan and Fort Walla Walla

## CONSTRUCTION RESUMES ON THE TINY SCHOONER *STAR OF OREGON*

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<sup>68</sup> *On to Oregon: The Diaries of Mary Walker and Myra Eells*, P. 231.

After taking the winter off [1841]-1842, Joseph Gale and his boat-building crew resumed construction hull of the *Star of Oregon* was moved from Willamette Falls to the mouth of the Willamette River Nearly two years after the beginning of construction, the completed American ship was moved to Fort Vancouver -- June 1842

#### AMERICAN ROBERT MOORE UNDERTAKES PLANS TO DEVELOP A NEW SETTLEMENT

Robert Moore, ex-Oregon Dragoon, surveyed 1,000 acres of land to lay out a town for a settlement he called "Robin's Nest" (later Linn City) -- 1842  
(eventually the standard land claim would be limited to 640 acres)  
Moore had mentioned to Naval Lieutenant Charles Wilkes  
he also had plans for an iron smelter, a ferry service and a dock [1841]  
Moore platted twenty-five city blocks -- each 320 feet by 220 feet  
sixty-foot wide streets were laid out -- each named after a United States President  
Moore planned to keep two entire blocks, one of them riverfront property, as his personal holding

#### BEGINNING OF PORTLAND, OREGON

High Sheriff William Johnson was the first permanent settler on the site (of today's Portland, Oregon) -- 1842  
he was a British sailor who jumped ship in Boston to join the U.S. Navy [before the War of 1812]  
he had visited the Pacific Northwest [1817]  
and returned again and took land at Champoeg [1835]  
Trading brig *Chenamos* belonged to the Massachusetts trading firm of Cushing and Company  
this was the family business of Massachusetts Congressman Caleb Cushing  
Captain John H. Couch plied the New England-Sandwich Island-Oregon circuit  
he had named the ship after a Columbia River Indian chief  
who had developed friendly relations with the American captain [1840]  
Captain Couch returned to the Pacific Northwest aboard the *Chenamos*  
with a stock of goods -- June 1842  
he pushed his ship up the Willamette River to an anchorage at the rapids below the falls  
Captain Couch sent the *Chenamos* back to Massachusetts  
but he remained in Oregon and took a "land claim"  
he operated a store at Willamette Falls for five years that was managed by George Le Breton  
who began bartering manufactured goods for pickled salmon, lumber and flour  
threatening the economic monopoly of the Hudson's Bay Company  
Encouraged by the American settlers in the Willamette Valley

sea-borne traders more and more frequently stormed Hudson's Bay Company's monopoly  
brigs of the Massachusetts firm of Cushman and Company  
pushed up the Willamette River to anchor at the rapids below the falls  
and began bartering manufactured goods for pickled salmon, lumber, and flour  
to avoid Chief Factor McLoughlin's sharp eyes another entrepreneur  
opened a secret trading house in a cabin purported to be a farm building  
thus one of Governor-in-Chief Sir George Simpson's longstanding fears  
regarding American competition was turned into reality

#### FATHER DE SMET AND HIS TRAVEL COMPANIONS REACHES FORT VANCOVER

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet, his Indian travel companion Charles, Peter Skene Ogden  
and his Hudson's Bay Company voyageurs arrived at Fort Vancouver -- June 8, 1842  
Father De Smet met Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin -- they immediately became friends  
Father De Smet also contacted Father Blanchet and Father Demers  
who were staying in the Willamette Valley at St. Paul's Mission to the French-Canadian settlers  
located twenty-four miles to the south of the Columbia River

#### UNITED STATES EXPLORING EXPEDITION RETURNS TO THE UNITED STATES

Members of U.S. Naval Lieutenant Charles Wilkes' Exploring Expedition (U.S. Ex. Ex.)  
who completed their long trip around the world arrived in New York harbor  
aboard the *Vincennes* -- June 10, 1842  
Wilkes' expedition was plagued by poor relationships between Wilkes and his subordinate officers  
Wilkes' self-proclaimed status as captain and commodore  
accompanied by flying a commodore's pennant over his flagship  
and wearing a captain's uniform while being commissioned only as a lieutenant  
infuriated members of the expedition who held the same rank  
Wilkes apparent mistreatment of many of his subordinates and use of punishments such as  
"flogging round the fleet" resulted in a major controversy upon his return to America  
flogging round the fleet required the number of lashes imposed  
be divided by the number of ships in port and the offender was rowed  
between ships for each ship's company to witness the punishment  
Deep divisions among the U.S. Ex. Ex. officers resulted in a series of courts-martial  
almost immediately Lieutenant Wilkes filed charges against several of his officers  
Wilkes, himself, was court-marshaled on his return, but was acquitted on all charges  
except that of illegally punishing men in his squadron for which he received a public reprimand

President John Tyler himself seemed indifferent to the achievements of the Wilkes Expedition in the distraction the public interest in Oregon waned

#### DESPITE POLITICAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND WILKES HIMSELF GAINS WERE MADE

Still, the great accomplishments of the expedition cannot be denied:

- Wilkes Expedition was the first scientific government expedition to the Pacific Northwest since the Lewis and Clark Expedition [1804-180];;
- U.S. Ex. Ex. had successfully shown the American flag around the globe  
United States Exploring Expedition's mapping work proved of lasting value  
they had surveyed 261 locations, made 180 charts (some used in World War II)  
nearly three hundred Pacific islands were charted  
and they charted many of the unknown regions of the globe including Antarctica;
- Wilkes' Expedition scientific work added greatly to scientific knowledge  
natural history specimens and anthropological artifacts were gathered during the voyage  
they brought back ten thousand specimens of plants, minerals, tools and artifacts  
including over a thousand specimens of birds, fishes, insects and animals  
these became foundation of the Smithsonian Institution's Museum of Natural History  
many more specimens were lost or destroyed in the sinking of several of their ships  
and by improper handling on East coast;
- Wilkes' nineteen-volume report was published and copies were sent to every state;
- United States Exploring Expedition increased interest in the Puget Sound region;
- a solid American claim to the Pacific Northwest was established  
(during the American-British negotiations over Oregon [Columbia District to the British]  
the U.S. Government took a strong position claiming Puget Sound country  
this resulted in the [1846] treaty with Britain  
which divided Oregon at the 49<sup>th</sup> Parallel [at the present U.S.-Canada border])

#### SECRETARY OF STATE DANIEL WEBSTER CHANGES NEGOTIATIONS TACTICS

British government finally became aware of the growing number of Americans in Oregon  
this shift in population became a factor in negotiations for the first time

Secretary of State Webster suggested to British Special Commissioner Lord Ashburton  
that the dispute with Great Britain could be resolved

if the United States could secure access to the great harbor of San Francisco from Mexico

British Special Commissioner Lord Ashburton reported Webster's remarks

to British Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Lord Aberdeen (George Hamilton-Gordon)



it seemed Secretary of State Webster was willing to abandon Northern Oregon  
in favor of acquiring Northern California

Webster declared he was never prepared to accept a boundary below 49° north  
perhaps this had been a ploy by Webster to pressure Mexico

using the military strength of Great Britain to gain San Francisco Bay as a port  
at any rate, Webster refused to discuss the Oregon question any further with the British

Lord Ashburton concluded Webster's loss of interest in the Oregon boundary settlement  
was caused by the return to Washington, D.C. of Lieutenant Charles Wilkes

Lord Ashburton noted Wilkes wrote unfavorably about a harbor

at the mouth of the Columbia River where he had lost the ship *Peacock* [1841]

but Wilkes also wrote favorably of the harbors on Puget Sound

#### DR. ELIJAH WHITE'S WAGON TRAIN CHANGES LEADERS

This wagon train appeared to be a quarrelsome group

most of Dr. White's troubles serving as captain of the train along the trail were self-made

he proposed too many elaborate rules for the trail which the caravan members voted into place

then with typical frontier self-determination declined to obey their own regulations

After a month of travel from Elm Grove Captain Elijah White was demoted -- June 16, 1842

he was replaced by Captain Lansford W. Hastings following a furious blow-up

over White's proposal the caravan's dogs be killed as their barking could attract Indians

about half of the pets were killed before the women stopped the carnage

(there was no indication the surviving dogs attracted any Indians)

both Dr. White and Captain Hastings bickered constantly over various decisions

including how best to accommodate the wagons and how to deal with the domestic animals

Hoping to resolve bickering between Dr. White and Lansford W. Hastings

Steven Meek's services as guide were secured as James Coates was relieved of his position

#### LIEUTENANT JOHN C. FREMONT AND HIS MEN REACH FORT LARAMIE (WYOMING)

Although the Indian were resisting American expansion further up the North Platte River

Fremont was determined to proceed

he, Kit Carson and the twenty-five men of their party advanced without difficulty

#### DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN FAILS TO FIND JUSTICE IN THE DEATH OF HIS SON

Justice proved to be expensive and elusive for Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin

men like Chief Factor James Douglas and Chief Trader Donald Munson

wasted Hudson's Bay Company time on Dr. McLoughlin's private investigation  
not only the suspects but the key witnesses had to be jailed and fed  
Russians refused to accept jurisdiction over the case thus the murderers might go free  
Dr. McLoughlin, at his own expense, sent the two chief suspects and eleven witnesses  
to attend to drawn-out hearings in Lower Canada  
those courts, too, decided they had no jurisdiction,  
moreover, they censured some of Chief Factor McLoughlin's extralegal actions  
and decreed that a trial, if any, could take place only in England  
with the expenses to be borne by the bereaved father  
his finances strained to the breaking point, Dr. McLoughlin at last gave up his quest for justice

#### FATHER BLANCHET DEVELOPS THE "CATHOLIC LADDER" TO EDUCATE INDIANS

Two widely variant types of Christianity, Protestant and Catholic,  
were being presented to the Northwest natives -- not surprising the Indians were puzzled  
Father Francis Blanchet developed the pictorial Catholic Ladder while working on the Cowlitz plains  
at St. Frances Xavier Mission  
this was a very effective teaching aid for instructing Indians in the basics of Christianity  
Like a map, it was a pictorial representation of world Jewish and Christian history  
it allowed Indians to see as well as hear what was being described  
versions of the Catholic Ladder varied from eight or ten feet tall and two or more feet wide  
it was a large diagram several feet long and two or more feet wide  
that used horizontal lines, dots and drawings  
to show the story of forty centuries of Christianity from the Catholic viewpoint  
from time of Adam and Eve to before Christ was represented by forty marks  
thirty-three years of Christ's life shown by thirty points followed by a cross  
eighteen centuries after Christ were shown by eighteen marks  
lateral branches of competing religious beliefs, notably Protestantism,  
were portrayed as leading to the everlasting flames of the Pit

This visual portrayal was one of the reasons for the success of the Catholic missionaries

**"Catholic Ladder were charts, about six feet long and eighteen inches wide, on which illustrations and parallel bars were painted. They were first devised by Father Blanchet at Cowlitz Mission, 1842, as a means of illustration for the natives his talks on the four millennial periods, heretics, heaven, hell, and other concepts of the church."**<sup>69</sup>

To counteract its impact, the Catholic Ladder was adopted and adapted by Protestant missionaries

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<sup>69</sup> Oscar Osburn Winther, *The Great Northwest*, P. 209.

Rev. Henry and Eliza Spalding drew a terrifying six-foot ladder of their own on it, the road of Catholicism was the one that led to eternal damnation all of this only added to the confusion of the natives

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET LEAVES FORT VANCOUVER

Father De Smet along with Charles his Flathead Indian guide left Fort Vancouver -- June 30, 1842 they travel once again on one of Hudson's Bay Company's boats sailing and rowing up the Columbia River toward Fort Walla Walla

#### U.S. NAVAL LIEUTENANT CHARLES WILKES' REPORT TO CONGRESS

After stopping in New York City Lieutenant Wilkes arrived in Washington City

Wilkes communicated confidentially with the United States Senate -- July 1, 1842

he argued against giving up any part of the territory between 42° and 54°-40' north latitude

he noted that settling the boundary at 49° North would give the Fraser River to the British

he gave a glowing report of the Pacific Northwest as he noted: "**Nothing can exceed the**

**beauty of these waters and their safety. Not a shoal exists with the Straits of Juan de Fuca,**

**Admiralty Inlet or Hood's Canal than can in any way interrupt their navigation by a 74-gun ship. I**

**venture nothing in saying that no country in the world possesses waters equal to these."**<sup>70</sup>

in addition, Wilkes reported that Hudson's Bay Company men

were able to rescue three Japanese sailors [1841]

(these sailors were sent on to England to eventually find their way home)

Wilkes' report crystallized the U.S. Senate position on the United States-Canadian boundary

but President John Tyler himself seemed indifferent to the achievements of the Wilkes Expedition

because of on-going boundary negotiations the president suppressed all official enthusiasm

Secretary of Navy refused to shake hands or offer a chair

when he was introduced to Lieutenant Wilkes

Wilkes' report probably had little impact on Secretary of State Daniel Webster

but it did stimulate expansionist zeal among politicians in Congress

#### POLITICAL PROSPECTS FOR OREGON REMAIN CONFUSING

Questions regarding the political organization of the region became more critical

it was natural that French-Canadians would not submit to law imposed by citizens of a rival nation

when their own country and the rival were contending for title to the soil

and the success of that contest depended on the nationality of the actual settlers

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<sup>70</sup> *The United Services A Monthly Review of Military and Naval Affairs*, Vol. 1, P. 53.

nor could American settlers be criticized for hesitating to join a business-based-government designed to occupy only a portion of the territory and to include only residents or settlers who voluntarily accepted its authority

#### AMERICAN EXPANSIONISTS BECOME MORE FRUSTRATED

Congressional majorities favored no growth policies and the executive branch which agreed with those policies were regarded with great disdain by expansionist groups Expansionists in the United States Government who anticipated increasing numbers of settlers would be migrating West turned for a weapon that was a part of the executive branch itself: the army's Corps of Topographical Engineers Corresponding committees in western Missouri had received the names of several emigrants who intended to journey West [as early as September 1842]

#### WAGON TRAIN MEMBERS HAD A VERY FORTUNATE MEETING AT FORT LARAMIE

Arriving at Fort Laramie on their way east with the furs garnered in their spring beaver hunt, Thomas "Broken Hand" Fitzpatrick and Jim Bridger came upon the wagon train bound for Oregon -- early July 1842

All 110 emigrants of this train of eighteen wagons were quarreling among themselves as bitterly as had the Bidwell-Bartleson company the year before [1841] Reports they were relying on portrayed the road to the West was infested with Sioux and Cheyenne Indians -- all in an ugly temper grudgingly these emigrants acknowledged the importance, if only sporadically, of some kind of leadership

Fortunately for the caravan, Thomas "Broken Hand" Fitzpatrick agreed to guide them to Fort Hall

Dr. Elijah White wrote in his journal of the trip: **"...and I have been able to obtain the services of Mr. Fitz Patrick [sic], one of the ablest and most suitable men in the country, in conducting us to Fort Hall, beyond the danger of the savages."**<sup>71</sup> -- July 2, 1841

Jim Bridger continued Eastward on his own to the United States to deliver the product of his and Tom Fitzpatrick's spring hunt Trappers Francois X. Matthieu, Paul Ojet and Peter Gauthier joined the caravan to Oregon along with three other French-Canadians

#### THOMAS "BROKEN HAND" FITZPATRICK BECOMES THE FIRST WAGON TRAIN'S GUIDE

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<sup>71</sup> Robert Utley, *A Life Wind and Perilous*, P 181.

Thomas “Broken Hand” Fitzpatrick had led first wagon train to Fort Hall (Idaho)  
when he guided Father Pierre-Jean De Smet and the Bartleson-Bidwell wagon train [1841  
As Overlanders swelled in numbers, most trains took care to hire a mountain man  
as captain, guide, pilot, or whatever other title they settled on  
guiding was the least of their responsibilities

even though the route was uncertain the trail to Oregon had been blazed by 1842  
what proved more important was to teach the greenhorns:

- how to get across the continent,
- how to kindle a campfire and cook over it,
- how to pack a mule or a wagon,
- how to ford a river,
- how to secure the wagons and stock at night,
- how to kill and dress a buffalo,
- and how to get along with the Indians

#### THOMAS FITZPATRICK LEADS THE CARAVAN TO INDEPENDENCE ROCK (WYOMING)

In common with the fur caravans before them and the emigrant trains that followed  
pioneers paused at Independence Rock (in present Wyoming)  
while all inscribed their names in the soft surface  
of the massive historic register of westward-migrating travelers  
here the 1842 wagon train had their only direct encounter with Indians  
when Captain Lansford Hastings and Asa L. Lovejoy were surrounded by Sioux  
they had laid down their rifles while carving their names on Independence Rock  
before anything serious resulted, however, the caravan’s guide, Thomas Fitzpatrick,  
rode up and rescued the frightened tenderfeet from their Sioux captors  
for a ransom of tobacco and a few trinkets

William Shotwell (an ironically named pioneer) was accidentally killed  
when he passed behind a wagon just as the owner drew a blanket from the front  
causing the gun to go off

Shotwell was buried near Independence Rock

Sioux Indians continued to harass the 1842 wagon train  
until a peace parley and gift exchange was held at the Sweetwater River

#### LIEUTENANT JOHN C. FREMONT’S EXPEDITION REACHES THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Fremont and his twenty-five men arrived at the Sweetwater River and crossed the Rocky Mountains

in fact, they somehow failed to locate the exact position of South Pass  
although this was one of their main objectives  
they climbed the highest peak in the Wind River Mountains of the Rockies  
Fremont's return journey down the Platte River was made without notable incident

#### FIRST LARGE WAGON CARAVAN CROSSES SOUTH PASS

At the Sweetwater River, Dr. Elijah White, Thomas "Broken Hand" Fitzpatrick  
and about a dozen others traveled ahead of the main group  
through South Pass in the Wind River Range of the Rocky Mountains  
crossing through South Pass proved to be uneventful  
Captain Lansford W. Hastings and Dr. Elijah White continued to argue over leadership  
at the Little Sandy River, Hastings' wagon train split away from the main party  
in a dispute over the further use of the wagons  
Once past the Green River and out of range of hostile natives  
the quarrelsome slower-moving company under Captain Hastings further split  
into a faster mounted horse troop and the group traveling with the wagons  
(in the future wagon trains will only rarely travel as one huge company)

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET REACHES FORT WALLA WALLA

Father De Smet arrived at Fort Walla Walla aboard the Hudson's Bay Company canoe -- July 14, 1842  
here Charles, the Flathead Indian guide, showed Father De Smet  
an alternate Indian trail to St. Mary's Mission on the Bitterroot River  
Father De Smet agreed to take this path which paralleled the Snake River  
the Catholic priest and his traveling companion crossed the Spokane desert  
and reached the southern shore of the Coeur d'Alene Lake  
they then traveled along the banks of the St. Joe River (Idaho)  
St. Mary's Mission would be reached after crossing the next mountain range

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET RETURNS TO ST. MARY'S MISSION

De Smet returned from Fort Colville to St. Mary's Mission on the Bitterroot River -- July 27, 1842  
Father Gregorio Mengarini welcomed home Fathers De Smet and Charles, the Flathead guide  
Father Mengarini was responsible for the work of the mission along with Lay Brothers Charles Duet,  
Joseph Specht and Willem Claessens as Father Nicholas Point had joined the Flatheads  
on their seasonal buffalo hunt

## PIONEERS REACH FORT HALL

Dr. Elijah White's and Captain Lansford W. Hastings' caravans were reunited at Fort Hall (Idaho)

Dr. White paid Thomas "Broken Hand" Fitzpatrick for his services -- July 1842

Hudson's Bay Company's new trader in charge of Fort Hall advised the pioneers to abandon their wagons as travelers of the previous years had done

At Fort Hall Dr. White and Captain Hastings continued their feud regarding the use of wagons

Captain Hastings and his followers saw this advice as a willful attempt by Hudson's Bay Company to discourage American immigration (anti-British propagandists soon took up the charge)

Dr. White and his followers sold their wagons to the Hudson's Bay Company other wagons were dismantled to be carried on pack saddles through the hazardous Idaho country to the Columbia River

## FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET TRAVELS WITH A BUFFALO HUNTING PARTY

After five days of rest at St. Mary's Mission on the Bitterroot River

Father De Smet and his Flathead Indian guide Charles

set out to join Father Nicholas Point and the Flathead buffalo hunting party -- August 1, 1842

They followed the Bitterroot River to its source at Ross's Hole (near today's Sula, Montana)

after climbing Gibbon Pass (about ten miles south of Sula) they follow the Big Hole River east to reach the Beaverhead River

## DR. ELIJAH WHITE AND HIS FOLLOWERS DEPART FROM FORT HALL

Dr. White, as usual, was the first to leave accompanied by some of his devoted followers

they traveled fast and carried their wagon parts with them on a pack train toward Waiilatpu

this small group of well-equipped horsemen crossed the hazardous lava desert of (Idaho)

White's party, now piloted by (probably Angus) McDonald,

pushed far ahead of the others led by Captain Lansford W. Hastings who remained at Fort Hall

## WEBSTER-ASHBURTON TREATY SETTLES A PORTION OF THE U.S.-CANADA BORDER

Webster-Ashburton Treaty was signed -- August 9, 1842

this treaty settled a dispute between the two nations regarding the Maine-New Brunswick border

it confirmed the boundary line drawn by the [1783] Treaty of Paris

between Lake Superior and Lake of the Woods

it also reaffirmed the boundary was along the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel

from Lake of the Woods to the Rocky Mountains as defined in [1818]

Webster-Ashburton Treaty agreed the Great Lakes would be shared  
and defined seven crimes subject to extradition by either nation  
Webster-Ashburton Treaty also called for an end to the slave trade on the high seas  
However, the Webster-Ashburton Treaty did not address the question of the international boundary  
West of the Rocky Mountains  
thus the ownership of Oregon (Columbia District) remained unresolved  
many people were grievously disappointed in the treaty  
because of the silence regarding the Pacific Northwest  
Congressional agitation over the shortcomings of the treaty  
written by Secretary of State Daniel Webster and British negotiator Lord Ashburton  
stimulated popular interest in the West as far as Oregon

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET REFUSES TO ESTABLISH A NEW CATHOLIC MISSION

De Smet and Charles his Flathead Indian guide followed the Beaverhead River  
until they arrived at (today's Three Forks, Montana)  
where the Jefferson, Madison and Gallatin rivers converge to form the Missouri River  
here they reached the Flathead Indian buffalo hunters -- August 15, 1842  
Father Nicholas Point was very happy serving the Flathead Indians at St. Mary's Mission  
but he offered to start a mission among the Blackfoot Indians  
Father De Smet did not like the idea as the Blackfoot Indians had a bad reputation  
for the time being this venture seemed far too dangerous  
Father Point protested, but Father De Smet maintained his decision  
Rocky Mountain Mission would place its second station among the Coeur d'Alene Indians

#### CAPTAIN LANSFORD W. HASTINGS CARAVAN DEPARTS FROM FORT HALL

Captain Hastings and the others of the 1842 wagon train followed behind Dr. Elijah White  
after benefiting from additional rest at Fort Hall  
Hastings' Party kept south of the Snake River until they reached the area near Fort Boise  
American fur trappers Osborne Russell and Elbridge Trask  
joined the caravan on its way to Waiilatpu Mission -- August 22, 1842

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET SETS OUT FOR ST. LOUIS

With a small escort of ten warriors mounted on horseback -- August 25, 1842  
they crossed the Yellowstone desert to gather additional recruits and finances  
Father De Smet had become more knowledgeable about the local native situation



he knew how dangerous the area could be for a small group of travelers

he did not want to run any unnecessary risks -- he covered 150 miles in three days

They were made welcome in a large camp of friendly Crow Indians on the banks of Yellowstone

De Smet dismissed his escort

he continued with Young Ignace and two Americans he met at the Crow village

Their route paralleled the Yellowstone River

for some time this area has been reputed to be a battleground

for the various Assiniboine, Cheyenne, Blackfoot and Sioux tribes

#### CLATSOP PLAINS MISSION IS FRUSTRATING FOR THE METHODIST MISSIONARIES

Rev. William H. Kone wrote to Rev. Jason Lee at Chemeketa

that the Clatsop Indians they serve were few in number

and were not ready to receive the teachings of the church -- September 1842

(consequently Kone and his family left Oregon for the United States [November 1841]

leaving Rev. Joseph H. Frost and his family to serve the natives as best they could)

#### ROBERT "DOC" NEWELL BECOMES INTERESTED IN GOVERNMENT

An incident occurred during which an Indian broke into the family home of Rev. Philo Littlejohn and took the Congregational minister's valuables -- 1842

Rev. Littlejohn had been guided from the Green River to Fort Hall by Doc Newell [1840]

Newell accompanied by Joe Meek, Caleb Wilkins and others caught and punished the thief

this incident caused Newell to contemplate the need for laws and a means of enforcing them

thus he began a push for a local government of some kind

he quickly became a leader in the movement to establish law and order in Oregon

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET AND HIS PARTY ARRIVES AT FORT UNION TRADING POST

It took six frightful days from the mutilated Assiniboine bodies

for Father De Smet and his traveling companions. Young Ignace and two Americans,

to reach the American Fur Company's headquarters for the western department

Fort Union trading post -- September 10, 1842

Fort Union trading post was renowned as the most important post on the upper Missouri River

at the fort they rested for a few days in full safety but the city of St. Louis is still very far away

To save time Father De Smet decided to try floating down the Missouri River

he bought a canoe and he and Young Ignace embarked downriver

#### TINY SCHOONER *STAR OF OREGON* SAILS FOR CALIFORNIA

Leaving Fort Vancouver the first sailing vessel manufactured in Oregon sailed out of the Columbia River in a storm -- September 12, 1842

During most of the trip Joseph Gale's crew of seven landlubbers Felix Hathaway, Ralph Kilborne, Pleasant Arrstrong, George Davis, Charles Matts, John Green and one Indian boy were too sick to do more than groan and avoid food keeping the *Star of Oregon* on course, Gale held the wheel for thirty-six continuous hours

#### FATHER DE SMET AND YOUNG IGNACE PADDLE DOWN THE MISSOURI RIVER

After three days of paddling downriver Father De Smet and Young Ignace met the American Fur Company steamer *Omega* whose crew invited them to board the ship but they also informed the missionary the *Omega* must first travel all the way to Fort Union before returning to St. Louis -- September 13, 1842

Father De Smet accepted this offer with enthusiasm for several reasons not the least being the banks of the Missouri River were reported to be infested with warlike Indians

#### SAILING ON THE *OMEGA* IS MORE DANGEROUS THAN FATHER DE SMET ANTICIPATED

In some places the Missouri River's water was very shallow captain of the boat had to avoid the many sand banks, rocks and other deadly snags such as the treacherous "sawyers" (hidden tree trunks) at one time one of the paddle wheels was severely damaged another time a tornado reversed the cockpit on the boat

#### DR. ELIJAH WHITE REACHES DR. MARCUS WHITMAN'S WAILATPU MISSION

Dr. Whitman's mission was reached -- September 14, 1842

Dr. White and his followers enjoyed the good food and warm comforts of the Whitman's home Dr. White informed the missionary of a hundred people behind him toiling down the Fort Hall trail and of the far greater numbers who would follow the next year ([843])

Sub-Indian Agent Dr. Elijah White delivered to Dr. Whitman the letter from the Prudential Committee of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions addressed to the doctor and other affiliated missionaries

although Rev. Asa Smith, William H. Gray and Cornelius Rogers had already departed before these new orders arrived

After making his mail delivery, Dr. White continued on to Fort Walla Walla traveling by a direct route along the Burnt River

## STATUS OF AMERICAN BOARD PROTESTANT MISSIONS

At the Whitman's Waiilatpu Mission Indians were farming using both dry methods and irrigation  
there were sixty Indians farming their own land  
there was a sawmill, grist mill, houses and farm buildings

At Rev. Henry Spalding's Lapwai, Indians had moved out of the mission to establish their own farms  
almost half of the native population had a farm of their own  
this mission had its own sawmill and grist mill  
it was self-sufficient in its economy and had 234 students in the school

## AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF FOREIGN MISSION WRITES TO WHITMAN

American Board had gotten the impression only Tshimakain Mission was worth saving  
faced with falling receipts and mounting expenses

American Board's response was a general housecleaning

thus Waiilatpu and Lapwai were to be closed and the property sold

Prudential Committee of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions' new orders  
delivered by Indian Sub-Agent Dr. Elijah White in a letter dated [February 25, 1842]

stated Dr. Whitman was:

- to discontinue the southern division of the Oregon mission  
and close Waiilatpu and Lapwai missions;
- to recall three missionaries who were to return to the United States  
at the earliest opportunity:
  - Rev. Henry H. Spalding and his wife Eliza
  - Rev. Asa Bowen Smith and his wife Sarah
  - William H. Gray and his wife Mary
- to transfer Dr. Marcus Whitman and his wife Narcissa to Tshimakain Mission  
to work with Rev. Cushing and Myra Eells, and Rev. Elkanah and Mary Walker
- to transfer Cornelius Rogers to Tshimakain if he desired to continue in missionary work
- Whitman and Cornelius Rogers were to dispose of Waiilatpu and Lapwai mission property  
saving only what they believed to be valuable in the work at Tshimakain Mission

Deeply agitated, Dr. Marcus Whitman sent Indian runners to the other stations,  
summoning the mission members to an emergency meeting at Waiilatpu

## STAR OF OREGON LANDS IN CALIFORNIA

Little ship, after a stormy passage of five days,

arrived at Yerba Buena (San Francisco) -- September 17, 1842

Joseph Gale and company found a captain who needed a replacement for his wrecked ship

Gale swapped the *Star of Oregon* to a rancher for 350 cows,

which may have been their intended goal all along,

in turn the rancher sold the *Star of Oregon* to the needy captain

It was too late in the season to drive cattle back to Oregon that fall

to increase the size of the herd the men worked in California (all winter)

and invested their pay in more livestock

#### ADDITIONAL CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES ARRIVE AT FORT VANCOUVER

French-Canadian servants of Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Vancouver and their families

had long complained about the long absences of the priests who served the post

For four years after their arrival in Columbia District

Father Francis Blanchet and Modeste Demers remained alone in their work

in the wilderness among the Indians and the scattered faithful

Then two Canadian Catholic priests, Antoine Langlois and Jean Baptiste Zacharie (J.B.Z.) Bolduc, arrived at Astoria -- September 19, 1842

where they met Rev. Asa Smith and his ailing wife Sarah on their way to Hawaii

and new mission opportunity

#### DR. ELIJAH WHITE ARRIVES IN OREGON FOR A SECOND TIME

Dr. White and his party guided by Stephen Meek floated the Columbia River from Fort Walla Walla they arrived at Fort Vancouver -- September 20, 1842

former Methodist missionary and rival to Rev. Jason Lee had returned to the Willamette Valley

this time he was holding the government title of sub-Indian Agent

Dr. Elijah White had led the first sizable pioneer company across the entire length of the Oregon Trail

traveling with Dr. White was David Hill who became active in community affairs

Stephen Meek and several of his associates were employed by Dr. McLoughlin

to survey and sell building lots along the Willamette and Clackamas rivers

#### DR. ELIJAH WHITE'S RETURN EFFECTS OREGON PIONEERS

Sub-Indian Agent Dr. White was the first resident United States government official in Oregon

he raised the hopes of settlers that their needs were being considered in Washington City

public meetings were held in Oregon to thank Congress for sending a federal agent

many settlers believed they were under American jurisdiction

Dr. Elijah White believed in the absence of any other authority he was the government itself  
he resumed his feud with Rev. Jason Lee over who would run the Pacific Northwest  
White believed Sen. Linn's Bill regarding Oregon would pass Congress and acted as though it had  
actually the Bill had failed in the U.S. House of Representatives  
Methodist missionaries, who earlier had dismissed Dr. White from their lives [1841],  
were now fearful that the sub-Indian Agent wanted to become the governor of a new territory  
they pushed plans forward to organize a government which would represent them  
and not the interests of Dr. Elijah White even if he was the sub-Indian Agent

#### PIONEERS ARRIVING WITH DR. WHITE IMPACT WILLAMETTE FALLS SETTLEMENT

Hugh Burns, newly arrived with Dr. Elijah White's wagon train, was a master blacksmith  
Burns took land next to ex-Oregon Dragoon Robert Moore  
then platted a town, to be called Multnomah City on his 640 acres  
(this settlement eventually included a tannery and the Price Hotel  
today the site of West Linn's Bolton neighborhood)  
(Multnomah City's lower river landing was obliterated in a [1853] flood and abandoned)  
French-Canadian settler Francis X. Matthieu arrived in Oregon with Dr. White  
he spent his first winter with fellow French-Canadian Etienne Lucier at Willamette Falls  
discussing politics and government  
Matthieu had been a part of an unsuccessful rebellion against the British government in Canada  
Sidney Moss bought a building lot at Willamette Falls from Dr. McLoughlin for \$285  
he constructed his house (at the corner of today's Third and Main streets)  
Hiram Straight, who was interested in political affairs,  
claimed 600 acres near the mouth of Abernathy Creek and the Clackamas River  
(later he was a merchant and a mill operator who soon became a leading businessman  
and was active in local politics)

#### METHODIST MISSIONARY REV. DAVID LESLIE STAYS IN ASTORIA WITH HIS FAMILY

While in Astoria awaiting favorable winds for sailing -- September 1842  
one of Rev. David Leslie's five daughters, fifteen-year-old Satira, slipped ashore  
she was married to missionary Cornelius Rogers  
although the marriage was sudden, Rev. Leslie accepted his daughter's choice  
Rogers was remembered as an outstanding young man

#### METHODIST MISSIONARY REV. DAVID LESLIE LEAVES FOR HAWAII

Rev. Leslie left two of his daughters, Aurelia and the baby Helen, in the care of Satira and Cornelius and proceeded to the Sandwich Islands where Mary and Sarah were left in a boarding school (sadly, Sarah died there only a year later)  
(Rev. Leslie joined the Methodist mission effort among the Kanaka [Hawaiian] natives)

#### CAPTAIN LANSFORD W. HASTINGS' CARAVAN REACHES THE WHITMAN MISSION

Captain Hastings and his followers arrived at Wailatpu from Fort Hall -- mid- to late-September at Dr. Whitman's mission, Asa L. Lovejoy parted company with the caravan and with Hastings Lovejoy, who made the acquaintance of Whitman, continued to Fort Vancouver on his own

#### MEETING IS HELD AT WAILATPU TO RESPOND TO NEW ORDERS

Remaining four missionaries: Dr. and Narcissa Whitman, Rev. Cushing and Myra Eells, Rev. Elkanah and Mary Walker and layman Cornelius Rogers met for a three day conference -- September 28-31, 1842

Rev. Asa Smith was pointedly not invited to attend

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions' orders to close the missions and fire or reassign missionaries crushed the missionaries' spirits

First order of business was to accept the resignation of William Gray and his wife Mary who wanted to go to work for the Methodists and who had been fired by the American Board's letter anyway

Gray and his wife Mary had decided their future lay elsewhere than in the mission field they moved to western Oregon where they began an active life as settlers

Next the Whitmans, Eells, Walkers and Rogers signed a resolution which gave Dr. Whitman authorization to represent them

Elkanah Walker wrote in his diary for September 28: **“Rose this morning with the determination to leave, and found Mr. S[mith] had the same view and was making preparations to leave, as he felt that nothing could be done. At breakfast the Dr. [Whitman] let out what was his plan in view of the state of things. We persuaded them to get together and talk things over. I think they felt some better afterwards. Then the question was submitted to us of the Dr.'s [sic] going home, which we felt that it was one of too much importance to be decided in a moment, but finally came to the conclusion if he could put things at that station in such a state that it would be safe we could consent to his going...”**<sup>72</sup>

#### LIEUTENANT JOHN C. FREMONT RETURNS TO ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

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<sup>72</sup> Edward Gaylord Bourne, *Essays in Historical Criticism*, P. 57.

Lieutenant Fremont returned to St. Louis, Missouri -- October 2, 1842

his first effort at exploration produced only disappointing information of little scientific value  
on the return trip home records and specimens were lost in the waters of the North Platte River  
Preuss's map added little to existing maps since they ended at South Pass  
they told emigrants nothing of the most difficult part of their overland journey  
even the segments it did display failed to identify such critical features  
as grass, timber and water

However, Fremont's graphic images and rousing rhetoric  
which was heavily influenced by his wife Jessie's skilled pen  
moved Oregon legislation closer to passage through Congress  
and heated public fervor for western expansion  
an extra thousand copies Fremont's report were printed  
thanks to a motion by Thomas Hart Benton on the United States Senate floor  
this report had enormous consequence  
while science did not benefit from Fremont's work the expansionist cause did  
Lieutenant John C. Fremont was a man of destiny -- or at least destiny's darling

#### DR. MARCUS WHITMAN PREPARES TO RIDE EAST TO MEET WITH THE MISSION BOARD

Dr. Whitman undertook preparation to return to the United States persuade  
the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions headquartered in Boston  
not to close all missions except Tshimakain and to solicit added support for his work  
A single companion, Massachusetts attorney Asa L. Lovejoy,  
recently arrived with the Captain Lansford W. Hastings Party  
with plans to settle at Fort Walla Walla for his health  
agreed to travel with him to the East -- October 2, 1842

#### DR. WHITMAN BEGINS HIS RIDE EAST

Both Dr. Whitman and Asa L. Lovejoy galloped away from Waiilatpu -- October 3, 1842  
aboard fast horses and carrying the barest minimum of supplies in the face of the coming winter  
leaving Narcissa and the other American Board missionaries  
to continue their work among the Indians of (today's Eastern Washington)

#### CAPTAIN LANSFORD W. HASTINGS' PARTY REACHES THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY

Portions of Hastings' followers journeyed from Waiilatpu to Fort Walla Walla  
before they drifted down the Columbia River to Fort Vancouver

Main body of pioneers with traveling with Hastings reached the Willamette Valley -- October 5, 1842

#### OREGON INSTITUTE OPENS IN CHEMEKETA (SALEM, OREGON)

After acquiring at minimal cost the three story Indian Manual Labor Training School building that had been constructed expressly for academic purposes

Mrs. Chloe A. (Clark) Willson was selected to serve as the teacher -- October 1842 [until 1850] she taught five students the first year

classes were conducted there as the Oregon Institute (later Willamette University)

this was the first organized school for white children West of the Mississippi River

and became the oldest institution of higher learning West of Rocky Mountains

Methodist missionaries turned their efforts toward laying out a town and selling building lots to finance the proposed new school

#### PIONEER LYCEUM AN LITERARY CLUB AT WILLAMETTE FALLS (OREGON CITY)

Failure of the United States government to address the needs of Americans in Oregon

had been the subject of critical rhetoric in Congress and the American press for twenty years

in response, the colonists themselves had twice petitioned Congress for action

Robert "Doc" Newell had moved from the Tualatin Plains (near present-day Hillsboro)

to Willamette Falls (Oregon City)

well read, he helped to organize the Willamette Falls Lyceum and Debating Society -- fall 1842

(lyceum is an organization that arranges or sponsors public events and entertainment)

this was the first literary society in the Pacific Northwest

Sidney Moss opened his home at the Willamette Falls

for the first meeting of the Willamette Falls Lyceum and Debating Society

Oregon's lyceum was supported by a debating society that provided a forum for public discussions

lyceum selected questions for debate focusing on:

- political organization of the territory:
- Pacific Northwest problems and cultural affairs,
- debates on the future of the colony

#### PIONEER LYCEUM AND LITERARY CLUB HOLDS A SERIES OF DEBATES

Willamette Falls Lyceum and Debating Society met regularly (for several years)

among the leading citizens involved in the debates, in addition to Doc Newell,

were George Abernathy and Lansford W. Hastings both were prominent

in the movement to become familiar with legal and political matters



meetings also were held to plan the Multnomah Circulating Library

#### AMERICAN POPULATION IN THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY GROWS

Wagon train of 1842 had deposited between one hundred-five and one hundred thirty-seven emigrants from the East into the valley -- this is the first consequence of "Oregon Fever"

(many of these people would relocate to California the next year [1843]

and the "Great Migration" of [1843], with 900 more pioneers,

was organizing on the Missouri frontier)

French Prairie settlers as recorded by Dr. John McLoughlin increased at to eighty-three families

Willamette population verged on a dramatic shift to an American preponderance

however, the British government still hoped to establish the boundary along the Columbia River

Most of the Americans living in Oregon were pioneers -- these were people of dependable classes

they were to constitute the vast bulk of home builders, settlers and trades people in the west

many were originally from New England

they became the political, educational, and moral leaders of the region

seldom was there a more respectable or more substantial group of immigrants

than those who comprised the members of the great caravans

that arrived annually over the Oregon Trail

down-and-outers found no place of welcome in the Oregon caravans

considerable outlay of cash was needed before going over the Trail

to outfit oneself with essential equipment -- wagon, livestock, foodstuffs, tools

shiftless and indolent classes found it difficult even to raise the capital necessary

#### ANTI-CATHOLIC FEELINGS SURFACE IN OREGON COUNTRY

Missionary rivalries added to the difficulties of converting Indians

unflattering impressions of Catholics spread from the East coast to the West

Catholics responded in kind rather than in kindness

One of Rev. Jason Lee's clerical assistants described the Oregon Country population: **"There are about 200 French Canadians in the settlement, all of whom are Papists of the most ignorant and bigoted type; the Roman Catholic priests in the country domineer over them to their entire satisfaction, consequently there is little probability that any Protestant influence that can be exerted upon them will ever convert them from their vain system of relics and image worship, to the true principles of the gospel."**<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Gordon B. Dodds, *The American Northwest*, P. 60.

Father Demers appraised the Methodist clergy as: “...men without learning, without education, and you comprehend men of that sort, former sailors, former soldiers, former packing-case porters...”<sup>74</sup>

Such quarrelsome bickering went a long way toward confusing the natives

#### FIRST AMERICAN OFFICIAL CALLS FOR A MEETING OF AMERICAN SETTLERS

Sub-Indian Agent Dr. Elijah White called a meeting of the Willamette Falls settlers  
he implied that as the only American official his powers were far more elastic  
than those usually attributed to such a position

This suggestion was received with rancor from his fellow Americans  
especially the immigrants who had accompanied him overland and recalled too clearly  
how they forced him to give up his captain’s position on the trail  
Methodist missionaries who had known him during his first visit to Oregon  
also did not accept Dr. White’s authority -- regardless whether it was real or imagined

#### ISLAND MILLING COMPANY COMPETES FOR LAND AT WILLAMETTE FALLS

Methodist missionary Rev. Alvin F. Waller had been living at Willamette Falls for two years  
after using Dr. McLoughlin’s lumber to build a church and parsonage there  
Rev. Waller continued to quarrel with Dr. McLoughlin over the Chief Factor’s land claim  
assuming the Chief Factor’s land to be his own  
Rev. Alvin F. Waller took up a section of land at Willamette Falls  
which overlapped Dr. John McLoughlin’s property  
Methodist missionaries led by Rev. Waller formed the Island Milling Society -- October 1842  
they constructed and operated a small sawmill on (Governor Island) in the Willamette River  
and were making plans for a grist (flour) mill on Dr. McLoughlin’s land  
in what seemed to be an effort to secure an American claim to the land near the falls

#### DR. WHITMAN AND ASA LOVEJOY REACH FORT HALL

Together the two men after leaving Waiilatpu Mission covered the five hundred miles to Fort Hall  
in eleven days -- October 14, 1842  
at Fort Hall they learned if they were to keep to the main road  
Sioux war parties along the Platte Trail would attempt to stop them  
In an effort to find a way across the Rocky Mountains  
Whitman and Lovejoy swung south making a long, almost disastrous, detour

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<sup>74</sup> Gordon B. Dodds, *The American Northwest*, P. 60.

over an old Spanish Trail through (Colorado and New Mexico) to Taos  
poor guides, shrieking snowstorms, fatigue, starvation, and frostbite plagued their effort

#### CATHOLIC PRIESTS LANGLOIS AND BOLDUC ARRIVE AT FORT VANCOUVER

After staying in Astoria for almost a month Fathers Antoine Langlois and J.B.Z. Bolduc  
were greeted at Fort Vancouver by Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin -- October 15, 1842

Traveling through the Willamette Valley they arrived at St. Paul's Mission which served  
retired Hudson's Bay Company employees and Indians at Willamette Falls -- October 17  
they were greeted by Father Francis Blanchet who asked the newly arrived priests  
to join with him in performing religious services  
afterward Blanchet gave them their appointments

Father Antoine Langlois was to remain at St. Paul's Mission

Father J.B.Z. Bolduc was to serve at St. Francis Xavier Mission along the Cowlitz River  
with Father Modeste Demers

#### MRS. NARCISSA WHITMAN FLEES FROM WAILLATPU

Without the support of her husband at the mission, Narcissa became frightened  
Tamsuky, Chief of the Tilaukait, had tried to break into Mrs. Whitman's bedroom  
with the intention of assaulting her  
he was driven off by one of Mrs. Whitman's Kanaka (Hawaiian) servants

Terrified, Narcissa decided to leave Waiilatpu Mission to seek safety  
she gathered up the metis daughters of Joe Meek and Jim Bridger  
and an orphaned boy she had adopted a short time before

Hudson's Bay Company Clerk Archibald McKinley, currently in charge of Fort Walla Walla,  
escorted her to the Hudson's Bay post for protection

She decided to travel on to the Methodist station of Wascopam at Celilo Falls  
taking the three children with her

While she was gone the Whitman's gristmill at Waiilatpu mysteriously burned down

#### UNITED STATES-SPANISH RELATIONS DETERIORATE

It was understood by Mexicans and Americans alike that war with Mexico  
would result in California being captured by the American naval fleet

In fact, U.S. Naval Commodore Thomas Jones commander of the American Pacific Fleet  
believed war already had broken out between the two nations

he captured the Mexican capital of Monterey and raised the American flag -- October 20, 1842

but after learning of his mistake he apologized gave up the place the next day

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET COMPLETES ANOTHER JOURNEY

It could be called a miracle that the seriously damaged steamboat *Omega* managed to reach St. Louis sixty-four days later -- Sunday, October 25, 1842  
Father De Smet was unscathed as he finished another successful round trip of 5000 miles he hurried to St. Louis Cathedral to thank his Lord and the Church officials he served

#### IN ST. LOUIS FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET WRITES OF HIS ADVENTURES

On this occasion, he took the time to put his colorful exploits on paper these letters were joined together to become his first book:  
*Western Missions and Missionaries: A Series of Letters*  
publication would help to make his work among the Northwestern tribes known to a greater audience

It slowly dawned on Father De Smet that Jesuits would require considerable resources to establish a successful Catholic mission in the Rocky Mountains  
once again he would have to solicit more aid in Europe  
but first he must attempt to find more financial support for his plans in the United States (he visited New Orleans, Boston, Louisville, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Washington City, Philadelphia and New York City and solicited no less than \$5,000)

#### AMERICANS ATTEMPT TO BEGIN A TEMPORARY GOVERNMENT

Overtures were again made to Hudson's Bay Company employees and retirees to join with the American settlers in a temporary (provisional) government and a meeting to consider the matter was held at French Prairie -- autumn 1842  
Hudson's Bay Company men declined to attend presumably acting on the advice of Dr. McLoughlin and Father Blanchet  
McLoughlin saw that to aid or allow the establishment of any government that owed exclusive allegiance to the United States would be disloyal to his country and his Company  
an Independent government would be preferable to one that was pro-American although there was a danger that such an organization might fall under the control of Americans and might enact laws detrimental to his unsettled claim to land at Willamette Falls south of the Columbia River  
therefore Dr. McLoughlin tried to avoid the issue

until the matter of the international boundary could be settled

## PIONEER DESTINATIONS IN OREGON

Willamette Valley was always pointed out as most desirable

Willamette Falls (later Oregon City in today's Clackamas)

was located at the Falls of the Willamette River [1829]

it had been established by Hudson's Bay Company Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin

this was the first permanent white settlement in the Willamette Valley

in addition to the homes of retired Hudson's Bay Company employees

the village featured a sawmill

Champoeg was the home of the French-Canadians and their ethnically mixed families

they had settled south of Champoeg (in present Marion County)

French Prairie population increased to eighty-three families

as counted by Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin

Champoeg was also an active community composed Methodist missionaries at Mission Bottom and American mountain men

this was a natural attraction to arriving immigrants from the United States

(it had been the home of the Indian Mission Manuel Labor Training School before it closed

it soon became a prime port for the thriving river trade on the Willamette)

Chemeteka (Salem, Oregon in Marion County)

was the growing area settled by Rev. Jason Lee

Methodist missionaries often turned to farming and business opportunities

residents here had led the movement for a creation of a Code of Laws Committee

with the prospect of forming a government

Rocky Mountain Retreat on the Tualatin Plains

was a newer settlement of American ex-fur traders and their ethnically mixed families

## RUMOR OF AN INDIAN UPRISING GENERATES FEAR IN OREGON

Rumors persisted that an Indian alliance had been formed

among the Cayuse, Nez Perce and Walla Walla Indians to carry out aggression -- autumn 1842

against the missionary stations in the interior and against the Willamette valley settlements

reports were coming in so frequently the settlements felt an increased need for protection

Americans called on the French-Canadians to join with them

and agitated for a local meeting to deal with the threat

but this idea was opposed by Hudson's Bay Company and Catholic leaders who said that as **“subjects of Queen Victoria and did not wish to forswear their country -- they could not consistently enter into any measure that might prove prejudicial to her Majesty's government.”**<sup>75</sup>

#### DR. ELIJAH WHITE WRITES LAWS TO BE IMPOSED ON THE INDIANS

Rumors of an Indian alliance and the threats faced by Mrs. Whitman at Waiilatpu Mission together with reports of general restlessness among the Indians east of the Cascade Mountains led sub-Indian Agent White to compile a code of laws for the Indians

Dr. White obtained the services of:

- Thomas McKay, the metis son of Alexander McKay  
(the partner in Astor's company who was lost on the ship *Tonquin* [1811]),
- Cornelius Rogers the frequently reassigned American Board Missionary,
- Baptiste Dorion, the son of Pierre and Madam Marie Dorion,  
(this couple had served as Astorian Wilson Price Hunt's interpreter [1811-1814])

Sub-Indian Agent Dr. Elijah White with these three men and a small armed party hurried across the Cascade Mountains to impose peace with the Indians (even if it already existed) under his newly written code of laws

Dr. White was peculiarly fortunate as his choice of companions were joined at Fort Walla Walla by Chief Trader Archibald McKinlay who represented the Hudson's Bay Company and thus guaranteed the success of the mission

Dr. White's Expedition continued directly into Nez Perce country

#### ST. MARY'S MISSION ON THE BITTERROOT RIVER ENJOYS GREAT SUCCESS

Catholic priests Gregory Mengarini and Nicolas Point and Lay Brothers Charles Duet, Joseph Specht and Willem Claessens had baptized hundreds of Flatheads and Pend d'Oreilles Father Jean-Pierre De Smet had promised the Coeur d'Alene natives a mission of Black Robes he now sought to deliver on his promise

#### FATHER DE SMET HONORS HIS PROMISE TO THE COEUR D'ALENE INDIANS

Father Nicholas Point had just completed a successful season of buffalo hunting with the Flatheads

Father De Smet ordered Father Point to open a mission for the Coeur d'Alenes

Father Point, content working among the Flathead Indians, resented it

he wondered why he had to be the one to fulfill the pledge

Father De Smet accompanied by Father Nicholas Point and Brother Charles Duet

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<sup>75</sup> Laura B. Downey Bartlett. *Student's History of the Northwest*. P, 140.

and interpreter Louis Brown set out from St. Mary's Mission  
to keep Father De Smet's promise to the Coeur d'Alene people -- November 4, 1842  
Father Nicholas Point noted that the Coeur d'Alene Indians were living in twenty-seven villages  
around Lake Coeur d'Alene  
they selected a location not far from the northern end of Lake Coeur d'Alene

#### DR. ELIJAH WHITE HOLDS A COUNCIL WITH THE NEZ PERCE INDIANS

United States government had always dealt with Indian tribes as if they were individual nations  
if no tribal government existed one was imposed by the whites to foster negotiations

Sub-Indian Agent White persuaded the Nez Perce to elect a head chief and sub-chiefs  
who would be responsible for enforcing the code of laws presented to the tribal councils  
by Dr. White and by Tom McKay and the Hudson's Bay Company

Dr. White gave assurances to the principal chiefs of the kindly intentions  
of the United States government -- November 1842

he noted: **“...the sad consequences that would ensue to any white men, from this time, who should invade their rights, by stealing, murder, selling them damaged for good articles, or alcohol, of which they are not fond.”**<sup>76</sup>

Elijah White later persuaded the more sullen Cayuse Indians to also elect chiefs  
but in assuring the natives Dr. White not only promised more than he could deliver,  
he prepared the way for subsequent accusations on the part of the Indians  
that whites wished to have one set of laws for the natives and another for themselves

#### MOUNT SAINT HELENS ERUPTS

Nearby settlers and missionaries witnessed a series of steam eruptions -- fall 1842  
as small volume flare-ups created large ash clouds

Mount St. Helens spewed a large amount of ash in a “Great Eruption” -- November 22, 1842  
which was witnessed by Rev. Josiah Parrish among others  
ash may have reached the Dalles forty-eight miles southeast of the volcano  
small, infrequent explosions followed [through 1857]

#### EVENTS AT WILLAMETTE FALLS ESCALATE BAD FEELINGS

Most of the recent overland immigrants were indebted to Dr. John McLoughlin  
almost all of the other Americans in Oregon were his customers and clients

An estimated population of 137 American pioneers lived near the Falls of the Willamette River

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<sup>76</sup> Charles Henry Carey, *History of Oregon*, P.543.

Felix Hathaway had conveyed all his rights and title to Governor Island  
to the Oregon Milling Company operated by Alvin F. Waller and the Methodist mission  
Rev. Waller became the first person officially listed on the deed -- November 23, 1842  
Dr. John McLoughlin became convinced some of the Methodist missionaries  
intended to take his land and to deprive him of his water rights at Willamette Falls  
to protect his rights, McLoughlin built a sawmill on the river bank near the island  
and gave notice that he would construct a flourmill in a short time

#### CATHOLICS OPENS A MISSION AMONG THE COEUR D' ALENE INDIANS

Father Nicholas Point and Brother Charles Duet at their winter camp  
on the north shore of Lake Coeur d'Alene where the Spokane River flows out -- December 2, 1842  
(where the modern city of Coeur d'Alene is located)  
Father Point's first activities included assembling the people into a single locale

#### WILLAMETTE FALLS BECOMES OREGON CITY

Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin had claimed the land at Willamette Falls [1829]  
this became a settlement of former Hudson's Bay Company employees and voyageurs  
Dr. McLoughlin, already disputed the Methodist missionaries occupation of the island mill site,  
now he decided to formally manage his property at Willamette Falls  
Lansford W. Hastings took a job acting as attorney for Dr. John McLoughlin  
in the Willamette Falls land dispute with the Methodist mission  
Dr. John McLoughlin platted the town site (of Oregon City) -- December 1842  
on his two-square mile "land claim" at the falls of the Willamette River  
between the riverbank and the timbered bluffs to the east  
Jesse Applegate, also a recent arrival, surveyed the town site  
Dr. McLoughlin hired Sidney W. Moss and J.M. Hudspeth to survey building lots  
they used a pocket compass and a rope  
(this would be the common practice until [1851] when the first U.S. survey was conducted)  
Dr. McLoughlin began to lay out the streets of the town  
community previously known as Willamette Falls he renamed Oregon City -- December 1842  
Oregon City was established as the first non-company settlement in the Pacific Northwest

#### POLITICAL INSTABILITY PREVAILS IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Idea of an independent government not controlled by either Great Britain or the United States  
had originated with the Methodist mission -- or, more accurately, its most prominent members



thus it was regarded to be a “missionary movement”

Much uncertainty existed in the minds of American settlers

Rev. Jason Lee himself seems to have regarded his own government movement

as a means of winning the land dispute with Dr. John McLoughlin

over ownership of property in Oregon City

and as a means of diminishing the power of Hudson’s Bay Company south of the Columbia

and thus detaching the French-Canadians from company domination

however, with those purposes unattainable for the present,

Rev. Jason Lee had lost interest in any government at all

#### LAND DISPUTE IN OREGON CITY INTENSIFIES

Methodist missionaries continued to operate the Island Milling Company sawmill

and advanced plans for a grist mill

Lansford W. Hastings represented Dr. John McLoughlin

in the land dispute with Rev. Waller and with Rev. Jason Lee’s Methodist mission

Settlers quickly divided into two camps: Pro-Waller and Pro-McLoughlin

these two camps also could be identified as:

- American versus British
- Missionary-farmers versus Hudson’s Bay Company
- Methodist versus Catholic

#### FATHER DE SMET WRITES AN ACCOUNT OF HIS TRAVELS ACROSS THE FRONTIER

Father Jean-Pierre De Smet hit upon a plan to raise funds for his work among the Indians

during his travels visiting tribes on the frontier Father Pierre-Jean De Smet disciplined himself

to write an account of the day’s events each evening

during extended stops at rendezvous or forts and on steamboat journeys

he compiled these into letters

Father De Smet compiled fifteen letters into a packet edited by Father Superior Pierre Verhaegen

whose command of English was better than De Smet’s

these were sent them to a Philadelphia publisher

sixteen pen-and-ink drawings by Father Nicholas Point provided illustrations

*Letters and Sketches with a Narrative of a Year’s Residence among the Indian Tribes of the Rocky Mountains* recapped De Smet’s [1840] journey

also included was pull-out copy of De Smet’s “Catholic Ladder” used to explain to the Indians the progression of Christianity from Adam and Eve to the present

now the priest had something he could present as a gift for generous donors or, if necessary, to sell  
Father Pierre-Jean De Smet embarked on his “begging tour” that began in New Orleans

#### DR. MARCUS WHITMAN CONTINUES ON HIS RIDE EAST

From Taos (in today’s New Mexico) Dr. Whitman and Asa L. Lovejoy rode north and east  
along Santa Fe Trail to Bent’s Fort (Colorado)

Severe winter of 1842-1843 overtook the two travelers and they became lost in snow and blizzards  
fighting cold and exposure and lacking proper food they nearly came to death

After arriving at Bent’s Fort on the Arkansas River -- early January 1843

Asa L. Lovejoy’s strength gave out as he was worn down by the ordeal  
too weak to go on -- he was forced to remain at Bent’s Fort

Alone, Dr. Whitman continued on without rest suffering from frozen hands, feet and face  
he hurried to overtake a fur traders’ caravan bound for Independence, Missouri  
catching them he rode with the caravan toward civilization

Dr. Whitman dressed like a hunter in buckskin clothing traveling with the fur traders’ caravan  
reached Independence, Missouri

Dr. Marcus Whitman had ridden over the Rocky Mountains and Great Plains in winter

#### ECONOMIC INSECURITY PERMEATES IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

American pioneers were concerned about Hudson’s Bay Company  
what if its subsidiary, the Puget Sound Agricultural Company, became self-sufficient  
and no longer needed their wheat to fulfill its Russian contracts;  
what if Dr. John McLoughlin ever decided, for whatever reason, not to sell them  
ammunition or cloth or hardware, as he was already declining to sell livestock,  
what would they do then?

#### METHODIST MISSIONARIES SEEK TO CREATE AN INDEPENDENT GOVERNMENT

Strong advocates for the Methodist mission and their missionary leaders  
banned together to form what was locally referred to as the “Mission Party”

Mission Party members wanted a provisional (temporary) government that would protect land claims  
and provide protection against predatory animals, natives, Catholics,

Hudson’s Bay Company and anyone else considered to be an enemy

Methodist missionaries believed they should be able to individually claim  
one mile square of land or 640 acres of his own

additional family members should also claim 640 acres each

they were especially focused on the huge land grants held by the Methodist mission itself  
it should be able to claim a township six miles on a side totaling 23,040 acres of land

#### SUB-INDIAN AGENT DR. ELIJAH WHITE EXERTS HIS AUTHORITY

Dr. Elijah White very much wished to be the American leader in Oregon

Dr. Elijah White called together the settlers of the Willamette Valley  
to present his credentials as sub-agent to the Indians

he implied that he, as sole representative of the United States west of the Rockies,  
held power far stronger than those in his position usually possessed

Dr. White's listeners were not impressed

Methodists missionaries who had associated with him during his first visit to the Northwest  
remembered the bitter power struggles with Rev. Jason Lee

those who had traveled West with him by wagon train

recalled boisterously removing him from his position as captain

#### YERBA BUENA (SAN FRANCISCO) POST EXPERIENCES SOME DIFFICULTY OF LEADERSHIP

William Glen Rae, Dr. McLoughlin's son-in-law and the manager of the Yerba Buena post,  
living far from Fort Vancouver often lacked the detailed instructions he needed

Chief Trader Rae had taken to drink

he squandered Hudson's Bay Company money, so it was said, on a Spanish beauty  
and then supported a rebel group with weapons and ammunition  
that failed in its attempted coup of the Mexican government

#### DR. McLOUGHLIN'S REPORTS TO HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY DIRECTORS IN LONDON

Chief Factor John McLoughlin wrote an endless stream of report to Company directors

he became increasingly reckless

page after page which should have been confined to company business

was filled with scathing charges against Governor-in-Chief Sir George Simpson  
and with plaintive rehashings of the most minute aspects of the death of his son

these reports, of course, passed through Simpson's hands on their way to London

they did McLoughlin's case no good when the governor discovered amidst the verbiage  
what seemed to him some questionable, or at least careless, bookkeeping

viciously Simpson pounced with alarming charges regarding the Chief Factor's honesty

One final charge leveled against the Chief Factor by Governor Simpson

was McLoughlin's fatal disobedience regarding the post at Yerba Buena

he had not closed the business -- a direct violation of his orders from the Governor

#### CHEMEKETA METHODIST CHURCH IS CONSTRUCTED

Chemeketa Methodist Church (today's First United Methodist Church in Salem)

had served as the headquarters for Rev. Jason Lee and his missionaries [beginning in 1841]

Methodist missionaries constructed the first building in Oregon

that was to serve only as a protestant church to serve the growing number of settlers -- 1843

#### AMERICANS IN THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY HAVE GRAVE CONCERNS

Destruction of their livestock caused grave concerns among the American settlers in Oregon

grizzlies, black bears, cougars and wolves ranged freely in the Willamette Valley

also no government existed to provide any form of law and order in Oregon

or to give validity to the settlers' land claims

American settlers other than Methodist missionaries decided to meet

to discuss a means of protecting against numerous wild beasts

which preyed on cattle and other livestock -- at least that was their stated objective

notice of a meeting at Chemeketa (Salem) in the Oregon Institute building was issued

#### TRAGEDIES OCCURRED FREQUENTLY IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

After leaving the other American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions missionaries

Cornelius Rogers and his wife Satira were moving to Oregon City

where they intended to make their future home -- February 1843

This journey was taken in a large Chinook canoe paddled by four Indians

passengers included: Dr. Elijah White and Nathaniel Crocker of the overland migration,

Methodist W.W. Raymond, Cornelius Rodgers, his wife and her sickly younger sister Aurelia

(both were the daughters of Rev. David Leslie)

Arriving at the rapids above Willamette Falls it was necessary to make a portage

a rope was attached to the canoe as was the custom

W.W. Raymond and two of the Indians walked along the rocks holding the rope

while approaching a landing place just above the falls

as the canoe came alongside a log, Dr. White attempted to step out

instantly a strong current caught the stern of the canoe, capsized it,

and tore the rope away from those along the riverbank

in a moment, Cornelius Rodgers, his wife, and her sister were swept over the falls

Their canoe was smashed into a thousand fragments

and its passengers were swallowed up in the whirlpool below  
Cornelius and Satira Rogers and her younger sister Aurelia Leslie were lost -- February 1, 1843  
additionally two natives and Nathaniel Crocker also lost their lives in the disaster  
this was a fearful blow to the colony  
as the sad news was carried through the settlement all business was suspended  
general grief and sadness permeated the inhabitants

#### FIRST WOLF MEETING IS HELD IN CHEMEKETA

First Wolf Meeting was presided over by Supreme Judge with probate powers Dr. Ira Babcock  
at the Chemeketa (Salem) Oregon Institute building -- February 2, 1843  
American William H. Willson was chosen secretary  
only a few of the Methodist missionaries attended the meeting  
Attendees discussed the problem of predatory animals attacking their herds  
settlers selected a Committee of Six composed of William H. Gray, Alanson Beers,  
Joseph Gervais, William H. Willson, Etienne Lucier, and G.W. Bellamy  
Committee of Six was charged with writing a report regarding how to protect the local livestock  
they were also charged with making arrangements for a general meeting  
where they would give their report

#### COMMITTEE OF SIX WRITES ITS REPORT

Committee of Six went to work writing a report for the colony  
offering a solution to protect their livestock  
Once that was completed arrangements were made to hold a general meeting  
to give their report to the colonists  
they decided to be meet (the first Monday in March (6<sup>th</sup>)  
at Joseph Gervais' home on French Prairie  
William H. Gray, a lay missionary who had settled in the Willamette Valley,  
cherished the hope of forming a local government  
he was tireless in his efforts to set the groundwork for a government  
he rode through the valley convincing doubters  
and reassuring all those who desired action to attend the meeting

#### INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY BECOMES THE FOCUS OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE

One United States Senate Committee reported -- 1843

on the best means of promoting colonization of Oregon: **“The occupation and settlements of Oregon by American citizens will of itself operate to repel all European intruders, except those who come to enjoy the blessings of our laws, this would secure us more powerful arguments than any diplomacy could invent or use to assert and maintain our just rights in that country if war should ever be necessary to preserve and protect them.”**<sup>77</sup>

#### U.S. SENATOR LEWIS F. LINN (OF MISSOURI) HAS PARTIAL SUCCESS

For a second time Sen. Linn introduced a Bill into Congress intended to expand America:

- extend United States jurisdiction over Oregon,
- provide for establishment of a territorial government,
- construct a chain of forts along the Oregon Trail,
- provide free land to immigrants to the Pacific Northwest

640 Acres to every adult and 160 acres for every child

Linn’s Bill squeaked through the United States Senate by a vote of 24 to 22 -- February 3, 1843

if it passed the House of Representatives, as the West was mistakenly sure it would,

every white male in the Northwest could claim 640 acres in his own name

and generous additional allotments in the names of his wife and children

public meetings were held regarding the Pacific Northwest question

where resolutions to Congress urging passage of the Linn Bill were adopted

Enthusiasm and hope which was aroused in the early pioneers did much to encourage emigration

wagon trains gathered at the Oregon Trailheads to proceed to the new Utopia

(Sen. Linn’s Bill later died in the House of Representatives)

#### DISPUTE DIVIDES OREGON CITY INTO TWO CAMPS

Thirty houses had been built on Dr. John McLoughlin’s Oregon City town sight

Methodist missionary and church pastor, Alvin F. Waller

quarreled with Dr. John McLoughlin over land claims in Oregon City

#### SECOND WOLF MEETING IS HELD AT THE HOME OF JOSEPH GERVAIS

Pioneers of the Willamette Valley held a general meeting at Joseph Gervais’ house -- March 6, 1843

Gervais was a retired Hudson's Bay Company employee who now grew wheat on French Prairie

he was a Catholic who served on Rev. Jason Lee's local Mission Board

and was respected by French-Canadians and Americans alike

Several mountain men who followed the guidance of Robert “Doc” Newell

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<sup>77</sup> Derek Hays, *Historical Atlas of British Columbia and the Pacific Northwest*, P. 132.

had made the transition from trapper to state builder  
Doc Newell and his followers comprised what became known as the “Newell Party”  
they played a prominent role in the meeting as they provided leadership  
James O’Neil was called upon to preside over the meeting  
he had come West with Nathaniel Wyeth[1834]  
and was a member of the Willamette Cattle Company  
Committee of Six that had been selected during the First Wolf Meeting [February 1841]  
was prepared with a resolution advising bounties to be paid for killing predatory animals  
with money contributed by the settlers  
and that officers be appointed to manage the business

**“Resolved:**

**1st That we deem it highly expedient for this community to take immediate measures to destroy all Wolves, Bears and Panthers and such animals as are known to be destructive to Cattle, Horses, Sheap (sic) & Hogs---**

**2 Resolved. That a Treasurer be appointed who shall receive all funds raised & distribute the same in accordance with drafts drawn on him by the Committee to receive the evidences of the destruction of the above named animals, & that he report the state of the Treasury, by posting up public notices once in three months in the vicinity of each of the Committee--**

**3 Resolved. That a Standing Committee of 8 be appointed whose duty it shall be together with the Treasurer to receive the proofs or evidences of the animals for which a bounty is claimed having been killed within the Willamette Valley---**

**4 Resolved. That a bounty of Fifty cents be paid for the destroying a small wolf, \$3.00 for the Large. \$1.50 for the Lynx, Bear & \$5.00 for the Panther ---**

**5 Resolved, That no bounty be paid except -- the individual claiming a bounty give Satisfactory evidence by presenting to Committee, The Skin of the head with the ears of all animals for which he claims a bounty---**”

**6 Resolved -- That the Committee and Treasurer form a board of advice to call public meetings whenever they deem it expedient to promote & encourage all persons to use their vigilance in destruction (sic) all the animals named...**

**7. Resolved, That the Bounty Specified...be limited to Whites and their descendents when they present proofs of having destroyed one or mor (sic) of the animals for which a bounty is to be given--**

**8. Resolved, That -- The proceedings of this meeting be signed by the Chairman -- and Secretary and a copy of the Resolves etc etc be presented to the Recorder of this Colony --**  
these resolutions were passed by voice vote

Most of the offices established in [1841] to probate the estate of Ewing Young were vacant by 1843 because the probate government had no particular power beyond settling estates of the recently deceased when they left no will or heirs

New “Wolf Association” officers were elected

George LeBreton was elected secretary

he was both French-Canadian in origin and Catholic

but he also was one of the leading Oregon settlers

he had journeyed from Baltimore to the Pacific Northwest

widely respected, he possessed a keen mind and was well educated

and his affiliations were with the Americans

William H. Gray was chosen Treasurer

he had been a lay member of the Whitman-Spalding missionary group

but had resigned [1842] and moved to Chemeketa to work at the Oregon Institute

J. C. Bridges who had crossed the plains to the Pacific Northwest with Dr. Elijah White [1842]

and George W. LeBreton were to collect the funds from settlers to be paid out in bounties

an assessment of \$5.00 was levied on each herd

It was resolved that drafts drawn on Fort Vancouver, the Methodist missions

and the milling company at Oregon City all be received as payment

hard money was so scarce in Oregon that wheat was accepted as legal tender

receipt for sixty bushels of wheat stored in the Hudson’s Bay Company granary sufficed

this was the crop grown by Americans in Willamette Valley

## SECOND WOLF MEETING TAKES STEPS TO ORGANIZE A GOVERNMENT

This second meeting of the American pioneers in Oregon provided an opportunity

to reintroduce the possibility of establishing a temporary (provisional) government

Just as the Second Wolf Meeting was about to adjourn

William H. Gray suggested the Americans also needed protection from human enemies

he proposed a motion that squarely faced the need for a government:

**“How is it, fellow-citizens, with you and me, and our wives and children? Have we any organization on which we can rely for mutual protection? Is there any power in the country sufficient to protect us and all that we hold dear, from the worse than wild beasts that threaten and occasionally destroy our cattle? We have mutually and unitedly agreed to defend and protect our cattle and domestic animals; now, therefore, fellow-citizens, I submit and move the adoption of the two following resolutions, that we may have protection for our lives and persons, as well as our cattle and herds: *Resolved* that a committee be appointed to take into consideration the propriety of**



**taking measures for the civil and military protection of this colony; Resolved that this committee consist of twelve persons.”<sup>78</sup>**

Following Gray’s proposal the subject of organizing the community into a government was fully discussed and this concept received a favorable vote

Committee of Twelve members composed mainly of Americans, was appointed to undertake the responsibility of formulating some kind of government for Oregon:

Dr. Ira Babcock served as Chairman, Dr. Elijah White, James A. O’Neil, Robert Shortess, Robert “Doc” Newell, Etienne Lucier, Joseph Gervais, Thomas J. Hubbard, Charles McRoy, William H. Gray, Sidney Smith and George Gay

It was widely understood the outcome of the committee meeting would be either:

- submission of a plan of government for the Willamette Valley;
- or a proposition to initiate the necessary preliminary steps to organize a government

Before the meeting Catholic Father Francis Blanchet had prepared as statement that reflected the concerns of the French-Canadians and Hudson’s Bay Company regarding plans to form a government

however, this was not read at the meeting as no plan for a government had been submitted Blanchet’s statement was handed to Secretary George LeBreton

but it was “laid on the table” (delayed) until the committee of twelve should report

#### OREGON CITY LYCEUM AND DEBATING SOCIETY DISCUSSES GOVERNMENT OPTIONS

Development of a government to protect both persons and property was much discussed by settlers even more significant was the question of protection of land claims

if and when it became possible to file a claim

under the terms of the [1818] Joint Occupation agreement neither United States nor Great Britain could govern Oregon (Great Britain’s Columbia District)

any local government would have to be temporary

Options were several and confusing:

- wait for the United States and Great Britain to negotiate a resolution to the question of who had jurisdiction over Oregon or the Columbia District;
- do nothing and remain under the benevolent protection of Hudson’s Bay Company which could impose new requirements or even leave the region at its discretion;
- become an independent nation much like the Lone Star Republic (Texas in [1836]);
- create a provisional (temporary) government until the United States exerted authority over the region -- if that could ever be successfully accomplished

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<sup>78</sup> William Denison Lyman, *The Columbia River*, P. 191.

What type of government Oregon should have was a topic fiercely discussed

Oregon City Lyceum and Debating Society took up the question at their March 1836 meeting

Mission Party members were focused on the huge land grants claimed by the missions

they believed the local government should imitate their countrymen in Texas

and declare themselves a Pacific Republic like the [1836] Lone Star Republic had done

by forming a Provisional (temporary) Government to meet local needs

they would be independent of both the United States and Great Britain

Robert “Doc” Newell, who had progressed from trapper to government organizer,

presented his position to the Oregon City Lyceum and Debating Society regarding

establishing a provisional government

American to the core, Newell and his friends of the “Newell Party” favored

the smallest possible government

one that would cost little but would respond to minor issues that arose

and stand ready to deal with any Indian troubles that might arise

above all Newell and his friends opposed any form of government that implied

any movement toward an independent government like the Lone Star Republic

they feared an independent government would be controlled

by French-Canadians and Hudson’s Bay Company

they would wait patiently for recognition by the United States

Lansford W. Hastings offered as a topic for debate: **“That it is expedient for the settlers upon the Pacific coast to establish an independent government.”**

#### HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY SEEKS A NEW HEADQUARTERS FOR COLUMBIA DISTRICT

As only a limited supply of furs remained in the Columbia River area

Hudson’s Bay Company feared the British government would give up the Columbia District

unless the Company was firmly established north of the Columbia River

Hudson’s Bay Company proposed a new post to serve as a fur trading center

Chief Factor James Douglas anchored the ship *Beaver* off Clover Point -- March 15, 1843

Douglas selected the site for a new post -- Fort Albert (later Fort Victoria) the next day

on the southern tip of Vancouver Island at the Songhees settlement of Camosack (Camosun)

(named in honor of the “camosack” a type of wild lily native to southern Vancouver Island)

(near the site of the present-day Empress Hotel on Victoria’ Inner Harbor)

he found the locale relatively clear and ready for farming

in case evacuation of land south of the Columbia River became necessary

## CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON FORT CAMOSUN (FORT VICTORIA)

Hudson's Bay Company established their first settlement on Vancouver Island  
construction party led by Chief Trader Charles Ross arrived on the company ship *Cadboro*  
work began on the new Hudson's Bay Company stockade -- March 16, 1843

logs three feet in circumference and twenty-two feet long were obtained from local Indians

Company loaned axes to the natives who fell the trees and drug them to the site

natives were paid one prime Hudson's Bay blanket for every forty logs

Although British subjects and Americans enjoyed equal rights west of the Rocky Mountains

British company had virtually eliminated competition in the fur trade between 54°40' and 42° N

But the need to fill the contracts with the Russian-American Company made diversification necessary

farming had been expanded at Fort Vancouver and in the Cowlitz Valley

French-Canadian settlers had been brought in from the Red River Colony (Winnipeg, Manitoba)

American settlers in increasing numbers began at first to trickle in,

and then to stream into the Willamette Valley

these Yankees were increasingly hostile to British occupation

Establishment of Fort Camosun (Victoria) signaled the last great days

of Hudson's Bay Company's Columbia District

## COMMITTEE OF TWELVE HOLDS A SERIES OF PUBLIC MEETINGS

Committee of Twelve held six meetings at the newly opened Methodist Oregon Institute

Dr. Ira Babcock presided -- March [April and May]

these deliberations were open to everyone

Residents of the Willamette Valley talked of nothing else but the merits of provisional government

most French-Canadians were loyal to Hudson's Bay Company

they were opposed to any form of government

but Dr. John McLoughlin, who held the most valuable land holdings in Oregon City,

had announced his intention to become a United States citizen

and appeared in favor of an independent government (like Texas)

rather than a provisional local government that would favor the United States

some Americans were for the idea of provisional government; some against -- many were confused

Dr. Elijah White seemed to think his federal appointment as sub-Indian Agent

already gave him the power to govern the settlers

at least until some real government came into existence

Mission Party members insisted on a provisional government

but Rev. Jason Lee and George Abernathy were opposed to the organization

of any government as they felt it was

**“both unnecessary in itself and unwise in the manner proposed”<sup>79</sup>**

Newell Party mountain men favored a small pro-American provisional government but feared an independent government would be dominated by Hudson’s Bay Company and French-Canadians

Committee of Twelve designated [May 2, 1843], at Champoeg, as the time and place **“to consider the propriety of taking measures for the civil and military protection of the colony”<sup>80</sup>**

#### OREGON CITY LYCEUM AND DEBATING SOCIETY DISCUSSES GOVERNMENT

Lansford W. Hastings debate topic was presented: **“That it is expedient for the settlers upon the Pacific coast to establish an independent government.”** -- March 1843

prominent citizens zealously participated in the discussion addressing

forming a provisional government at once or waiting for the United States to act first enough settlers favored independence to make the debate intense and the division close

disgust with inaction by the government in Washington City was such that the motion carried

George Abernethy, a lay worker at the Methodist mission attempted to repair the damage

passage of such an emphatic position would cause among the divided residents of Oregon

he championed the opposite side and offered a resolution for the next debate: **“Resolved, that, if the United States extends its jurisdiction over this country within the next four years, it will not be expedient to form an independent government.”**

Settlers by a large majority still felt a patriotic allegiance to the Mother Country

Abernathy’s resolution not to adopt an independent government was approved

this countered Lansford W. Hastings’ resolution to create an independent government

those who wanted to wait up to four years for United States recognition “won”

#### DR. MARCUS WHITMAN ARRIVES IN THE EAST

Continuing East from Independence, Missouri, Whitman hastened to Westport

(today’s Kansas City), Missouri before continuing on to the east coast

Dr. Whitman visited Washington City -- March 23, 1843

he presented quite a figure wearing his trail-blackened buckskins under a buffalo robe,

his face and hands still showing signs of frostbite,

he called at the War Department and met Secretary of War James M. Porter

legend says (probably incorrectly) he also conferred with President James Tyler

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<sup>79</sup> J. Quinn Thornton, *Oregon Pioneer Association Transactions for 1875*, P. 61.

<sup>80</sup> Charles Henry Carey, *History of Oregon*, P. 378.

Whitman urged a chain of forts and farming stations be built to protect and supply immigrants along the yet to be determined route to the Pacific Northwest

Dr. Whitman visited New York City -- March 25, 1843

went to the offices of the great editor of the *New York Tribune* -- Horace Greeley (who one day would make current the famous quotation: "Go West young man")

#### YET ANOTHER MEMORIAL IS SENT TO CONGRESS

Robert Shortess had arrived in the Willamette Valley [April 1840]

and had joined the Methodist Church [about 1841]

he held an intense dislike for Hudson's Bay Company and its officers

Robert Shortess and Albert E. Wilson in Oregon City were enemies of Dr. McLoughlin

after agreeing at a Lyceum debate to wait up to four years for American government recognition

they initiated an inaccurate and strongly worded petition to be presented to the U.S. Congress

this one bristling with malicious charges against Dr. McLoughlin, Hudson's Bay Company

and the British in general dated -- March 25, 1843

What became known as the Shortess Petition began by noting the petitioners had no laws to govern them and that **"where the highest court of appeal is the rifle, safety in life and property cannot be depended on."**<sup>81</sup>

Shortess Memorial asked the Polk Administration for naval yards, mail service, land grants, military protection and territorial status

this petition was signed by sixty-five settlers -- first signature on the petition was Robert Shortess

and included the directors of the Oregon Milling Company

about a third of the signers were newly-arrived immigrants

who had been in Oregon for less than six months

it was said that this petition was really drawn by George Abernathy

who was in charge of all secular affairs for the Methodist mission

Abernathy disguised his participation by having a clerk, Albert E. Wilson, copy the petition

if Abernathy appeared unfriendly toward McLoughlin

then the business interests of the mission and Abernathy

could be badly damaged by the Chief Factor

Shortess Petition-was dispatched to the east

(although it was published in the Congressional Record there was no official action)

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<sup>81</sup> Public Documents Printed by Order of The Senate of the United States, First Session of the Twenty-eighth Congress, December 4, 1843.

## SUB-INDIAN AGENT DR. ELIJAH WHITE SUPPORTS THE SHORTESS PETITION

In an official report to the commissioner of Indian Affairs at Washington City, Sub-Indian Agent Dr. White noted the Shortess Petition made bitter complaints against the Hudson's Bay Company and Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin. Dr. White chose to ignore the fact that under the Joint Occupation Agreement every British subject had the same rights as an American citizen in Oregon.

## DR. MARCUS WHITMAN TRAVELS BY BOAT TO BOSTON

Dr. Whitman continued from New York aboard the steamboat *Narragansett* to Boston where he arrived -- March 30, 1843.

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions Secretary Rev. David Greene received him coolly

in a letter to the missionaries in the field dated the year before [April 28, 1842]

Rev. Greene had already sent the order to close Waiilatpu Mission.

Rev. Greene also had received a letter from Whitman's associates that had arrived by ship.

Dr. Whitman convinced the Board to reinstate Rev. Henry Spalding

but no provision was made to hire replacements for the other dismissed missionaries.

## METHODIST MISSION SOCIETY IS CONCERNED ABOUT REV. JASON LEE'S ACTIVITIES

After reviewing the written concerns of Methodist missionaries in Oregon

along with Dr. Elijah White's accusations, the Methodist Mission Society in Utica, New York came to the conclusions that Rev. Jason Lee had selected a bad location for the missions and had made several unwise missionary selections.

While in Boston Dr. Marcus Whitman was given a letter by the Methodist Mission Society

to be delivered to Superintendent of Methodist missions Rev. Jason Lee in Oregon -- 1843.

This letter accused Jason Lee of mishandling mission money and of neglecting the Indians.

They also noted Jason Lee had established a town which was not a religious colony.

Methodist Mission Society had decided to send out a new superintendent by ship around Cape Horn.

He was to investigate the charges against Rev. Jason Lee.

## DR. MARCUS WHITMAN TRAVELS FROM BOSTON TO RUSHVILLE, NEW YORK

Leaving Boston, Dr. Whitman carried new instructions

from the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions.

Dr. Whitman made a hurried visit to his old hometown, Rushville, New York.

There he adopted Perrin Whitman, his motherless thirteen-year-old nephew.

with the youngster in tow, Marcus Whitman again faced toward the frontier

#### CONGRESSIONAL INACTION IRRITATES AMERICANS ACROSS THE NATION

Missouri U.S. Senator Lewis F. Linn's proposal to create an Oregon Territory failed to pass  
resentment toward Congressional inaction swept across the nation -- spring 1843

American immigrants in Oregon were being deprived of access to American laws  
opportunity to occupy, settle and claim land in the West was being denied

Worse in the minds of expansionists, it appeared that Secretary of State Daniel Webster  
was willing to concede the Pacific Northwest if Britain would coerce Mexico  
into selling Northern California to the United States

#### AMERICANS DRIVE A HERD FROM CALIFORNIA TO THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY

(After selling the tiny schooner *Star of Oregon* and spending the winter gathering together a herd

Joseph Gale and his crew of four non-sailors and an Indian boy spent the winter

working in California to buy 3000 sheep, 900 head of cattle making a total of 1250,  
and 600 horses and mules purchased at \$3.00 a head)

Joseph Gale and his men persuaded Captain Joe Walker to guide the herd to the Willamette Valley  
and convinced an indeterminate number of men, women and even children

to accompany them back to Oregon driving the herd ahead of them -- spring 1843

#### SACRED HEART MISSION IS ESTABLISHED ON THE ST. JOE RIVER

Father Nicholas Point moved to a site on a river he named after Saint Joseph (St. Joe River)  
where it entered the south end of Lake Coeur d'Alene -- spring 1843

there a small log structure was built under the direction of Brother Charles Huet

this was named Sacred Heart Mission

Father Point found the landscape abundant with life

he noted that fishing and hunting were year around activities

canoes could be filled and emptied in only a few hours

180 deer were killed in one day while a different hunting party killed 300 in just six hours

Almost from the first, unfortunately, a chief named Stellam challenged Father Point

because the chief felt threatened by the spiritual power of the Jesuits

(little by little, however, Father Point made progress

he sincerely believed that Sacred Heart Mission would be fully operational

by the time Father Pierre-Jean De Smet, the head of the Rocky Mountain Mission,  
returned in another year with needed supplies, tool and additional assistance)

## CATHOLIC EFFORT EXPANDS IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

After Father Pierre-Jean De Smet's successful "begging tour" during which he visited New Orleans, Boston, Louisville, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Washington City, Philadelphia and New York, City -- there he raised some \$5,000 to support his mission work

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet convinced his superior, Father Superior Pierre Verhaegen, to send more missionaries to the Rocky Mountains

Father Superior Pierre Verhaegen dispatched Father Adrian Hoeken, Father Peter De Vos, Father Tiberio Soderini, and Brother Michael McGean (or McGill)

from St. Louis to travel to St. Mary's Mission on the Bitterroot River

where they would assist Father Gregory Mengarini and Father Nicholas Point along with Lay Brothers Joseph Specht and Willem Claessens

Father De Smet, the head of the Rocky Mountain Mission, accompanied the recruits as they set out for the frontier

they traveled on the steamer *John Auld* as far as Westport, Missouri -- April 25, 1843

at the same time, aboard the steamship *Omega* were passengers

John James Audubon and Etienne Provost

De Smet met these gentlemen when both ships stopped at supply points

In Westport De Smet met John C. Fremont, Thomas "Broken Hand" Fitzpatrick, Dr. Marcus Whitman

and Sir William Drummond Stewart's "party of pleasure" up of approximately seventy men consisting of twenty gentlemen of St. Louis that included socialites, army officers on leave and several scientists

there were thirty hunters, mule skinnners (drivers) and camp servants

on their way to explore the Rocky Mountains guided by William Sublette

Father De Smet entrusted his Catholic recruits to experienced mountain guide William Sublette as he himself traveled to St. Louis

## DR. MARCUS WHITMAN JOURNEYS BACK TO OREGON

Traveling from Rushville, New York Dr. Whitman arrived at the Shawnee mission just beyond Westport, Missouri (now within the limits of present-day Kansas City)

While at the Shawnee Mission he noted with some envy

that the methods and equipment available to Presbyterian missionaries

seemed to elicit a better response from the displaced Indians of the East

than did his own efforts among the Cayuse of the Walla Walla Valley

At length, he started for Independence, Missouri in pursuit of the pioneers on their way to Oregon



accompanied by his nephew Perrin and a handful of belated emigrants

### THIRD WOLF MEETING (SOMETIMES CALLED THE CHAMPOEG MEETING) TAKES PLACE

While many of the settlers in Oregon City were excited to hear the report of the Committee of Twelve little interest in politics was apparent in the more outlying areas

Settlers of Oregon came together in a general meeting in an open field at Champoeg **“to consider the propriety of taking measures for the civil and military protection of the colony”**<sup>82</sup> -- May 2, 1843

this gathering was not particularly well attended

of the more than one hundred twenty-five Americans living in the Willamette Valley,  
only fifty or so showed up

there was a great deal of uncertainty in the minds of American settlers

regarding the best course of action for their personal interests

most were former mountain men or members of the two successful wagon trains

only a few Methodist missionaries even attended the meeting

of the more than eight hundred French-Canadians living in the area

approximately the same number as Americans also attended

many were still opposed to the scheme of establishing a government

however, their opposition was not unanimous

Like the First Wolf Meeting [February 2], it was again chaired by Supreme Judge Dr. Ira Babcock

George W. LeBreton again kept the official minutes and noted the purpose of the meeting was for **“taking steps to organize themselves into a civil community, and provide themselves with protection, secured by the enforcement of law and order.”**

William H. Willson and William H. Gray took notes

### COMMITTEE OF TWELVE REPORTS TO THOSE ASSEMBLED AT THE THIRD WOLF MEETING

Committee members had written a referendum to the people

to create a temporary independent government in Oregon

and they had selected a slate of candidates to hold office in this Provisional Government

Committee of Twelve Report was submitted to the assembly

committee members declared themselves in favor of establishing a Provisional Government

which would apply only to Americans in the community

this “American Plan” was an effort to meet the differing views of United States emigrants

but the proposal was so broad and open ended that it was confusing even to Americans

and opposed out of hand by British subjects attending the Third Wolf Meeting

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<sup>82</sup> Charles Henry Carey, *History of Oregon*, P. 378.

George W. LeBreton discovered French-Canadians had been coached to vote “**NO**” on all questions  
LeBreton proposed that measures be introduced in such a way  
that the French-Canadians ought to vote “**YES**”

#### CONFUSION REIGNS AT THE THIRD WOLF MEETING

Those Americans who were in attendance decided to take a vote  
on the whole concept of forming a Provisional Government  
Voting became bewildering regardless of the intent of the voter:

- Americans found them overwhelmed with questions:
  - Americans who voted “FOR” a Provisional Government could lose their land  
because no claims had ever been filed with any government -- there was no government;
  - Americans who voted “AGAINST” would appear disloyal to the other Americans;
  - some Americans feared the probable taxes any government would need;
  - other Americans wanted to form an independent country like Texas had done;
- French-Canadians faced equally difficult prospects:
  - many French-Canadians were opposed to the obvious pro-American takeover
  - those who voted “FOR” would appear disloyal to their peers;
  - but those who voted “AGAINST” would delay the American power play  
but also would have no government with which to file a land claim of their own;

There were shouts and quarrels and rappings for order by Chairman Babcock  
confusion and excitement swelled to a great crescendo  
at one point it appeared the Americans had enough votes to carry the issue

George W. LeBreton carefully watched developments  
at the moment he thought he could command a majority of votes he rose and exclaimed:  
**“We can risk it, let us divide and count!”**<sup>83</sup>  
William H. Gray shouted, **“I second the motion!”**<sup>84</sup>

a Division of the House was called for on the question of proceeding to organize  
Committee of Twelve Report was voted on and appeared about to be declared lost  
primarily due to the inclusion of a governor in the list of governmental officers

#### JOE MEEK TAKES CHARGE OF THE THIRD WOLF MEETING

Joe Meek, former American mountain man turned farmer and person of considerable influence  
in the colony, stepped grandly in front of the excited crowd

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<sup>83</sup> William Denison Lyman, *The Columbia River*, P. 192

<sup>84</sup> William Denison Lyman, *The Columbia River*, P. 192

swinging his fur cap in the air he shouted a war whoop

Meek picked up a stick and in his loudest voice he yelled: **“Divide. Divide. Who’s for a divide? All those in favor of the report of the Committee, the American Flag, and an organization follow me.”**<sup>85</sup>

As the popular story attests,

Americans speedily gathered to the *right* behind the large form of the mountain man/farmer French-Canadian opponents of organization filed to the *left* after a half hour of the greatest confusion a count was made

Legend says the vote was estimated to be fifty-two in favor of the motion -- and fifty opposed Americans would have been outvoted had it not been for George W. LeBreton along with two other French-Canadians

Etienne Lucier a former Astorian and French Prairie’s first settler and former British sailor and Canadian revolutionary Francois X. Matthieu,

all of whom somehow appeared on the American side of Joe Meek’s line

dissenters withdrew as a group, leaving the American government party without further opposition

It probably did not happen so dramatically and the archives of the day do not support this legend

Doc Newell names more than two French-Canadians or ex-Hudson’s Bay Company employees who voted for government

Rev. Gustavus Hines’ list of those opposed to government

includes the names of some who were in favor, and even some who held office

#### PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT IS FORMED BY THE THIRD WOLF MEETING

American settlers in the Willamette Valley accepted civil leadership for their community

Committee of Twelve’s report was considered and adopted article by article -- May 2, 1843

a motion was made and carried that a supreme judge, with probate powers be chosen;

a motion was made and carried that a clerk of the court, or recorder, be chosen;

a motion was made and carried that a sheriff be chosen;

a motion was made and carried that three magistrates be chosen;

a motion was made and carried that three constables be chosen;

a motion was made and carried that a that **“a committee of nine persons to draft a code of laws, to be presented for approval to a public meeting to be held at Champoeg on the 5<sup>th</sup> day of July next”**<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> William Denison Lyman, *The Columbia River*, P. 192

<sup>86</sup> *History of the Pacific Northwest: Oregon and Washington*, Vol. 1, Compiled and Published by the North Pacific History Company of Portland, Oregon, P. 238.

a motion was made and carried that a treasurer be chosen;  
a motion was made and carried that a major and three captains of the local militia be chosen;  
a motion was made and carried that and carried that they proceed  
to choose the persons to fill the various offices by ballot:

Albert E. Wilson was elected Supreme Judge with probate powers,  
George W. LeBreton was elected Clerk of the Court,  
Joseph (Joe) L. Meek was elected Sheriff  
William H. Willson was chosen treasurer

It was then moved and carried that the remainder of the officers be nominated from the floor  
and chosen by raising hands:

Hugh Burns, Lewis H. Judson and Alvin T. Smith were chosen to act as magistrates;  
John Howard was chosen major of the local militia

William McCarty, Charles McKay and Sidney Smith were chosen captains

Specific instructions to the nine-member Legislative Committee were passed to direct their actions:

**“That the sessions of the said Legislative Committee should not exceed six days; that no tax should be levied; that the office of governor should not be created; that the compensation of the Legislative Committee should be \$1.25 per day; that the revenues of the territory should be contributed by voluntary subscriptions.”**

It was moved and carried that the militia major and captains be instructed  
to enlist men to form companies of mounted riflemen

Two additional positions were created when it was moved and carried  
that an additional magistrate and constable be chosen

Charles Campo was chosen as an additional magistrate,

Francois X, Matthieu was chosen as an additional constable

Third Wolf Meeting was then adjourned but a question arose regarding  
when the newly-elected officers were to take office

the meeting was called back to order and it was moved and carried

that the old “Wolf Association” officers who had been elected at the [May 2] meeting  
would remain in office and the official acts of these officers were validated

until the laws were made and accepted at the [July 5] meeting

when these or other officers-elect would be installed

Nine Legislative Committee members had been elected:

- Robert Moore was the Speaker or Chairman of the Committee of Nine  
he had traveled to the Pacific Northwest with Thomas Farnham’s Peoria Party  
as a member of the Oregon Dragoons [1839]

- at age sixty-two he was the oldest member of the Legislative Committee;
- Robert Shortness had also been a member of the Oregon Dragoons  
Oregon's first constitution is in his handwriting;
- Thomas Jefferson Hubbard had jumped ship in Yerba Buena (San Francisco) [1834]  
he moved to Fort William on the Columbia River's Wapato Island and became a gunsmith  
Hubbard killed the fort's tailor, Mr. Thornburg, in a dispute [1835] but Hubbard was cleared;
- James O'Neil had arrived with the [1834] Wyeth Expedition  
he had joined Ewing Young's Willamette Cattle Company at the [1837] cattle drive;
- William H. Gray, missionary, had arrived with Marcus and Narcissa Whitman [1836]  
he joined Rev. Jason Lee's Methodist missionaries before becoming a farmer;
- Alanson Beers had emigrated [1837] from Connecticut with his wife and family  
he served in Jason Lee's Champoeg Methodist mission as a blacksmith;
- Robert "Doc" Newell had been in Oregon as a mountain man since the early 1830s  
he had led the first wagons into the Pacific Northwest [1840]  
he had taken a claim on the Tualatin Plains (near present day Hillsboro)  
before moving to Oregon City and had retired to his Champoeg farm;
- William Dougherty, age thirty-one, was the youngest member of the legislative committee  
he had arrived with the Bidwell Wagon Train [1841];
- David Hill had just arrived with Dr. Elijah White the previous winter [1842]  
and was farming the Tualatin Valley

Evidence of the earnestness and zeal of the members of the nine-member Legislative Committee was demonstrated by each member contributing a sum of money equal to his salary except Alanson Beers and Dr. Ira Babcock who each subscribed an amount equal to the pay of the whole committee

## PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT IS FORMED -- OREGON COUNTRY IS CREATED

Local government had to be temporary as under the terms of the Joint Occupation neither United States nor Great Britain could govern Oregon (Columbia District)  
Weak Provisional Government crafted by Robert "Doc" Newell and his followers was jokingly called a "non-government" which it very nearly was and which its authors intended -- it served the needs of the moment  
settlers were aware the Provisional Government would assume new forms and meet new needs as dictated by impending changes

## OREGON PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT'S CONSTITUTION WAS UNIQUE

Organic Laws of Oregon drew no distinction between what was law and what was constitution this document, including the seven Articles drawn from the *Little Blue Book* of Iowa laws, could not be amended

this document provided for no taxes in the unrealistic hope the new government could be financed, like a church, through voluntary contributions these pioneers not only acted upon the idea that all

**“just governments derived their authority by the consent of the governed,”**

but they granted to each citizen the power to judge how much he was willing to contribute

in the place of a governor as the chief executive, a three-man committee was implemented this proved to be quite cumbersome

Article IV declared that no private individual could hold claim to **“excessive water privileges, or other situations necessary for the transaction of mercantile or manufacturing operations... Provided that nothing in these laws shall be so construed as to affect any claim of any mission of a religious character, made previous to this time, of an extent not more than six miles square.”**<sup>87</sup>

purpose of this discriminatory section was to freeze Dr. John McLoughlin out of Oregon City and to validate the holdings of the Methodist mission’s claim of 23,040 acres

Even at that, the document apparently was what the Oregon Country settlers wanted it was accepted by an overwhelming majority at a mass meeting on [July 5, 1843] and an election of officers was scheduled for the following [May 1844]

(Provisional Government did prove to be adequate for that year

settlers believed that after that length of time their actions would be guided by word of the latest developments in the United States brought by the next wave of immigrants)

#### CATHOLIC DELEGATION SETS OUT FOR ST. MARY’S MISSION IN THE BITTERROOTS

Fathers Peter DeVos, acting head of the Rocky Mountain Mission in the absence of Father De Smet, and Father Adrian Hoeken accompanied by Brother Michael McGean (or McGill) began their journey from Westport, Missouri -- May 1843

#### ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN AMERICA DO NOT OFFER MUCH HOPE FOR RECOVERY

President Andrew Jackson’s veto of the Second National Bank’s charter [1833]

had resulted in the Economic Panic of [1837] as profits, prices and wages declined while unemployment went up -- pessimism abounded throughout the nation

By [1842] the United States was in one of the longest and deepest depressions ever experienced

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<sup>87</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 242.

pronounced deflation drove the value of personal and public debts upward  
resulting massive defaults on debts  
citizens in St. Louis were so tense that they gathered for the purpose of mobbing stock brokers  
over-production of crops in Mississippi River Valley drove farm prices ever lower  
Weather conditions were especially bad all across America -- 1843  
which added to the economic misery in the nation

#### U.S. RACIAL CONCERNS LEAD TO DISCRIMINATION IN THE UNITED STATES

People who settled in the Pacific Northwest tended to come from the frontier areas of the Middle West  
especially the Ohio and Mississippi River valleys  
migration West for many included the expectation that they could settle in an area  
untroubled by racial concerns

South and parts of the Midwest passed laws restricting the rights of black people:

- their right to vote was denied,
- access to own land in the territory in which they lived was restricted or denied,
- their right to testimony in court was restricted or denied,
- they were required to post a bond guaranteeing good behavior,
- proof of their free status was required to be carried by black people  
or they were excluded from living in these territories

#### INFORMATION REGARDING OREGON WAS READILY AVAILABLE TO MOST AMERICANS

Americans had considerable information about the Pacific Northwest -- spring 1843  
sources included the agitation in Congress, reports, speeches, newspaper articles and letters

They knew the Willamette Valley was a favorable land for farmers and stockmen  
it possessed rich soil, mild climate, a combination of prairie and forest  
springs of pure water were everywhere

a navigable river was at their doorstep, and an ocean a short distance away  
opening new farms would be easy and pleasant in Oregon

markets for grain was good, cattle were worth four times their value as in Missouri,  
and cost of production was much less

Hudson's Bay Company, which some proposed to drive out Oregon as soon as they arrived,  
was presented in the next breath as eager to purchase every bushel of grain settlers could raise

Oregon had other resources in addition to arable land

streams full of salmon which might be packed and shipped at a good profit

forests of pine and fir extended down to the water's edge and invited saw mills

unlimited water power was available for manufacturing purposes  
Numbers of men in various sections of the country  
prepared for the march to the Pacific Northwest -- spring 1843

#### PRESSURE BUILDS TO PROTECT AMERICANS MOVING WEST

John M. Shivley, an emigration agent from St. Louis, (spent the winter of [1842] in Washington City)  
he kept the people who were preparing to travel to the West informed of the progress of legislation  
after newly appointed Secretary of War James Madison Porter took office  
Shivley tried to induce him to provide a company of troops to escort emigrants to the West

#### AMERICAN PIONEERS ARE INDEPENDENT AND RESOURCEFUL

Seldom was there ever a more respectable or more substantial group of immigrants than those  
who comprised the members of the great caravans that traveled annually over the Oregon Trail  
down-and-outers found no place of welcome in the Oregon caravans

considerable outlay of cash was needed before traveling over the Oregon Trail  
to outfit oneself with essential equipment -- wagon, livestock, foodstuffs and tools  
shiftless and indolent classes found it difficult to raise the capital necessary  
people of dependable classes were to constitute the bulk of home builders, settlers  
and trades people in the West

from their ranks, many originally from New England, became the political, educational,  
and moral leaders that guided the development of the Pacific Northwest

In order to go west many of these early emigrants sold at sacrifice prices

better farms than the ones they would build in Oregon

in fact, if farmland was all they wanted, for a paltry \$1.25 an acre

they could have bought in adjacent Iowa and newly opened Wisconsin

all the rich acreage any one family could handle

These early pioneers were mostly family men who were prosperous enough to buy substantial outfits  
or else sound enough of character that backers were willing to finance them  
just as debt-ridden Peter Hardeman Burnet was being financed

#### PETER H. BURNET JOINS THE WESTWARD MOVEMENT

Peter Hardeman Burnet (later he added the second "t" to his family name)

was born in Nashville, Tennessee -- he had little formal education

he married Harriet W. Rogers and journeyed up the Missouri River where he went into debt  
young and unlucky, the debt-ridden storekeeper took up the study of law



he became a self-taught lawyer and entered practice in Platt Grove, Missouri [1839]  
He spent the snowy months in Platt Grove extolling to cold listeners the perpetual greenness  
of the Pacific coast where fevers and agues (high fevers) were reputedly unknown  
he determined to go west partly for this wife's health  
and partly for the lordly acreage he hoped to claim along with his wife and seven children  
Peter Burnett found a financial backer for his journey to Oregon

### THREE APPLGATE BROTHERS PREPARE TO MIGRATE WEST

Kentucky-born Jesse Applegate was lean and more than six feet tall  
unlike most of his fellow travelers, he was well educated  
as a young man he had studied briefly in the St. Louis law office of Edward Bates  
each man held the other in the greatest esteem throughout their lives  
(Bates one day would be a nominee for the presidency of the United States  
and would serve as Abraham Lincoln's Attorney General)

After he was married, Jesse Applegate began a new farm in the Osage Valley, Kansas  
along with his brothers Charles and Lindsay  
but they could not find a satisfactory market for their corn, cotton and fat steers  
meanwhile slave-owners were moving in around him  
they had no personal feelings regarding slavery but hated the competition

Word had gotten around that Oregon was a stockman's paradise  
Jesse abruptly decided he and his family would move to Oregon  
they were joined by his two brothers and their wives and children  
three Applegate brothers invested the money they raised from the sale of their farms  
they purchased a herd of several hundred cattle  
Lindsay Applegate announced in print that he and his brothers intended to go west  
driving their large herd of cattle with them -- he invited men of a similar mind to join them

### CHANGES ARE MADE AT FORT NISQUALLY

Dr. William Fraser Tolmie returned to Columbia District -- May 1843  
after visiting England and serving at Hudson's Bay Company's  
Fort McLoughlin at Campbell Island (British Columbia)  
Fort Nisqually was put once again under leadership of Dr. Tolmie  
Dr. Tolmie saw Fort Nisqually moved to a new location on Sequelitchew Creek's south bank  
this new location had better access to water and farm land  
new and larger fort was completed -- 1843

20x30 foot granary was constructed (a few years later, the factor's house was added)  
this outpost on the frontier was a place full of life and activity until [1870]

it served as a business, a multicultural community and a meeting place for various people  
(Fort Nisqually was moved to its present location at Point Defiance Park in Tacoma  
by the Metropolitan Park Board and the Young Men's Club [1934])

Dr. Tolmie provided very valuable leadership:

- he directed the business interests of Puget Sound Agriculture Company,
- he used his deep interest in botany to guide the development of the farm and its structures  
progress at the site spanned a period of more than ten years,
- he kept careful health records and noted the arrival of dysentery along the Columbia River

#### DR. MARCUS WHITMAN ARRIVES IN INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI

After two months in the East, Dr. Marcus Whitman arrived in Independence, Missouri  
where the Missouri River makes its great bend toward the north -- middle of May 1843

Dr. Whitman viewed with amazement the city streets crowded by pioneers  
nearly a thousand men, women and children had poured into Independence  
seeking companions to form traveling companies for the trek west

#### GREAT MIGRATION ORGANIZES AT WESTPORT, MISSOURI

Everyone from homesteaders to horse thieves gathered in Westport (Kansas City, Missouri)  
they collected in a sprawling unorganized mass on the prairies  
in search of traveling companies that were as yet unformed  
near Westport, Missouri -- middle of May 1843

they possessed cows and crated chickens, washing tubs and churns and all manner of other things  
thought to be necessary to assure a successful relocation in Oregon  
which was often referred to as the "New Arcadia" (an unspoiled, harmonious wilderness)  
where people were imagined to enjoy a perfect life of rustic simplicity

Emigrants severely burdened by too much equipment later were unburdened by knowledge

**"They overloaded their wagons with heavy plows they should have shipped around the Horn  
and with family furniture they would chop up for fuel long before they reached the westward-  
flowing streams. They did not know the trail -- its fords, its hazards, its techniques. They did not  
know how to deal with Indians or kill buffalo or jerk meat; how to cook over buffalo dung or  
protect their horses' legs from cactus."**<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 226.

## EMIGRANTS SEEK THE GUIDANCE OF EXPERTS ON THE ROUTE THEY ARE TO TAKE

Emigrants formed a committee to meet with Dr. Marcus Whitman who offered sound advice regarding the route and discipline necessary to reach Oregon

U.S. Army Captain and Mountain man John Gnatt was contracted to pilot to Fort Hall the largest single wagon train to attempt to cross the continent for \$1 per person (he imposed enough discipline to herd the disorderly quarrelsome settlers as far as Fort Hall)

By trial and error order began to evolve for what quickly became known as the "Great Migration" named more for its importance to history than for its inaccurately estimated size committees met to decide on rules borrowed largely from Santa Fe traders and trapper caravans trail discipline, division into companies, night corralling, guard duty

and innumerable others issues were considered and voted on

additional committees were formed to inspect vehicles and enforce the regulations

it was decided the election of officers should wait (in what became a tradition of the trail) until the men had a chance to see each other in action

## NINE MEMBER LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE HOLDS A SERIES OF MEETINGS

Legislative Committee of Nine met for the first time -- May 16, 1843

at the Champoeg Methodist mission building ten miles below Salem known as "the Granary"

Methodists allowed the Legislative Committee of Nine its use free of charge

this began a time of great political activity in the Willamette Valley settlements

as it was the first gathering of its kind, or of any kind, west of the Rocky Mountains

Champoeg replaced Rev. Jason Lee's mission at Chemeketa

as the political center of Willamette Valley

Oregon's first legislative hall was a story-and-a-half tall frame building sixteen by thirty feet, with a square room in front, which had been used as a school, then as a church,

it now became the capital of "Oregon Country"

a room behind this hall and above the stairs was used as a granary or storeroom

and thus the name of the building

Robert Moore chaired a series of public meetings to write a constitution

for an anticipated Provisional (temporary) "Oregon Country" government

none of the Legislative Committee of Nine members were lawyers -- all were Americans

sitting at the same table were a mountain man, a sailor and two missionaries,

five were adventurers or pioneers

one or two members of the committee could even be called shifty characters

Nine members of the Legislative Committee used James O'Neil's *Little Blue Book*

as their guide: **“all statute laws of Iowa Territory not of a local character and not incompatible with the conditions and circumstances of the (Oregon) country, shall be the laws of this government, unless otherwise modified.”**<sup>89</sup>

Legislative Committee of Nine was dominated by two groups of Americans:

- “Mission Party” which focused on the interests of the Methodist missions especially the huge land grants held by the missions;
- “Newell Party” mountain men who favored a small pro-American Provisional Government

Operating rules of the Legislative Committee were established

James O’Neil owned the only law book available in all of Oregon,

he had carried it west with him on Nathaniel Wyeth’s [1834] expedition

this law book included seven Articles taken verbatim from Iowa Territorial Laws [1839]

and was referred to as the *Little Blue Book*

this volume also contained the Northwest Ordinance of 1787

Thomas Jefferson’s process to create new states on an equal footing with the original states

which dated back to Articles of Confederation government [1777-1781]

Northwest Ordinance stated: **“neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime”** would ever be permitted -- slavery was to be prohibited in Oregon

as the only legal guide available, the *Little Blue Book*

became the foundation of the Oregon Provisional Constitution

#### LIEUTENANT JOHN C. FREMONT PREPARES FOR A SECOND EXPEDITION

Fremont’s father-in-law, U.S. Senator Thomas Hart Benton, had picked the right man

during his first expedition Fremont examined accurately

and, with the help of his wife Jessie (Benton), wrote clearly

as a reward he was elevated (brevetted) to the rank of Army captain

although he received no additional authority, priority, or pay

Missouri Senators Benton and Lewis F. Linn developed an ambitious plan of exploration for Fremont

United States Army Corps of Topographical Engineers commander Colonel John J. Abert

signed the orders adding no details to the instructions

Lieutenant John C. Fremont led a second official U.S. exploring expedition into the West:

they were assigned the task of surveying the route for what became known as the Oregon Trail

from the western limit of his earlier [1842] reconnaissance

also they were to incorporate U.S. Naval Lieutenant Charles Wilkes’ [1841] survey

**“...to give a connected survey of the interior of our continent.”**

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<sup>89</sup> Howard McKinley Corning, *Dictionary of Oregon History*, P. 30.

Lieutenant Fremont began preparations for his second plunge into the western wilds he resembled the men of his [1842] effort near Westport, (Kansas City) Missouri they were mostly French-Canadian veterans of the fur trade and mountain men who signed up in St. Louis  
Fremont again took the skilled German cartographer Charles Preuss with him to collect specimens, help with the astronomical observations, maintain scientific instruments and make topographical sketches of the landscape  
Fremont also employed prominent Mountain Man Thomas "Broken Hand" Fitzpatrick who served as guide  
Lucien B. Maxwell, Taos trapper and trader, went along as hunter several untested men were also employed including Jacob Dodson a young black servant of the household of U.S. Senator Thomas Hart Benton twenty-four handpicked men were engaged in total  
during all of his expeditions to the west, Fremont alone held rank in the U.S. Army  
Fremont's men were well-equipped and especially well-armed -- each carried a breech loading rifle (breech loaded weapons were loaded from the back of the gun barrel with a cartridge while muskets were loaded with a musket ball dropped down the gun barrel)  
they also dragged along a small howitzer (cannon on wheels) which nearly ended the expedition before it started  
Topographical Corps demanded Fremont return to Washington City to explain why it was necessary for a peaceful, scientific expedition to be heavily armed  
Fremont's wife Jessie intercepted the letter of inquiry and replaced it with a message that he was to proceed west without further preparation

#### DR. MARCUS WHITMAN MEETS LIEUTENANT JOHN C. FREEMONT

Dr. Whitman overtook another man of destiny, Lieutenant John C. Fremont who was bound for Oregon leading a government exploring party  
Whitman camped for a night with Fremont answering the explorer's questions as fully as he could  
next morning, astride a fast-stepping mule, Whitman along with his nephew Perrin and accompanied by several laggard emigrant wagons hurried in pursuit of the Great Migration

#### LIEUTENANT JOHN CHARLES FREMONT'S SECOND EXPEDITION SETS OUT

Fremont and his twenty-four men set out from St. Louis, Missouri -- May 17, 1843  
traveling in the direction of Soda Springs (Idaho)  
Fremont's expedition followed the route of the future Oregon Trail for a time

as Fremont visited the valleys with his party along the route,  
he wrote glowing descriptions of the soil, vegetation and animals  
touting the valleys as location for future settlement

#### ADDITIONAL LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE PUBLIC MEETINGS WERE HELD AT CHAMPOEG

Nine-member Legislative Committee meeting at the Champoeg Methodist mission granary

proposed a Preamble: **“We, the people of Oregon Territory** [this was the word used although territorial status had not been granted by the United States], **for purposes of mutual protection, and to secure peace and prosperity among ourselves, agree to adopt the following laws and regulations, until such time as the United States of America extend their jurisdiction over us.”**<sup>90</sup>

In the process of a succession of meetings the nine member Legislative Committee passed a series of resolutions on the **“feeling of the community”**

various sub-committees were formed to address specific needs:

- Executive Committee;
- Judiciary Committee;
- Ways and Means (finance) Committee;
- Military Affairs Committee;
- Private Land Claims Committee;
- Division of Districts (Counties) Committee;

they also unanimously resolved that these resolutions should be transmitted

to the United States government by Dr. Elijah White -- the only U.S. official in Oregon

After three days the Legislative Committee’s work to draft a constitution and code of laws work was stopped -- May 19, 1843

it was announced a meeting of the committee would be held to complete their task [June 27]

#### LANSFORD W. HASTINGS LEAVES THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Dr. John McLoughlin’s attorney American Lansford W. Hastings organized an emigrant party to travel to California after the Third Wolf Meeting -- May 1843

(he stayed in California only a short time before returning to the East)

(Hastings published *Emigrant’s Guide to Oregon and California* [1845])

which stimulated a great deal of influence in the Oregon movement

but his ill-conceived guidebook was so inaccurate that it doomed the Donner-Reed Party as they attempted to reach California [1846])

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<sup>90</sup> Joseph Schafer, *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, P. 162.

## FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET SEEKS PERMISSION TO TRAVEL TO EUROPE

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet returned to St. Louis from Westport -- spring 1843

he believed the needs of the Rocky Mountain natives was so pressing  
that he would travel to Europe to conduct a second “begging tour”  
and to recruit additional reinforcements

Father De Smet numbered his Indian Catholic converts in the thousands

his superior, Father Pierre Verhaegen, granted permission to travel to Europe  
to acquire support for additional efforts in the Rocky Mountain mission

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet named Father Peter De Vos as his replacement  
as the head of the Rocky Mountain Mission

Father De Smet neglected to recognize Father De Vos and Father Nicholas Point had clashed  
several times while they were students at the Jesuit college at Grand Coteau, Louisiana  
Father Point refused to allow the matter to rest

## JOHN C. FREMONT SPLITS HIS EXPEDITION INTO TWO DIVISIONS

Lieutenant Fremont and fifteen men turned south to survey the Kansas River country

Tom Fitzpatrick with the main group of twelve wagons

turned northward and followed the Oregon Trail along the Platte River

## JOHN C. FREMONT SEARCHES FOR A NEW ROUTE ACROSS THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Lieutenant Fremont and his fifteen men searched for a new route through the Rockies

they traveled up the Cache de la Poudre River (Colorado)

when this proved to be a futile effort Fremont turned north to the Sweetwater River  
and crossed the mountains using South Pass

Fremont and his party reunited with Tom Fitzpatrick and the main group of twelve wagons  
at Fort St. Vrains, Colorado

there Fitzpatrick again took the main force to the Sweetwater

while Fremont ventured south to the Arkansas River

here Fremont met Christopher “Kit” Carson

due to his celebrated frontier skills Carson was invited along to serve as a guide

Fremont’s orders to Carson, a model of brevity, directed him

simply to survey the Platte and Sweetwater rivers as far as South Pass

## GREAT MIGRATION GETS A LATE START DUE TO THE LATE ARRIVAL OF SPRING

Weather conditions were especially bad all across America -- 1843

economic depression added to the misery being experienced across the nation  
Some 200 families, an estimated 700 to 1,000 emigrants in 120 wagons and 5,000 head of livestock  
completed final preparations in a massive undertaking  
They set out from Westport, (Kansas City, Missouri) following the Santa Fe Trail -- May 22, 1843  
they traveled to where the Oregon Trail became a wagon road

#### GREAT MIGRATION IS UNDER WAY

Jesse Applegate noted his fellow travelers as they journeyed toward the Kansas River: **“No other race of men with means at their command would undertake so great a journey--none save those could successfully perform it with no previous preparation, relying only on the fertility of their invention to devise the means to overcome each danger and difficulty as it arose.... They have undertaken to perform, with slow-moving oxen, a journey of two thousand miles. The way lies over trackless wastes, wide and deep rivers, rugged and lofty mountains, and is beset with hostile savages. Yet...they are always found ready and equal to the occasion, and always conquerors. May we not call men of destiny?”**<sup>91</sup>

#### MAYHEM REIGNS ON THE TRAIL

Each morning as they traveled along the Santa Fe Trail toward the Kansas River  
there was competitive jockeying of wagons for less dusty positions  
at the front of the sprawling caravan  
Children became lost and possessions became mixed in the daily unpacking and repacking  
livestock unbroken to the trail ran back to Westport -- or just ran  
Rules of order the pioneers had been quick to vote into effect they were equally quick to ignore  
enthusiastic men wasted their animals' strength and risked their wagons  
in exhilarating races across the prairies  
there were endless arguments over wood and over watering holes -- tempers flared  
belligerent individuals, bent on proving their manhood, engaged in rowdy fist fights  
each night there were struggles for preferred campsites

#### SHAKEDOWN PORTION OF THE GREAT MIGRATION TRIP COMES TO AN END

After traveling the Santa Fe Trail about sixty-six miles the Great Migration  
reached the swollen Kansas River (near the site of present Topeka, Kansas)  
this was where the Oregon Trail branched away from the Santa Fe Trail  
here the Great Migration caught up with the Catholic missionaries

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<sup>91</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 227.



Fathers Peter DeVos and Adrian Hoeken accompanied by Brother Michael McGean  
it was decided the Catholics would join the emigrants  
Finding the ford (crossing) of the river too swift for swimming, the emigrants built two crude boats  
they laid a platform of poles between them  
one by one the wagons were rolled by hand onto the improvised ferry  
which was then hauled across the river by gangs of chanting men pulling on ropes

#### GREAT MIGRATION ELECTS OFFICERS

At Elm Grove on the far bank of the Kansas River, in what became a tradition of the trail,  
pioneers gathered to elect a permanent captain, a sergeant, and a council of ten  
Democracy in its most primitive form was reflected in the voting  
candidates for the council of ten made their promises -- then lined up abreast across the open plain  
at a given signal they walked off as a group  
voting consisted of having each man's supporters falling in behind him to form a kind of tail  
to increase enthusiasm, and perhaps to confuse the vote counters,  
these lines pranced and serpentine with loud shouts through the camp  
eventually the whole election degenerated into a good-natured uproar  
Meantime, in more traditional election  
young Peter Hardeman Burnet(t) who kept a diary during the journey, was elected captain  
flamboyant James W. Nesmith was elected orderly sergeant

#### ORDERLY SERGEANT JAMES W. NESMITH RECORDS THE SCENE

Nesmith, one of the pioneers of the Great Migration wrote an account of the beginning of the journey:

**“Mr. Burnett, or as he was more familiarly styled, "Pete," was called upon for a speech. Mounting a log the glib-tongued orator delivered a glowing florid address. He commenced by showing his audience that the then western tier of states and territories were crowded with a redundant population, who had not sufficient elbow room for the expansion of their enterprise and genius, and it was a duty they owed to themselves and posterity to strike out in search of a more expanded field and a more genial climate, where the soil yielded the richest return for the slightest amount of cultivation,--where the trees were loaded with perennial fruit,--and where a good substitute for bread, called La Camash, grew in the ground; where salmon and other fish crowded the streams; and where the principal labour of the settlers would be confined to keeping their gardens free from the inroads of buffalo, elk, deer, and wild turkeys. He appealed to our patriotism by picturing forth the glorious empire we should establish upon the shores of the Pacific,--how with our trusty rifles we should drive out the British usurpers who claimed the soil, and defend the**

country from the avarice and pretensions of the British Lion,--and how posterity would honor us for placing the fairest portion of the land under the Stars and Stripes.... Other speeches were made full of glowing descriptions of the fair land of promise, the far-away Oregon,, which no one in the assemblage had ever seen, and about which not ore than half a dozen had ever read any account. After the election of Mr. Burnett as captain, and other necessary officers, the meeting, as motley and primitive a one as ever assembled, adjourned with ‘three cheers’ for Captain Burnett and Oregon.”<sup>92</sup>

#### GREAT MIGRATION LEAVES ELM GROVE ON THE KANSAS RIVER

Caravan was scarcely under way again when violent quarrels broke out  
between those emigrants who owned sizable herds of livestock  
and those who possessed only a cow or two for milk  
men without cattle protested the slowness of the herds by day  
and refused to help guard their fellow travelers’ animals at night  
Peter Burnett was unable to resolve the issue between the two warring factions  
plagued by his own ill-health he resigned as captain  
although he had contributed a great deal to get the company together  
William Martin replaced Burnett as captain (until the California cut-off at Fort Hall was reached)

#### GREAT MIGRATION CROSSES KANSAS

Traveling Northwestward along the bank of the Kansas River the days were a storybook adventure  
a loose, winding line over rolling hills sprinkled with wild flowers  
gently rolling Kansas countryside was usually unimpeded  
except where streams had cut steep banks and there a passage could be made  
with a lot of shovel work to cut down the banks  
or the travelers could find an already established crossing  
occasionally there were Indians to stare at  
More spectacular were the violent thunderstorms  
such rain as one later emigrant put it, that a man could not lie down for fear of drowning  
or stand up for fear of being struck by lightening  
While women struggled with collapsed tents, soaked cooking fires and crying children,  
men rode wildly about involved with the more exciting work of preventing stampedes

#### OREGON CITY BECOMES A SIGNIFICANT SETTLEMENT IN OREGON

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<sup>92</sup> William Denison Lyman, *The Columbia River*, P. 169.

Robert Moore in partnership with Dr. John McLoughlin began a ferryboat service between Moore's settlement at Robin's Nest (later called Linn City) and the landing at 3<sup>rd</sup> Street in Oregon City from Robin's Nest an Indian trail (later Rosemont Road) ran up hill and into the Tualatin Valley Francis Pettygrove with his brother-in-law and Philip Foster had been partners in a lumber business and stores in Maine they sold their interests in the companies and sailed as far as Hawaii arrangements were made to have inventory valued at \$1,146.05 sent to Oregon before they arrived in Oregon City aboard the sailing ship *Fama* Pettygrove and Foster paid Dr. McLoughlin a token fee for one of his Oregon City building lots at the foot of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street opposite the ferryboat landing two-story building was constructed which housed the Pettygrove and Foster families upstairs a store occupied the bottom floor -- late May 1843 Walter Pomeroy also purchased a town lot from Dr. McLoughlin and along with Philip Foster contracted with the Chief Factor to build a flour mill (wheat ground more finely than a grist mill) on the island above the falls

#### PORTLAND, OREGON RECEIVES TWO BUSINESS FOUNDERS

Captain John Couch had been employed by the Massachusetts shipping firm owned by the family of Congressman Caleb Cushing (Couch had opened a general store in Oregon City managed by George LeBreton [1842]) Couch, himself, settled at a place known as "the clearing" (today's Portland) -- 1843 at the mouth of the Willamette River halfway between Fort Vancouver and Oregon City while his mercantile business operated in Oregon City (for five years) William Overton saw great commercial potential for "the clearing" --1843 but lacked the funds required (25¢) to file a land claim with the Provisional Government

#### PETER SKENE OGDEN DELIVERS FURS TO FORT VANCOUVER

Ogden traveled six months of the year going to and fro from Fort Vancouver to the outposts he used as many as nine boats with sixty *voyageurs* and always carried a number of passengers Hudson's Bay Company's Chief Trader Ogden brought down the yearly consignment of \$250,000 worth of furs from Stuart's Lake to Fort Vancouver -- summer 1843

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET SAILS TO EUROPE

Father De Smet departed from New York bound for Europe -- June 7, 1843

on this trip, he will plead, beg and collect money while journeying through  
Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Italy, Spain and Germany  
in Rome when Father De Smet was introduced Pope Gregory XVI rose from his throne  
and clasp the humble missionary in his arms  
American bishops were convinced that Father De Smet was the right man  
to be appointed bishop for the whole of Oregon  
but the priest did not want to leave his beloved natives in the Rocky Mountains  
De Smet suggested the honored position be given to Father Francis Blanchet

#### AMERICAN FINANCIER ASA WHITNEY DREAMS OF A TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROAD

Since [1830] pamphleteers had unsuccessfully championed construction of a transcontinental railroad

New York businessman Asa Whitney had traveled in the Orient

he acquired the idea of developing the China trade

Whitney believed that linking the east and west coasts of North America

would unlock the commercial potential of China

while eliminating long and dangerous ocean journeys around Cape Horn

Whitney thought a transcontinental railway could become the corridor of exchange

between Europe and Asia placing America at the center of the world's attention financially

this would give America a stupendous commercial advantage over Europe

as the entire continent would open itself to be settled by the throngs of pioneers

and, he thought, the natives of those vast lands would join the American family

Asa Whitney asked the United States government for a land grant belt sixty miles wide

from Lake Michigan to the Columbia River or Puget Sound

whichever became the final destination -- 1843

Whitney conducted a very active campaign for this scheme:

- he issued pamphlets;

- he solicited favorable resolutions from companies, and state legislatures;

- he made a vigorous canvass of Washington City and informed congressmen: **"If I can get the**

**land grants, I can build the road. In a few months after the grant the work shall be commenced and far sooner than I had dared to hope it can be completed, when we shall have the whole world tributary to us -- when the commerce of the whole world shall be tumbled into our lap."**<sup>93</sup>

#### LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE OF NINE PASSES THE [1843] ORGANIC LAWS OF OREGON

Nine member Legislative Committee chaired by Robert Moore convened its final meeting

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<sup>93</sup> Joseph Schafer, *A History of the Pacific Northwest*. P. 233.

at the Champoege Methodist mission's granary -- June 27, 1843

George W. LeBreton once again served as secretary

Nine-member Legislative Committee had composed the [1843] Organic Laws of Oregon although not a formal constitution, the document outlined the laws of the Provisional Government Organic Laws of Oregon opened with a Preamble

Section One included the Fourteenth Section of the [1789] Northwest Ordinance

this guaranteed freedom of worship, right to a trial by jury, right of habeas corpus

(protection from illegal restraint) and provided **“schools and the means of Education**

**shall forever be encouraged”**

there were minor modifications in the Northwest Ordinance including **“There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in said territory, otherwise than for the punishment of crimes whereof the party shall have been duly convicted.”**

Section Two had eighteen articles dealing with the structure of the Provisional Government

Articles 1-4 covered the elections of officers

suffrage was restricted to **“Every free white male descendant of a white man, over twenty-one years of age, who was an inhabitant at the time of the organization of the government, and all emigrants of such description after six months' residence.”**

this allowed for participation by French-Canadians and their Metis children

Articles 5-7 created the three bodies of government:

*Executive Committee:* **“Executive power was vested in an executive committee of three, to be elected at the annual election, with authority to pardon and reprieve, to call out the military force of the territory, to see that the laws are faithfully executed, and to recommend laws to the Legislative Committee. Two of their number constituted a quorum.”**

*Legislative Committee* composed of a nine member unicameral (single chamber) Council whose members were to be elected annually by district in proportion to the population excluding Indians

Legislative Council was to meet twice a year ([une and December]

sessions of the Council should not exceed six days

*Judiciary* was composed of:

- Supreme Court, consisting of a Supreme Judge and two Justices of the Peace;
- Probate Court and Justice's Court

whose jurisdiction, both to hear cases and to hear appeals, were defined and limited

Articles 8-11 established and defined the offices of *Recorder* and *Treasurer*

Articles 12-15 outlined what [1839] Iowa Territorial Laws were adopted

land claims were to be made available: **“No individual shall be allowed to hold a claim of more than one square mile, or 640 acres in a square or oblong form, according to the natural situation of the premises; nor shall any individual be able to hold more than one claim at the same time. Any person complying with the provisions of these ordinances shall be entitled to the same process as in other cases provided by law. No person shall be entitled to hold such a claim upon city or town lots, extensive water privileges, or other situations necessary for the transaction of mercantile or manufacturing operations: *Provided*, that nothing in these laws shall be so construed as to affect any claim of any mission of a religious character made prior to this time, of extent not more than six miles square.”**

purpose of these discriminatory clauses was to claim

much of Dr. John McLoughlin’s land in Oregon City

title to 23,040 acres of Dr. McLoughlin’s claim was given to the Methodist missions

and to the Methodist missionaries who could each claim 640 acres

further, the law forbid claiming **“extensive water privileges, and other sites needed for transaction of mercantile or manufacturing operations”**

Article 16 regulated the Supreme Court sessions with two sessions held annually

Article 17 detailed the system of marriage with parental consent required

for participants under the age of twenty-one

women had to be at least fourteen years old and men sixteen

it cost \$1 to marry and 50¢ to record the marriage

Section Three divided what was incorrectly identified as “Oregon Territory” into four districts:

care was taken to adopt language and designate as a north border

the “Northern boundary of the United States”

(it is clear that the government recognized the idea that the Columbia River

might probably be the boundary line between the United States and Great Britain)

First District (Northwest corner) to be called the Twality District, comprised all the country

bounded on the North by the Russian-America line (54° 40’ north latitude)

bounded on the South by the Yamhill River (in today’s Oregon)

bounded on the West by the Pacific Ocean

bounded on the East by an invisible line running from Russian-America

through Puget Sound to the Willamette River all the way to the Yamhill River

(Twality District later decreased in size and became known as today’s Columbia County)

Second District (Southwest corner) to be called the Yamhill District, embraced all the country

bounded on the North by the Yamhill River

bounded on the South by the United States and California line (42° north latitude)

bounded on the West by the Pacific Ocean

bounded on the East by the Willamette River

(Yamhill County greatly altered in size and shape remains today)

Third District (Northeast corner) to be called the Clackamas District (also “Klackamas”)

was bounded on the North by the Yamhill River

bounded on the South by the United States and California line (42° North)

bounded on the West by the Pacific Ocean

bounded on the East by the Willamette River

(Clackamas Counties greatly altered in size and shape remains today)

Fourth District (Southeast corner), to be called the Champooick District was

bounded on the North by the Yamhill River

bounded on the South by the United States and California line (42° North)

bounded on the West by Yamhill District

bounded on the East by the Continental Divide

(Champooick District was also written as “Champoie” pronounced “Cham-poo-ee”

by early pioneers -- it was reduced in size and is today’s Marion County)

two of the Districts, Twality and Clackamas, extended north of the Columbia River

placing the Provisional Government in direct conflict with Hudson’s Bay Company

#### LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE OF NINE COMPLETES THE ORGANIC LAWS OF OREGON

Yet another Memorial to Congress was approved by the Legislative Committee -- June 28, 1843

United States government was informed of the existence of a new government in Oregon

this memorial asked the Polk Administration for naval yards, mail service, land grants,  
military protection and territorial status

what was most significant was that political leaders across the continent were made aware

that an American colony had begun on the shores of the Pacific Ocean

After these two days of meetings the Legislative Committee of Nine had drafted the first

Oregon Provisional Constitution which became known as the “Organic Laws of Oregon”

this initiative to the settlers was to be voted upon [July 5, 1843]

#### DR. WHITMAN OVERTAKES THE GREAT MIGRATION

Whitman and his nephew Perrin did not catch the wagon train until the end of June

when they joined largest single wagon train ever to travel the Oregon Trail -- the Great Migration

They were not universally welcomed

without any worldly possessions, they sponged off other immigrants unabashedly

and earned the annoyance of several of their reluctant hosts  
however, to the caravan's guide mountain man John Gantt and Captain William Martin  
Whitman was worth all the handouts he cost  
Dr. Whitman served the train as scout and medical doctor  
(because of his influence, immigrants eventually drove wagons all the way to the Columbia River  
detractors said it could not be done -- Whitman said he already had done it most of the way)

#### GREAT MIGRATION LEAVES KANSAS AND ENTERS NEBRASKA

Leaving the banks of the Kansas River behind Captain William Martin led his wagon train  
toward the Wakarusa River and on to the Vermillion River both rivers needed to be ferried across  
Traveling northwest mountain man John Gantt piloted the wagons paralleling the Little Blue River

#### GREAT MIGRATION DIVIDED INTO TWO PARTIES

Friction between those driving large herds of animals and those with only few  
resulted in the Great Migration splitting into two columns when the Little Blue River was reached  
sixty-one unburdened wagons were placed under the command of Captain William Martin  
this "light column" moved on ahead with few cattle  
livestock owners with approximately an equal number of wagons  
formed themselves into what they called the "cow column"  
Cow column members elected as their leader a notable figure of Western history: Jesse Applegate  
thousands of head of slow-moving livestock would have to travel more hours per day  
to keep up with the light column

#### JESSIE APPLGATE PROVIDES LEADERSHIP TO THE COW COLUMN

Jesse Applegate was said to be so homely that all of his life he avoided mirrors  
he walked with an effortless, loose-swinging stride  
that enabled him to cover upwards of sixty miles a day when the need arose  
Under Jesse's guidance the unwieldy cow column plodded safely along  
(on a far longer and in many respects a far more amazing march than the legendary cattle drives  
made years later by the boastful trail herders of Texas)  
Cow column tried to (and did) stay close enough to the light column  
so that the parties could render mutual aid in the event of need

#### JESSE APPLGATE EXPLAINS DIVIDING THE GREAT MIGRATION INTO COLUMNS

Years after the arrival of the Great Migration in Oregon Jesse Applegate wrote his memoirs



he explained the need to divide the wagon train into two columns: **“Some of the immigrants had only their teams, while others had large herds in addition which must share the pastures and be guarded and driven by the whole body. Those not encumbered with or having but few loose cattle attached themselves to the light column, those having more than four or five cows had of necessity to join the heavy or cow column. Hence the cow column, being much larger than the other and much encumbered with its large herds, had to use greater exertion and observe a more rigid discipline to keep pace with the more agile escort. It is with the cow column that I propose to journey with the reader for a single day. The emigrants first organized and attempted to travel in one body, but it was soon found that no progress could be made with a body so cumbrous, and as yet so averse to all discipline. And at a crossing of the ‘Big Blue’ [River] it divided into two columns, which traveled in supporting distance of each other as far as Independence Rock on the Sweetwater.**

**From this point, all danger from Indians being over, the emigrants separated into small parties better suited to the narrow mountain paths and small pastures in their front.”<sup>94</sup>**

#### NEBRASKA IS CROSSED BY THE GREAT MIGRATION

Platte River provided a corridor of easy going running almost due west

(today’s Interstate 80 and U.S. Highway 30 approximate the route)

Platte River provided access to water, grass, buffalo and buffalo chips for fuel

this water was silty and bad tasting but it could be used if no other water was available

letting the water sit in a bucket for an hour or so

or stirring in ¼-cup of cornmeal allowed most of the silt to settle out

(because of the Platte’s brackish water the preferred camping spots were located

along the many fresh water streams that drained into the Platte

or one of the occasional fresh water spring found along the way

these preferred camping spots became sources of cholera in the epidemic years [1849–1855]

as many thousands of people used the same camping spots

with essentially no sewage facilities or adequate sewage treatment

one of the effects of cholera is acute diarrhea which contaminated even more water

thousands of travelers on the combined California, Oregon, and Mormon trails

succumbed to cholera

most were buried in unmarked graves in Kansas, Nebraska and Wyoming)

#### CAMP LIFE WITH THE COW COLUMN AS REPORTED BY JESSE APPLGATE

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<sup>94</sup> Jesse Applegate, *A Day on the Oregon Trail*, Transactions of the Oregon Pioneer Association.

In his memoirs Jessie wrote of a typical day traveling with the cow column to Oregon:

**“It is four o'clock A.M.; the sentinels on duty have discharged their rifles--the signal that the hours of sleep are over--and every wagon and tent is pouring forth its night tenants, and slow-kindling smokes begin largely to rise and float away in the morning air. Sixty men start from the corral, spreading as they make through the vast herd of cattle and horses that make a semicircle around the encampment, the most distant perhaps two miles away.**

**“The herders pass to the extreme verge and carefully examine for trails beyond, to see that none of the animals have strayed or been stolen during the night. This morning no trails led beyond the outside animals in sight, and by 5 o'clock the herders begin to contract the great, moving circle, and the well-trained animals moved slowly towards camp, clipping here and there a thistle or a tempting bunch of grass on the way. In about an hour five thousand animals are close up to the encampment, and the teamsters are busy selecting their teams and driving them inside the corral to be yoked. The corral is a circle one hundred yards deep, formed with wagons connected strongly with each other; the wagon in the rear being connected with the wagon in front by its tongue and ox chains. It is a strong barrier that the most vicious ox cannot break, and in case of an attack of the Sioux would be no contemptible intrenchment [sic].**

**“From 6 to 7 o'clock is a busy time; breakfast is to be eaten, the tents struck, the wagons loaded and the teams yoked and brought up in readiness to be attached to their respective wagons. All know when, at 7 o'clock, the signal to march sounds, that those not ready to take their proper places in the line of march must fall into the dusty rear for the day.**

**“There are sixty wagons. They have been divided into fifteen divisions or platoons of four wagons each, and each platoon is entitled to lead in its turn. The leading platoon today will be the rear one tomorrow, and will bring up the rear unless some teamster, through indolence or negligence, has lost his place in the line, and is condemned to that uncomfortable post. It is within ten minutes of seven; the corral but now a strong barricade is everywhere broken, the teams being attached to the wagons. The women and children have taken their places in them. The pilot [a (frontiersman) who has passed his life on the verge of civilization and has been chosen to the post of leader from his knowledge of the savage and his experience in travel through roadless waste], stands ready, in the midst of his pioneers and aids, to mount and lead the way. Ten or fifteen young men, not today on duty, form another cluster. They are ready to start on a buffalo hunt, are well mounted and well armed, as they need be, for the unfriendly Sioux have driven the buffalo out of the Platte, and the hunters must ride fifteen or twenty miles to reach them. The cow drivers are hastening, as they get ready, to the rear of their charge, to collect and prepare them for the day's march.**

**“It is on the stroke of seven; the rush to and fro, the cracking of whips, the loud command to oxen, and what seemed to be the inextricable confusion of the last ten minutes has ceased.**

Fortunately every one [sic] has been found and every teamster is at his post. The clear notes of a trumpet sound in the front; the pilot and his guards mount their horses; the leading divisions of the wagons move out of the encampment, and take up the line of march; the rest fall into their places with the precision of clock work, until the spot so lately full of life sinks back into that solitude that seems to reign over the broad plain and rushing river as the caravan draws its lazy length towards the distant El Dorado [a mythical place of abundant wealth]. It is with the hunters we shall briskly canter towards the bold but smooth and grassy bluffs that bound the broad valley, for we are not yet in sight of the grander but less beautiful scenery [of Chimney Rock, Court House and other bluffs, so nearly resembling giant castles and palaces], made by the passage of the Platte through the highlands near Laramie. We have been traveling briskly for more than an hour. We have reached the top of the bluff, and now have turned to view the wonderful panorama spread before us. To those who have not been on the Platte, my powers of description are wholly inadequate to convey an idea of the vast extent and grandeur of the picture, and the rare beauty and distinctness of the detail. No haze or fog obscures objects in the pure and transparent atmosphere of this lofty region. To those accustomed only to the murky air of the seaboard, no correct judgment of distance can be formed by sight, and objects which they think they can reach in a two hours' walk may be a day's travel away; and though the evening air is a better conductor of sound, on the high plain during the day the report of the loudest rifle sounds little louder than the bursting of a cap; and while the report can be heard but a few hundred yards, the smoke of the discharge may be seen for miles. So extended is the view from the bluff on which the hunters stand, that the broad river glowing under the morning sun like a sheet of silver, and the broader emerald valley that borders it, stretch away in the distance until they narrow at almost two points in the horizon, and when first seen, the vast pile of the Wind River Mountains though hundreds of miles away, looks clear and distinct as a white cottage on the plain.

“We are a full six miles away from the line of march; though everything is dwarfed by distance, it is seen distinctly. The caravan has been about two hours in motion and is now as widely extended as a prudent regard for safety will permit. First, near the bank of the shining river is a company of horsemen; they seem to have found an obstruction, for the main body has halted while three or four ride rapidly along the bank of the creek or slough. They are hunting a favorable crossing for the wagons; while we look they have succeeded; it has apparently required no work to make it passable, for all but one of the party have passed on, and he has raised a flag, no doubt a signal to the wagons to steer their course to where he stands. The leading teamster sees him; though he is yet two miles off, and steers his course directly towards him, all the wagons following in his track. They form a line three-quarters of a mile in length; some of the teamsters ride upon the front of their wagons, some march beside their wagons; scattered along the line companies of women are taking exercise

on foot; they gather bouquets of rare and beautiful flowers that line the way; near them stalks a stately greyhound, or an Irish wolf dog, apparently proud of keeping watch and ward over his master's wife and children. Next comes a band of horses; two or three men or boys follow them, the docile and sagacious [shrewd] animals scarce needing this attention, for they have learned to follow in the rear of the wagons, and know that at noon they will be allowed to graze and rest. Their knowledge of time seems as accurate as of the place they are to occupy in the line, and even a full-blown thistle will scarce tempt them to straggle or halt until the dinner hour has arrived. Not so with the large herd of horned beasts that bring up the rear; lazy, selfish and unsocial, it has been a task to get them in motion, the strong always ready to domineer over the weak, halt in the front and forbid the weak to pass them. They seem to move only in the fear of the driver's whip; though in the morning, full of repletion, they have not been driven an hour before their hunger and thirst seem to indicate a fast of days' duration. Through all the long day their greed is never satisfied, nor their thirst quenched, nor is there a moment of relaxation of the tedious and vexatious labors of their drivers, although to all others the march furnishes some season of relaxation or enjoyment. For the cow-drivers there is none.

“But from the standpoint of the hunters, the vexations are not apparent; the crack of whips and loud abnegations [objections] are lost in the distances. Nothing of the moving panorama, smooth and orderly as it appears, has more attractions for the eye than the vast square column in which all colors are mingled, moving here slowly and there briskly, as impelled by horsemen riding furiously in front and rear.

“But the picture in its grandeur, it's wonderful mingling of colors and distinctness of detail, is forgotten in contemplation of the singular people who give it life and animation. No other race of men with the means at their command would undertake so great a journey, none save these could successfully perform it, with no previous preparation, relying only on the fertility of their own invention as it arose. They have undertaken to perform with slow-moving oxen a journey a journey of two thousand miles. The way lies over trackless wastes, wide and deep rivers, ragged and lofty mountains, and is beset with hostile savages. Yet, whether it were a deep river with no tree upon its banks, a rugged defile where even a loose horse could not pass, a hill too steep for him to climb, or a threatened attack of an enemy, they are always found ready and equal to the occasion, and always conquerors. May we not call them men of destiny? They are people changed in no essential particulars from their ancestors, who have followed closely on the footsteps of the receding savage, from the Atlantic seaboard to the great Valley of the Mississippi.

“But while we have been gazing at the picture in the valley, the hunters have been examining the high plain in the other direction. Some dark moving objects have been discovered in the distance, and all are closely watching them to discover what they are, for in the atmosphere of the plains a

flock of crows marching miles away, or a band of buffaloes or Indians at ten times the distance look alike, and many ludicrous [ridiculous] mistakes occur. But these are buffaloes, for two have struck their heads together and are, alternately, pushing each other back. The hunters mount and away in pursuit, and I, a poor cow-driver, must hurry back to my daily toil, and take a scolding from my fellow herders for so long playing truant.

“The pilot, by measuring the ground and timing the speed of the wagons and the walk of his horses, had determined the rate of each, so as to enable him to select the nooning place, as nearly as the requisite grass and water can be had at the end of five hours’ travel of the wagons. Today, the ground being favorable, little time has been lost in preparing the road, so that he and his pioneers are at the nooning place an hour in advance of the wagons, which time is spent in preparing convenient watering places for the animals, and digging little wells near the bank of the Platte, as the teams are not unyoked, but simply turned loose from the wagons, a corral is not formed at noon, but the wagons are drawn up in columns, four abreast, the leading wagon of each platoon on the left, the platoons being formed with that in view. This brings friends together at noon as well as at night.

“Today an extra session of the council is being held, to settle a dispute that does not admit of delay, between a proprietor and a young man who has undertaken to do a man’s service on the journey for bed and board. Many such engagements exist, and much interest is taken in the manner in which this high court, from which there is no appeal, will define the rights of each party in such engagements. The council was a high court in the most exalted sense. It was a senate composed of the ablest and most respected fathers of the emigration. It exercised both legislative and judicial powers, and its laws and decisions proved it equal and worthy of the high trust reposed on it. Its sessions were usually held on days when the caravan was not moving. It first took the state of the little commonwealth into consideration; revised or repeated rules defective or obsolete, and enacted such others as the exigencies seemed to require. The common weal [happiness and safety of everyone] being cared for, it next resolved itself into a court to hear and settle private disputes and grievances. The offender and the aggrieved appeared before it; witnesses were examined, and the parties were heard by themselves and sometimes by counsel. The judges being thus made fully acquainted with the case, and being in no way influenced or cramped by technicalities, decided all cases according to their merits. There was but little use for lawyers before this court, for no plea was entertained which was calculated to hinder or defeat the ends of justice. Many of these judges have since won honors in higher spheres. They have aided to establish on the broad basis of right and universal liberty two pillars of our great Republic in the Occident [United States]. Some of the young men who appeared before them as advocates have themselves sat upon the highest judicial

tribunals, commanded armies, been governors of states and taken high position in the senate of the nation.

“It is now one o'clock; the bugle has sounded and the caravan has resumed its westward journey. It is in the same order, but the evening is far less animated than the morning march; a drowsiness has fallen apparently on man and beast; teamsters drop asleep on their perches and even when walking by their teams, and the words of command are now addressed to the slowly creeping oxen in the soft tenor of women or the piping treble of children, while the snores of the teamsters make a droning accompaniment. But a little incident breaks the monotony of the march. An emigrant's wife, whose state of health has caused Doctor Whitman to travel near the wagon for the day, is now taken with violent illness. The Doctor has had the wagon driven out of the line, a tent pitched and a fire kindled. Many conjectures are hazarded in regard to this mysterious proceeding, and as to why this lone wagon is to be left behind. And we too must leave it, hasten to the front and note the proceedings, for the sun is now getting low in the west and at length the painstaking pilot is standing ready to conduct the train in the circle which he has previously measured and marked out, which is to form the invariable fortification for the night. The leading wagons follow him so nearly around the circle that but a wagon length separates them. Each wagon follows in its track, the rear closing on the front, until its tongue and ox-chains will perfectly reach from one to the other, and so accurate the measure and perfect the practice, that the hindmost wagon of the train always precisely closes the gateway, as each wagon is brought into position. It is dropped from its team [the teams being inside the circle], the team unyoked and the yokes and chains are used to connect the wagon strongly with that in its front. Within ten minutes from the time the leading wagon halted, the barricade is formed, the teams unyoked and driven out to pasture. Every one is busy preparing fires of buffalo chips to cook the evening meal, pitching tents and otherwise preparing for the night. There are anxious watchers for the absent wagon, for there are many matrons who may be afflicted like its inmate before the journey is over; and they fear the strange and startling practice of this Oregon doctor will be dangerous. But as the sun goes down the absent wagon rolls into camp, the bright, speaking face and cheery look of the doctor, who rides in advance, declare without words that all is well, and both mother and child are comfortable. I would fain now and here pay a passing tribute to that noble and devoted man, Doctor Whitman. I will obtrude no other name upon the reader, nor would I his were he of our party or even living, but his stay with us was transient, though the good he did was permanent, and he has long since died at his post.

“From the time he joined us on the Platte until he left us at Fort Hall, his great experience and indomitable energy were of priceless value to the migrating column. His constant advice, which we knew was based upon a knowledge of the road before us, was ‘Travel, travel, TRAVEL; nothing else will take you to the end of your journey; nothing is wise that does not help you along; nothing is

good for you that causes a moment's delay.' His great authority as a physician and complete success in the case above referred to, saved us many prolonged and perhaps ruinous delays from similar causes, and it is no disparagement to others to say that to no other individual are the emigrants of 1843 so much indebted for the successful conclusion of their journey as to Dr. Marcus Whitman.

"All able to bear arms in the party have been formed into three companies, and each of these into four watches; every third night it is the duty of one of these companies to keep watch and ward over the camp, and it is so arranged that each watch takes its turn of guard duty through the different watches of the night. Those forming the first watch tonight will be second on duty, then third and fourth, which brings them through all the watches of the night. They begin at 8 o'clock P.M., and end at 4 o'clock A.M.

"It is not yet 8 o'clock when the first watch is to be set; the evening meal is just over, and the corral now free from the intrusion of cattle or horses, groups of children are scattered over it. The larger are taking a game of romps; 'the wee toddling things' are being taught the great achievement that distinguishes man from the lower animals. Before a tent near the river a violin makes lively music, and some youths and maidens have improvised a dance upon the green; in another quarter a flute gives its mellow and melancholy notes to the still night air, which, as they float away over the quiet river, seem a lament for the past rather than a hope for the future. It has been a prosperous day; more than twenty miles have been accomplished of the great journey. The encampment is a good one; one of the causes that threatened much future delay has just been removed by the skill and energy of that 'good angel' of the emigrants, Doctor Whitman, and it has lifted a load from the hearts of the elders. Many of these are assembled around the good doctor at the tent of the pilot [which is his home for the time being], and are giving grave attention to his wise and energetic counsel. The care-worn pilot sits aloof, quietly smoking his pipe, for he knows the brave doctor is 'strengthening his hands.'

"But time passes; the watch is set for the night; the council of old men has broken up, and each has returned to his own quarter; the flute whispered its last lament to the deepening night; the violin is silent, and the dancers have dispersed; enamored youth have whispered a tender 'good night' in the ear of blushing maidens, or stolen a kiss from the lips of some future bride-for Cupid here, as elsewhere, has been busy bringing together congenial hearts, and among these simple people he alone is consulted in forming the marriage tie. Even the doctor and the pilot have finished their confidential interview and have separated for the night. All is hushed and repose from the fatigues of the day, save the vigilant guard and the wakeful leader, who still has cares upon his mind that forbid sleep. He hears the 10 o'clock relief taking post and the 'all well' report of the returned guard; the night deepens, yet he seeks not the needed repose. At length a sentinel hurries to him with the welcome report that a party is approaching--as yet too far away for its character to be

determined, and he instantly hurries out in the direction in which it was seen. This he does both from inclination and duty, for in times past the camp had been unnecessarily alarmed by timid or inexperienced sentinels, causing much confusion and fright amongst women and children, and it had been a rule that all extraordinary incidents of the night should be reported directly to the pilot, who alone had the authority to call out the military strength of the column, or of so much of it was in his judgment necessary to prevent a stampede or repel an enemy. Tonight he is at no loss to determine that the approaching party are our missing hunters, and that they have met with success, and he only waits until some further signal he can know that no ill has happened to them. This is not long wanting. He does not even await their arrival, but the last care of the day being removed, and the last duty performed, he too seeks the rest that will enable him to go through the same routine tomorrow. But here I leave him, for my task is also done, and unlike his, it is to be repeated no more.”<sup>95</sup>

#### GREAT MIGRATION REACHES THE BRANCH OF THE PLATTE RIVER

Following the Platte River the Great Migration reached to location where the South Platte River branched away from the main stream (at today’s city of North Platte, Nebraska)  
they found a muddy brown flood rolling down the southern branch which they had to cross  
Captain William Martin’s light column traveling in advance paused in dismay  
Dr. Marcus Whitman inspirited everyone by successfully delivering a baby  
Jesse Applegate’s cow column caught up and there was a tangle of dejection  
Several buffalo were killed and boats were improvised by stretching the green hides  
across dismantled wagon boxes  
empty wagons were drawn into the stream at an angle  
so that the current would not strike the wheels broadside  
these clumsy craft were loaded with goods and manhandled through the muddy river  
by men wielding hand-hewn oars and pulling on ropes  
men wading or swimming downstream of each yoke of oxen pounded the dumb, frightened beasts  
back into line whenever they threatened to swing around  
it took five days to complete the crossing of the South Platte River

#### GREAT MIGRATION ENTERS THE NORTH PLATTE RIVER VALLEY

After crossing the muddy South Platte River the Oregon Trail followed the North Platte River  
into the North Platte Valley  
It took great effort to struggle through the deep-gullied sand hills to reach

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<sup>95</sup> Jesse Applegate, *The Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* Vol. 1, No. 4 (Dec., 1900), P. 371-383.



what appeared (to the as yet uninitiated travelers) as the terrifying precipices of Ash Hollow along the North Platte River with its steep descent down "Windlass Hill"

where the steep twenty-five-degree downward angle ran for about 300 feet

wagons were roped to trees and a windlass (wrench) was used to lower them (emigrants did not use the name Windlass Hill and its source remains unknown) they continued on past the ancient, eroded sights of Courthouse Rock and Jailhouse Rock, Chimney Rock and Scott's Bluff

Buffalo disappeared from existence -- some said the Sioux Indians had driven the herds out of reach others said, with bitter anti-British curses, that Sir William Stewart's party of sportsmen traveling just ahead of Great Migration had frightened all but a few beasts away from the trail at any rate there was no fresh meat extravagant cooks, not two weeks before, had thrown away bacon rind and leftover biscuits now they counted the days ahead and hoarded every scrap of food

#### STEPHEN MEEK GUIDES SEVERAL PIONEERS TO CALIFORNIA

Several of those Oregon residents were dissatisfied with Oregon and decided to go to California traveling over the Old Hudson's Bay Company trail

When they reached the Rogue River Valley they met Captain Joe Walker and others driving two thousand head of cattle north to the Willamette Valley

several of Meek's traveling companions decided to return to Oregon

Joseph Gale and his party guided by Captain Joe Walker arrived in the Willamette Valley with his herd intact after a long and hard if relatively uneventful seventy-five day drive their arrival of such a large number of animals

broke the Hudson's Bay Company cattle monopoly

Stephen Meek saw the remaining travelers to Sutter's Fort -- summer 1843

Meek then continued alone to Monterey, California

(he stayed the winter in Monterey, Meek before continuing north to Bodega Bay

here he met Captain Smith with the trading brig *George and Henry* out of Baltimore

who persuaded Meek to start on a voyage with him around the world

but he only got to New York before a change of heart took Meek home to Virginia)

#### GREAT MIGRATION CROSSED FROM (NEBRASKA) TO (WYOMING)

Members of the Great Migration continued to follow the North Platte River

there was no time to rest -- time was an enemy

they had to dry out their gear and stock, load up and go on

they had left Missouri late and they were averaging less than fifteen miles a day  
concerns mounted:

- would the animals last?
- would the onrushing winter arrive before they reached Oregon?

Fort John (later Fort Laramie) at the confluence of the Laramie and North Platte rivers was reached  
(in today's eastern Wyoming) -- but there was only time for a brief pause

Fort Laramie and adjacent posts provided opportunities:

- to buy skimpy supplies at outrageous prices,
- to tighten loose wagon tires,
- to hammer bent wagon parts back into place
- but it did not provide time for rest

Asa L. Lovejoy, Dr. Marcus Whitman's traveling companion from the year before [1842],  
was waiting there and joined with Dr. Whitman on his return to Waiilatpu

#### GREAT MIGRATION ARRIVES AT THE SWEETWATER RIVER (WYOMING)

Believing the Indian danger was past, the caravan broke into even more fragments  
partly because of accumulated cabin fever

partly because smaller groups would have better luck

finding desperately needed game and pasture for the animals

North Platte River converged with the Sweetwater River (at today's Casper, Wyoming)

they followed the west flowing waters of the Sweetwater

Independence Rock was passed

(so named because later caravans usually reached here about the Fourth of July)

nine crossings of the crooked Sweetwater River were necessary as the stream flowed

out of the Wind River Range of the Rocky Mountains

Unalterable passage of time forced the Great Migration to press on toward Fort Hall (Idaho)

#### CINCINNATI, OHIO HOLDS A CONVENTION IN SUPPORT OF AMERICANS IN OREGON

Interest regarding the plight of Oregon settlers was growing rapidly across the nation

as was American agitation for occupation and the protection of laws

An idea for a convention to demonstrate this concern originated at Columbus, Ohio

local meetings were held throughout the Mississippi River Valley

which resulted in the calling of the Oregon Convention at Cincinnati

Cincinnati Convention opened -- July 3, 1843

it was attended by nearly one hundred delegates from across the United States

who represented Americans' interest in United States occupation of Oregon  
zealots passed a resolution demanding the government immediately occupy Oregon  
and demanded action regarding the Oregon international boundary even if it brought on war

#### INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Settlers gathered to hear an address by Rev. Gustavus Hines -- July 4, 1843  
also speeches for and against the proposals of the nine member Legislative Committee  
were given  
those who attended camped on the ground for the night at Champoeg

#### CINCINNATI CONVENTION CALLS FOR DEFINING THE BOUNDARIES OF OREGON

Cincinnati meeting adopted resolutions declaring the United States had an undoubted right  
to the country West of Rocky Mountains between 42° and 54°-40' north latitude  
that is, 42° north would separate Oregon from Mexico  
and 54°-40' north would separate Oregon from Russian-America  
they asserted the line established to separate the United States from Russia (54°40')  
was the rightful boundary  
accepting this boundary would have meant Britain was shut out of the Northwest altogether  
Convention adopted a resolution calling for 54°40' as the American line -- July 5, 1843

#### SUMMARY OF CONDITIONS IN OREGON COUNTRY

Political conditions:

Oregon City (formerly Willamette Falls) served as the Provisional Capital and only town  
Oregon City replaced both Champoeg and Chemeketa  
as the political center of the Willamette Valley

three "Political Parties" reflected the views of the inhabitants:

- Mission Party was concerned local protection would postpone United States authority
- Newell Party's mountain men wanted protection but as little government as possible
- Catholic and British Party wanted no government  
with Hudson's Bay Company to remain in control

Spiritual conditions:

Methodist missionaries under Rev. Jason Lee had little success among the Indians  
most missionaries turned to farming or teaching

Catholic priests under Father Francis Blanchet fared much better

Economic conditions:

financial hard times in the United States were also reflected in the West

Oregon farmers produced an abundance of wheat -- which drove the market price down  
shortages of goods, cash and a market for wheat impaired growth

Hudson's Bay Company offered the best prices and variety for imported goods  
coins drained off into Company strongboxes

with only the small excess going to American merchants  
credit system made merchants a vital figure for the community

business was run on the barter and credit system

businessmen were the object of envy, resentment and suspicion

Social conditions:

settlement North of the Columbia River was virtually nonexistent

Northern population was said to be the crudest element of the frontier

Hudson's Bay Company's Puget Sound Agricultural Company controlled the best land

Willamette Valley was very attractive

it was reported to new-comers the land North of the Columbia was poor

#### PUBLIC MEETING IS HELD IN CHAMPOEG TO RATIFY THE ORGANIC LAWS

Supreme Judge Dr. Ira Babcock, the former president, was not present at the start of the meeting

George W. LeBreton, Secretary or Recorder of the Committee of Nine called everyone to order

Dr. John E. Long was elected recorder

Rev. Gustavus Hines was called upon to serve as chair of the Champoeg Meeting -- July 5, 1843

remainder of the meeting was presided over by Rev. Hines

Chairman Hines called for reports by each committee spokesmen

Executive Committee reported there would be no governor of Oregon

rather a three-person Executive Committee would assume the duties of the executive officer

Judiciary Committee stated there would be a Supreme Judge with probate powers

and two Justices of the Peace -- when they all met together they became the Supreme Court

also a Probate Court and Justice's Court would be put into place

Ways and Means (finance) Committee announced taxes were to consist of a voluntary subscription

**“We, the subscribers, hereby pledge ourselves to pay annually, to the treasurer of Oregon Territory, the sum affixed to our respective names, for the purpose of defraying the expenses of government: *Provided*, that in all cases each individual subscriber may at any time withdraw his name from said subscription upon paying up all arrearages (back taxes) and notifying the treasurer of the colony of such desire to withdraw.”**

Military Affairs Committee reported the creation of a local militia battalion of three companies

of mounted riflemen with officers defined by the law to be called out by order of the Executive  
although any militia officer could also call them out in times of insurrection or invasion  
Private Land Claims Committee said one mile square or 640 acres could be claimed individually  
provided it not be on a town site or water-power source  
settlers had one year in which to file at 640-acre claim  
no surveys of the land existed -- each man had to make his own survey  
no requirement of proof of claim was necessary except for a description of the boundary  
(actually, claims were so large that settlers were spread thin  
it was difficult to develop or improve land)  
missions could claim no more than six miles square -- 23,040 acres  
Division of Districts (Counties) Committee reported the creation of four districts:  
Yamhill District and Champooick District south of the Columbia River  
Twality District and Clackamas District north of the Columbia River  
Legislative Committee of Nine Chairman Robert Moore  
read the recommendations of the legislative committee to everyone present  
but the proposed laws were to apply only to Americans -- Indians were to be treated justly  
Hudson's Bay Company employees would remain responsible to the Company

#### ORGANIC LAWS OF OREGON ARE PROPOSED TO THE AMERICAN SETTLERS

At close of the Champoeg meeting -- July 5, 1843

a motion to adopt the complete report was offered by Joseph McLoughlin, the Chief Factor's son  
Rev. Gustavus Hines called for the vote

Legislative Committee Report was accepted almost unanimously  
local Provisional Government, distinctly pro-American, had been approved  
British and French-Canadians withdrew their participation

#### PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT TAKES SHAPE

When the Organic Laws of Oregon were approved by those attending the Champoeg Meeting  
Oregon's first written constitution was put into place  
this was an American statement of self-protection, property protection, and law and order  
in fact, there was no lawful means of protecting land titles in Oregon Country  
the only land law in Oregon Country was a consensus of public opinion  
that when a person settled (squatted) on a piece of land and improved it  
or declared his intention to claim it all other settlers respected his claim  
every settler believed the drawing of an international boundary would insure

individual land claim made under the Joint Occupation Treaty [1818 and 1827]  
Three-man Executive Committee, an odd feature of the Organic Laws of Oregon,  
was elected to a one-year term in office (to serve until [May 1844]):

- David Hill -- had arrived the year before with Dr. Elijah White [1842]  
he was a political activist in the colony  
(Hillsborough would later be named in his honor)
- Alanson Beers -- long time Oregon Country resident  
blacksmith who arrived with the [1837] Methodist reinforcement  
reached Oregon with his wife and three children aboard the ship *Diana*  
he was placed in charge of a mission farm at Mission Bottom  
he built several houses and mills  
he was active in the Oregon Temperance Society and Indian Manual Labor School  
he was one of the founders of the Oregon Institute
- Joseph Gale -- had been a brigade leader for Nathaniel Wyeth [1834]  
built the first ship in Oregon, the *Star of Oregon*, before becoming a successful rancher  
who had broken Hudson's Bay Company livestock monopoly  
with two trips into California for Spanish cattle

Other officers of the Provisional Government were elected:

Clerk and Recorder of public documents -- French-Canadian George W. LeBreton

Provisional Treasurer -- Dr. William H. Willson

government had no taxing authority but rather relied on voluntary subscriptions for funds

money was represented by receipts for sixty bushels of wheat

stored in the Hudson's Bay Company granary

wheat was the crop grown by Americans in Willamette Valley

additional positions included an attorney general, and two overseers of the poor

Judicial Branch

Supreme Judge with Probate Powers -- merchant Albert E. Wilson

(Wilson declined to serve and was replaced by Osborne Russell [September 13])

several magistrates were elected

lower probate court and justice courts could only hear controversies

involving less than \$50 and that did not involve land disputes

Hugh Burns (later replaced by Robert Moore), Rev. Lewis H. Judson and Alvin T. Smith

James O'Neil, Xavier Ladarout, Pierre Billique and William McCarty

were locally elected at the District level

there was no meeting of the court in 1843

Peace Officers

High Sheriff -- Joe Meek who took his place along with other trappers turned political leaders he compiled a record of vigor and whimsy rivaling his Rocky Mountain career although his noisy participation in political activities is in some dispute, area participants lost no time in recognizing his rising stature under the new government

Constables: Joseph Gervais, William Cannon, and Robert Moore

all together the police force numbered about a dozen

Militia battalion of three Companies of mounted riflemen was authorized militia officers appointed

Major -- John Howard

three Captains -- William McCarty, Charles McKay, and Solomon H. Smith

militia was to assemble once a year in September for inspection

every male between 16 and 60 was considered a member of the military

Legislative Committee's nine members had completed their work

District elections to the newly-created Legislative Council would be held [1844]

That day Officers were sworn into office with an oath to **“support the Organic Laws of the provisional Government of Oregon so far as said Organic Laws are consistent with my duties as a Citizen of the United States or a subject of Great Britain....”**<sup>96</sup>

Before the first day's meeting was adjourned -- July 5, 1843

Provisional Government structure had been set up by Americans

about half of those who voted for the proposed government received offices

## MOUNTAINS OF WYOMING ARE REACHED BY THE GREAT MIGRATION

Over 7550-foot high South Pass the Great Migration and herd crawled

they were heartened, and perhaps somewhat disgusted, that this low marshy portal

looked so little like the mountain pass of the Continental Divide they had imagined

Next the Big Sandy River was crossed and they moved on to the Green River

which was usually at high water (during July and August) and crossing was dangerous

after crossing the Green their route continued on in an approximately southwest direction

Slowly the Green River and its blistering deserts dropped behind

painfully they climbed the first real mountains they had yet encountered

## GREAT MIGRATION REACHES (TODAY'S IDAHO)

Wagons creaked and groaned frightfully as the wagon train dropped down into the lush meadows

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<sup>96</sup> Lancaster Pollard, *A History of the State of Washington*, P. 100.

along the Bear River (in eastern Idaho)  
emigrants and animals alike collapsed beside the Bear River -- exhaustion forced them to rest  
There explorer John C. Fremont happened upon the pioneers sitting in camp one evening

#### REV. GEORGE GARY IS APPOINTED SUPERINTENDENT OF OREGON METHODIST MISSIONS

Methodist Mission Society members in Boston appointed Rev. George Gary to replace Rev. Jason Lee  
Society members wanted a **“more full and satisfactory account of this Mission, than our present information will permit”** and instructed Gary **“to curtail the secular departments of the mission...”**<sup>97</sup>

new superintendent was instructed him to dispose of the properties of the Methodist mission  
including the grist mill and missions not actively used -- July 1843  
Rev. George Gary began preparations for his journey by ship around Cape Horn

#### CAMP MEETINGS ARE HELD IN OREGON COUNTRY

Religious revival gatherings were held in the Willamette Valley  
these were conducted by local and visiting ministers and “exhorters” who encouraged participation  
heartfelt and ardent demonstrations came from listeners on whom the Spirit fell  
Meeting grounds were always located adjacent to streams to provide for baptisms  
services usually lasted four or five days but occasionally stretched out to ten days  
sometimes they were interrupted by rowdiness and drunkenness  
First Oregon camp meeting was held at Forest Grove -- July 1843  
with Joe Meek becoming a new religious convert  
(in later years summer educational and recreational gatherings known as “Chautauqua meetings”  
diminished influence and power of camp meetings)

#### FORT BRIDGER IS CONSTRUCTED ALONG THE OREGON TRAIL

Jim Bridger, with his latest partner, Louis Vasquez selected a new site for their base  
on Black’s Fork of the Green River in Southwest (Wyoming) -- summer 1843  
this broad well-watered valley offered an ideal location for intercepting emigrants  
Built for the emigrant trade on the Oregon Trail rather than for the fur trade  
Fort Bridger provided blacksmith shop and supply station for pioneers  
it soon became an important stop

In describing Fort Bridger, the founder noted: **“I have established a small store, with a Black Smith Shop, and a supply of Iron on the road of the Emigrants on Black’s Fork Green River, which**

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<sup>97</sup> Charles Carey, “Methodist Annual Reports.” The Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society 23, no. 4, 303-364.



**promises fairly, they in coming out are generally well supplied with money, but by the time they get there are in want of all kinds of supplies. Horses, Provisions, Smith work &c brings ready Cash from them and should I receive the goods hereby ordered will do a considerable business in that way with them. The same establishment trades with the Indians in the neighborhood, who have mostly a good number of beaver amongst them.”<sup>98</sup>**

#### LIEUTENANT JOHN C. FREMONT VISITS WITH THE GREAT MIGRATION

Fremont was fresh from scouting alternative routes through (today’s Colorado) in his journal he reported an idyllic picture

that would give later travelers false confidence: **“a picture of home beauty that went directly to our hearts...smokes were rising lazily from the fires, around which the women were occupied in preparing the evening meal, and the children playing in the grass; and the herds of cattle, grazing in the bottom, had an air of quiet security and civilized comfort that made a rare sight for the traveler in the remote wilderness.”<sup>99</sup>**

John C. Fremont and his men set out for (Utah) and the Great Salt Lake

#### NINE-MAN PROVISIONAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL REPRESENTS PIONEERS’ INTERESTS

Members of the Provisional Government’s Legislative Council

met at the Champoeg Methodist mission’s granary -- August 1843

In an effort to expand access to money for farmers the Council expanded the accepted currency in addition to receipts for bushels of wheat stored in the Hudson’s Bay Company granary

receipts for hides, tallow, beef, pork, lumber and similar exportable goods became acceptable

Members of the Provisional Government’s Legislative Council passed an act prohibiting the presence of Free Negroes within Oregon Country -- slavery was not the concern but rather Negroes

Also, at the insistence of settlers like William H. Gray who was adamantly pro-American

an act was passed specifically extending jurisdiction of the Provisional Government

north of the Columbia River

Americans now directly challenged the authority of the Hudson’s Bay Company

#### REV. JOSEPH H. FROST LEAVES CLATSOP PLAINS MISSION

Rev. Joseph H. Frost along with his wife and son worked with the Clatsop Indians

they had not converted any natives in the three years they had been there

he concluded there would never be a successful Christian church to serve the Clatsops

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<sup>98</sup> Robert Utley, *A Life Wind and Perilous*, P 152-153.

<sup>99</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 233.

he decided the mission budget could better be dedicated to efforts elsewhere  
Rev. Frost and his family left what they called the "land of darkness"<sup>100</sup> -- August 14, 1843  
they were replaced by Rev. Josiah Parrish (who operated the mission until the following year  
when the Clatsop Plains Mission was closed and Rev. Parrish purchased the property)

#### GREAT MIGRATION FOLLOWS THE BEAR RIVER NORTH

Breaking their camp along the Bear River the wagon train and its herd of animals  
set out for Soda Springs (Idaho) which became a favorite attraction for the pioneers  
who marveled at the hot carbonated water and chugging "steamboat" springs  
many stopped and did their laundry in the hot water  
as there was plenty of good grass and fresh water available  
Leaving Soda Springs the trail turned northwest to follow the Portneuf River Valley  
to Fort Hall, Idaho (roughly the route of today's Highway 30)

#### GREAT MIGRATION REACHES FORT HALL (IDAHO)

After ninety-eight days of travel the light column of the Great Migration  
arrived at Fort Hall (near Pocatello, Idaho) -- August 27, 1843  
Fort Hall was an old fur trading post on the Snake River  
established by Nathaniel Wyeth [1832] and later sold to Hudson's Bay Company [1837]  
Factor Richard Grant was astonished to see the long wagon train when it the post  
he treated them as kindly as possible under the circumstances  
although he was aware of Dr. Whitman's stubborn determination and patriotic purpose  
mosquitoes were constant pests  
(later travelers often mentioned that their animals were covered with blood from the bites)  
They were now two-thirds of the way to the Willamette Valley  
as they all knew, the most difficult part of the trip was yet ahead of them  
as the well marked trail ended here and was replaced by only a pack trail  
At the post, Dr. Whitman fortunately received from Waiilatpu four or five horse loads of flour  
to distribute among the most destitute of the emigrants  
Factor Richard Grant then devastated the immigrants by saying their wagons could not go through  
as it was impossible to secure enough pack horses to carry the women and children,  
let alone their property, to the Columbia River  
it would be necessary to go forward using the wagons despite the hazards  
John Gantt their pilot left the main group at Fort Hall

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<sup>100</sup> Nellie B. Pipes, "Journal of John H. Frost, 1840-43." Oregon Historical Quarterly 35, No. 2 (1934), 139-167.

he set out with sixteen or twenty people bound for California

#### FATHER TIBERIO SODERINI DECIDES TO LEAVE THE PREISTHOOD

Father Tiberio Soderini appears to have become so disillusioned with his fellow Jesuits during their trek that when he and his traveling companions reached Fort Hall he decided to leave the society of Jesuits altogether and become, instead, a secular priest under the authority of Father Francis Blanchet

#### GREAT MIGRATION MEMBERS HOLD A FRIGHTENED CONFERENCE AT FORT HALL

Dr. Marcus Whitman admitted he had failed to push his two-wheeled cart past Fort Boise [1836] Joel Walker and his family traveled from Fort Hall by Hudson's Bay Company boat [1840] Mountain Man Robert "Doc" Newell had not been able to open a way with anything but a wagon running-gear [1840] Bartleson-Bidwell Party had split at Soda Springs (Idaho) before thirty-two pioneers were led to Waiilatpu by Hudson's Bay Company agent Francis Ermantinger [1841] Dr. Elijah White and Captain Lansford W. Hastings had stopped their wagon train at Fort Hall before most continued by boat [1842]

Yet, Dr. Whitman insisted that wagons *could* go through he noted this group possessed an asset all of the others had lacked: enough able-bodied men to build a road as they went Pioneers agreed to try to reach Waiilatpu -- they had little other choice, actually they hired Dr. Whitman at a reputed fee of four hundred dollars to lead the way with a small party and blaze a wagon road

#### GREAT MIGRATION FOLLOWS THE SNAKE RIVER ON ITS WAY WEST

Members of the Great Migration and their herd of animals left Fort Hall -- August 30, 1843 west of Fort Hall the main route traveled about forty miles along the south side of the Snake River Southwesterly past American Falls, Massacre Rocks, Register Rock and Coldwater Hill (roughly traveling the route of today's Interstate 84) Great Migration wagon train strung out for miles through most of September as the light column and cow column followed the Snake River for about 180 miles suffering with the heat, wading through tangled sagebrush and crossing lacerating lava stones smaller parties were demanded -- the great caravan was split into still smaller sections as they passed Cauldron Linn rapids and Shoshone Falls (near today's Twin Falls, Idaho) and on to Upper Salmon Falls on the Snake River

(at Salmon Falls there were often a hundred or more Indians fishing  
who would trade for their salmon -- a welcome treat)

Dr. Whitman wasted untold amounts of energy riding back and forth along the exhausted line,  
trying to hurry his charges forward

#### DR. MARCUS WHITMAN IS CALLED UPON TO ASSIST AILING MISSIONAIRES

Great Migration was met by a band of Indians from Dr. Whitman's Waiilatpu Mission  
headed by Sticcus, a Christian Indian

they had come to meet the wagon train searching for Dr. Whitman to tell him  
that his medical services were needed as Rev. Henry and Eliza Spalding were both ill  
and needed him at Lapwai Mission

Guide duties for the Great Migration were turned over to Sticcus

as Dr. Whitman hastened to his home at Waiilatpu before continuing on to Lapwai

Oregon Trail continued west to Three Island Crossing (near present day Glenns Ferry, Idaho)

here the emigrants used the divisions of the river caused by three islands  
to cross the difficult and swift Snake River by floating their wagons  
and swimming their teams across

this crossing was doubly treacherous because there were often hidden holes in the river bottom  
which could overturn the wagon or entangle the team, sometimes with fatal consequences

They entered the lush Boise River Valley

for the members of the Great Migration this was a welcome relief

#### DR. MARCUS WHITMAN MEETS NARCISSA AT WASCOPAM MISSION

As the doctor passed through Waiilatpu he learned that the conduct of the Indians  
had provoked Narcissa Whitman to go Rev. Daniel Lee's Wascopam Mission at Celilo Falls  
during his absence Indians burned his mills and committed other acts of destruction

Dr. Whitman rode to Wascopam Mission -- September 6, 1843

#### LIEUTENANT JOHN C. FREMONT'S MILITARY EXPEDITION REACHES GREAT SALT LAKE

Fremont and his twenty-seven-man expedition followed the Green and Bear rivers

Fremont turned south into (what is now Utah) to explore the Great Salt Lake  
this was one of the primary objectives of the expedition

After weeks of groping down the valley of the Bear River and across miles of marshy land,

Fremont and his men saw the Great Salt Lake -- September 6, 1843

Fremont unpacked an inflatable boat of India rubber he had brought all the way with him

he and his men paddled the leaky boat to (today's Fremont Island)  
which he named "Disappointment Island"

Fremont and his party mapped the lake and reported on its mineral content  
they collected plant and rock specimens  
they made astronomical observations to fix its exact location  
using a barometric to measure atmospheric pressure and boiling-temperature readings  
they estimated the lake's elevation at 4,200 feet above sea level  
but perhaps even greater importance were Fremont's positive reports  
of the country around the lake and in the vicinity of the Bear and Weber rivers  
(it was Fremont's report with its glowing descriptions that persuaded Brigham Young  
that the Great Salt Lake was the place for his people to settle)

After leaving Great Salt Lake the expedition traveled northwestward on the way to Fort Hall

#### DAVID THOMPSON COMPLETES WORK ON HIS GREAT ATLAS

Once again he sent British government a set of his most recently revised maps -- September 1843  
to assist them in one of the negotiations that was taking place

to determine the boundary between the U.S. and British territory in the Oregon Country

David Thompson concluded: **"Thus I have fully completed the survey of this part of North America from sea to sea, and...have determined the positions of the mountain, lakes and rivers, and other remarkable places of the northern part of this continent, the maps of all of which have been drawn and laid down in geographical position, being now the work of twenty-seven years."**<sup>101</sup>

he had mapped the entire Canadian landscape from Hudson's Bay to the Pacific

including the course of the Columbia River from source to mouth

detailed an area of over 1.7 million square miles

his scale model (which is now in the care of the Provincial Archivist at Toronto)

measured ten and one-half feet by five and one-half feet

British government returned them to Thompson

saying that Hudson's Bay Company had already supplied them with maps

those Hudson's Bay Company maps were, of course, also Thompson's

from the one published in [1816] in the North West Company pamphlet

as Hudson's Bay Company and North West Company had merged [1822]

Both the [1826] and 1843 maps, plus the [1813] map, were all pirated

and incorporated into other maps, without any acknowledgement to Thompson

by the London Mapmaking Company of Arrowsmith

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<sup>101</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 77.

in this form they became the standard for the rest of the country  
although David Thompson received little credit for his efforts  
His vision failing, Koo-Koo-Sint “The Man Who Looks At Stars”  
began to work on writing his adventures from his seventy-seven original notebooks

#### DAVID THOMPSON WORKS ON HIS MANUSCRIPT

At age seventy-six, he still found the power to weave his journals and his memories  
into his manuscript: *Travels*

his writings show he had a remarkable power of description

He took great satisfaction in being the outsider

a white man among the Indians

a Welshman among the Scots

a pious man among the colorfully profane French *voyagers*

Public interest in Thompson’s explorations on the Columbia River momentarily arose,  
but waned quickly during the Oregon dispute of the (mid-1840s)

It was a task that he never would complete

#### GREAT MIGRATION REACHES HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY’S FORT BOISE

Sticcus was a capable guide and Great Migration reached (old) Fort Boise  
near the Snake River -- September 20, 1843

this post was headed by the French-Canadian Francois Payette

he staffed his post primarily with Owyhee (Hawaiian) employees

(Fort Boise became known for the hospitality and supplies provided to later emigrants)

#### DR. WHITMAN TREATS AMERICAN BOARD MISSIONARIES IN NEED

Dr. Whitman rode to Waiilatpu Mission where he discovered that during his absence

Indians burned his mills and committed other acts of destruction

He then rode to Lapwai to attend the Spaldings in their illness

Dr. Whitman found Rev. Henry and Eliza Spalding recovering

then he was summoned a hundred and forty miles to Tshimakain Mission

by word that Mrs. Myra Eells’ baby was imminent

#### GREAT MIGTATION SETS OUT FROM FORT BOISE

After leaving (old) Fort Boise the next crossing of the Snake River was close by

this last crossing of the Snake was done using bull boats while swimming the animals across

(later pioneers would chain a large string of wagons and teams together  
their thinking was that the front teams, usually oxen, would get out of water first  
and with good footing help pull the whole string of wagons and teams across  
how well this worked in practice is not stated  
often young Indian boys were hired to drive and ride the stock across the river  
unlike many pioneers they knew how to swim)

Once across the Snake River ford near (old) Fort Boise the weary travelers entered  
what would become the state of Oregon as the Oregon Trail went to the Malheur River  
and continued along the Snake River to Farewell Bend where they left the Snake River behind  
Mass Migration's light column traveled through the fire-ravaged timber of the Burnt River (Oregon)  
with the Indian Sticcus pointing out the way a crew of forty axmen spent four days  
chopping and grading a "road" northwest across the Blue Mountains  
they continued on to the Grande Ronde Valley (near present day La Grande, Oregon)

#### GREAT MIGRATION REACHES THE GRANDE RONDE RIVER VALLEY

Sticcus led the immigrants into the beautiful region of the Grande Ronde River  
the famous circular valley of the Blue Mountains -- September 30, 1843  
no doubt the valley appeared doubly lovely after another grueling ford of the Snake River  
some pioneers broke into tears as they looked down on the peaceful country  
after the hardships of many weeks spent in the mountains and desert

#### MISSOURI U.S. SENATOR LEWIS F. LINN DIES IN OFFICE

Democratic Senator Lewis F. Linn's unwavering support for the people of Oregon was well known  
however, his work was incomplete at his untimely death at age forty-seven -- October 3, 1843  
His unfinished work toward Oregon was taken up by his colleague  
Missouri Senator Thomas Hart Benton  
Senator Benton pursued Senator Linn's policy with fiery, uncompromising energy

#### BUSINESS IN OREGON CITY IS GROWING

Arrivals on the Oregon Trail brought a booming business  
Sidney Moss opened the first "hotel" west of the Rocky Mountains  
on his Oregon City property at Third and Main  
where accommodated new arrivals over the Oregon Trail  
amenities were restricted to a space on the floor -- but it provided refuge from the rain  
first meeting of the Willamette Falls Lyceum and Debating Society also was held here

Francis Pettygrove's and Philip Foster's store developed a thriving enterprise  
they soon doubled their original order and added \$4000 worth of additional goods for sale  
they produced salted salmon and barreled peas grown in the Willamette Valley  
for shipment to the store's suppliers in the Sandwich Islands  
Captain Edmund Sylvester's ship *Pallas* sailed from Oregon City -- October 1843  
with a cargo of Pettygrove and Foster products

#### PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT IMPOSES A TAX ON AMERICANS IN OREGON

Three member Executive Committee imposed a tax of 1/8th of 1% on all merchandise  
brought into the country for sale -- 1843  
this was aimed at the primary, almost singular, importer of goods -- Hudson's Bay Company  
no vote on the issue by the Legislative Council or settlers was taken  
(and thus without any authority) this action by the Executive Committee  
did not have even the slightest appearance of being legal

#### STICKUS CONTINUES TO GUIDE THE GREAT MIGRATION TOWARD WAILLATPU MISSION

Safely reaching the Umatilla River at last, pioneers gorged themselves  
on ripe berries growing in thickets  
mission-trained Indian farmers provided fresh vegetables in exchange for old clothing  
An early snow fall terrified the caravan but it did not last long enough to be dangerous -- October

#### LIEUTENANT JOHN C. FREMONT'S MILITARY EXPEDITION REACHES FORT HALL (IDAHO)

When they arrived at Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Hall, Fremont discharged eleven volunteers  
because of a supply problem he sent them back to the states -- October 9, 1843  
From Fort Hall to Fort Vancouver the route held few uncertainties  
trailing about two weeks behind the Great Migration wagon train  
Fremont followed the route of the future Oregon Trail from Fort Boise to The Dalles  
with the exception of a side trip over the Blue Mountains  
which they crossed between the forks of Looking Glass Creek  
Fremont and German cartographer Charles Preuss devoted themselves  
to gathering the usual data needed for a scientific survey  
Fremont crossed the Snake River at Fort Boise and traveled through Keeney Pass  
(six miles southeast of today's Vale, Oregon) until they reached the Malheur River  
they passed Oregon's Tub Mountain and continued on to Farewell Bend  
where the future Oregon Trail left the Snake River behind



continuing on, Fremont and his scientific expedition traveled up Burnt River Canyon  
crossed the divide to the Powder River and reached the Grande Ronde Valley  
always following behind the wagons of the Great Migration

#### GREAT MIGRATION REACHES THE WHITMAN MISSION

Dr. Whitman was not at Waiilatpu when the Great Migration arrived there -- October 10, 1843  
supplies were available but prices quoted by the man Whitman left in charge seemed fantastic  
a dollar for a bushel of wheat, forty cents for a bushel of potatoes  
these figures were almost double Missouri prices

Several of the immigrants cursed Dr. Whitman bitterly saying he had brought them this way  
so that he could sell them his produce at outrageous charges

(Waiilatpu was, in fact, only a little off the most direct route)

Difficult decisions regarding how to proceed had to be addressed  
emigrants without cattle quickly decided to continue on directly to the Columbia River  
hoping to find water transportation from Fort Walla Walla to Fort Vancouver  
cattle owners faced a more difficult dilemma as they drove their herds toward Fort Walla Walla

#### CATHOLICS OPEN THEIR FIRST SCHOOL IN OREGON

St. Joseph's College, a boarding school for boys and the first Catholic school in Oregon,  
was built due to the inspiration of Father Francis Blanchet  
with funds from a former fur trader Joseph Larocque

St. Joseph's College opened near the log chapel on the grounds of St. Paul's Mission  
at French Prairie -- October 17, 1843

primary and secondary school instruction in writing and arithmetic  
was provided in both French and English languages

Jesuit Father Antoine Langlois was placed in charge of the school

Father J.B.Z. Bolduc taught of thirty boys who were enrolled as boarders

all were metis except one full-blood Indian who was the son of a local chief

(This school flourished for five years before the California gold rush  
depleted the settlement of men and boys [June 1849])

#### LIEUTENANT FREMONT CROSSES THE GRANDE RONDE VALLEY

Lieutenant John Fremont's expedition crossed the Grande Ronde Valley  
(north of today's La Grande, Oregon) -- October 24, 1843

Fremont decided to search for a more direct and better route across the Blue mountains

Fremont continued on along a northern course across the Grande Ronde following an Indian trail they camped on Willow Creek (near Imbler, Oregon)  
Their course the next day took them to “Indian Valley” (Elgin, Oregon)  
when they left the valley they ascended Gordon Creek to the summit  
Fremont’s route continued through the vicinity of (Tollgate, Oregon)  
along the ridge of Linton Mountain where Mount Hood was seen 180 miles away  
they descended to the Walla Walla River

Fremont described the scene in his journal: **“The white frost this morning was like snow on the ground; the ice was a quarter of an inch thick on the creek, and the thermometer at sunrise was at 20°. But, in a few hours, the day became warm and pleasant, and our road over the mountains was delightful and full of enjoyment.... On our right was a mountain plateau, covered with a dense forest; and to the westward, immediately below us, was the Nez Perce (pierced nose) prairie, in which dark lines of timber indicated the course of many affluents (sic) to a considerable stream that was seen pursuing its way across the plain towards what appeared to be the Columbia river. This I knew to be the Walahwalah [Walla Walla] river....”**<sup>102</sup>

#### FREMONT’S SECOND EXPEDITION REACHES AT WAILATPU MISSION

Lieutenant Fremont followed the Walla Walla River to Dr. Marcus Whitman’s Waiilatpu Mission which they reached early in the morning -- October 24, 1843

Dr. Whitman was absent that day, but Fremont recorded that he **“had the pleasure to see a fine-looking large family of emigrants, men, women, and children, in robust health....”**<sup>103</sup>

Fremont failed to obtain supplies as the grist mill had just burned  
he and his twenty-seven men continued on

#### LIEUTENANT FREMONT MAKES CAMP ALONG THE WALLA WALLA RIVER

Weather was pleasant with a sunrise temperature near freezing  
they crossed a sandy, rolling plain and reached the Walla Walla River with its scanty forest  
camp was made about three miles from where the river enters the Columbia River  
While in Oregon German Cartographer Charles Preuss, never a particularly cheerful person,  
complained about the damp and the cold of the Northwest -- October 26, 1843

**“It is certainly terrible. ...what a poor devil has to contend with in this country in order to make an honest living.”**<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> James A. Crutchfield, *It Happened in Washington*, P. 31.

<sup>103</sup> James A. Crutchfield, *It Happened in Washington*, P. 32.

<sup>104</sup> Derek Hayes, *Historical Atlas of British Columbia and the Pacific Northwest*. P. 121.

## LIEUTENANT JOHN C. FREMONT'S EXPEDITION CONTINUES WEST

Lieutenant Fremont and his twenty-seven men arrived at Fort Walla Walla -- October 27, 1843 at this Hudson's Bay Company post they had their first view of the Columbia River camp was made near the fort but the horses had to be sent back to the camp of previous night to provide ample forage

located on the east bank of the Columbia River about half a mile north

of the mouth of the Walla Walla River and a few miles below the mouth of the Snake River

this location was chosen for its strategic geographic value

Once he reached Fort Walla Walla Lieutenant Fremont judged his mission of connecting with U.S. Naval Lieutenant Charles Wilkes [1841] survey expedition accomplished

here he wrote: **“our land journey found...its western termination.”**<sup>105</sup>

Fremont considered Fort Walla Walla to be the end of overland portion of the Oregon Trail

which he estimated to be about 2,000 miles from Westport, Missouri

When Fremont arrived at the post he observed that portion of the Great Migration

under the direction of Jesse Applegate had nearly completed constructing boats

Fremont also noted the Cow Column preferred to continue their journey overland

taking their stock and wagons with them along the northern bank of the Columbia River

Fremont recorded his impression of the Columbia River: **“We here saw, for the first time, the great river on which the course of events for the last half century has been directing attention and conferring historical fame. The river is, indeed, a noble object, and has here attained its full magnitude.”**<sup>106</sup>

traveling with Fremont was Ransome Clark who met Miss Lettice Jane Millican

then traveling with a wagon train at Fort Walla Walla

(this couple met again in the Willamette Valley and married

they established the first permanent white home in the Walla Walla Valley)

## LETTER HOME FROM WAILATPU MISSION DESCRIBES THE GREAT MIGRATION

Jesse Looney, a recent Pacific Northwest arrival, wrote a letter from Wailatpu Mission

back home to Missouri -- dated October 27, 1843

**“The company of emigrants came through safely this season to the number of a thousand persons with something over a hundred wagons to this place...and, with the exception of myself, and a few others, have all gone on down [to the Willamette Valley]. ...There were five or six deaths**

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<sup>105</sup> James A. Crutchfield, *It Happened in Washington*, P. 32.

<sup>106</sup> James A. Crutchfield, *It Happened in Washington*, P. 32.

**on the road...and there were some eight or ten births. Upon the whole we fared better than we expected.”<sup>107</sup>**

#### LIEUTENANT JOHN C. FREMONT’S EXPEDITION SETS OUT ONCE AGAIN

Fremont again divided his command leaving guide Tom Fitzpatrick and the Great Migration behind at Fort Walla Walla to bring up the rear

Fremont and his men resumed their journey setting out from Fort Walla Walla -- October 28, 1843 their route along the south bank of the Columbia River was difficult

as they toiled through deep loose sands and sharp fragments of volcanic rock

in contrast, Jesse Applegate’s fleet of boats glided by traveling down the Columbia

As they followed the trail Mt. St. Helens came into view as did a second peak (probably Mt. Adams) they crossed the Umatilla River at a fall near its mouth

#### GREAT MIGRATION ARRIVES AT FORT WALLA WALLA

Archibald McKinley, Hudson’s Bay Company Factor at the fort, agreed with Dr. Whitman’s advice to leave the cattle and wagons for the winter along the Walla Walla River

settlers could then continue on down the Columbia River unencumbered as best they could

this sage advice was, for the most part, ignored

#### GREAT MIGRATION SPLITS INTO SMALL GROUPS AT FORT WALLA WALLA

This first wagon train to reach the Columbia River paused to make final preparations before continuing down the Columbia River to the rapids of the Dalles

Early arrivals of the Light Column traveling without cattle took directly to the river:

- some gave up their wagons and hired Indian canoes for the rest of the journey through the rapids of the Dalles and on to the Willamette River or Fort Vancouver these lucky few hurried ahead to seek assistance for those to follow soon all of the available Indians canoes were gone;
- some bought Hudson’s Bay Company bateau (river boats) for the journey downriver these roomy vessels were forty-five feet long by five feet broad they were light enough for gangs of Indians to carry them around the portages of the cascades;
- more reckless of the emigrants laboriously gathered drift logs and tied them together ankle-deep in the frigid water they wheeled their wagons aboard these clumsy rafts for the trip down the Columbia River to the Dalles
- still others, fearful of trusting their goods and lives to such uncertain craft,

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<sup>107</sup> James A. Crutchfield, *It Happened in Washington*, P. 34,

dug pits for whipsawing logs gathered along the river bank into planks  
they began the difficult task of hammering together flatboats to carry their wagons and families  
these huge and uncouth structures were steered with immense sweeps located in the stern  
they hoped would be safer than rafts -- sometimes they were

- a few forced their wagons along the south side of the Columbia River toward the Dalles

#### FLATBOATS JOURNEY DOWN THE COLUMBIA RIVER

As they completed their task, finished flatboats were loaded  
with families, disassembled wagons and other property -- then pushed out into the swift current  
to be taken down the Columbia River to the mouth of the Willamette River or Fort Vancouver  
Flatboat travel was a delightful change for the first one hundred miles  
bright sunshine, clear, cold water and majestic snow-covered peaks in the distance  
lifted their spirits -- this part of the journey was safe and pleasant  
easily gliding boats provided quite a comfortable contrast  
to the preceding months of harsh, difficult and treacherous overland travel  
Safety, however, was a conditional situation  
chill November winds blew on them through the canyon  
they floated, towed, surged and portaged their way fraught with danger down the river  
potential disaster at The Cascades Rapids always haunted them

#### COW COLUMN REACHES THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Following in the wake of the Light column, the Cow Column arrived at Fort Walla Walla  
as October turned to November

These members of the Great Migration burdened with their cattle pondered their options:

- some, afraid that they could not successfully drive their animals to the Willamette Valley  
over the heavily timbered Cascade Mountains,  
arranged to leave their cattle for safe keeping at Fort Walla Walla;
- others traded good-blooded but trail-gaunt Missouri stock for scrubby Spanish cattle  
that they could acquire from Hudson's Bay Company herds at Fort Vancouver;
- still others, decided to risk everything to the whims of fate  
they traded their wagons for pack animals and started their herds along treacherous trails  
far above the Columbia River on the south side  
destined for the Dalles where it would be necessary to portage the animals  
and to portage again at The Cascades Rapids  
a few pioneers, hearing that routes were better along the north bank of the Columbia River

swam their animals across the great river two at a time tied behind rented Indian canoes  
once across, they began the arduous cattle drive  
to the Dalles and The Cascades Rapids and, finally, Fort Vancouver

#### APPLEGATE FAMILY JOURNEYS FROM FORT WALLA WALLA

Having made arrangements to leave their cattle near Fort Walla Walla for the winter  
two homemade flatboats embarked carrying the family members and hired hands  
of brothers Jesse, Lindsay and Charles Applegate  
At first the change from wagons to boats was exhilarating  
Columbia's current carried them effortlessly -- the scenery was austere and majestic  
even their guide was amusing, a weathered Indian with a dirty red handkerchief around his head  
sporting long black hair hanging down his back

#### LIEUTENANT JOHN C. FREMONT AND HIS MEN ARRIVE AT THE DALLES

After crossing the Umatilla River Mount Hood had been lit by a glowing sunrise  
they continued along the road and passed near an elevated point  
they could see the valley of the Columbia River for miles ahead  
in the distance were several houses  
which a local chief identified as the Methodist mission Wascopam  
Fremont's expedition reached the rapids (at today's The Dalles, Oregon)  
they rapidly cross the three or four miles and camped near the mission  
just after the departure of the last of the Great Migration -- November 5, 1843  
there he learned of the tragic wrecking of Applegate's boats  
and the drowning of his twelve-year-old son, a nephew and a family friend  
while at Wascopam Fremont saw an eruption of Mount St. Helens  
Fremont wrote to Thomas "Broken Hand" Fitzpatrick who was still at Fort Walla Walla  
he directed the Great Migration's guide to abandon their carts, make pack saddles  
to continue overland and reunite with Fremont at the Dalles  
At Wascopam, Fremont again divided the command  
Christopher "Kit" Carson was placed in charge of Fremont's camp  
to carry out preparations for the long journey home  
Fremont, Jacob Dodson, a young Black household servant of U.S. Senator Thomas Hart Benton,  
and cartographer Charles Preuss borrowed an Indian canoe  
with ten Indians they paddled down the Columbia River to Fort Vancouver

## DR. MARCUS WHITMAN CONTINUES HIS JOURNEY TOWARD HOME

After assisting Mrs. Eells with childbirth Dr. Whitman braved cold, gray November rains as he rode from Tshimakain to Rev. Daniel Lee's Wascopam Mission at Celilo Falls -- November 6, 1843 to bring Narcissa home to Waiilatpu

## TRAGEDY STRIKES THE APPLGATE FAMILY

Gradually, almost imperceptibly, the current of the Columbia River gained strength as the homemade flatboat approached Celilo Falls it suddenly leaped more wildly than they could manage -- morning November 6, 1843  
shouts came from the trailing boat occupied by three older men and three of the children three Applegate brothers and their wives in the lead boat looked back just in time to see the spinning craft drop from sight under the foaming surge of the river instinctively the fathers started to their feet -- intuitively the mothers pulled them back their own boat was running uncontrolled straight for the rocks

Somehow the lead boat fought its way clear of the rapids and managed to land frantic with grief, Lindsay Applegate jerked a rifle from the baggage to kill the Indian pilot of the trailing boat

luckily the man disappeared before Lindsay could shoot  
meanwhile the fear-stricken mothers scrambled back along the rocky bank

Two Applegate cousins, a young boy and a young man, were saved in a most miraculous way the boy was physically very active and an excellent swimmer  
he was carried downriver for two miles in the current -- part of the time sucked under water after being thrown about, he was spewed out on the slippery ledge of rock there, battered but safe, he desperately clung until he recovered his breath as he drew himself up onto the narrow ledge, he saw his older cousin being swept by reaching out he grabbed the young man and drug him to the same ledge

When they regained ample strength, they saw they were caught on a rocky niche above them rose a steep cliff which offered no escape -- they were in a trap looking across the river they saw the bank was smooth and there was a trail the younger Applegate saw a reef that extended a considerable distance into the river he decided to pick his way along the reef to where he might be able to swim to safety Reaching the end of the reef, the younger Applegate discovered his cousin had not accompanied him he struggled back to get his more timid relative wondrously, on the second try, they both reached the end of the reef there they jumped into the swirling water and swam for the far shore

exhausted they arrived safely, battered and bruised, but alive  
As the Applegate family members stood on the rocky bank of the Columbia River  
quietly celebrating the success of the two cousins  
another young swimmer appeared and was clawed free of the water  
soon yet another boy bobbed by battered but safe  
finally a man floated into sight on a feather bed  
However, the body of elderly traveler, Alexander McClelland, and of two ten-year-old cousins  
Jesse's son Edward and Lindsay's son Warren were never found

#### MEMBERS OF THE GREAT MIGRATION STAGGER INTO THE DALLES

Parts of the Great Migration's two divisions, the Light Column and the Cow Column  
were once again united at the Dalles  
Those who had reached Fort Walla Walla early were fortunate because  
they could leave their wagons and most of their possessions along the Walla Walla River  
and hire Indians to take them by canoe down the Columbia River to Fort Vancouver  
or hire a Hudson's Bay Company bateaux to take them  
Those who had driven their wagons to the Dalles were stopped by the Cascade Mountains  
however, a passable wagon trail now existed from the Missouri River to the Dalles  
these lucky few hired small Indian canoes for the remainder of the journey to Fort Vancouver  
soon all of the canoes at the Dalles were gone

#### AT THE DALLES MEMBERS OF THE GREAT MIGRATION FACE TERRIFYING PROSPECTS

Having reached the Dalles the members of the Great Migration  
faced the remainder of the Columbia Gorge with its multiple rapids, treacherous winds  
and 1.6 mile portage around The Cascades Rapids  
their cattle, oxen and horses would have to be driven around Mount Hood  
on the narrow, crooked and rough Lolo Pass trail  
Vast rapids at the Dalles were too much to overcome for some who settled there

#### SETTLEMENT OF "THE DALLES," OREGON BEGINS

So many people had arrived at the Dalles of the Columbia River with the Great Migration  
that a settlement developed to serve those who could not or would not continue on to Oregon  
The Dalles became home to these pioneers (capital "T" in "The" refers to the town  
while a small "t" refers to the Columbia River's rapids in the area)



## LIEUTENANT JOHN C. FREMONT ARRIVES AT FORT VANCOUVER

Upon reaching Fort Vancouver -- November 8, 1843

Fremont was hospitably received Hudson's Bay Company Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin as Fremont noted, **“with the courtesy and hospitality for which he has been eminently distinguished, and which makes a forcible and delightful impression on a traveler from the long wilderness from which we had issued.”**<sup>108</sup>

Fremont quarreled with Charles Preuss who refused to cut off his beard  
merely to dine presentably at McLoughlin's table

in just two days Fremont was supplied with provisions from the vast stores of the fort

Fremont needed to refit and support his expedition for a winter journey to return to the states  
Fremont chose not to complete his transcontinental journey with a trip to the Pacific Ocean  
citing the conditions of the rainy season

and having fulfilled his mission of connecting with Charles Wilkes' survey effort  
he felt he could not justify delaying his return home waiting for favorable weather

## LIEUTENANT FREMONT'S SECOND EXPEDITION RETURNS UP THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Now, as his orders directed, he was to lead his men in a winter trek back to the United States,  
exploring in detail the route of the Oregon Trail

and further examining the Wind River Mountains along the way

Before leaving Fort Vancouver, Fremont received some information from Dr. McLoughlin  
regarding South-Central Oregon which was then still a region of mystery

Fremont and his men departed with a barge and three canoes manned by voyageurs and Indians  
to transport them back toward Wascopam Mission -- November 10, 1843

one of the expedition members, Henry A.G. Lee, chose to remain and settle in Oregon Country

## GREAT MIGRATION SET OUT FROM THE DALLES

From the Dalles to Fort Vancouver pioneers suffered more than in all the rest of the journey

November rains poured with unrelenting energy in the beautiful, terrible river gorge

food was almost completely exhausted -- clothing was in rags

families were huddled, destitute, tired, hungry, wet, cold and disheartened

they clogged up at the portages, pleading with the Indians for help

they traded loved possessions for bits of salmon jerky and pemmican

many thought they would die

Stronger or luckier men hurried ahead for assistance at Fort Vancouver

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<sup>108</sup> Robert Utley, *A Life Wind and Perilous*, P 197.

one pioneer, James Waters, managed to acquire a canoe and hastened down the river

#### REVEREND JASON LEE IS SUSPENDED BY THE METHODIST MISSION SOCIETY

Letters from the Methodist Mission Society in Utica, New York

were delivered to Superintendent of Methodist missions Rev. Jason Lee

by Dr. Marcus Whitman after his return to Waiilatpu -- 1843

Mission Society members noted Rev. Lee had established a town

which was not a religious colony

Lee was accused of mishandling mission money and of neglecting the Indians

these letters noted the Methodist Society in New York had decided to send out Rev. George Gary

by ship around Cape Horn to investigate the charges against Jason Lee

and, if need be, to replace him

Thoroughly upset, Jason Lee decided to sail east and answer the charges in person

Rev. Jason Lee set sail for the Sandwich Islands on the bark *Columbia* -- November 17, 1843

In Oregon Country, in fact, the missionary influence was waning

American hostility toward Hudson's Bay Company was growing

#### LIEUTENANT CHARLES FREMONT AGAIN ARRIVES AT WASCOPAM METHODIST MISSION

Fremont, Jacob Dodson and Charles Preuss returned from Fort Vancouver

after a difficult passage through wind and rain upriver to Wascopam -- November 18, 1843

there they reunited with Kit Carson and the others of the expedition

Preparations for the return effort to the Arkansas River were completed

provisions acquired from Dr. John McLoughlin at Fort Vancouver

consisted of: a three month supply of flour, peas and tallow;

some California cattle to be driven with the expedition on their homeward-bound journey

were purchased from the mission

other livestock consisted of 104 mules and horses

Fremont announced that although his orders directed they return home by way of the Oregon Trail

and contrary to what he told Chief Factor McLoughlin, Fremont would instead take a new route

they would travel a great circuit to the south and southeast to explore the Great Basin region  
(of today's southeast Oregon, Nevada and Utah)

he was interested in investigating three landmarks:

- the Klamath Lake region of southern Oregon,
- the westward flowing Buenaventura River from the Rocky Mountains,
- the Rocky Mountains near the headwaters of the Arkansas and Colorado rivers

crossing this virtually unknown area at the onset of winter  
was a daunting, even reckless, undertaking

#### GREAT MIGRATION RECEIVES HELP

James Waters was among the first of the immigrants to reach Fort Vancouver  
he appealed to Hudson's Bay Company's Dr. John McLoughlin for provisions  
he assured the Chief Factor the stranded migrants would be glad to pay any fair price  
As soon as McLoughlin learned that nearly 900 men, women and children  
were desperately attempting to reach the safety of the fort  
he prepared Hudson's Bay Company boats to provide transportation  
he also sent flour, meat and tea  
Dr. McLoughlin asked in return only the same price that his own employees  
would have to pay at the store at Fort Vancouver for the goods  
One rescue boat was rowed upstream by a Hudson's Bay Company crew  
it carried James Waters and life sustaining provisions  
eagerly the starving emigrants consumed what Waters brought them  
When the settlers in the Willamette Valley heard of the fate of the newcomers,  
they responded with some supplies  
however, the difference between disaster and salvation was Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin

#### GREAT MIGRATION RECEIVES A WARM WELCOME

Dr. McLoughlin ordered vast bonfires to be lighted along the river bank the next night  
and gathered together all of the food and blankets the fort could spare  
When they arrived, the Americans were greeted by the Chief Factor personally  
however, once they felt comfortable again many Americans  
cruelly abused both James Waters and John McLoughlin  
stating the two heroes were trying to cash in on their misfortune  
few of the Americans ever kept their promise to pay  
Waters and McLoughlin had to make good the losses out of their own pockets

#### CHIEF FACTOR'S HUMANE ACT WAS NOT VIEWED WARMLY

Hudson's Bay Company Governor-in-Chief Sir George Simpson had long been concerned  
about Dr. John McLoughlin's hospitality toward recent arrivals  
this most recent example added fuel to their long-running, intense feud  
Hudson's Bay Company Board of Directors frequently expressed a view similar to the governor's

Americans in Oregon had long accepted the Chief Factor's extraordinarily fair treatment as fitting, while resenting the economic dominance of Hudson's Bay Company in general and the authority of Chief Factor McLoughlin in particular

#### CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES TRAVEL WITH THE GREAT MIGRATION

Catholic reinforcements also arrived with the overland party

Fathers Peter De Vos and Adrian Hoeken and Brother Michael McGean

met with Father Francis Blanchet before setting out to establish a Catholic Mission among the Kalispel Indians [1844]

#### GREAT MIGRATION PAUSES AT FORT VANCOUVER

After a rest at the Hudson's Bay Company headquarters for Columbia Department

pioneers trickled into the Willamette Valley over a period of weeks using a variety of routes

starving, destitute and exhausted pioneers slowly trickled into the Willamette Valley

most proceeded on to Oregon City -- the center of population in Oregon Country

where they found a Provisional Government that favored "old timers" awaited them

Soon these successful Overlanders were joined by those who had driven cattle

down the north or south side of the Columbia River to Fort Vancouver

also an arduous experience, but one successfully accomplished

Most of the emigrants reached the Willamette Valley by the end of November

900 new settlers arrived -- swelling American population to 1,300

their arrival changed the small American majority in the Willamette Valley

into an overwhelming one

political control of Oregon City passed from the missionaries to the farmers

who wanted to make the country wholly American

and they looked upon the British as interlopers or and even as the enemy

New arrivals immediately began to agitate for protection for themselves, their stock and their land

and a strong voice in the Provisional Government which was less than six months old

Great Migration provided able political leaders like:

Peter H. Burnett, Jesse Applegate, Morton M. McCarver, James W. Nesmith,

Asa L. Lovejoy and Daniel Waldo

#### DANIEL WALDO SETTLES IN (TODAY'S WALDO HILLS)

Daniel Waldo and his wife Malinda (Walton Lunsford) Waldo took up land

east of (Salem, Oregon in an area known today as the Waldo Hills)

traveling with them was a black baby -- America Waldo

it was generally assumed her mother was a slave of one of the Waldo brothers

who lived in Missouri and her father was one of Daniel's brothers

Daniel Waldo immediately immersed himself in local politics

#### DR. MARCUS WHITMAN DEVELOPS A NEW PURPOSE FOR WAILATPU

Dr. Whitman's long ride overland with the Great Migration

gave him a totally new concept of the purpose of his mission

Waiilatpu Mission was turned into a provision center, rest station and hospital

for emigrants on the Oregon Trail

there he would administer to the sick travelers

and supply them with food -- and even sheltered whole families

Dr. Whitman rebuilt his grist mill

and constructed another sawmill twenty miles from Waiilatpu

it was true the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions

insisted that they had built their stations in the West to help the Indians

but the words sounded hollow when Whitman made his hurried ride to the East

then returned with the greatest number of pioneers the Indians had ever seen

Dr. Whitman's helpfulness to the emigrants made the Indians extremely bitter

they believed he preferred whites to them

#### OREGON COUNTRY FACES CHANGE

In all, the Methodist establishments numbered nearly one hundred men, women and children

some operated other stations that Jason Lee had organized outside of the Willamette Valley

Arrival of the Great Migration, the first large and largest wagon train to reach Oregon,

changed the small American majority in Oregon Country into an overwhelming one

settlement at Oregon City passed from the control of missionaries to that of farmers

farmers wanted to make the country wholly American

and looked upon the British as enemies or interlopers

divisions along national lines were inevitable

intensifying these feelings were religious cleavages

Each passing month brought more immigrants to the west by wagon and ship --

Methodist missionary influence was waning

American hostility toward Hudson's Bay Company was growing -- November 1843

(Oregon Trail would be followed by more than 100,000 immigrants over the next fifteen years

their arrival helped to win ownership of Oregon for America)

## CONCERNS REGARDING THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT SURFACE

Forming a Provisional Government provided a large first step toward establishing local laws but no effort to declare independence surfaced because of the Joint Occupation Treaty [1818] “Newell Party” and “Mission Party” had dominated the 1843 Provisional Government election all the legislation passed by the Provisional government seemed to have as its goal the development of a consistent pro-American feeling in the community and the banishment of every divisive influences -- British, Catholic, or Indian Provisional Government was, in most respects, very weak

it was incapable of meeting the needs of the Great Migration and other new arrivals new arrivals had had no voice in selection of local officials three-man Executive Committee serving instead of a governor was not practical and they believed a “head of state” was necessary many Oregon Country settlers were arriving from Southern states and territories they were not the slaveholder class -- they were more anti-Negro than anti-slavery voluntary tax unworkable as there was no way to raise money for support of the government except by private contribution

Great Migration brought new perspectives to bear

large influxes of new pioneers in 1843 brought nine hundred immigrants farmers, lawyers, merchants and all of the other elements of the communities from where they had come wanted the stronger forms of government they had known at home these new arrivals soon began to agitate for protection for themselves and their land claims and for a voice in the Provisional Government which was less than six months old several able political leaders had arrived with the Great Migration such as Peter H. Burnett, Jesse Applegate, Morton M. McCarver, James W. Nesmith, William Waldo and Asa L. Lovejoy

old political parties in Oregon no longer met the needs of settlers

Robert “Doc Newell’s “Newell Party” and its old mountain men continued to be respected and valued members of the community but no longer did they exert their earlier influence on political decisions

Methodist missionaries’ “Mission Party” after Rev. Jason Lee lost interest

found new leadership and a new direction under businessman George Abernathy

Arriving pioneers also disapproved of the favoritism regarding land grants

given toward Rev. Jason Lee's Methodist missions

Provisional law allowed Protestant missions to claim an entire township -- thirty-six sections  
in addition to the land their members held as individuals

Great Migration members believed Hudson's Bay Company employees  
also should be under Provisional Law

British settlers, on the advice of Dr. John McLoughlin refused to continue to cooperate  
as did the Catholics

## FORMATION OF LOCAL POLITICAL PARTIES IN OREGON COUNTRY

New settlers wanted a stronger, more aggressive government

three separate philosophies of the political future of Oregon Country-quickly emerged:

- Independent Party desired Oregon Country to become an independent country  
as the [1836] Lone Star Republic was doing (for Texas)
- Mission Party members represented the interests of the Methodist missions
- American Party wanted Oregon Country to become a United States territory

## INDEPENDENT PARTY MEMBERS WANT TO FORM A THE REPUBLIC OF OREGON

Americans had established themselves in Oregon Country

they continued to gather strength through the arrival of new immigrants from the mid-west states  
yet no action on the part of the United States government had followed

Because of delays by Congress a small minority of citizens in Oregon Country

still favored the idea of forming a government independent of both the U.S. and Britain  
to extend its jurisdiction over the territory and to settle the boundary question

also at issue was the isolated condition of the settlements in Oregon Country  
and their remoteness from the United States

"Independent Party," although small in number, demanded Oregon Country become a republic  
they thought that neither Great Britain nor the United States could presently exercise control  
over the residents of Oregon Country and that titles to land and to property of all kinds  
would continue unsettled and in doubt

they believed they could deal with both Britain and the United States as their own republic  
(this process was then being use by Texas)

they believed American settlers were in Oregon Country permanently

Hudson's Bay Company was, therefore, merely a temporary resident

they further believed that the powers of the Provisional Government rested solely on the will  
of the governed and could be rejected at any time by coordinated opposition of the people

## MISSION PARTY MEMBERS ARE INTERESTED IN CLAIMING LAND

Not finding a great deal of success with the native population many Methodist missionaries were interested in claiming land and establishing farms  
Methodist Mission at Champoege and Chemeketa also claimed huge areas of land including prime sites for future villages and industrial development especially in Oregon City

## AMERICAN PARTY WANTS OREGON COUNTRY TO BECOME A U.S. TERRITORY

“American Party” wanted to become a territory of the United States and eventually become a state but the significance of Hudson’s Bay Company split this party into two positions  
“Moderate American Party” and “Ultra American Party”  
“Moderate American Party” members were sure they would be made a territory of the United States as soon as the boundary dispute with Great Britain was cleared up  
Joint Occupation was acceptable to them until the international boundary question was settled they were willing to recognize influence of Hudson’s Bay Company in maintaining law and order they believe their community would be better served if Americans worked with the Company they believed Hudson’s Bay Company had property rights in Oregon Country  
“Ultra American Party” members also wanted to become a United States Territory but they did not believe Hudson’s Bay Company had any right to the land at all they were opposed to Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin and everything British and did not agree with the Moderate Americans regarding Hudson’s Bay Company’s rights

## LIEUTENANT JOHN CHARLES FREMONT’S SECOND EXPEDITION TURNS SOUTH

At the start of his trip back towards Missouri Fremont decided not to follow the Oregon Trail but rather to strike out eastward to define, map and name the Great Basin (of Nevada and Utah) the wisdom of not following the Oregon Trail but instead exploring new terrain at the start of winter must have been questioned  
however, Fremont claimed his men welcomed the challenge  
Twenty-seven men of Fremont’s United States expedition left the banks of the Columbia River and headed south -- about noon November 25, 1843 they began an ascent of the Deschutes River  
their little wagon that had carried German cartographer Charles Preuss and the scientific instruments was left behind but the howitzer was taken along

## LIEUTENANT FREMONT EXPLORES EASTERN OREGON



Continuing up the Deschutes River, the twenty-seven adventurers traveled along Indian trails as they mapped geographical features fog, rain and snow made travel miserable -- Indians occasionally ran off their animals Fremont's expedition experienced a difficult crossing of this virtually unknown area cold, lack of grass for the animals and lack of food for the men added to their discomfort this route across Oregon Country became known in military history as the Fremont Trail

#### GREAT MIGRATION WAS THE FIRST AND LARGEST WAGON TRAIN TO CROSS

Wagon trains dramatically reduced in size and increased in frequency after 1843 organizing a thousand people into an expedition was no longer necessary

Horace Greeley, editor of the *New-York Tribune*, declared: **“This emigration of more than a thousand persons in one body to Oregon wears an aspect of insanity.... For what do they [women and children] brave the desert, the wilderness, the savage, the snowy precipices of the Rocky Mountains, the weary march, the storm-drenched bivouac and the gnawing of famine.”**<sup>109</sup>

(Great Migration was followed by more than 100,000 emigrants over the next fifteen years their arrival helped to win ownership of Oregon for America)

#### PETER H. BURNETT DESCRIBES THE REWARD FOR SUCCESS

After reaching Willamette Valley, Peter H. Burnett wrote a number of letters to the New York Herald newspaper giving an account of the Great Migration's journey

He wrote of their camp at Elm Grove on the bank of the Kansas River: **“I have never witnessed a scene more beautiful than this. Elm Grove stands in a wide, gentle undulating prairie. The moon shed her silvery beams on the white sheets of sixty wagons; a thousand head of cattle grazed upon the surrounding plain; fifty campfires sent up their brilliant flames, and the sound of the sweet violin was heard in the tents. All was stir and excitement.”**<sup>110</sup>

#### JESSE APPLGATE ALSO WROTE OF THE EXPERIENCE OF THE OREGON TRAIL

**“The Western pioneer had probably crossed the Blue Ridge or the Cumberland Mountains when a boy and was now in his prime. Rugged, hardy, and powerful of frame, he was full to overflowing with the love of adventure, and animated by a brave soul that scorned the very idea of fear. All had heard of the perpetually green hills and plains of Western Oregon, and how the warm breath of the vast Pacific tempered the air to the genial degree and drove winter back to the North. Many of them contrasted in imagination the open stretch of a mile square of rich, green, and grassy**

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<sup>109</sup> Joseph Schafer. *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, P. 167.

<sup>110</sup> Joseph Schafer, *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, P. 148.

land, where the strawberry plant bloomed through every winter month, with their circumscribed clearings in the Missouri bottoms. Of long winter evenings neighbors visited each other, and before the big shell-bark hickory fire, the seasoned walnut fire, the dry black-jack fire, or the roaring dead elm fire, they talked these things over; and as a natural consequence, under these favorable circumstances, the spirit of emigration warmed up; and the 'Oregon fever' became as a household expression. Thus originated the cast cavalcade, or emigrant train, stretching its serpentine length for miles, enveloped in vast pillars of dust, patiently wending its toilsome way across the American continent.

How familiar these scenes and experiences with the old pioneers! The vast plains, the uncountable herds of buffalo; the swift-footed antelope; the bands of mounted, painted warriors; the rugged snow-capped mountain ranges; the deep, swift, and dangerous rivers; the lonesome howl of the wild wolf; the midnight yell of the assaulting savage; the awful panic and stampede; the solemn and silent funeral at the dead hour of night, and the lonely and hidden grave of departed friends, -- what memories are associated with the Plains across!"<sup>111</sup>

#### UNITED STATES AND BRITAIN OPEN NEGOTIATIONS ON A WESTERN BOUNDARY

(American Minister to the United Kingdom Edward Everett was given authority

to negotiate with British officials to settle the Oregon Question [October 1843])

Edward Everett met with British Prime Minister Robert Peel's Foreign Secretary, the Earl of Aberdeen

Everett presented the Earl of Aberdeen the terms considered by the President John Tyler

America's old offer of a boundary along the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel was again presented

along with a guarantee of free access to the Columbia River -- November 29, 1843

#### PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT IMPOSES CHANGES

Great Migration changed the political and social dynamics of the Willamette Valley

farmers, lawyers, merchants and other elements of the communities from which they had come

wanted stronger forms of government that they had known at home

Enlarged American community made it necessary to change the government

nine member Legislative Council met in Special Session -- December 1843

under the influence of the Independent Party the Provisional Government

extended its jurisdiction over land north of Columbia River

although Great Britain had not relinquished its authority

Legislative Council did not impose laws or legal restraint on British subjects

but rather they established a government in which distinctions of nationality

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<sup>111</sup> William Denison Lyman, *The Columbia River*, P. 178

were for the time being overlooked -- everyone was invited to cooperate

British subjects accepted the expansion of the government as did Dr. McLoughlin who wrote he joined **“the association both for the security of the company’s property and the protection of its rights.”**<sup>112</sup>

#### PRESIDENT JOHN TYLER CHANGES HIS OFFER TO BRITAIN REGARDING OREGON

American Minister to the United Kingdom Edward Everett had been authorized to present to Britain an offer to establish the international boundary along the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel and to guarantee Britain free access to the Columbia River

However during President Tyler’s State of the Union address -- December 6, 1843

he claimed **“the entire region of country lying on the Pacific and embraced within 42° and 54°40’ of north latitude.”**

Great Britain’s government was quite startled by this change

#### CONGRESS RECEIVES A MEMORIAL FROM THE OREGON PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

Missouri Democrat Senator Thomas Hart Benton whose son-in-law had just departed from Oregon presented the Provisional Government Memorial (penned June 28, 1843 by Robert Shortess) to the U.S. Senate

Shortess Memorial asked the Polk Administration for naval yards, mail service, land grants, military protection and territorial status

what was most significant was that political leaders across the continent were made aware that an American colony had begun on the shores of the Pacific Ocean

U.S. Senate accepted the Memorial -- December 8, 1843

this memorial, like several before it, fanned the flames of a growing expansionist movement

#### FREMONT’S EXPEDITION REACHES THE VICINITY OF KLAMATH LAKE

Lieutenant Fremont and his twenty-seven men came upon an extensive meadow surrounded by timber he believed he had reached Klamath Lake (actually he was at Klamath Marsh thirty miles north) excellent feed which was badly needed was available for the animals

camp was made (at today’s Military Crossing Road) -- December 10, 1843

Fremont noted several columns of smoke rising from Klamath Indian campfires around the marsh

Fremont ordered the howitzer fired and the smoke immediately disappeared

#### LIEUTENANT FREMONT VISITS WITH THE KLAMATH INDIANS

Fremont was guided to a Klamath village in the middle of the marsh -- December 11, 1843

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<sup>112</sup> Lancaster Pollard, *A History of the State of Washington*, P. 102.

they were met by the chief and his wife who led them into the village beside the river bank  
communication was possible only using sign language which limited the information available  
here, the guides who had led the expedition from the Dalles indicated they wanted to return home  
Fremont was unsuccessful in convincing the Klamath Indians to provide replacement guides

#### FREMONT'S CAMP IS THROGGED BY KLAMATH INDIANS

Many Klamath Indians visited Fremont's camp -- December 12, 1843

mindful of the disaster that Jedediah Smith had encountered, Fremont kept a constant guard  
according to information from the Klamaths a large lake could be reached by traveling east  
Breaking camp in a snow storm the expedition crossed the marsh and found shelter in the timber  
where camp was made

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET PREPARES TO RETURN TO AMERICA

Father De Smet arrived in Antwerp, Belgium -- December 12, 1843

as a result of his European tour he raised \$26,500

in addition, Father De Smet recruited eleven people to work in the mission field of Oregon  
Fathers John Nobili, Michael Accolti, Antonio (Anthony) Ravalli and Louis Vercruysse  
and lay brother Francis Huybrechts

six nuns of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur from Belgium accompanied

Sisters Loyola (Superior), Mary Cornelia, Mary Catherine, Mary Aloysia, Mary Albine  
and Norbertine volunteered to go to Oregon out of an eagerness to serve

they knew they would probably never return to their homeland

they gathered all the provisions they thought might be needed

including a piano

Father De Smet decided it would be not a good idea to embark on the difficult and dangerous journey  
that required crossing the Atlantic Ocean, traveling overland to St. Louis,  
and then continuing on to the mission site

especially with Jesuits and the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur

who had little travel experience

Father De Smet began preparations to sail round Cape Horn to Oregon Country

he chartered the *Indefatigable* a two-masted sailing brig

with its crew headed by Captain M.J. Moller for the considerable sum of \$3,300

#### LIEUTENANT FREMONT AND HIS EXPEDITION ENTER THE CASCADE MOUNTAINS

Setting out Fremont led his men into a pine forest on the Cascade Mountains -- December 13, 1843

snow was four to twelve inches deep and the howitzer was hard to move  
Unexpectedly, the Klamath chief and a few others arrived to help guide for a day or two  
after traveling east for several hours, they reached a considerable stream  
where camp was made (along today's Williamson River)

#### KLAMATH INDIANS LEAVE LIEUTENANT FREMONT'S EXPEDITION

When the Klamath chief announced the snow was getting too deep in the mountains  
he and his men were turning back to return home  
Fremont provided them with gifts for the service they had provided -- December 15, 1843  
a course running north by east was pointed out by the chief that would take Fremont to a lake  
where no more snow would be found  
Fremont crossed a hard-frozen swamp and entered a pine forest  
that ascended the Cascade Mountains of southeast Oregon

#### LIEUTENANT FREMONT AND HIS MEN REACH THE EAST SIDE OF THE CASCADES

Travel this morning was through about three feet of crusted snow that cut the animals' hoofs  
gradually climbing up the mountains through pine forests they crossed several springs  
tree branches were weighted down with snow -- December 16, 1843  
as a storm raged they reached the edge of a vertical rock wall  
more than a thousand feet below was a valley of green grass lit by bright sun  
in the middle was a lake with no ice nor snow along its shore  
Fremont named Summer Lake (Oregon) and the Winter ridge which they stood on  
Looking east from Winter Ridge not a tree was to be seen  
they had reached (Nevada's) Great Basin  
They followed the rocky wall north for five or six miles before they found a way down to the valley  
although the descent was extremely difficult  
it was dark when the last of the men reached the valley

#### LIEUTENANT FREMONT TRAVELS AROUND SUMMER LAKE

Fremont and his men followed an Indian trail along the shore of Summer Lake  
both water and grass were scarce as the lake water was alkali  
camp was made that night near the eastern point of the lake -- December 18, 1843  
Continuing south-east Fremont sighted and name Lake Abert  
in honor of U.S. Army Corps of Topographical Engineers commander Colonel John J. Abert  
water in this lake was not fit for drinking

## SACRED HEART MISSION IS MOVED AND RENAMED SAINT JOSEPH'S MISSION

Father Peter De Vos, the acting head of the Rocky Mountain Mission in Father De Smet's absence, arrived for a visit at Sacred Heart Mission much to the annoyance of Father Nicholas Point who still harbored a grudge against De Vos from their seminary days

Father De Vos had a heavy administrative hand -- he renamed and relocated the mission

De Vos decreed that Sacred Heart Mission should be repositioned

to the southern end of Lake Coeur d'Alene about a mile up the Saint Joe River henceforth, it would be known as Saint Joseph's Mission

Father De Vos then ordered Father Point accompany the Flatheads on their fall buffalo hunt

Father Point undertook this assignment with contempt

Father De Vos also gathered together Father Point's personal letters which he believed subversive and placed them in a sealed envelope for Father Superior Father Pierre Verhaegen in St. Louis

Father Point believed this was an invasion of his privacy nevertheless compliance was implicit in the vow of obedience taken by member of the Society of Jesus

St. Joseph's Mission was built at the south end of Lake Coeur d'Alene

on a rise above the St. Joe River (northwest of St. Maries, Idaho -- pronounced St. Mary's)

there Catholic missionaries taught the Coeur d'Alene Indians the Gospel

and the industry of farming

Father Nicholas Point, who was placed in charge of the mission, kept a journal

and made hundreds of sketches of Indians in every phase of their existence

## DR. McLOUGHLIN'S LAND IN OREGON CITY COMES UNDER DISPUTE

By this time Dr. John McLoughlin had again made improvements on his claim at Oregon City

the land, including Governor Island, was surveyed by Jesse Applegate -- December 1843

part of the property had been laid out in town lots and blocks

some of these lots and blocks he gave away -- some he sold

(after the Methodist mission dissolved and new settlers arrived, the crude survey efforts

were challenged by those who refused to recognize non-American citizens' land claims)

Provisional Government Land Laws gave title to Dr. McLoughlin's claim

to Rev. Jason Lee's missionaries and the Methodist mission under the discriminatory Article IV

Methodist minister Alvin F. Waller employed John Ricord as his attorney

then asserted his own ownership of all the McLoughlin land claim, except Governor Island

to which the Oregon Milling Company laid claim

## MRS. EMILIE GAMELIN BECOMES THE HEAD OF THE SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE

Mrs. Emilie Gamelin [1800-1851] of Montreal, Canada had been married to Jean Baptiste Gamelin they had three sons -- two of whom died in infancy  
then her husband died as did her last child -- [1827]  
she devoted the remainder of her life to easing the needs of the city's poorest residents  
Emilie Gamelin was asked by the Bishop Ignace Bourget of Montreal  
to found a religious order for women -- Mrs. Gamelin became Mother Emilie Gamelin  
seven young women were received as the Daughters of Charity, Servants of the Poor [1843]  
they became known as the Sisters of Providence because of their profound belief  
that Providence would supply the needs of those they served

## ESTHER PARISEAU (MOTHER JOSEPH) ENTERS A CONVENT

Joseph Pariseau presented his daughter to Mother Superior Emilie Gamelin -- December 26, 1843  
(talented young recruit standing before Mother Gamelin  
would go on to become Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart)  
Esther Pariseau enrolled at Asile of Providence convent -- December 26, 1843  
she began to work with Mother Emile Gamelin and the Daughters of Charity, Servants of the Poor  
known as the Sisters of Providence  
she learned to adapt to a new life away from her beloved family  
as a novice, she was trained in nursing in the sisters' pharmacy and infirmary  
her sewing skills were honed in the roberie, making habits and vestments,  
she learned to carve fine wax figures  
she also assisted the treasurer with the daily tasks of marketing, baking, and the laundry

## LIEUTENANT JOHN C. FREMONT'S EXPEDITION ENTERS (TODAY'S NEVADA)

Fremont took a navigational reading of the stars and determined that his camp  
was directly on the forty-second parallel (at today's Oregon-Nevada border)  
Fremont continued south (across the Great Basin of today's Nevada)  
to find the fabled Buenaventura River of Spanish lore  
his exploration proved the river did not exist -- end of December 1843  
Prospects for continuing east seemed very uncertain  
this county was extremely difficult to cross, what grass was available was unwholesome  
hooves of the animals were worn and cut by rocks -- many of them were lame  
1843 closed on a gloomy note for Lieutenant Fremont and his twenty-seven men

## LIEUTENANT JOHN FREMONT CONTINUES ACROSS THE DESERT OF THE GREAT BASIN

Fremont and the members of his second expedition endured desert conditions

as they traveled a difficult road in falling snow -- January 3, 1844

deep fine sand mixed in places with clay added to their misery

camp were made without water or grass for the animals

Fremont felt the country was so foreboding that he turned southward

he and his men walked to spare the animals

fog became so dense that breaking camp was delayed as finding the animals was difficult

hot spring were reached that provided some relief as some forage was available

Continuing their journey Lieutenant Fremont and his twenty-seven men reached an Indian village

they were very happy to see that people could survive in this region

an Indian brought a large steelhead to trade -- soon the explorers' camp had a number of fish

## FLOODING CONDITIONS ARE FELT IN THE UNITED STATES

Many settlements in the United States were devastated by floods -- winter 1843-1844

sickness and utter discouragement followed throughout the flood zones

Strands of idealism and opportunism were inextricably intertwined

in the dreams of disheartened Americans and passionate pioneers alike

## CONDITIONS IN OREGON COUNTRY ARE MORE FAVORABLE THAN THOSE IN THE U.S.

"Old settlers," those who arrived at end of the Oregon Trail before [1843] occupied the choicest land

some fifty families lived on French Prairie in the Willamette Valley (near today's Woodburn)

a few others were scattered over the valley plain

they had been fortunate to find Hudson's Bay Company firmly entrenched in the region

Dr. John McLoughlin was both courteous and helpful to Americans

timely and ungrudgingly assistance was given to new comers

at Fort Walla Walla and Fort Vancouver

in notable instances, no bill was presented for this generous first aid

at Fort Vancouver he was always ready to provision the needy, protect them from danger

and make first winter as safe and pleasant as possible

boats were provided to carry pioneers to the Willamette Valley, cattle were loaned,

and settlers supplied with clothing food, farming utensils and wheat seed

occasionally a ship arrived on Columbia River with goods to supply the colonists

supplies from England were offered for purchase

It was generally reported throughout the country that Western farmers on the coast



would find a market for their products in the Orient

Americans moving into Oregon Country were helped by the old settlers

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET JOURNEYS FROM EUROPE TO THE PACIFIC COAST

Father De Smet had chartered the sailing brig *Indefatigable* to carry missionary recruits to America

*Indefatigable* sailed from Antwerp, Belgium carrying twelve passengers -- January 9, 1844

Fathers Pierre-Jean De Smet, John Nobili, Michael Accolti, Antonio (Anthony) Ravalli  
and Louis Vercruysse and lay brother Francis Huybrechts

in addition six nuns of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur from Belgium

sailed with the Jesuit priests: Sister Loyola (who served as Superior), Sisters Mary Cornelia,  
Mary Catherine, Mary Aloysia, Mary Albine, and Norbertine

*Indefatigable's* voyage to Oregon Country took seven months as they traveled across the Atlantic,  
rounded Cape Horn, entered the Pacific Ocean, sailed along the coasts  
of South, Central and North America before reaching the mouth of the Columbia River

#### REV. JASON LEE DECIDES TO MEET WITH THE METHODIST MISSION SOCIETY

Knowing charges had been leveled against him and the Methodist Mission Society was unhappy

Rev. Jason Lee sailed east to report to them in person -- winter 1843-1844

Rev. David Leslie was left in charge of the Oregon Mission in the absence of Rev. Jason Lee  
working with him were only:

- Rev. Henry Kirk W. (or H.K.W.) Perkins who had founded Wascopam Mission at The Dalles  
along with Rev. Daniel Lee [1838]

this had been by far the most successful of the Methodist missions;

- Rev. Alvin F. Waller at Oregon City;

- Rev. Josiah Parrish who had been sent to Clatsop to take the place of Rev. Joseph H. Frost;

- and various lay helpers at these places and at the Indian Manual Labor School

While in Jason Lee received a letter written to him by the Mission Society carried by Dr. Ira Babcock  
in which Lee's dismissal and replacement as superintendent of the mission were announced

#### LIEUTENANT JOHN CHARLES FREMONT'S SECOND EXPEDITION CONTINUES ON

Following a well-marked Indian trail running beside a beautiful stream

they traveled along the base of the Sierra Nevada Mountains -- January 16, 1844

Fremont expected to find the fabled Buena Ventura River at any moment

#### LIEUTENANT JOHN FREMONT DECIDES TO TURN WEST

After examining the condition of the remaining animals Fremont found their hoofs so cut up they could not possibly cross the Rocky Mountains and return to St. Louis

Fremont changed his become critical as Fremont noted on January 18, 1844: **“It was evidently impossible that they [future travelers on the Oregon Trail] could cross the country to the Rocky Mountains...I therefore determined to abandoned my eastern course, and to cross the Sierra Nevada into the valley of the Sacramento, wherever a practicable pass could be found.”**<sup>113</sup>

This not only departed from his orders, but risked the annihilation of his command even if he made it to the Sacramento River he would be leading an official United States exploring expedition uninvited into Mexican territory They began a hazardous crossing into the Sierra Nevada Mountains -- January 19

#### DISPUTE OVER LAND IN OREGON CITY ESCALATES

Hudson’s Bay Company Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin had made personal loans to Americans that were valued in excess of \$30,000

Dr. McLoughlin wanted a means to sue and attach debtor’s property if necessary Attorney for Methodist preacher Alvin F. Waller John Ricord signed a public proclamation that was publicly posted at Oregon City -- early 1844 [although it was dated December 20, 1843] this proclamation set forth the alleged illegality of Dr. John McLoughlin’s claim and the imaginary rights of Rev. Waller to the land -- early 1844

#### CONGRESSMAN STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS OF ILLINOIS WRITES A TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Democrat Stephen A. Douglas was Chairman of the Committee on Territories for the National House of Representatives -- 1844

he developed a transcontinental railroad plan of his own that differed materially from financier Asa Whitney’s plan to use land grants to finance construction Douglas proposed to organize two new territories -- Oregon and Nebraska together with Iowa Territory they would contain the railroad route from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean

U.S. government would then grant to each territory alternative sections of land to be sold to pay for construction of the road work could be accomplished either as a public venture or let out to private companies as each of the territorial governments involved could determine

#### FREMONT AND HIS SECOND EXPEDITION ENTERS THE SIERRA NEVADA MOUNTAINS

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<sup>113</sup> Robert Utley, *A Life Wind and Perilous*, P 198.

The expedition met a party of Indians who agreed to lead Fremont to a pass across the mountains

Fremont's expedition followed a path before setting out across very broken ground

that passed through a gap between the snowy mountains

Pressing on, the snow deepened until it became three to four feet deep in the summit of the mountains

here their guide left them after pointing out the trail beside a river they were to follow

below them was a little valley -- ahead the mountains rose still higher one ridge after another

#### LIEUTENANT FREMONT CONTINUES ACROSS THE SIERRA NEVADA MOUNTAINS

Fremont and the men of his second expedition journeyed through Carson Valley (Nevada) --

named by Fremont to honor Christopher "Kit" Carson who served as guide

they traveled along a broad trail gently rising trail

as they moved deeper into the Sierra Nevada Mountains -- January 31, 1844

They had just ignited their campfires when a crowd of nearly naked Indians entered the camp

they had been hunting rabbits and sat themselves around the campfires

one group of about twelve Indians sat on a log near one of the fires

Fremont approached them and explained that he wanted to cross the mountains to the Pacific

one old man told Fremont that before the snow it was six sleeps to where whites lived

but the way was impossible in the deep snow

he explained the river Fremont was following led to a lake that held many large fish

there would be many people and no snow on the ground

this was a place where they could wait until spring

Fremont indicated he could not wait until spring and a young man was presented to the explorer

who, it was said, had seen the white men with his own eyes

this young Indian was convinced to serve as guide

#### FREMONT AND HIS MEN SET OUT WITH HIS YOUNG INDIAN GUIDE

Camp at the 6,000- or 7,000-foot level was broken and the snow had stopped falling

morning air was clear and frosty -- February 2, 1844

Fremont's party took up the trek crossing the river on the ice

they began climbing the valley of a tributary in silence as everyone knew the danger ahead

As the snow in the deepened ten men were sent ahead on the strongest horses

each man and horse worked as long as he could breaking the trail

then stepped aside and took his place in the rear as the next man and horse broke the trail

cartographer Charles Preuss noted in his journal February 3: **“We are getting deeper and deeper into the mountain and snow. We can make only a few miles each day.”**<sup>114</sup>

Day after day they continued toward the mountain pass indicated by their guide  
one morning their young guide ran away but Fremont was determined to continue on  
progress up the Sierra Nevada Mountains was very slow  
time was taken to construct snowshoes and sledges for the baggage  
horses could travel only at night after the snow had frozen hard enough to support them  
Finally camp was made at the 8,000 foot level where the men rested and waited for the horses  
Fremont and another man went ahead to scout  
they found what Fremont believed was the Sacramento River  
(it was, in fact, the American River)

#### LIEUTENANT FREMONT AND TOM FITZPATRICK RECONNIOTER ON SNOWSHOES

Charles Fremont and guide Tom “Broken Hand” Fitzpatrick led a party on snowshoes single file  
on a ten mile trek tramping the heavy snow as best they could  
to the top of one of the peaks -- February 6, 1844  
Christopher “Kit” Carson recognized these were the coastal mountains he had visited before  
Using a telescope they traced the course of a river  
between them and river were miles of snowy fields and broken ridges of pine-covered mountains

#### CONDITIONS FOR THE FREMONT EXPEDITION BECOME ALMOST HOPELESS

Cartographer Charles Preuss noted in his diary: **“We are now completely snowed in. The snowstorm is on top of us. The wind obliterates all tracks which, with incredible effort, we make for our horses. The horses are about twenty miles behind and are expected to arrive tonight, or rather, they are now no longer expected. How could they get through? At the moment no one can tell what will really happen. It is certain we shall have to eat horse meat. I should not mind if we only had salt. I feel terribly weak and have little appetite.”**<sup>115</sup> -- February 11, 1844

#### LAKE TAHOE IS SEEN BY CAPTAIN JOHN FREMONT

Fremont and his cartographer Charles Preuss climbed a high peak to view their surroundings  
in the far distance they saw a beautiful mountain lake (Lake Tahoe) through their telescope  
the lake was surrounded by mountains with no apparent outlet -- February 14, 1844  
fog obscured the view but snow could be seen in mountains that faded blue in the distance

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<sup>114</sup> Francis P. Farquhar, *History of the Sierra Nevada*, P. 56.

<sup>115</sup> Francis P. Farquhar, *History of the Sierra Nevada*, P. 56.

## FREMONT MAKES CAMP AT THE SUMMIT OF THE SIERRA NEVADA MOUNTAINS

Lieutenant Fremont established "Long Camp," the most noted camp of this expedition,  
at the 9,338-foot level (of today's Carson Pass) -- February 20, 1844  
Fremont's men considered themselves victorious over the Sierra Nevada Mountains  
with only the descent ahead  
however, deep fields of snow still lay between them and the American River

## FREMONT AND HIS MEN BEGIN THEIR DESCENT TO THE AMERICAN RIVER

An early start was made the next morning (over Carson Pass) was made  
to allow for travel before the snow became too soft for the animals -- February 21, 1844  
hard and doubtful labor lay ahead for the members of Fremont's second expedition  
They watched clouds roll in and surround the mountains and were fearful of another snow storm  
but they heard thunder roll across the valley below  
they watched and listened to the storm all afternoon  
at dusk the sky cleared and fires could be seen in the valley below  
seeing signs of humanity lifted the explorers' spirits

## FREMONT AND HIS MEN FACE THEIR MOST DIFFICULT DAY

Soft snow forced Fremont and his twenty-seven men to leave the trail and travel the mountain sides  
these were steep and slippery with snow and ice -- February 23, 1844  
trees impeded their progress, tore at their skin and exhausted their patience  
slippery moccasins made footing difficult to maintain  
axes and mauls were necessary to make a road through the snow  
but that night in camp the men were rewarded with rain and plentiful grass for the animals  
Travel became easier when a foot path down the south face of the mountain was discovered  
and the ground became soft to the animals' hooves  
as they hurried on, the sounds of birds singing and warm winds filled them with excitement  
however, forage for the animals was in short supply

## LACK OF PASTURE FOR THE ANIMALS AND FOOD FOR THE MEN BECOMES CRITICAL

Several days later the first flowers were seen however grass for forage remained scarce  
Charles Towns became lightheaded and wandered into the woods  
he had no idea where he was going  
another of the men brought him back but he was dazed and disoriented from hunger

horses and mules began to weaken and collapse from starvation or stray off into the woods  
one of these was Fremont's favorite horse  
Baptiste Derosier volunteered to backtrack in an effort to find Fremont's horse  
he did not return to camp that night

#### HARSH CONDITIONS BEGIN TO TAKE A TOLL ON FREMONT'S MEN

Charles Towns, still unsettled in his mind, went for a swim in the American River  
as if it was (summer) and the stream was calm instead of the cold foaming mountain torrent it was  
Baptiste Derosier appeared in camp  
he imagined he had been missing for several days and thought they were still at their former camp  
it became obvious that he was deranged  
when he had been lost in the mountains cold, hunger and exhaustion had crazed him

#### CATHOLIC RELATIONS WITH HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY CONCERN AMERICAN SETTLERS

Good relations were enjoyed among the Hudson's Bay Company, Catholics and Indians  
this was seen in a negative light from the American settlers' view  
Americans accused the Hudson's Bay Company  
of plotting with the Indians and foreign-born Catholics  
to undermine the United States of America settlement progress

#### RACISM IN AMERICA SPREADS TO OREGON COUNTRY

People who settled in Oregon Country tended to come from the frontier areas of the Middle West  
particularly the Ohio and Mississippi River valleys  
move West for many pioneers included the expectation that they could settle  
in an area untroubled by racial concerns

South and parts of the Mid-west passed laws restricting the rights of black people:

- they denied blacks their right to vote,
- they restricted blacks the right to be heard in court and to serve on juries,
- they required blacks to post a bond to assure their good behavior,
- they demanded that black people carry proof of their freedom,  
or excluded them altogether from living in these territories

#### ISSUE OF SLAVERY IMPACTS OREGON COUNTRY

Democrats were generally more inclined to Western expansion than were Whigs  
yet Democratic Southern slaveholders were more interested in Texas

because the Provisional Government in Oregon had prohibited slavery  
Oregon question became entangled with Texas and slavery in the nation's capital

#### INTER-RACIAL INCIDENT IN OREGON COUNTRY CAUSES GREAT CONCERN

Mulatto George Winslow (also known as Winslow Anderson) hired a Wasco Indian named Cockstock  
to clear a tract of land on Winslow's farm near Oregon City -- late February 1844

Cockstock, in payment, was to receive a horse when the job was completed  
Before the completion of the contract, Winslow sold the horse and the farm  
to a Negro, James D. Saules

When Cockstock finished the job and asked for payment Saules refused to give him the horse

#### JOHN C. CALHOUN IS NAMED SECRETARY TO STATE

President John Tyler appointed United States Senator John C. Calhoun from South Carolina  
to succeed Secretary of State Abel P. Upshur -- February 28, 1844

Secretary of State Upshur had been accidentally killed in an explosion  
aboard the U.S. Navy warship USS *Princeton*

both United States and Great Britain wanted to possess the Willamette Valley  
and, even more importantly to those governments, the Columbia River

Newly appointed Secretary of State Calhoun was ready to fight Mexico for possession of Texas  
but the Southern statesman did not want to fight Great Britain for Oregon Country  
Calhoun believed if war arose with Great Britain

England could send a fleet to the Columbia River from China in six weeks  
whereas the United States ships would have to sail around Cape Horn  
and up the coast of North America to Oregon Country

an American army would have to cross the continent to be in a position to fight  
America would lose **"every inch of Oregon"**<sup>116</sup>

nevertheless as a Democrat, he did not dare to offend the West by backing down from England

Calhoun believed time was on the side of the Americans

he therefore adopted a policy of "masterly inactivity"

Agitation regarding the international boundary continued in Congress

reports were given, speeches written and delivered, newspaper articles flooded the press,  
and innumerable letters were written to Congress, about Congress and by Congressmen

#### COCKSTOCK VOWES VENGEANCE FOR THE BREAKING OF HIS CONTRACT

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<sup>116</sup> William Denison Lyman, *The Columbia River*, P. 198.

Vowing vengeance against both black men, Cockstock appropriated the horse  
and for the next several weeks made threats against both George Winslow and James D. Saules  
Both men feared for their lives and appealed to sub-Indian Agent Dr. Elijah White  
to arrange for Cockstock to be removed from the Willamette Valley -- early March 1844  
Dr. White forced Cockstock to return the horse  
this prompted the Wasco Indian to renew his threats against the two men  
Saules notified Dr. White he was prepared to defend himself by force of arms if necessary  
sub-Indian Agent White made two attempts to capture Cockstock -- late February and early March  
Dr. White finally a \$100 reward was posted in Oregon City for Cockstock's arrest  
hoping that Cockstock could be taken peaceably  
but this only enraged the native to an armed confrontation

#### ONE OF LIEUTENANT JOHN C. FREMONT'S MEN BECOMES LOST

Lieutenant John Fremont's second expedition continued their struggle  
down the Sierra Nevada Mountains beside the American River  
Camp was made on a bench where there were springs and an abundance of grass for the stock  
German cartographer Charles Preuss traveling alone continued down the river  
he was unaware that camp had been made early -- March 2, 1844

#### LIEUTENANT JOHN C. FREMONT CONTINES DOWN THE AMERICAN RIVER

Fremont and his men were concerned when Charles Preuss did not arrive in camp -- March 3, 1844  
Preuss' trail along the river was discovered in the morning  
it was followed for a considerable distance to where he had camped  
here they shouted and fired their guns but heard no response  
Fremont concluded he must have continued downstream  
Continuing along the bank of the American River the shouts of the expedition members  
were rewarded with a response that drew gradually nearer  
but when the person appeared he was an Indian who thought the shouts were from his companions  
their search for the German cartographer continued

#### AN INTER-RACIAL INCIDENT IS AVOIDED IN OREGON CITY

Wasco Indian Cockstock and four Molalla Indians arrayed in war paint  
armed with guns and bows and arrows, they rode into Oregon City -- March 4, 1844  
without committing any actual hostile act they re-crossed the Willamette River  
back to the Indian camps on the opposite side



there they solicited the Clackamas and Willamette Falls Indians to join them

#### COCKSTOCK AND HIS COMPANIONS RETURN TO OREGON CITY

Cockstock and five companions once again returned toward town -- March 5, 1844

citizens assembled in considerable numbers at the landing -- everyone grew increasingly excited  
firing by both Whites and Indians broke out

Legislative Council Recorder George W. LeBreton rushed Cockstock in an attempt to arrest him  
either in the interest of good order or to earn a reward that had been posted  
LeBreton, shot twice, fell to the ground and was struggling with Cockstock

LeBreton called out that he was being stabbed

Winslow Anderson, going to the rescue of LeBreton,

struck a blow to Cockstock's skull with the barrel of his rifle killing him

Companions of Cockstock then fired guns and poisoned arrows into the crowd

two bystanders working in the vicinity, Sterling Rogers and Mr. Wilson,

were wounded by the arrows -- Rogers died the next day

George W. LeBreton lingered [until June 7]

though a young man, he had become a very prominent member of the community

he was one of the most zealous of American settlers who demanded a government

he held the position of Clerk of the Provisional Court

and Recorder for the Provisional Government

his death was a great loss to the young settlement

#### REACTIONS TO THE COCKSTOCK INCIDENT VARIED

Wasco Indians were much agitated by the killing of their fellow tribesman

they believed that Cockstock had not gone to Oregon City on a hostile errand

Cockstock incident created considerable alarm and excitement among the settlers

fears of black and Indian hostility were raised

some advocated that without a law excluding black settlers

pioneers might have two hostile minority groups to deal with

hostility between Indians and whites, Indians and Blacks, and whites and Blacks rapidly escalated

unfounded rumors of an Indian-Black alliance circulated generating alarm among whites

Sub-Indian Agent Dr. Elijah White feared the outbreak of an Indian war

he reported the incident to the United States Secretary of War

#### FREMONT AND HIS MEN CONTINUE THEIR SEARCH FOR CHARLES PREUSS

When John Fremont and his second expedition members continued down the American River  
they discovered three Indian women and surrounded them before they could escape  
they had been gathering a small leafy plant just beginning to bloom

Camp was made that evening beside the American River -- March 5, 1844

toward evening the men heard a weak shout coming from a nearby hill

they were very pleased to see Charles Preuss descending toward their camp

Preuss told the members of the expedition of his adventure

he knew the expedition would follow the river downstream and his only hope was to press on  
he had survived on roots that he dug out with his pocket knife,

he found an ant hill that provided nourishment and came on small pools holding tiny frogs  
at one point he had heard barking dogs in the night

he set out to find them hoping to find an Indian hut -- they were, in fact, two wolves

his disappointment quickly became despair

he came upon five or six Indian huts and, being a man alone, the natives welcomed him

Preuss traded his pocket knife for a supply of roasted acorns

he stumbled upon the three Indian women

and followed the tracks of Fremont's horses to the camp

#### TRAVEL BECOMES MUCH EASIER FOR JOHN C. FREMONT'S SECOND EXPEDITION

Fremont and a few of his men went forward as quickly as possible

guide Tom "Broken Hand" Fitzpatrick remained behind with several men to drive the animals  
and care for the baggage

They passed through surprisingly beautiful country with excellent pasturage -- March 6, 1844

as the horses became stronger the men were able to ride

little herds of deer were frequently seen

but the men were too anxious to continue on to take time to hunt

they were delighted to discover tracks of cattle and columns of smoke were seen to the southwest

#### LIEUTNANT FREMONT REACHES CAPTAIN JOHN SUTTER'S NEW HELVETICA

Fremont came upon a small village of Indians -- some wore manufactured shirts indicating trade  
continuing on they suddenly discovered a large village of Indians -- most were in cotton clothes  
one well-dressed Indian spoke Spanish very well

he told Fremont he and his men were on the Rio de los Americanos (American River)

that joined the Sacramento River about ten miles below

this Indian explained he was employed by Captain John Sutter as were the other villagers

Lieutenant Fremont asked about Sutter's house and learned it was just over the next hill  
this Indian offered to conduct the explorers to meet Captain Sutter  
this offer was accepted

Fremont and his men set out with their guide

after several miles they were met by Captain John Sutter himself at his fort -- March 6, 1844  
Captain Sutter provided a night of rest, enjoyment and refreshment at his residence

Fremont the next day rode back up the American River to retrieve

Tom "Broken Hand" Fitzpatrick and his men who had stayed with the horses and baggage  
rain and melting snow had made the trail down the mountain slippery for the animals

many horses had fallen over cliffs and had been killed -- some packs were lost

out of sixty-seven animals that had set out from Fort Hall

only thirty-three had survived the 2,000-mile journey

#### SUB-INDIAN AGENT DR. ELIJAH WHITE CALMS THE INDIANS

Dr. Elijah White visited the Indians and pacified them "**by giving Cockstock's widow two blankets, a dress and handkerchief, believing the moral influence better than to make presents to the chief or tribe, and to receive nothing at their hands.**"<sup>117</sup>

no gifts were given to the Wasco tribe or chiefs, but they remained appeased anyway

War feeling subsided on both sides

an Indian war which was nearly caused by the folly and injudicious acts

of a Provisional Government agent was averted

#### ACTIONS OF THE SETTLERS DURING THE INCIDENT WERE CONDEMNED

There were strong denunciations of the acts of the settlers who engaged in the attacks

it was declared by some to have been unnecessary and hasty

and undertaken without any overt act by the natives to justify it

it was also claimed that the friendly Clackamas and Willamette Falls Indians

who crossed the river with Cockstock and his party on their return to Oregon City

declared that Cockstock was angered by an accusation that he had stolen a horse

his purpose in returning was to get an explanation from the Whites

and to demand the reason for their hostile actions and feelings to him

and why a reward should have been offered for his arrest

none-the-less the security of Oregon City pioneers, justified or not, had been shaken

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<sup>117</sup> Dr. Elijah White, *Concise View of Oregon Territory*, P. 36.

## SETTLERS IN OREGON CITY CREATE A MILITIA

Because of the Comstock incident a meeting was held in Champoege  
at the home of Andre LaChapelle -- March 10, 1844

There was an unsubstantiated story told of a "shower of arrows" falling on Oregon City  
from the cliffs above  
those in attendance at the meeting demanded the Provisional Government create a militia

## RACIAL CONFLICT INCREASES IN OREGON COUNTRY

Following the Cockstock incident concerns about an inter-racial Indian-black alliance  
organizing against the white settlers increased  
these fears were heightened following an additional conflict involving negro James Saules  
who was living on his squatter's claim on Saules Point (near today's Fort Canby, Washington)  
Saules ran into trouble with white settler Charles E. Pickett who accused Saules  
of threatening to "incense the Indians" against Pickett

James Saules was arrested but his arrest triggered racist sentiment when he threatened to incite  
his wife's native people to a great interracial war against whites unless he was released  
James Saules was kept in custody for several weeks  
three witnesses testified against Saules and he was found guilty  
but because there was no jail he was released and told to leave the region

## LEIUTENANT JOHN FREMONT BEGINS HIS JOURNEY BACK TO THE UNITED STATES

Several of Fremont's men were released to take up life in New Helvetica  
as the other members of Fremont's second expedition began their return to St. Louis  
and the United States -- March 24, 1844  
they took an ample stock of provisions and a large herd of animals consisting  
of 130 horses and mules and about thirty head of cattle of which five were milk cows  
Captain John Sutter furnished an Indian boy trained to drive cattle  
While their direct route lay to the east, the Sierra Nevada Mountains forced them to travel south  
about 500 miles to a mountain pass at the head of the San Joaquin River  
(they followed along the eastern edge of the San Joaquin Valley,  
crossed the coastal mountain at Tehachapi Pass and entered the Mojave Desert  
they reached the Great Basin of (Nevada) and reached Las Vegas)

## GERMAN IMMIGRANTS BEGIN TO MOVE WEST TO MISSOURI

There were waves of political agitation in the German states based on libertarian ideals

represented in the American and French revolutions  
an attempt to overthrow the German rulers failed [1830]  
Germans arrived in America from a European region of many kingdoms in the early [1830s]  
(Germany did not unite as a nation until [1871])  
Rev. William Keil and nearly 500 German-Dutch followers  
founded the settlement of Bethel Christian Community in Bethel, Missouri -- 1844  
where they advocated "Christian Communism"

#### AFREEMENT IS REACHED REGARDING PROPERTY AT WILLAMETTE FALLS

Dr. John McLoughlin reached an agreement with Rev. Alvin F. Waller that was executed  
by Rev. David Leslie acting Superintendent of the Methodist mission dated April 4, 1844  
under this agreement Dr. McLoughlin was compelled to pay Waller \$500.  
and to convey to Waller eight lots and three blocks in Oregon City,  
McLoughlin was also to convey to the Methodist mission six lots and one block  
what right the missionaries had to Dr. McLoughlin's land was not explained  
however, there were no courts in Oregon Country where Dr. McLoughlin could turn for relief  
since he was not protected by the Provisional Government  
but it was probably better and cheaper for him to submit to this unfair agreement,  
otherwise he would have been compelled to allow Waller to take the land  
or to have ousted him by force

#### FOUR SEPARATE WAGON TRAINS SET OUT FROM MISSOURI OVER THE OREGON TRAIL

Slaves were too valuable for many owners to be willingly give them up to travel to Oregon Country  
due to the length and difficulty of the journey most slave owners brought only a few slaves West  
often a single longtime family servant and generally no more than a single family of slaves  
John Thorpe led a train followed the route traveled by Dr. Marcus Whitman [1836]  
he brought with him his slave Hannah and her six-year old daughter Eliza  
they were the only known black women to be listed in an Oregon Trail roster  
both were listed in the [1850] Oregon census as Hannah and Eliza Thorp  
and in the [1860] census as Hannah and Eliza Gorman)

Colonel Nathaniel Ford's wagon train started from Independence, Missouri

Ford promised his slaves Robin and Polly Holmes and their three-year-old daughter Mary Jane  
that he would free them after reaching Oregon and establishing a farm  
however, Ford did not keep this promise

Stephens-Townsend-Murphy Wagon Train consisted of ten families who migrated from Iowa

to California over what became Donner Pass (two years before the Donner Party faced disaster)  
Fourth wagon train voted to call itself the “Independent Colony”  
before it was fully formed it was reported that this train contained forty-eight families,  
323 people (108 men, sixty of whom were young men), 410 oxen,  
160 cows (sixteen of which were team cows that pulled wagons), 143 young cattle,  
fifty-four horses, eleven mules, and seventy-two wagons  
(eventually this wagon train would grow large enough  
to bring 800 emigrants over the Oregon Trail)

## BLACK PIONEER GEORGE WASHINGTON BUSH -- BIOGRAPHY

George Washington Bush was born a free man in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania [about 1779]  
to an African American sailor, Matthew Bush, and his Irish wife Maggie  
Matthew Bush had been born in India

Matthew Bush spent his early years serving an English merchant named Stevenson

Stevenson settled in Philadelphia where he owned several ships

Matthew Bush became a life-long servant in the mansion of the English shipping magnate

Matthew Bush married Maggie, Stevenson’s Irish nurse to his invalid wife  
and maid to the household

Matthew and Maggie Bush had a son -- George Washington Bush

Matthew and Maggie cared for Stevenson in his declining years

since Stevenson had no children he left a substantial fortune to Matthew Bush

George Washington Bush had the advantage of the best Quaker schooling available

he became an apprentice to David Montgomery and moved west to Tennessee

George’s principal duty was to tend and protect the fruit trees

meant for an orchard in Missouri

young George developed considerable knowledge and skill

After six years of apprenticeship, George Washington Bush joined the United States Army

he became a veteran of the War of 1812 and fought with General Andrew Jackson

in the Battle of New Orleans [December 1814-January 1815]

Next he signed on as trapper and trader with the Hudson’s Bay Company

as an employee he made his way to the Pacific Northwest as early as the [1820s]

he visited Fort Vancouver and both the northern and southern extremities of Columbia District

George W. Bush returned to Tennessee and married Isabella James, an Irish woman [July 4, 1831]

they began a successful farm in Tennessee and were relatively wealthy

together they had: William Owen [1832-1907], Joseph Talbot [1834-1904],

Rial Bailey [1837-?], Henry Sanford ([841-1913] and Jackson January [1843-1888] however, in Tennessee Negroes not considered citizens even if they were born free basic rights to own land, travel freely and pursue a chosen occupation were not widely available to black people

George Washington Bush and his family moved to western Missouri where he became a wealthy farmer and rancher -- but once again the family was frustrated Missouri had a law forbidding blacks to settle in the state for more than six months Bush family could see the climate of bigotry and discrimination was increasing Reports of pioneers crossing the continent to settle in the fertile Willamette Valley provided inspiration to follow the Oregon Trail west

George Washington Bush saw westward migration as a way to escape the increasing prejudice he, his wife and his sons were facing

#### GEORGE WASHINGTON BUSH TRAVELS WEST WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

At about age fifty Oregon Fever or racism motivated George and Isabella to move to Oregon Country with their five sons: William Owen Bush, Joseph Talbot Bush, Reilly Bailey Bush, Henry Sanford Bush and Jackson January Bush

George W. Bush purchased six wagons for the journey -- four of which were for other families four white families, all neighbors and longtime friends of the Bushes, joined George W. and Isabella Bush and their five children in the Westward migration:

- Michael Simmons and his wife Elizabeth,
- James McAllister and his wife Charlotte (who was Michael Simmons' sister) and their four children,
- David Kindred (Elizabeth Simmons' brother) and his wife Talitha and their son,
- Gabriel and Keziah Jones and their three children

George W. Bush hoped to put the racism of Missouri behind him

Bush and Simmons planned, after reaching Fort Vancouver, to swing southward and settle in Willamette Valley where they hoped to find their square mile of land if good land could not be found there, they planned to try the Rogue River Valley

#### GEORGE WASHINGTON BUSH LEADS HIS SIX COVERED WAGONS WESTWARD

George Washington Bush, his wife Isabella and their five sons left Westport, Missouri bound for Oregon Country with their six covered wagons -- May 1844 accompanying Bush in his wagons were Michael T. Simmons and his wife Elizabeth, Elisabeth's sister Martha who was married to James McAllister

Elizabeth's brother David Kindred and his wife Talitha  
and Gabriel and Keziah Jones

as they crossed Missouri they joined another group of about thirty families  
their journey was slow due to heavy rains and flooding

George Washington Bush with his six wagons and the thirty families they had joined while traveling  
united with the members of the Independent Colony wagon train at St. Joseph, Missouri

#### PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT HOLDS ELECTIONS

Knowledge that the Methodist mission was in disfavor with its own Board of directors was in the air  
when the election of government officials was held

About two hundred voters turned out for the election of a new Provisional Government  
for Oregon Country -- May 14, 1844

only voter qualification: a man must be a resident of Oregon Country -- Indians excepted  
French-Canadians voted for the first time in a general election in Oregon Country

Belief that the discriminatory Provisional Law written primarily by the "Mission Party"  
led to a resounding defeat at the polls of everyone associated with that organization  
and the old Provisional Government

of the new legislators elected, only Robert "Doc" Newell and one other man  
had been in Oregon more than six months

new Nine Man Council legislative branch was elected

"Independents" had won a majority of the Provisional Council

Morton Matthew McCarver, Twality District served as Speaker of the Legislative Council,

Peter H. Burnett, Twality District,

Matthew Gilmore, Twality District,

David Hill, Twality District,

Asa L. Lovejoy, Clackamas District,

Thomas D. Keizer, Champoeg District,

Robert "Doc" Newell, Champoeg District,

Daniel Waldo, Champoeg District,

Dr. John E. Long, Champoeg District

New Three-Man Executive Committee was elected to serve until [June 12, 1845]

Dr. William J. Bailey replaced Alanson Beers

William Bailey had been a sailor before jumping ship in Yerba Buena (San Francisco)  
he joined Ewing Young's cattle company and was wounded and horribly scarred  
by Rogue River Indians on his journey north



he arrived in Oregon [1835] then took up the study of medicine under Dr. Elijah White  
he was a long-time and respected resident of French Prairie and had been politically active  
he was a signer of the [1840] Rev. David Leslie Petition to congress  
he was member of committee that met with Charles Wilkes and Dr. McLoughlin -- [1841]  
regarding a constitution and code of law

Osborne Russell replaced Joseph Gale

he had had joined the second Nathaniel Wyeth Party at age sixteen and reached Oregon [1834]  
he helped build Fort Hall and had stayed there [1834-1842]  
he wrote a detailed diary of his life at the fort -- *Journal of a Trapper*  
he joined the Dr. Elijah White caravan [1842] and served as guide  
he had been appointed Provisional Government Supreme Judge [1843]

Peter G. Stewart replaced David Hill

Peter Stewart was born and raised in New York state where he attended public schools  
he became a watchmaker and ventured West with the [1843] Great Migration  
his abilities were soon recognized

Philip Foster was elected Provisional Government Treasurer

Philip Foster and Francis Pettygrove had established a general store in Oregon City  
he formed many business partnerships  
including a business arrangement with Dr. John McLoughlin to build a flour mill

Provisional Government judicial branch officers were selected over the next few months:

when they met together they formed the Provisional Government Supreme Court

Dr. Ira L. Babcock was elected Supreme Judge by the voters

he had served as Oregon Country's first Supreme Judge with probate power [1841]

James W. Nesmith was appointed by the Executive Committee

he had arrived in Oregon [1843], studied law and was accepted to practice law

Nathaniel Ford was elected by the Provisional Council but never served

he had only just arrived in Oregon Country

Joe Meek was reelected sheriff where he compiled a record of energy and whimsy  
rivaling his Mountain Man career

#### DIVERSIFICATION TAKES PLACE AT WHITMAN'S WAILLATPU MISSION

Dr. Marcus Whitman reported that about fifty Cayuse Indians had started small farms  
ranging in size from a quarter of an acre to three or four acres  
several natives were also interested in acquiring cattle  
Education and religious instruction showed much slower progress

Cayuse became less and less interested in learning about Christianity

Whitman's long overland journey west with the emigrants had given him a new concept of his mission

Marcus and Narcissa found the time they had to devote to the natives rapidly diminished

in addition to daily household and farm chores, the arrival of ever more emigrants

demanding an increasing commitment of their time and energy

Dr. Whitman built his third mill

much larger than the others, the new gristmill had grinding stones forty inches in diameter

for waterpower to operate the mill, a ditch was dug from the Walla Walla River

to a millpond formed by two long earthen dikes

(later, a threshing machine and a turning lathe were built on the mill platform)

Waiilatpu was becoming not only an Indian mission, but an important stop on the Oregon Trail

reflecting on his experiences Marcus wrote to Narcissa's parents --spring 1844: **“As I hold the settlement of his country by Americans rather than by an English colony to be most important, I am happy to have been the means of landing so large an emigration on the shores of the Columbia....I have no doubt our greatest work is to be to aid the white settlement of this country to found its religious institutions.**

**“Providence has its full share in all these events. Although the Indians have made and are making rapid advances in Religious knowledge & civilization yet it cannot be hoped that time will be allowed to mature either the work of Christianization or Civilization before the White settlers will demand the soil and seek the removal of both the Indians & the Mission. What American desire of this kind they always effect and it is equally useless to oppose or desire it otherwise.”<sup>118</sup>**

#### INDEPENDENT COLONY WAGON TRAIN PREPARES FOR ITS JOURNEY

Following military guidelines, Cornelius Gilliam was elected general -- May 1844

Michael T. Simmons, thirty years old and completely illiterate but persuasive, was elected colonel

This wagon train divided into four parties each led by its own captain

Robert Wilson Morrison, Allen Saunders and Richard Woodcock and William Shaw

whose mother was General Cornelius Gilliam's sister

#### INDEPENDENT COLONY WAGON TRAIN HIRES A GUIDE

Harris, a black man, was also known as “Black Harris” and the “Black Squire”

(Moses “Black” Harris is thought to have first ventured into the West in [1823],

and he was considered an expert in winter travel

he is credited with having helped build Fort Laramie,

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<sup>118</sup> David Lavender, *Land of the Giants*, P. 234.

he may have been among the party of trappers who christened Independence Rock)  
After spending years exploring and fur trapping in the Rocky Mountains  
Moses "Black" Harris became a wagon train guide on the Oregon Trail  
Harris had helped guide the Whitman-Spalding Party to Oregon [1836]  
Independent Colony Wagon Train hired ex-Mountain Man Moses Harris to serve as their guide  
along the Oregon Trail to Fort Vancouver to Oregon Country -- 1844

#### INDEPENDENT COLONY WAGON TRAIN SETS OUT FOR OREGON

Independent Colony wagon train under the command of General Cornelius Gilliam,  
Colonel Michael T. Simmons, Captains Robert Wilson Morrison, William Shaw, Allen Saunders  
and Richard Woodcock and guided by Moses "Black" Harris  
left St. Joseph, Missouri for Oregon Country -- May 1844  
George Washington Bush's frontier experience made him a valuable addition to the train  
he quickly became a trusted and popular leader  
also, Bush was considered one of the wealthiest members of the expedition  
some said a false floor in the Bush wagon concealed a layer of silver dollars  
Bush used his wealth to assist others  
he supplied covered wagons and supplies that allowed some others to make the trip  
he also lent a helping hand and finances as grave problems developed on the way  
George W. Bush his Irish wife Isabella cared for children who were orphaned on the Trail  
John Minto, an Englishman traveling with the Independent Colony wagon train,  
commented in his diary about a conversation he had with George Washington Bush  
Minto wrote that Bush was concerned about how he would be treated in Oregon Country,  
and he had resolved to move on if he was treated poorly

#### INDEPENDENT COLONY WAGON TRAIN CROSSES KANSAS

Members of the four companies of the Independent Colony wagon train  
finally reached the Big Blue River in Kansas -- June 1844  
it took sixteen days to get all of their belongings across the river

#### NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION ADDRESSES THE OREGON QUESTION

Democrats held their national convention in Baltimore, Maryland -- May 21, 1844  
expansionist fever had gripped the Democratic Party  
Democratic Party was the political party of the South  
new states were being added in pairs to maintain a balance of states on the slavery question

most Democrats wanted to annex Texas into the Union

to make Northerners feel better, Democrats proposed to take in Oregon also

Western influence of the Democratic Party succeeded in addressing the Oregon boundary question

Western Democrats demanded “**54 degrees 40 minutes**” become the northern boundary of Oregon

changed by popular clamor the words “**or fight**” were added to their campaign slogan

“**Fifty-four Forty or Fight**” became the battle cry -- it was not a plank in the platform

but it did reflect the concerns of expansionists

Democrats inserted “**That our title to the whole of the territory of Oregon is clear and unquestionable; that no portion of the same ought to be ceded to England or to any other power...**”<sup>119</sup>

was inserted into the Democratic platform

Democratic delegates then busied themselves nominating expansionist James K. Polk

as their candidate for president

#### BAPTIST CHURCH IS CONSTRUCTED IN OREGON CITY

West Union Baptist Church was founded at West Union, Oregon Country -- May 25, 1844

Rev. Vincent Snelling served as Pastor

when building construction was completed ([1853] and still in use today)

this became the oldest Baptist Church west of the Rocky Mountains

(its adjoining cemetery is the oldest in Oregon State)

#### PORTLAND, OREGON RECEIVES ITS NAME

William Overton marked off a 640 Acre tract of mostly dense timber

but he lacked the 25¢ needed to file a land claim with the Provisional Government

Overton struck a bargain with his partner Asa Lovejoy from Boston, Massachusetts

for 25¢ Overton would share his claim to the site with Lovejoy

Lovejoy, who considered site ideal for a harbor town, took half of the claim

William Overton later sold his half of the claim to Francis W. Pettygrove of Portland, Maine

Pettygrove and Lovejoy both wished to name the new city after their own home town

Pettygrove won a coin toss and named the cluster of log cabins among the stumps

Portland after his home town in Maine

Francis Pettygrove set up first store in Portland and sold on consignment -- 1844

he advertised his goods: “**20 cases of wooden clocks; 20 barrels dried apples; 3 small mills; 1 doz. cross cut saws; mill saws and saw sets; mill cranks, plough shares, pitchforks; 1 winnowing**

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<sup>119</sup> Oscar Osburn Winther, *The Great Northwest*, P. 145.

machine; 100 casks cut nails; 50 boxes saddlers' tacks; 6 boxes carpenters tools; 12 doz. hand axes; 20 boxes manufactured tobacco, 5000 cigars [in subsequent issues, 50,000]; 50 kegs white lead, 100 kegs paints, 1/2 doz. medicine chests, fifty bags Rio Coffee; 25 bags of pepper; 200 boxes soap; 50 cases boots and shoes; 6 doz. slippers; 50 cane seat chairs; 40 doz. wooden seat do., 50 dozen sarsapariolla; 10 bales sheetings; 4 cases assorted prints; 1 bale damask tartan shawls; 5 pieces striped jeans; 6 doz. satinett jackets; 10 doz. cotton do. do; 12 dozen linen duck pants; 12 doz. red flannel shirts; 200 doz. cottn hdk'fs; 6 cases white cot. flannels; 6 bales extra heavy indigo cotton; 2 cases negro prints; 1 case black velveteen; 4 cases Mackanaw blankets; 150 casks and bbls. molasses; 450 bags sugar ... for sale at reduced prices for cash." [*Oregon Spectator*, February 5, 1846]

Francis Pettygrove slashed out a wagon road westward to the hills

he went on to re-organized a new Willamette Cattle Company

which imported 550 head of cattle, 535 sheep, and twenty horses from California -- 1844

#### REV. GEORGE GARY ARRIVES IN OREGON COUNTRY FROM BOSTON

Rev. George Gary had been appointed by Methodist Mission Society in Utica, New York

to serve as the new superintendent of the Oregon Methodist missionary effort

he was to investigate Jason Lee's mishandling mission money and neglect of the Indians

Rev. Gary arrived by sea to succeed Rev. Jason Lee -- June 1844

to reorganize, or if necessary, eventually liquidate the Chemeketa Mission at Mission Bottom

Rev. Gary was quartered in Rev. David Leslie's home

Rev. Leslie had served as interim leader of the Methodist missionaries in Rev. Jason Lee's absence

Rev. Gary was misinformed about the mission effort and arrived with strong preconceived notions radically different opinions regarding the mission effort

led to inevitable conflicts between the two men

#### REV. GEORGE GARY IMPOSES CHANGES ON THE METHODIST MISSIONS

Rev. Gary, Rev. Jason Lee's replacement, made a careful inventory of the property, purposes, and personnel of the missions at Mission Bottom, Chemeketa, Fort Nisqually, Oregon City,

The Dalles, Clatsop Plains and at the mouth of the Columbia River

After holding a meeting the members of the Methodist mission -- June 7, 1844

Rev. Gary concluded the organization was no longer filling its purpose and should be dissolved:

- he found enrollment at the Indian Manual Labor School to be virtually nonexistent due to an epidemic of tuberculosis

he closed the Indian Mission School at Champoeg and sold its principal building, a three story structure, to the trustees of the Oregon Institute for \$4,000;

- grain and timber mills were sold for \$6,000 to a pioneer who had resided in Oregon for the previous two years;
- extensive herds of horse and cattle brought another \$4,200 for the Methodist treasury;
- Clatsop mission was purchased by its manager Rev. Josiah Parrish who settled there;
- (Wascopam Mission at The Dalles was sold for \$600 to Marcus Whitman [1847] although his death in the Whitman Massacre later that year left the post unused and it was returned to the Methodist mission [in 1849])

## HENRY SAGER FAMILY JOINS THE INDEPENDENT COLONY WAGON TRAIN TO OREGON

Henry Sager was a simple farmer who sought a better life in Oregon

when the Independent Colony wagon train passed by, Henry, his wife Naomi and their children

John 14, Frank 12, Catherine 9, Elizabeth 7, Matilda 5, and Louisa 3 years old

joined Captain William Shaw's division at Capless Landing (near Weston Missouri)

soon after, the baby was born -- she was named Henrietta

Catherine Sager, the oldest Sager daughter, made notes in the journal she kept all of her life

(years later as Mrs. Clark Pringle Catherine wrote about setting out for Oregon:) **“My father was one of the restless ones who are not content to remain in one place long at a time. Late in the fall of 1838 we emigrated from Ohio to Missouri. Our first halting place was on Green River, but the next year we took a farm in Platte County. He engaged in farming and blacksmithing, and had a wide reputation for ingenuity. Anything they needed made or mended sought his shop. In 1843, Dr. Whitman came to Missouri. The healthful climate inducted my mother to favor moving to Oregon. Immigration was the theme of all winter, and we decided to start for Oregon.**

**“Late in 1843 father sold his property and moved near St. Joseph, and in April 1844 we started across the plains. The first encampments were a great pleasure to us children. We were five girls and two boys, ranging from the baby to be born on the way to the oldest boy, hardly old enough to be any help.**

**“We waited several days at the Missouri River. Many friends came that far to see the emigrants start on their long journey, and there was much sadness at the parting, and a sorrowful company crossed the Missouri that bright spring morning. The motion of the wagon made us all sick, and it was weeks before we got used to the seasick motion... Rain came down and required us to tie down the wagon covers, and so increased our sickness by confining the air we breathed.**

**“Our cattle recrossed [the Missouri River] in the night and went back to their winter quarters. This caused delay in recovering them and a weary forced march to rejoin the train. This was divided into companies, and we were in that commanded by William Shaw. Soon after starting**

**Indians raided our camp one night and drove off a number of cattle. They were pursued, but never recovered.**

**“Soon everything went smooth and our train made steady headway. The weather was fine and we enjoyed the journey pleasantly. There were several musical instruments among the emigrants, and these sounded clearly on the evening air when camp was made and merry talk and laughter resounded from almost every camp-fire.”<sup>120</sup>**

#### REV. JASON LEE ATTEMPTS TO DEFEND HIS WORK IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

After his humiliating exit from Oregon Country Jason Lee,

he had sailed to the East coast and Utica, New York [spring 1844]

During a nine-day conference with his superiors -- June 1844

Rev. Jason Lee deftly defended himself against the charges that had led to his dismissal

he reported his cattle had been sold for only as much as they had been purchased

regarding his salary he had always refused to be paid more than ministers in the United States

as for his leadership, the mission location had been approved by other mission members

and the selection of missionaries was done through the board itself

finally, regarding the mission’s effectiveness and cost, Lee admitted that it had not resulted

in large numbers of converted natives and that it had cost a significant amount of money

but the mission had been instrumental in the conversion of a number of whites,

had helped prevent bloodshed at the hands of both whites and natives,

and had become somewhat self-supporting through productive endeavors

such as the farm and the mills

Protracted hearings concerning charges brought against him in the handling of the Oregon missions

were held by the Methodist Mission Society that largely exonerated him during [summer 1844]

Convinced of his sincerity and the truthfulness of his testimony, the Society cleared Lee of all charges

but it was determined that Lee would not be returned to his position

until after a financial report from Rev. George Gary, the new superintendent, arrived

Rev. Jason Lee continued his work for the Oregon missions “agent for the Oregon Institute”

he went to work raising funds for the school, hoping to return soon to Oregon

#### NEW NINE-MEMBER LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETS FOR THE FIRST TIME

Provisional Government’s nine-member Legislative Council met in the Oregon City home

of long-time settler Felix Hathaway -- June 18, 1844

they elected officers, formed committees and mourned the loss of Legislative Council Recorder

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<sup>120</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 503-504.

George LeBreton who had been killed during the Cockstock incident

Dr. John E. Long replaced George LeBreton but Dr. Long did not attend this legislative session nor did council member Matthew Gilmore

Peter H. Burnett who represented Twality District acted as Legislative Council Recorder  
Executive Committee members Peter G. Stewart and Osborne Russell presented a message to the Council group addressing the opposing claims of the United States and Great Britain they also recommended a more thorough organization” be established

they advised the creation of an executive branch with only one governor who had veto power  
Legislative Council members appointed four sub-committees

Ways and Means (finance), Land Claims, Judiciary and Military Affairs

Provisional Government’s Legislative Council ruled the Organic Laws were statutory thus they could be repealed or revoked at the discretion of the assembly

new operating rules for the Council were to be written to address issues not covered

by the [1843] Organic Laws of Oregon or the [1839] *Little Blue Book* (Iowa Territorial Laws)

Asa L. Lovejoy, Peter Burnett and Daniel Waldo served as the committee

in charge of developing and presenting operating rules for the Legislative Council

#### PROVISIONAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ADOPTS CHANGES TO ORGANIC LAWS

Legislative Council committee report of Asa L. Lovejoy, Peter Burnett and Daniel Waldo establishing new operating rules for the Legislative Council was approved -- June 19, 1844

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PROPOSES A SINGLE GOVERNOR WITH VETO POWER

Legislative Council members passed a bill that dissolved the three-man Executive Committee that was to give way to an elected governor with veto power

four candidates were nominated for the two-year post of Provisional Governor

to be elected [June 1845] with the frontrunners being:

- member of the outgoing three-man Executive Committee Osborne Russell
- businessman and co-founder of Portland, Oregon Asa L. Lovejoy
- Oregon City merchant George Abernathy,

#### PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT ADDS CLATSOP DISTRICT

Twality District, Yamhill District, Clackamas District and Champooick District

were altered by the Provisional Government with the addition of Clatsop District

which was created from the northern and western portions of Twality District -- June 22, 1844

Clatsop District extended north of the Columbia River



## NEW NINE MEMBER LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL REWRITES THE ORGANIC LAWS

Provisional Government's Legislative Council passed their first act -- June 22, 1844  
their first bill changed the name "district" to "county" and created Clatsop County  
from the northwest portions of Twality District  
making a total of five counties instead of the original four districts  
Twality, Yamhill, Clackamas, Champoeg and now Clatsop

## THREE-MAN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AUTHORIZES PROPERTY TAXES

Voluntary subscriptions authorized by the [1843] Oregon Organic Laws  
failed to raise enough funds to meet the needs of the Provisional Government  
Executive Committee members authorized a property tax -- 1844  
that required every settler's property to be assessed on a regular basis  
all property, real estate and personal property, with some exceptions,  
was taxed at the rate of 0.00125%

## PROVISIONAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL CHANGES PROVISIONAL TAX LAWS

Legislative Council believed revenue should be derived from uniform taxation  
out went taxation by subscription -- June 24-25, 1844

Legislative Council members imposed several new taxes to support the Provisional Government:

- new plan of taxation proposed by the Three-Man Executive  
imposing a tax of rate of 0.00125% on property was approved  
this money would become available to support the government  
every settler's property was to be assessed on a regular basis  
**improvements on farm lots, mills, pleasure carriages, clocks, watches, mules, cattle,  
and hogs.**<sup>121</sup> was implemented;

- an import tax was imposed on **"all merchandise brought into the Country for sale,  
improvements on farm lots, mills, pleasure carriages, clocks, watches, mules, cattle, and hogs."**<sup>122</sup>

this tax was aimed at Hudson's Bay Company which was the major importer

- poll tax fifty cents for the right to vote was implemented

Ways and Means Committee members insisted that any person refusing to pay taxes  
would be excluded from benefits provided by government  
including right to vote or to have access to Provisional court

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<sup>121</sup> Johansen and Gates, *Empire of the Columbia*, P. 244.

<sup>122</sup> Johansen and Gates, *Empire of the Columbia*, P. 244.

if his claim was jumped there was no recourse to law -- government would not help him  
rustling of his cattle, or butchering in the field would be ignored by sheriff  
in fact, someone who failed to pay taxes was treated as an outlaw  
sheriff was also to serve as tax collector with a commission of ten per cent on collections  
almost \$8,000 was paid by direct collections to the Provisional Government  
however, this income was still inadequate because of refusals or inability to pay  
spending deficits were met by issuing \$15,000 in paper script and warrants of indebtedness  
Provisional Legislative Council passed a Temperance Law to prohibit

**“introduction, sale or distillation of Ardent Spirits....”<sup>123</sup>**

this was probably the first prohibition act passed in the United States  
fear of the Native Americans becoming hostile if intoxicated was the motivation  
Dr. Elijah White acting as sub-Indian Agent  
seized and destroyed several small distilleries in Oregon City  
Nine-member Legislative Council discussed the need for a road from The Dalles to Oregon City  
they created a three-member Roads Committee to be added  
to the Ways and Means (finance), Land Claims, Judiciary and Military Affairs in existence  
Roads Committee was authorized to finance construction the needed road  
Cockstock Affair prompted the organization of three militia companies by the Legislative Council  
twenty-five men who met at the now defunct Indian Manual Labor School  
were organized into the Oregon Rangers  
they were to be paid \$2 per day for active service, or \$1 a day for drills  
these men were also expected to provide their own weapons  
Captain Thomas D. Keizer led the Oregon Rangers but he soon resigned  
Charles H. Bennett then took command of these mounted riflemen  
Oregon City was put in a state of defense  
but because the Indians remained peaceful, the Oregon Rangers were not called into action  
Legislative Council authorized construction of the first public building in Oregon Country  
Ewing Young’s estate was diverted into the Provisional Government treasury  
to be used to build a jail in Oregon City -- Dr. John McLoughlin donated the site

## RACIAL PREJUDICE IS A GROWING CONCERN IN OREGON COUNTRY

Oregon Country was settled by a large proportion of Southern and mid-Western emigrants  
who came from portions of the nation where efforts to resolve issues of slavery  
through political compromise had failed

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<sup>123</sup> Howard McKinley Corning, *Dictionary of Oregon History*, P. 73.

Prejudice was a significant part of the cultural baggage white settlers brought west by pioneers  
all of the nonwhite groups suffered from the effects of racial prejudice  
Indians, Kanakas (Hawaiians), Mexicans (Hispanics) and blacks  
Many white emigrants who came to Oregon during the 1840s (and 1850s) reflected their home culture  
some were opposed slavery -- some were pro-slavery in sympathy  
some had no personal opinion regarding slavery at all  
many were nonslaveholding farmers from Missouri and other border states  
who had struggled to compete against those who owned slaves  
others hated not only the slaves but all Negroes of any status  
they were opposed living alongside African Americans of any status

#### OREGON'S PROVISIONAL COUNCIL PASSES AN EXCLUSION LAW

Settlers arriving in Oregon Country who brought racist attitudes with them across the plains  
saw legal restrictions to residency as the best solution to racial issues  
laws excluding Blacks were passed in Indiana and Illinois  
and considered, though never passed, in Ohio

Oregon pioneers were familiar with these exclusion laws

Legislative Council members had passed the [1843] Organic Laws of Oregon  
which included the [1787] Northwest Ordinance that prohibited slavery

this portion of the Organic Laws was amended by the Legislative Council -- June 26, 1844

Missouri immigrant Peter Burnett proposed a new Section 4 of the law read: **“That when any free Negro or mulatto shall have come to Oregon, he or she, as the case may be, if of the age of eighteen or upward, shall remove from and leave the country within the term of two years for males and three years for females from the passage of this act; and if any free Negro or mulatto shall hereafter come to Oregon, if of the age aforesaid, he or she shall quit and leave within the term of two years for males and three years for females from his or her arrival in the country.”**

in addition a new Section 6, known as the “Lash Law,” provided: **“That if any such free Negro or mulatto shall fail to quit the country as required by this act, he or she may be arrested upon a warrant issued by some justice of the peace, and if guilty upon trial before such justice, shall receive upon his or her bare back not less than twenty nor more than thirty-nine stripes, to be inflicted by the constable of the proper county.”**

slave owner Daniel Waldo as a member of the Legislative Council

voted in favor of the Exclusion Law and the "Lash Law"

in effect, slavery in Oregon was legalized for three years

moreover, once freed, a former slave could not stay in Oregon Country

## VANCOUVER DISTRICT IS CREATED NORTH OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Vancouver District was created from the part of Clatsop County and Clackamas County that extended north of the Columbia River -- June 27, 1844

all of the region west of the Rocky Mountains and south of 54°-40' to the Columbia River was included in the district (that is all of today's Washington State, parts of Idaho and Montana and all of British Columbia

Vancouver District was the first and oldest county in (today's Washington State)

## PROVISIONAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL FINISHES ITS WORK

To avoid jurisdictional conflict with Hudson's Bay Company the Provisional Council redrew the northern boundary of Twality and Clackamas counties

moving the line from the Russian-America boundary to the Columbia River -- June 27, 1844 only two settlers lived on the north side of the Columbia River

James Birnie, retired servant of the Hudson's Bay Company, resided at Cathlamet, Captain James Scarborough, an American, lived near the mouth of the Cowlitz River, Antoine Gobar, a herdsman employed by Hudson's Bay Company, settled on a little prairie along the Cowlitz River on the old Hudson's Bay Company trail from Fort Vancouver to Cowlitz

Discriminatory Article IV clause depriving Dr. McLoughlin was repealed and a new one enacted -- June 27, 1844

size of mission claims was reduced from a full township (thirty six sections -- 23,040 acres) new land laws permitted only actual settlers to hold claims

white or metis man single men eighteen years of age and older could claim 320 acre and married women or widows fourteen years old and older could claim an additional 320 acres in their own name

this was recognition of the role of women in settling Oregon Country in addition to the primary land claim ownership of lots in town was allowed

After practically destroying the Provisional Government Charter adopted in [1843]

by revising the Organic Laws of Oregon and enacting several new laws

the Provisional Government Legislative Council adjourned -- June 27, 1844

[to meet again on December 16] as the nine-member legislative body though by that time their actions would be guided by word of the latest developments in the United States brought by the most recent emigrants

## LOCAL POLITICAL REFORMS CAUSE A GREAT DEAL OF CONFUSION AND CONCERN

While changes carried out by the Legislative Council were effective in some regards, these changes generated a great deal of new political agitation

- some objected to the taxation laws
- others felt aggrieved by the land laws
- still others wanted the laws extended to land north of the Columbia River
- yet others were upset by the exclusion and flogging laws

many settlers objected to the procedure to make the changes

virtually a new code of Organic Laws of Oregon was created by the Legislative Council without submitting any of the changes to the people

it seemed to many that the Legislative Council had enacted a political revolution

patriotism of the council members was questioned

Dr. McLoughlin reported a group among the settlers wanted to establish a state that was independent of both Great Britain and the United States

it was clear that the Organic Laws as amended must be submitted for approval to the citizens

## OREGON CITY SERVES AS THE CAPITAL OF OREGON COUNTRY

Oregon City was incorporated by the Provisional Government Legislative Council -- 1844

this was the first city incorporated west of the Rocky Mountains

J. Quinn Thornton, tongue in cheek, compared Felix Hathaway's home with the national capitol

when he later gave a speech describing the capitol building in Oregon City: **“The Oregon State House was built with posts set upright, one end set in the ground, grooved on two sides, and filled in with poles and split timber, such as would be suitable for fence rails, with plates and poles across the top. Rafters and horizontal poles instead of iron ribs, held the cedar bark which was used instead of thick copper for roofing. It was twenty by forty feet and therefore did not cover three acres and a half. At one end some puncheons were put up for a platform for the president; some poles and slabs were placed around the seats; three planks, about a foot wide and twelve feet long, placed upon a sort of stake platform for a table, were all that was believed necessary for the use of the legislative committee and the clerks.”**<sup>124</sup>

City boasted two churches, two saloons, a newspaper, seventy-five houses, two blacksmiths,

two coopers, two cabinet makers, two hatters, two silversmiths,

and four tailors to re-supply and properly clothe the new settlers

Oregon Printing Association was organized at Oregon City -- 1844

by W.G. T'Vault, J.W. Nesmith, John P. Brooks and George Abernathy

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<sup>124</sup> Lyman, William Denison, *The Columbia River*, P. 194.

eighty shares sold at \$10 each

Father Modeste Demers was the first Catholic priest at Oregon City -- 1844

Methodist missionary Rev. Alvin F. Waller after having riled the inhabitants

regarding Dr. McLoughlin's land claim moved from Oregon City to The Dalles -- 1844

where he succeeded Rev. Daniel Lee and Rev. H.K.W. Perkins at Wascopam Mission

other missionaries ministered to the settlers or established their own farms and businesses

#### GEORGE ABERNATHY BECOMES A LEADING AMERICAN MERCHANT IN OREGON CITY

Behind George Abernathy's house was a meadow purported to be the end of the Oregon Trail

Abernathy was a former steward of the [1840] Oregon City Methodist Mission

When the Methodist mission closed Abernathy set up his own business

he took over the debts owed to the Methodist mission and bought the mission store's stock

for \$20,000 using financial gifts meant for religious purposes

he operated his new business in Oregon City

Hudson's Bay Company also opened a store in Oregon City to compete with businesses owned by

Abernathy, Captain John Couch, and Francis Pettygrove and Philip Foster

Next Abernathy bought out Island Milling Company -- sawmill, grist mill, and lathe

and took Alanson Beers as a partner

George Abernathy was soon a leading American merchant in Oregon City

#### ST. MICHAEL'S MISSION IS LAID OUT AMONG THE KALISPEL INDIANS

Father Peter De Vos, the acting head of the Rocky Mountain Mission

in the absence of Father Pierre-Jean De Smet, together with Father Adrian Hoeken

visited the Kalispel village near Lake Pend Oreille -- summer 1844

there Father Hoeken was instructed to lay out the site

for the third Catholic missionary station in the Rocky Mountains

at a location on the Pend Oreille River near (today's Albeni Falls, Idaho)

#### INDEPENDENT COLONY WAGON TRAIN REACHES NEBRASKA

George W. Bush-Michael Simmons portion of the Independent Wagon Train entered Nebraska

they crossed the South Platte River -- July 1844

Catherine Sager described the trials of moving west along the Oregon Trail: **"We had one wagon, two steady yoke of old cattle, and several of young and not well-broken ones. Father was no ox-driver, and had trouble with these until one day he called on Captain Shaw for assistance. It was furnished by the good captain pelting the refractory steers with stones until they were glad to come to terms.**

**“Reaching the buffalo country, our father would get someone to drive his team and start on the hunt, for he was enthusiastic in his love of such sport. He not only killed the great bison, but often brought home on his shoulder the timid antelope that had fallen at his unerring aim, and that are not often shot by ordinary marksmen. Soon after crossing South Platte, the unwieldy oxen ran on a bank and overturned the wagon, greatly injuring our mother. She lay long insensible in the tent put up for the occasion.”<sup>125</sup>**

#### CATHERINE SAGER RECORDS THE TRIALS OF CROSSING THE NEBRASKA PLAIN

Catherine Sager later described: **“We had one wagon, two steady yoke of old cattle, and several of young and not well-broken ones. Father was no ox-driver, and had trouble with these until one day he called on Captain Shaw for assistance. It was furnished by the good captain pelting the refractory steers with stones until they were glad to come to terms.**

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#### JOHN C. FREMONT IS ELEVATED IN RANK

Congress published Lieutenant John C. Fremont’s report on his [1842] exploration effort under the title *Map of an exploring expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the year 1842* Lieutenant Fremont was brevetted (appointed temporarily with no pay increase) to the rank of Captain as a result of publications depicting his earlier exploration effort -- July 1844 (this will set a pattern as Fremont will later be brevetted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and Major General)

#### INDEPENDENT COLONY WAGON TRAIN LEADERSHIP IS CHALLENGED

John Minto from his wagon at the head of the wagon train heard the sound of buffalo he saw a vast herd ascending the hill ahead -- July 11, 1844 General Cornelius Gilliam called for a horse and threw himself into the saddle he instructed those men who were driving teams to find a campsite near wood and water everyone who had guns and horses rode out after the General

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<sup>125</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 504.

<sup>126</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 504.

Gilliam and the hunters killed fourteen buffalo but foolishly left them in the July sun when they returned for the meat they found it had rotted  
Captain William Shaw said he would not continue serving under the “general” who had been so headstrong that he galloped off after buffalo without first checking for Indians in the area

#### INDEPENDENT COLONY WAGON TRAIN SPLITS APART

Next day a meeting was held and the emigrants questioned Gilliam’s competence -- July 12, 1844  
several wagon owners wanted to strike out on their own  
After the meeting the Independent Colony wagon train split into three companies  
General Cornelius Gilliam took charge of one company  
this party included George Washington Bush, Michael T. Simmons and others  
Captain Robert Wilson Morrison led a second company  
Captain William Shaw led the third company  
this party included Henry Sager, his pregnant wife Naomi and their six children

#### METHODIST MISSION PROPERTY IN OREGON CITY IS SOLD

Methodist mission was dissolved by Rev. George Gary  
all of the property of the Methodist mission was sold except Wascopam Mission at The Dalles  
most of property went at bargain rates to former mission members  
Dr. John McLoughlin did not share the bargain, however  
Rev. George Gary submitted a proposal in writing to Dr. John McLoughlin -- July 15, 1844

**“The following is the valuation we put upon the property of the Missionary Board of the Methodist-Episcopal Church in this place [Oregon City]. We deem it proper to present a bill of items, that you may more fully understand the grounds of our estimate: One warehouse, \$1,300; one white dwelling-house, \$2,200; outhouses and fencing, \$200; old house and fencing, \$100; four warehouse lots, \$800; eight lots in connection with dwelling-house, \$1,400. Total, \$6,000. The two lots occupied by the church are not included in the above bill. If you should conclude to purchase the above-named property, you will do it with the understanding that we reserve the occupancy of the warehouse until the 1st of June, 1845; the house in which Mr. Abernethy resides until August, 1845; and all the fruit-trees on the premises, to be moved in the fall of 1844 or spring of 1845; and the garden vegetables now growing. If you see fit to accept this proposition, please inform us at the earliest opportunity, as we cannot consider ourselves pledged longer than a day or two.”<sup>127</sup>**

Dr. McLoughlin was outraged by this extortion

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<sup>127</sup> Elwood Evans, *History of the Pacific Northwest: Oregon and Washington, Vol. I.*, P. 253.



he replied calling attention to the fact that because he had recently given the lots to the Mission it would be the fairest solution for Gary to give Dr. McLoughlin back the donated lots since the Mission had no longer any use for them, and let him pay for the improvements; also one of the houses built with lumber borrowed from him and had not yet been paid for as a final compromise McLoughlin suggested the matter

be referred to the Methodist Missionary Society in Utica, New York

Each of Dr. McLoughlin's proposals was rejected by Rev. Gary who insisted it was a business deal Dr. McLoughlin was compelled to yield and agreed to pay the \$6000 demanded by Gary (ownership of the property was not settled until long after Oregon had become a state)

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET ARRIVES IN OREGON COUNTRY FROM EUROPE

After almost eight months of difficult navigating from Antwerp, Belgium aboard the *Indefatigable* Father Pierre-Jean De Smet sighted the coastline of Oregon -- July 27, 1844

along with his traveling companions Father John Nobili, Father Michael Accolti,

Father Anthony Ravalli and Father Louis Verduyck and lay brother Francis Huybrechts and six nuns of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur from Belgium

Sister Loyola (who served as Superior), Sister Mary Cornelia, Sister Mary Catherine,

Sister Mary Aloysia, Sister Mary Albine, and Sister Norbertine

Preparations were made to enter the Columbia River

Captain M.J. Moller had been unable to obtain a map of the mouth of the river

*Indefatigable* approached Cape Disappointment north of the sand bars

about 10 o'clock AM -- July 29

suddenly the crew saw people near the shoreline firing weapons and lighting fires

Captain Moller changed course back to the open sea

Passengers and crew aboard the *Indefatigable* noticed a ship apparently entering the next day but the vessel soon disappeared into the haze -- July 30

Captain Moller changed tactics

he sent a lifeboat with volunteers to seek a passage through the sand bars

when the launch and its crew safely returned they announced

they had found a five-fathom passage to the south

Captain Moller refused to waste any more time and directed his ship to the promising channel

sailor in charge of measuring the depth cried out:

**“seven, six, five, four 1/2, four, three... four, three, two 1/2..., four, five...”** -

They safely crossed the bar of the Columbia River -- July 30, 1844

after days of tension for crew and passengers the ship finally was able to anchor in Youngs Bay

in the afternoon a canoe with Clatsop Indians visited the ship  
from the natives the crew learned how lucky they have been  
as mouth of the Columbia has two channels.  
one in front of Cape Disappointment is the deepest  
and is the one that is generally used  
southern channel was not charted and in normal circumstances it was not used

#### *INDEFATIGABLE REACHES ASTORIA*

James Birnie, the representative of Hudson's Bay Company in Astoria,  
Father Pierre-Jean De Smet and his traveling companions he had crossed the Columbia River  
in order to show them the way by making the signals the crew had noticed a few days earlier  
Captain M.J. Moller explained he imagined the signals to be a trap by the natives  
to run the boat aground and to plunder it  
In the evening Birnie provided the new arrivals with fresh salmon and apples  
while curious Chinook Indians investigated the boat  
Captain Moller had to wait for a pilot to sail his large vessel up the Columbia from Astoria  
Father De Smet, impatient as always, did not want to waste any more time  
he determined to travel to Fort Vancouver as fast as he could by canoe  
with a favorable wind and nine strong paddlers the last 100 miles were quickly bridged

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET ARRIVES AT FORT VANCOUVER

Father De Smet was greeted by the employees of Hudson's Bay Company -- evening July 31, 1844  
Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin, Chief Factor James Douglas and Doctor Forbes Barclay  
were happy to be reunited with the great missionary once again  
Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin immediately sent a messenger to Saint Paul Mission  
located along the Willamette River at Champoege  
For eight glorious days the Jesuits and Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur  
enjoyed the hospitality of Dr. and Mrs. McLoughlin before Father Blanchet arrived  
to guide them up the Willamette Valley

#### CATHERINE SAGER (MRS. CLARK PRINGLE) SUFFERS AN ACCIDENT ON THE TRAIL

**“August 1st we nooned in a beautiful grove on the north side of the Platte. We had by this time  
got used to climbing in and out of the wagon when in motion. When performing this feat that  
afternoon my dress caught on an axle helve and I was thrown under the wagon wheel, which passed**

over and badly crushed my limb before Father could stop the team. He picked me up and saw the extent of the injury when the injured limb hung dangling in the air.

In a broken voice he exclaimed, 'My dear child, your leg is broken all to pieces!' The news soon spread along the train and a halt was called. A surgeon was found and the limb set; then we pushed on the same night to Laramie, where we arrived soon after dark. This accident confined me to the wagon the remainder of the long journey"<sup>128</sup>

#### OREGON COUNTRY BOUNDARY NEGOTIATIONS ARE TAKEN UP AGAIN

British government officials were anxious to avoid a complete rupture with the United States

Special Minister Richard Pakenham was sent on a special mission -- August 1844

by new British premier Sir Robert Peel to settle the Oregon boundary question

British diplomats began to receive instructions that were influenced

by Hudson's Bay Company officials whose suggestions were transmitted

through Governor Sir John Pelly and then Foreign Secretary Lord Aberdeen

to the British Ambassador Richard Pakenham

however, the new demographic reality of the migration to Oregon

was not representative of the facts as they were perceived in England

Hudson's Bay Company Governor Pelly had reported

only a few American families in the Pacific Northwest

(After meeting for several months with new Secretary of State John C. Calhoun

no prospect of reaching a positive result appeared

but Pakenham learned 49° north might be acceptable to the United States

if the boundary continued on to the southern tip of Vancouver Island)

#### INDEFATIGABLE ANCHORED NEAR FORT VANCOUVER

Twelve Catholic passengers disembarked -- August 5, 1844

six days after Father Pierre-Jean De Smet had arrived by canoe

Fathers Joseph Joset, Michael Accolti, Antonio Ravalli, and Louis Vercruysse

and Brothers Magri and Francois Huybrechts

plus six Sisters of Notre Dame

Whole Belgian party was hosted by Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin

#### CAPTAIN JOHN CHARLES FREMONT'S SECOND EXPEDITION REACHES ST. LOUIS

Striking out from Las Vegas they reached Jedediah Smith's trail through (Utah) and South Pass

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<sup>128</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 504-505.

traveling to Santa Fe (New Mexico) and ending at St. Louis, Missouri -- August 6, 1844  
his great discovery was to show there was no river except the Columbia  
which passed through the mountains to the Pacific coast therefore it was essential  
the United States gain control of Oregon Country from the British  
Captain Fremont had successfully mapped the future Oregon Trail  
from St. Louis to Fort Vancouver

(Captain John Charles Fremont continued on to Washington City  
after he arrived congress produced a map of his first expedition  
that expanded on an earlier map by cartographer George Gibbs)

#### CATHERINE SAGER DESCRIBES THE DEATH OF HER FATHER

Catherine Sager (Mrs. Clark Pringle) described the death of her father, Henry Sager -- August 1844:  
**“After Laramie we entered the great American desert, which was hard on the teams. Sickness became common. Father and the boys were all sick, and we were dependent for a driver on the Dutch doctor who set my leg. He offered his services and was employed, but though an excellent surgeon, he knew little about driving oxen. Some of them often had to rise from their sick beds to wade steams and get the oxen safely across. One day four buffalo ran between our wagon and the one behind. Though feeble, father sized his gun and gave chase to them. This imprudent act prostrated him again, and it soon became apparent that his days were numbered. He was fully conscious of the fact, but could not be reconciled to the thought of leaving his large and helpless family such perilous circumstances. The evening before his death we crossed Green River and camped on the bank. Looking where I lay helpless, he said, ‘Poor child! What will become of you?’ Captain Shaw found him weeping bitterly. He said his last hour had come, and his heart was filled with anguish for his family. His wife was ill, the children small, and one likely to be a cripple. They had no relatives near, and a long journey lay before them. In piteous tones he begged the Captain to take charge of them and see them through. This he stoutly promised. Father was buried the next day on the banks of Green River. His coffin was made of two troughs dug out of the body of a tree, but the next year emigrants found his bleaching bones, as the Indians had disinterred the remains.”<sup>129</sup>**

#### EPEDEMIC SWEEPS ACROSS OREGON COUNTRY

Hundreds of Indians died and countless other people fell ill from an infection -- August 1844  
this was a a contagious, flu-like ailment commonly called “bloody flux”  
that periodically swept up the Columbia River and the Willamette Valley

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<sup>129</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 505.

Father De Smet had not yet fully recovered from his long voyage  
when he was taken down by a severe attack of dysentery which laid him up for several day  
three of the Sisters also fell ill  
but luckily all of them recovered from this catastrophic disease  
When the illness ran its course De Smet decided not to wait  
for Father De Vos to arrive at Saint Francis Xavier Mission  
because any day snow could close the mountain passes on the route to Saint Mary's Mission  
in the Bitterroot Mountains

#### NEWLY ARRIVED CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES TRAVEL WITH FATHER BLANCHET

Father Jean-Pierre De Smet and his companions traveled willingly with Father Blanchet  
as four canoes and small sloop traveled up the Columbia River -- August 14, 1844  
Father Anthony Ravalli carried with him surgical and medical instruments, carpenter tools,  
supplies of medicines and two mill stones -- a gift from an Irish merchant in Antwerp  
camp was made that night (at the present site of Portland) -- mosquitoes made sleeping impossible  
After Father Blanchet said the Mass of the Assumption the next morning the Catholic missionaries  
entered the Willamette River and passed through a land of great natural beauty  
Father Blanchet described for the Sisters their nearly complete convent  
he had built it approximately two miles from Saint Paul's Mission the Jesuit mission  
serving the Willamette Valley  
Father Blanchet suggest that Father De Smet consider the abandoned Methodist mission at The Dalles  
built a decade earlier by Rev. Jason and Rev. Daniel Lee  
rumors circulated that the Methodists had spent a quarter of a million dollars  
on the property and making improvements

#### CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES ARRIVE AT ST. PAUL MISSION

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet, Father John Nobili, Father Michael Accolti, Father Antonio Ravalli,  
Father Louis Vercruyse, Brother Francis Huybrechts and six Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur  
Sister Loyola (who served as Superior), Sister Mary Cornelia, Sister Mary Catherine,  
Sister Mary Aloysia, Sister Mary Albine and Sister Norbertine  
arrived at St. Paul Mission -- 11:00 AM August 17, 1844  
Sister Loyola described the church, "**as lowly as the stable in Bethlehem**"<sup>130</sup>  
at last, they safely reached St. Paul Mission eight months after setting sail from Belgium  
they had completed their journey and their new adventure was beginning

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<sup>130</sup> Clarence B. Bagley, *Early Catholic Missions in Old Oregon*, P. 84.

Jesuit priests accepted Father Blanchet's gracious hospitality for the next week

#### SIX SISTERS OF NORTE DAME ARRIVE AT THEIR NEW CONVENT

Sister Loyola (who served as Superior), Sister Mary Cornelia, Sister Mary Catherine, Sister Mary Aloysia, Sister Mary Albine and Sister Norbertine were taken six miles by horse cart provided by the delighted French-Canadians to their not yet completed convent -- August 17, 1844 rather than complain they moved into two rooms at the boys' school, cleaned the rugged church and began teaching classes outdoors

#### ST. MARIE DE WILLAMETTE ACADEMY BEGINS OPERATION

Sainte Marie De Willamette Academy was in the small Catholic community of St. Paul, Oregon this convent and a school for girls was operated by and six sisters of Notre Dame de Namur St. Marie De Willamette Academy attracted the daughters of the French-Canadian fur traders and Native American or mixed-blood women who settled at French Prairie (between the Willamette and Pudding Rivers north of Salem) Six Sisters of Notre Dame, Sister Loyola (who served as Superior), Sister Mary Cornelia, Sister Mary Catherine, Sister Mary Aloysia, Sister Mary Albine, and Sister Norbertine also prepared local Indian women and fur trader's wives to receive the sacraments classes were taught in the open air as the building was not completed (until early October) Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur conducted classes in French they also acquired some knowledge of the Chinook Jargon familiar to their students (While learning to survive the nuns developed skills such as bread-making, clothes washing, carpentry, livestock husbandry and gardening their farm supported the community with food for their own consumption and products to sell and served as a training ground for students who worked in the fields and learned to produce marketable goods)

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET REJECTS THE WASCOPAM MISSION LOCATION

Father De Smet rejected the Methodist site at Wascopam, The Dalles he decided on another location on a bend of the Willamette River nearer to Oregon City for his new mission in Oregon Country De Smet preferred land that was crowded with large, healthy trees -- a sign to him of rich soil that indicated bountiful future harvests when the land was cleared and put into production with fruit trees and produce

Moreover, he saw no reason to purchase land from others, especially Methodists, when the rules governing land titles in Oregon changed with each revision of the governmental charters currently being debated by the American settlers in the Willamette Valley

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET SELECTS THE SITE FOR A NEW CATHOLIC MISSION

After a great deal of discussion Father De Smet selected a site for the new Catholic mission in a pleasantly wooded tract on the bank of the Willamette River near St. Paul's Mission De Smet intended for it to become the chief supply station for the Jesuits in Oregon accordingly a suitable tract of land was secured for that purpose -- August 1844 Father De Smet directed French-Canadian workmen cleared brush away and constructed three shops finally a fifteen-room, two-story house was completed which Father De Smet piously hoped would be filled in missionaries Father De Smet named St. Francis Xavier Mission in honor of Jesuit priest St. Francis Xavier

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET CALLS FOR ADDITIONAL MISSIONARIES FOR OREGON

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet was still Superior of the Rocky Mountain Mission of the Society of Jesus he sent a message to Saint Mary's Mission in the Bitterroots asking Father Gregory Mengarini to come to the Willamette Valley and assist him in transporting the supplies he had brought from Europe for the interior missions Father Peter De Vos, acting Superior of the Rocky Mountain Mission during De Smet's absence, was ordered to leave the Kalispel mission and take up permanent residence at Saint Francis Xavier in the Willamette Valley Mengarini reached the Willamette mission first, three weeks first receiving the call

#### CATHERINE SAGER (MRS. CLARK PRINGLE) NOTES HARDSHIPS IN HER JOURNAL

Catherine described how the family struggled to move west -- August 1844: **"We hired a young man to drive, as mother was afraid to trust the doctor, but the kind-hearted German would not leave her, and declared his intention to see her safe in the Willamette. At Fort Bridger the stream was full of fish, and we made nets of wagon sheets to catch them. That evening the new driver told Mother he would hunt for game if she would let him use the gun. He made for the train in advance, where he had a sweetheart. We found the gun waiting our arrival at Whitman's Then we got along as best we could with the doctor's help."**<sup>131</sup>

#### GENERAL CORNILIUS GRAHAM'S WAGON TRAIN SPLITS AGAIN

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<sup>131</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 505-506.

Before reaching Fort Bridger on Blacks Fork of the Green River (Wyoming) -- late August 1844

George Washington Bush and his four wagons had split away from the main train

they became known as the Simmons-Bush wagon train

Michael and Elisabeth Simmons, James and Charlotte McAllister, David and Talitha Kindred and their families, Gabriel and Keziah Jones and other pioneers had run out of supplies

Bush purchased flour at the amazingly inflated prices of \$60 a barrel, sugar at \$1.00 a pound and calico at \$1.00 a yard

When they arrived at Fort Bridger many of the pioneers were bitterly disappointed to learn they were only half-way to Oregon

#### OREGON INSTITUTE OPENS IN A NEW SCHOOL

Oregon Institute board of trustees formally opened a new school for missionary children -- fall 1844 enrollment grew steadily until community leaders decided that the growing population at Salem and the resources available to the school warranted the establishment

of a postsecondary institution at the Oregon Institute

(members of the board of trustees petitioned for and received a charter

from the Oregon Territorial Legislature [January 2, 1853]

the first degree was awarded to Emily York in [1859])

#### CATHERINE SAGER WRITES OF THE DEATH OF HER MOTHER

Catherine Sager (Mrs. Clark Pringle) noted the death of her mother in her journal -- September 1844

**“Mother planned to get to Whitman’s and winter there, but she was rapidly failing under her sorrows. The nights and mornings were very cold, and she took cold from the exposure unavoidably. With camp fever and a sore mouth, she fought bravely against fate for the sake of her children, but she was taken delirious soon after reaching Fort Bridger, and was bedfast. Traveling in this condition over a road clouded with dust, she suffered intensely. She talked of her husband, addressing him as though present, beseeching him in piteous tones to relieve her suffering, until at last she became unconscious. Her babe was cared for by the women of the train. Those kind hearted women would also come in at night and wash the dust from the mother’s face and otherwise made her comfortable. We traveled a rough road the day she died, and she moaned fearfully all the time. At night one of the women came in as usual, but she [Mother] made no reply to questions, so she thought her asleep, and washed her face, then took her hand and discovered the pulse was nearly gone. She lived but a few moments, and her last words were, ‘Oh, Henry! If you only knew how we have suffered.’ The tent was set up, the corpse laid out, and next morning we took the last look at**



our mother's face. The grave was near the road; willow brush was laid in the bottom and covered the body, the earth filled in -- then the train moved on.

“Her name was cut on a head-board, and that was all that could be done. So in twenty-six days we became orphans. Seven children of us, the oldest fourteen and the youngest a babe. A few days before her death, finding herself in possession of her faculties and fully aware of the coming end, she had taken an affectionate farewell of her children and charged the doctor to take care of us. She made the same request of Captain Shaw. The baby was taken by a woman in the train, and all were literally adopted by the company. No one there but was ready to do us any possible favor. This was especially true of Captain Shaw and his wife. Their kindness will ever be cherished in grateful remembrance by us all. Our parents could not have been more solicitous or careful. When our flour gave out they gave us bread as long as they had any, actually dividing their last loaf. To this day Uncle Billy and Aunt Sally, as we call them regard us with the affection of parents. Blessings on his...head!”<sup>132</sup>

#### CATHERINE SAGER WRITES OF THE JOURNEY THROUGH SNAKE RIVER COUNTRY

Catherine Sager (Mrs. Clark Pringle) described is part of their journey -- end of September 1844

“At Snake River they lay by to make our wagon into a cart, as our team was wearing out. Into this was loaded what was necessary. Some things were sold and some left on the plains. The last of September we arrived at Grande Ronde, where one of my sister's clothes caught fire, and she would have burned to death only that the German doctor, at the cost of burning his hands, saved her. One night the Captain heard a child crying, and found my little sister had got out of the wagon and was perishing in the freezing air, for the nights were very cold. We had been out of flour and living on meat alone, so a few [men] were sent in advance to get supplies from Dr. Whitman and return to [the wagon train]. Having so light a load we [the children except for the baby who remained with the wagon train] could travel faster than the other teams, and went on with Captain Shaw and the advance [party]. Through the Blue Mountains cattle were giving out and left lying in the road. We made but a few miles a day. We were in the country of ‘Dr. Whitman's Indians,’ as they called themselves. They were returning from buffalo hunting and frequented our camps. They were loud in praise of the missionaries and anxious to assist us. Often they would drive up some beast that had been left behind as given out and return it to its owner.

“One day when we were making a fire of wet wood Francis thought to help the matter by holding his powder horn over a small blaze. Of course, the powder horn exploded, and the wonder was he was left alive. He ran to a creek near by and bathed his hands and face, and came back

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<sup>132</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 506-507.

**destitute of whiskers and eyebrows, and his face was blackened beyond recognition. Such were the incidents and dangerous and humorous features of the journey.”<sup>133</sup>**

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET LEAVES SAINT FRANCIS XAVIER MISSION

Father De Smet traveled with Father Gregory Mengarini and four European priests and a lay brother as they set out from Saint Francis Xavier Mission  
on the way to Saint Mary’s Mission among the Flathead Indians -- October 3, 1844  
fortunately, just as De Smet and Mengarini reached Fort Vancouver  
an eight-oar Hudson’s Bay Company barge was preparing to leave for the interior  
Dr. McLoughlin generously secured places for the priests and their baggage on board  
in the few hours he had at Fort Vancouver De Smet hired Peter Biledot, a Canadian mechanic,  
to come along and install the grindstones De Smet had brought all the way from Belgium  
so that Saint Mary’s Mission would have a flour mill  
Father De Smet loaded a pack train of eleven horses with plows, spades, pickaxes, scythes,  
and carpenters’ implements brought by ship to the Columbia River  
to deliver to the Catholic missions in the Rocky Mountains

#### PRESIDENT JOHN TYLER IS HESITANT TO ENGAGE BRITAIN IN NEGOTIATIONS

In a letter to Secretary of State John C. Calhoun dated October 7, 1844  
said he hesitated to take up the Oregon Country negotiation after the treaty of 1842, **“believing that under the convention of joint occupation we stood on the most favorable footing. Our population was already finding its way to the shores of the Pacific, and a few years would see an American Settlement on the Columbia sufficiently strong to defend itself and to protect the rights of the U. States to the territory.”<sup>134</sup>**

#### SIMMONS-BUSH WAGON TRAIN CONTINUES ALONG THE OREGON TRAIL

Leaving Fort Bridger the members of the Simmons-Bush wagon train followed the Snake River  
they came to British Hudson’s Bay Company’s Fort Boise  
where they remained for a few days -- October 1844  
British fur traders told them about the rich farmland in Oregon’s Willamette River Valley

#### FATHER DE SMET MEETS FATHER DE VOS AT THE PORTAGE ON THE COLUMBIA RIVER

It required several portages to bypass the five major chutes and falls on the Columbia River

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<sup>133</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 507.

<sup>134</sup> Joseph Schafer, *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, P. 142-143.

between Fort Vancouver and Fort Walla Walla

at one of those stops Father De Smet chanced to meet Father Peter De Vos

and Brother Michael McGean who were on their way to Saint Francis Xavier Mission

in answer to Father De Smet's request De Vos had come from Saint Mary's

Fathers De Smet and De Vos whose friendship extended back to youthful days in Belgium

spoke frankly about many things, including a dossier detailing grievances against Father Point

Father De Vos intended to forward a package of damaging documents to Saint Louis

Father Point's very tolerant attitude toward the Indians

Father Point accepted them as they were

and opposed the racist attitude of certain Jesuits

but De Smet, using his authority as superior of the Rocky Mountains Mission,

confiscated the documents addressed to Father Superior Pierre Verhaegen

and refused to return them

Father De Vos sent his complaints to Superior General Roothaan in Rome

in his letter he also criticized Father Pierre-Jean De Smet

in De Vos' opinion De Smet showed more interest in establishing a chain of mission

than he did in mediating sensitive personnel matters facing the Catholic missionaries

De Smet loved to start missions and build buildings but he seldom remained in them long

he sought glamour by planning, establishing and publicizing his Indian missions

## CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES ARRIVE AT FORT WALLA WALLA

Arriving at Fort Walla Walla Fathers Pierre-Jean De Smet and Gregory Mengarini

redistributed their supplies from the barges transferred to a string of twenty horses and mules

and a few head of cattle were purchased from Hudson's Bay Company -- mid- October 1844

they also hired two guides to help them travel through the Spokane desert to Colville

Father Tiberio Soderini was staying at Fort Walla Walla

(he was one of five recruits who in 1844 left from Westport for the missions in the Rockies)

after he had arrived at Fort Hall, Father Soderini decided he had enough

of the hard and adventurous existence as a traveling missionary

he wanted to give up his solitary life to work among the Indians,

he was on his way to offer his services to Bishop Blanchet as a simple secular priest

(that is, to give up his vows of chastity, poverty and obedience but continue to serve)

Father De Smet took a few days rest and spoke with Father Tiberio Soderini

Father De Smet apparently convinced him to postpone his final decision

and return to St. Michael's Mission on the Pend Oreille River as a Catholic missionary

Father Gregory Mengarini, mechanic Peter Biledot and several priests  
continued with their heavy load of equipment toward Saint Mary's mission  
Father Anthony Ravalli received a harsh introduction to his new environment  
as he journeyed up the Columbia River on a Hudson's Bay Company barge  
when he was spilled into the icy water -- fortunately an Indian man rescued him

#### FATHERS PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET AND GREGORY MENGARINI CONTINUE ON

Caravan started from Fort Walla Walla on the Colville Road to Fort Colville -- October 15, 1844  
Father De Smet and his European traveling companions enjoyed warm weather  
as they traveled the well-worn Colville Road that stretched from Fort Walla Walla  
several hundred miles to just short of Fort Colville the enjoyed warm weather  
although it was mid-October

#### CATHERINE SAGER WRITES OF TRAVELING TO WAILLATPU

Catherine Sager (Mrs. Clark Pringle) described the Sager children's trip to Wailatpu: **"We reached Umatilla October 15, and lay by while Captain Shaw went on to Whitman's station to see if the doctor would take care of us, if only until he could become located in the Willamette. We purchased of the Indians the first potatoes we had eaten since we started on our long and sad journey. October 17 we started for our destination, leaving the baby very sick, with doubts of its recovery. Mrs. Shaw took an affectionate leave of us all, and stood looking after us as long as we were in sight. Speaking of it in later years she said she never saw a more pitiful sight than the cartful of orphans going to find a home among strangers."**<sup>135</sup>

#### CATHERINE SAGER DESCRIBES THE ARRIVAL OF THE CHILDREN AT WAILLATPU

Catherine Sager (Mrs. Clark Pringle) wrote of the scene at the Whitman Mission -- October 1844:  
**"We reached the station in the forenoon. For weeks this place had been a subject for our talk by day and formed our dreams at night. We expected to see log houses, occupied by Indians and such people as we had seen about the forts. Instead we saw a large white house surrounded with palisades. A short distance from the doctor's dwelling was another large adobe house, built by Mr. [William] Gray, but now used by immigrants in the winter, and for a granary in the summer. It was situated near the mill pond, and the grist mill was not far from it.**

**'Between the two houses were the blacksmith shop and the corral, enclosed with slabs set up end ways. The garden lay between the mill and the house, and a large field was on the opposite side. A**

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<sup>135</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 507.

good-sized ditch passed in front of the house, connecting with the mill pond, intersecting other ditches all around the farm, for the purpose of irrigating the land.”<sup>136</sup>

#### SAGER CHILDREN MEET DR. MARCUS AND MRS. NARCISSA WHITMAN

Catherine Sager (Mrs. Clark Pringle) noted in her journal -- October 1844: **“We drove up and halted near [the irrigation] ditch. Captain Shaw was in the house conversing with Mrs. Whitman. Glancing through the window, he saw us, and turning to her said: ‘your children have come; will you go out and see them?’ He then came out and told the boys to ‘Help the girls out and get their bonnets.’ Alas! it was easy to talk of bonnets, but not to find them! But one or two were finally discovered by the time Mrs. Whitman had come out. Here was a scene for an artist to describe. Foremost stood the little cart, with the tired oxen that had been unyoked lying near it. Sitting in the front end of the cart was John, weeping bitterly; on the opposite side stood Francis, his arms on the wheel and his head resting on his arms, sobbing aloud; on the near side the little girls were huddled together, bareheaded and barefooted, looking at the boys and then at the house, dreading we knew not what. By the oxen stood the good German doctor, with his whip in his hand, regarding the scene with suppressed emotion.**

**“Thus Mrs. Whitman found us. She was a large, well-formed woman, fair complexioned, with beautiful auburn hair, nose rather large, and large gray eyes. She had on a dark calico dress and gingham sunbonnet. We thought as we shyly looked at her that she was the prettiest woman we had ever seen. She spoke kindly to us as she came up, but like frightened things we ran behind the cart, peeping shyly around at her. She then addressed the boys, asking why they wept, adding: ‘Poor boys, no wonder you weep!’ She then began to arrange things as we threw them out, at the same time conversing with an Indian woman sitting on the ground near by.**

**“A little girl about seven years old soon came out and stood regarding us with a timid look. This was little Helen Mar Meek, and though a half-breed, she looked very pretty to us in her green dress and white apron and neat sunbonnet.**

**“Having arranged everything in compact form, Mrs. Whitman directed the doctor and the boys where to carry them, and told Helen to show the girls the way to the house. Seeing my lameness, she kindly took me by the hand and my little sister by the other hand, and thus led us in. As we reached the steps, Captain Shaw asked if she had children of her own. Pointing to a grave at the foot of the hill, not far off, she said: ‘All the child I ever had sleeps yonder.’ She added that it was a great pleasure to her that she could see the grave from the door. The doctor and boys having deposited the things as directed, went over to the mansion. As we entered the house we saw a girl about nine years old washing dishes. Mrs. Whitman spoke cheerfully to her and said: ‘Well, Mary Ann**

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<sup>136</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 507-508.

[Bridger], how do you think you will like all these sisters?’ Seated in her arm-chair, she placed the youngest on her lap, and calling us round her, asked our names, about our parents, and the baby, often exclaiming as we told our artless story, ‘Poor children!’

“Dr. Whitman came in from the mill and stood in the door, looking as though surprised at the large addition so suddenly made to the family. We were a sight calculated to excite surprise, dirty and sunburned until we looked more like Indians than white children. Added to this, John had cropped our hair so that it hung in uneven locks and added to our uncouth appearance. Seeing her husband standing there, Mrs. Whitman said, with a laugh: ‘Come in, doctor, and see your children.’ He sat down and tried to take little Louisa in his arms, but she ran screaming to me, much to the discomfiture of the doctor and amusement of his wife. She then related to him what we had told her in reference to the baby, and expressed her fears lest it should die, saying it was the baby she wanted most of all.

“Our mother had asked that we might not be separated, so Captain Shaw now urged the doctor to take charge of us all. He feared the [American Mission] Board might object, as he was sent a missionary to the Indians. The Captain argued that a missionary’s duty was to do good, and we certainly were objects worthy of missionary charity. He was finally persuaded to keep us all until spring. His wife did not readily consent, but he told her he wanted boys as well as she wanted girls. Finding the boys willing to stay, he made a written agreement with Captain Shaw that he would take charge of them. Before Captain Shaw reached the valley, Dr. Whitman overtook him and told he was pleased with the children and he need give himself no further care concerning them. The baby was brought over in a few days. It was very sick, but under Mrs. Whitman’s judicious care was soon restored to health.”<sup>137</sup>

#### WAILLATPU MISSION SERVES AS A WAY-STATION FOR OREGON BOUND PIONEERS

On occasion, a small party was hurried forward ahead of the wagon train  
to bring supplies back from the Willamette Valley  
some brought food from missionaries at Waiilatpu  
Indians also provided some supplies

Dr. Whitman would provide, and sometimes even deliver,  
pack-train loads of supplies to the immigrants on the trail  
Rev. Henry Spalding added flour and vegetables from Lapwai -- 1844  
yet the mission’s farms were supposedly for the Indians

Many Immigrants wintered at the mission because of illness or exhaustion of their oxen  
population at the mission varied from fifty to about seventy-five

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<sup>137</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 508-510.

men were employed about the place  
children attended school which no longer educated Indian children  
several children were also left in the care of the mission

Mary Ann Bridger -- nine-year-old daughter of Jim Bridger

Helen Mar Meek -- seven-year-old daughter of Joe Meek

Eliza Spalding -- seven-year-old daughter of Henry and Eliza Spalding

#### NATIVE AMERICANS RESENT THE NEW ARRIVALS IN OREGON COUNTRY

Indians resented the littered campsites, slain deer and the injured grass  
contemptuously the Cayuse and the Indians at The Dalles  
began bullying small immigrant parties and stealing horses  
in retaliation the whites seized replacement stock from unguarded Indian herds  
and the bitterness grew

#### CATHERINE SAGER (MRS. CLARK PRINGLE) DESCRIBES LIFE WITH THE WHITMANS

Catherine noted in her journal: **“Our faithful friend, the German doctor, left us at last, safe in the motherly care of Mrs. Whitman. He had kept his promise to our dying mother.**

**“For a week or two the house at Wailatpu was full of company. Having no help, Mrs. Whitman was too much engaged in household affairs to pay any attention to us. Very lonely did that large house seem to me during that time. Being a cripple, I was not able to join the other children in their pastimes, and they were too busy enjoying themselves to attend to me. Seated by the cradle, I plied my needle at simple sewing. I saw my brothers only at mealtime. Mrs. Whitman came occasionally to bring the baby her milk. I thought I could never be happy where everything was so strange, and shed many tears in solitude. I became so timid as to cry if addressed by the doctor or anyone.**

**“School commenced soon after our arrival, and most of the children attended. In course of time the company left the house; help was hired to do the housework, and Mrs. Whitman, having more time to herself, paid more to us. Gathering us around her in the evening she would amuse us with anecdotes, distributing pieces of calico and show us how to make patchwork and rag dolls, conversing with us in a kind and familiar way. On one of these occasions she gave each of us a string of beads to wear with the understanding that anyone who had to be reprovved for doing wrong must return the beads to her. We had been long without restraint, so that we had become quite unruly and difficult to manage. They were strict disciplinarians, and held the reins with steady hands. Any deviation from the rules met with instant and severe chastisement. Every effort to merit their approval was rewarded with smiles. While we were held under strict subjection, every effort was made to render us comfortable and happy and to win our love and confidence. Mrs. Whitman was**

particularly adept to raising children, having the art of uniting instruction and pleasure. She was a fine singer. I have never known anyone who excelled her in this respect. She soon commenced teaching us vocal music. Refined and accomplished herself, she exercised over our rude natures that influence that refines and beautifies a home. We soon formed a warm attachment for her, and fell into the practice of calling her and Dr. Whitman mother and father, as the other children did, and continued it while they lived. They were careful to have us remember our parents, and would speak of them with affection and respect. When necessary to administer punishment, she would set our fault before us and her own responsibility, and show that all was done for our own good, and would ask what we thought our parents would wish her to do.

“Dr. Whitman’s family, before we came, consisted of himself and wife, Perrin P. Whitman, his nephew, who came out with him in 1843, when fourteen years old; Mary Ann Bridger, nine years old; Helen Mar Meek, seven years old, who had been raised from infancy by Mrs. Whitman, and David M. Cortez, seven years old. This boy’s father was a Spaniard, his mother a Walla Walla Indian. Becoming tired of the infant, she cast it into a hole to perish. His grandmother rescued him and took him to Mrs. Whitman, naked, except a small piece of skin tied over his shoulders. We were in the schoolroom from Monday morning until Saturday noon. The afternoon was a holiday. If the weather was pleasant, the preparations for the Sabbath being completed, Mrs. Whitman took us out for [a] ramble over the hills. In inclement weather we were provided amusement in the house; the doctor believed in young folks having plenty of exercise. The Sabbath was always strictly observed, yet made so pleasant that we hailed its dawn with delight. Every preparation was made the day before, and perfect stillness pervaded the house Sabbath morning. In the winter season a Bible class met on Saturday night. All the family attended, and no effort was spared to make it interesting. A subject was given us to prove from the Bible, and Mrs. Whitman saw that each child had a proof to bring in. They were commented on, a chapter was read, each one reading a verse and giving their thoughts on it. These exercises closed by singing some Bible hymn. Sabbath morning we were reminded of the day and all kept still. Each sat with a book, and those too small to read were handed pictures. After breakfast we prepared for Sunday School that met at 11 o’clock, while the doctor held his service with the natives. Each got seven verses, one being learned every morning during the week. This was an interesting hour spent together, especially when the doctor could spend some moments with us. At 3 P.M. we met for the regular afternoon service, when Dr. Whitman read a sermon. He was not a preacher, but a physician. We had to find the text after the service was over and repeat it to him. The evening was spent in reading, reciting the commandments, etc.

“One evening in the week Mrs. Whitman would collect the young around her, holding a prayer meeting with them and conversing on religious subjects. The first Monday night in each month a



meeting was held in behalf of missions, and Monday after New Year's was observed as a fast day. The housework was hired out in winter, so the children could follow their studies without hindrance; Mrs. Whitman and the girls did the work in the summer. Each of us had her allotted task and was expected to promptly do her duty. At 11:00 we bathed in the river; dinner was served at 12:00. When the work was done we all sat in a large room at our sewing, save one of us, who read aloud to the rest. Supper was at 5 o'clock and after that was over time until retiring for the night was devoted to recreation. In the spring the evenings were spent in the garden putting in seeds; otherwise we did as we pleased. Sometimes the boys would bring horses for us to ride; at times we would go with the doctor to visit the lodges where Indians were sick. Mrs. Whitman was always with us in all these occupations, adding to our enjoyment. She was very fond of flowers, and we assisted in taking care of her flower garden each season. Our time flowed on in one uninterrupted stream of pleasure; we were kept constantly gaining knowledge, and from morning until night our adopted parents labored to promote our happiness. The family was larger in the winter. From twenty to twenty-five, including children, sat around the table at meals. Besides the adopted children, there were others who came to attend the mission school. Summers the doctor was gone most of the time so there was only Mrs. Whitman and the children. Mr. [Henry] Spalding's daughter [Eliza] attended school with us. She came on horseback, in charge of an Indians woman, 120 miles.

“The manner of living was simple. In winter we had beef, and in summer mutton and fish. Pork seldom came on the table. Dr. Whitman ignored fine flour, and wheat flour and corn meal were used unbolted. Tea and coffee came to the table only on rare occasions. This was a matter of economy, as delicacies were not easy to get in this country at that time. There was an abundance of wild fruit to be purchased of the natives; a good garden supplied plenty of vegetables. Cakes and pastry only were seen on holidays. Milk, butter and cheese were in full supply, and thus you have our mode of living at Waiilatpu.

“Some may ask how the washing for so large a family was managed. As early as 4 o'clock all hands were mustered for work in the kitchen, Mrs. Whitman at the head. Tubs and barrels were put in use and all the implements needed were at hand. The boys, with long aprons tied around them, brought the water and did the pounding while the women rubbed the clothes. Jokes were current and all were in good humor. By school time (9 o'clock) the clothes were on the line. It fell to the lot of myself and brother to get breakfast on wash days.

“Owing to the location and the evaporation in the spring of alkali ponds near by, Waiilatpu was not healthy. The mill pond was near by, and we were more or less troubled with chills and fever in warm weather. I was very subject to it, and suffered every summer of my stay there being often unable to labor. As the eldest daughter I had supervision of the other girls, and from being confined to the house so much I became the constant companion of Mrs. Whitman. An attachment near to

**that of mother and daughter existed between us from this constant association. To me she told all her plans for the pleasure or improvement of the children, as well as her fears and trouble concerning them. When the doctor was long absent I sat with her and read or conversed....She said often she could not get along without me.”<sup>138</sup>**

#### FATHER FRANCIS BLANCHET BECOMES VICAR APOSTOLIC BLANCHET

(Pope Gregory XVI in Rome created the Vicariate Apostolic of Oregon [December 1, 1843]  
this jurisdiction is established by the Catholic Church in regions served by missionaries  
it is led by a vicariate apostolic

Father Blanchet was promoted to Vicariate Apostolic of Oregon  
this position is comparable to that of Bishop is settled Catholic lands)

Father Blanchet received the papal brief which proclaimed him  
to be apostolic vicariate of Oregon -- November 4, 1844

Vicariate Apostolic Francis Blanchet made his ecclesiastical seat at Oregon City  
Vicar Blanchet began making plans to visit Montreal to receive his promotion  
and continue on to Europe on a recruiting and fundraising trip

#### FATHER DE SMET AND HIS COMPANIONS VISIT ST. MICHAEL'S MISSION

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet and his party encountered a pack train of seventeen horses  
going to the Pend Oreille River by way of the pass near Calispel Mountain  
so De Smet thanked and released his guides and attached himself to the larger caravan

Meanwhile Father Adrian Hoecken at Saint Michael's Mission

learned of De Smet's approach from travelers so he went to the eastern slope of Calispel Mountain  
and escorted his fellow Jesuits back to Saint Michael's Mission  
(near present-day Alburni Falls, Idaho) -- November 6, 1844

Father De Smet promised to stay a few days at the main camp of Kalipel Indians  
who joyously celebrated his arrival

Father Gregory Mengarini and the European priests continued on with the bulk of the supplies

#### NATIONAL ELECTION RESULTS REFLECTS AN EXPANSIONIST AGENDA

Oregon Country, Texas and slavery were the issues facing the nation

Democrat James K. Polk won the White House on an expansionist platform  
expansionists desired to end Joint Occupation with Great Britain

“Fifty-Four Forty or Fight” ran the slogan of one faction of Polk's party,

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<sup>138</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 520-523.

referring to the southern boundary of Russian-Alaska at 54°40' north latitude  
Democrats were swept into office -- November 7, 1844  
this brought forth new hope to Willamette settlers

#### SIMMONS-BUSH WAGON TRAIN TRAVELS FROM FORT BOISE

Michael and Elisabeth Simmons, James and Charlotte McAllister, David and Talitha Kindred  
and their families, Gabriel and Keziah Jones and other pioneers spend the month of November  
pushing through the Blue Mountains -- November 1844  
John Minto, a young Englishman, was sent ahead to Fort Vancouver to gather supplies  
remainder of the party would rejoin him at Wascopam Mission at The Dalles

#### VARIOUS CONDITIONS IN OREGON COUNTRY

##### Political conditions

Oregon City -- formerly the Willamette Falls  
provided the Provisional Capitol and only town  
replaced both Champeog and Chemeketa as the political center of the Willamette Valley

##### Economic conditions

hard times in Oregon Country  
farmers produced an abundance of wheat  
however, shortages of goods, cash, and a market for wheat impaired growth  
credit system made merchants a vital figure  
business run on barter and credit  
businessmen were the object of envy, resentment, and suspicion  
Hudson's Bay Company offered the best prices and variety of goods  
coins drained off into Company strongboxes  
the little remaining went to American merchants

##### Social conditions

settlement North of the Columbia River was slow  
Hudson's Bay Company controlled best land  
Fort Nisqually was home to the company's herds  
Cowlitz Valley farms provided produce for company employees  
Willamette Valley was attractive  
it was reported to new-comers that the land North of the Columbia was poor  
and that the population there the crudest element of the frontier

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PIONEER FARMER

He was patriotic and felt it was his duty to expand and remove all obstacles to American growth  
as a rough individualist, he carried his government and law with him  
he was confident, practical, stubborn and optimistic about the future  
indeed, he displayed an exaggerated confidence and optimism  
however, he possessed no feeling for history or the past

He was interested in political organization and usually was a states-rights, anti-monopoly Democrat  
any government must be local and responsive to the immediate needs of the settlers

He was litigious by nature, but demonstrated no respect for the lawyers  
laws must be specific, clear and understandable

but he was not personally bound to obey

if laws interfered with his personal rights, privileges, or interests

Oregon Country was described as a paradise of natural beauty

rich, well-watered valleys with a luxuriously mild climate prevailed

there also were excellent facilities for developing an Asian trade for farm products

## PIONEER HOMES DESCRIBED

Simple cabins were made of logs with the spaces between filled with moss and mud

pine boughs with dirt thrown over formed the roof -- floors were dirt

windows consisted of stretched cotton cloth or oiled undressed deer hides

occasionally a box of window glass might become available

stoves were rare -- an open fire served for cooking

furniture was made by hand -- the table was a large board hinged against the wall

if boards were available, beds also were built against the wall

mattresses were filled with corn husks with a blanket spread over as a cover

nearly every family tried to preserve a feather bed

regardless of whatever else was discarded along the trail

buffalo robes served as common blankets

sometimes a bear skin was used to protect beds from leaks in the roof

dishes were made of tin -- forks and spoons had been brought out from the United States

Fort Vancouver tinnerns provided replacements

some earthenware dishes were shipped from London

clothing consisted of buckskins -- shredded deer sinew was used for thread to make clothing

buckskin also served as flour sacks to store the harvest of wheat

women clothes had to be ordered a year in advance from London

to be delivered on Hudson's Bay Company ships

#### FATHER DE SMET VISITS ST. JOSEPH'S MISSION ON THE ST. JOSEPH RIVER

Father De Smet left Saint Michael's Mission traveling to St. Joseph's Mission to honor the request of some Coeur d'Alene Indians to visit their community and to visit the mission that had been ordered built by Father Peter De Vos

After a difficult trip, Father De Smet arrived in the area where the Coeur d'Alene Indians spend most of their time -- November 1844

Father De Smet named the area around the mission St. Maries (pronounced Saint Marys) Fathers Nicholas Point and Joseph Joset worked among them at St. Joseph's Mission located at the south end of Lake Coeur d'Alene

Father Point's architectural plans came to fruition "**...a new village was laid out; trees were felled, roads opened, a church erected and the public fields sown. By October, 1844 the little village contained one hundred Christian families.**"<sup>139</sup>

Fathers Point and Joseph Joset along with Brother Charles Huet taught the Coeur d'Alene Indians the Gospel and the industry of farming Unfortunately the site was vulnerable to flooding, so Father De Smet ordered the mission relocated to a site near (present-day Cataldo, Idaho)

#### FATHER MENGARINI AND HIS COMPANIONS ARRIVE AT ST. MARY'S MISSION

Father Gregory Mengarini and the European priests traveling ahead of Father Pierre-Jean De Smet continued their journey from St. Michael's Mission

they arrived St. Mary's Mission with the bulk of the equipment and supplies -- fall 1844 one of these new arrivals was Father Anthony Ravalli

(Father Ravalli had been born in Ferrara, Italy [May 15, 1812])

at the age of fifteen he entered the Jesuit Novitiate desiring to be a missionary to prepare himself to be all things to all men he added medicine and surgery to his study of philosophy, theology, mathematics, and natural sciences he also served apprenticeships in an artist's painting and sculpture studio and mechanic's shop and studied mathematics)

Father Ravalli was six feet tall and 200 pounds with a cheerful disposition

he had a quick wit and was a renown storyteller

(this zealous priest will give forty years of his life as a missionary in the Northwest)

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<sup>139</sup> John Dawson Gilmary Shea, *History of Catholic Missions Among the Indian Tribes of the United States* P. 474-475.

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET ATTEMPTS TO REACH ST. MARY'S MISSION

It was late too climb the Coeur d'Alene Mountains when Father De Smet set out with four guides from St. Michael's Mission for the Saint Mary's Mission -- November 17, 1844 it rained and snowed continuously and the rivers were much higher than usual banks of the St. Joe River were completely inundated when they reached St. Ignace River (Montana) their passage was blocked one of the guides offered to return to St. Michael's Mission and seek assistance two days later he returned with canoes which carried the unfortunate party back to Saint Michael Mission among the Kalipel Indians where Father De Smet visited with Father Adrian Hoecken

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet along with Father Adrian Hoecken and Brother Peter McGean secured shelter in a cabin constructed from fir columns and bark slabs near Albeni Falls there the three Jesuits carried out religious instructions and baptisms

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET RETURNS TO ST. MICHAEL'S MISSION

After traveling by canoe for two days Father De Smet and his four guides traveled by canoe back to Saint Michael's Mission among the Kalipel Indians where Father De Smet again visited with Father Adrian Hoecken -- November 19, 1844

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet, the head of the Rocky Mountain Mission, believed St. Michael's Mission should be moved because of flooding

Father Tiberio Soderini at the insistence of De Smet agreed to remain at St. Michael's Mission to assist Father Hoecken in the move to establish a new mission

#### BRITISH SLOOP-OF-WAR ARRIVES AT FORT VANCOUVER

*Modeste*, carrying twenty guns, under the command Captain Thomas Baillie visited Fort Vancouver and remained for several weeks -- November 1844

This visit caused some anxiety to the American settlers reports were about that Hudson's Bay Company had strengthened the defenses of their posts it was feared that the boundary was soon to be adjusted that the region north of the Columbia River would become British territory

#### FATHER FRANCIS BLANCHET TRAVELS TO CANADA AND EUROPE

Father Blanchet left from Fort Vancouver bound for Montreal and Quebec -- November 28, 1844 because he traveled on a Hudson's Bay Company vessel, he sailed first to Oahu, (Hawaii)

(reaching there on New Year's Eve [[1844])

#### FATHER DE SMET SEEKS TO REPLACE ST. MICHAEL'S MISSION

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet, Adrian Hoecken and Tiberio Soderini and Brother Peter McGean attempted a second time to depart from St. Joseph's Mission -- December 4, 1844  
this time they used another path through the Kalispel Valley and Clark Fork River  
Father Pierre-Jean De Smet and his companions reached a location better suited to avoid flooding  
they secured shelter in a cabin constructed from fir columns and bark slabs near Albeni Falls  
there the Jesuits carried out religious instructions and baptisms among the Kalispel Indians

#### VICARATE APOSTOLIC BRLANCHET SAILS OUT OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Vicar Francis Norbert Blanchet sailed away from the Columbia River  
aboard the Hudson's Bay Company bark *Columbia* -- December 5, 1844  
in his absence he left Father Modeste Demers in charge of the administration of Columbia District

#### SIMMONS-BUSH WAGON TRAIN LEARNS OF THE EXCLUSIONARY LAWS

Exhausted pioneers of the Simmons-Bush wagon train reached Wascopam at The Dalles  
as winter was setting in -- December 7, 1844  
they met with John Minto who had gone ahead to Fort Vancouver seeking supplies  
Minto told them about the Oregon Exclusionary Laws enacted by the Provisional Government  
which said African-Americans and mulattos could not live in Oregon Country  
as they were considered to be a challenge to the Provisional Government  
George Washington Bush faced an ironic dilemma  
he left the United States and its tolerance of slavery to achieve personal security  
now he was faced with the lash as imposed by the Provisional Government of Oregon Country  
two choices were available to the popular mulatto  
move to California and live under Mexican law  
move north of the Columbia River where a more tolerant Hudson's Bay Company ruled

#### MEMBERS OF THE SIMMONS-BUSH WAGON TRAIN MAKE AN HISTORIC DECISION

Weather was too cold to allow for the safe driving of stock around Mount Hood  
Wagon train members who had accompanied Michael Simmons and George Washington Bush  
were thankful for the gifts and assistance they received along the Oregon Trail from George  
entire Simmons caravan agreed to not settle anywhere that George Washington Bush could not  
they sought a way to avoid the Provisional Government's new restrictions against Negroes

they would look for land where George Washington Bush had worked  
on his first visit to Oregon

in addition to Michael and Elizabeth Simmons were:

James McAllister, his wife, Martha and children: George, daughter America, Martha, and John;  
David Kindred, his wife Talitha, and son John K. Kindred;

Gabriel Jones, his wife, Keziah B., their sons, Lewis and Morris, and daughter Elizabeth  
they also were accompanied by two single men: Samuel Crockett and Jesse Ferguson

George and Isabella Bush and their five sons William Owen Bush, Joseph Talbot Bush,

Riley Bailey Bush, Henry Sanford and Jackson January remained at The Dalles for the winter

along with Captain William Shaw who was sick with typhoid fever and members of his family  
they tended their own animals and those of the others who had gone on ahead

(they would rejoin the others when the cattle could be ferried across the river in the spring)

#### MICHAEL SIMMONS PARTY ARRIVES AT FORT VANCOUVER

Members of the Simmons' party arrived at Fort Vancouver

where they discovered the British were less than enthusiastic

about permitting American settlers north of the Columbia River

Michael Simmons attempted to acquire living quarters for his family at Fort Vancouver

while he would journey north searching to a place to settle

this request was flatly denied unless he abandoned his effort to settle north of the Columbia  
persistent efforts were made by Hudson's Bay Company

to induce the party to settle in the Willamette Valley

Maintaining their commitment to George Washington Bush and each other

members of the Michael Simmons party crossed to the north side of the Columbia River

Simmons finally acquired use of a room for one month from a Kanaka (Hawaiian)

in a shanty outside the fort in Washougal (Washington)

this was an area that British Hudson's Bay Company had refused

to allow American Overlanders to settle,

so the Oregon government's code was not enforced there

McLoughlin then provided the Simmons party with supplies at good prices and on credit

members of the Michael Simmons party found work cutting timber, splitting logs

and making and selling rough cedar shingles in exchange for food and supplies

#### PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT COULD NOT MEET PRESSING NEEDS

Oregon pioneers had to operate under the provisional government



while the federal government delayed in creating a territory

Joe Meek continued as sheriff, collecting taxes, summoning juries and witnesses,  
arresting miscreants and even taking a census

provisional government maintained some degree of law and order in the region  
laid out and constructed or provided for roads, ferries and bridges  
and passed laws for the good of the community

Influx of another twelve hundred pioneers increased the pressure for change -- 1844

provisions of the law of [1843] Organic Laws of Oregon were found to be inadequate  
for the growing necessities of an expanding community

Provisional Government would be forced to adjust to assume new forms and meet new needs

Provisional Government expenses currently reached about \$23,000

three-man Executive Committee previously had imposed a property tax  
without a vote of the Legislative Council [December 1843]

Executive Committee sent a message to the Provisional Legislative Council

recommending several important modifications of the Organic Law of 1843  
including doubling the property tax to 1/4 of 1% with many exemptions  
almost \$8,000 was to be paid by direct collection of the property tax

however, the income was still inadequate because of refusals or inability to pay  
these deficits met by issuance of \$15,000 in paper script

and warrants of indebtedness that were used as currency by the settlers

#### SOME AMERICANS FEEL CONCERN REGARDING DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN'S PLIGHT

Although confirmed British-haters of the Ultra American Party cursed McLoughlin to the end,  
the Chief Factor's generosity was having an effect as some pioneers began to wonder  
if the charges they had heard and read regarding the Chief Factor were accurate  
especially those that emanated from Hall Jackson Kelley and Rev. Henry Spalding  
that had been published as government documents

One of the immigrants, M.M. McCarver, suggested that McLoughlin write him a letter  
answering the most damaging of the complaints about him

McLoughlin did write the letter which McCarver showed around Oregon City  
coupled with the views of men like Jesse Applegate and Peter Burnett,

this letter did a great deal to soften hostility toward Dr. McLoughlin

and to raise questions in many minds about the loss of Dr. McLoughlin's land  
required by the Provisional Constitution's discriminatory Article IV

## DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN IS NOT OPPOSED TO THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

Americans had limited their jurisdiction to area south of the Columbia River

provisional government could also be used by the Hudson's Bay Company

to help collect the \$30,000 in debt owed by the Americans in the Willamette Valley

Dr. McLoughlin who wrote he joined **“the association both for the security of the Company’s property and the protection of its rights.”**<sup>140</sup>

## INDIANS GO TO CALIFORNIA TO DRIVE HORSES BACK TO THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY

All of the Indians of the upper Columbia River Valley were eager to acquire cattle by 1844

they knew about the successful [1837] cattle drive sponsored by some of the white settlers

when approximately 630 head were driven into Oregon from California

a group of Spokane, Cayuse, and Walla Walla natives decided to go to California to trade for cattle

one of the members of the party was Elijah Hedding the son of Peu-peu-mox-mox

Elijah had spent several years in the Methodist Mission school at the Oregon Institute

and had been named after a prominent Methodist bishop

At first all went well, when the Indians arrived at Sutter's Fort they were given a cordial welcome arrangements were made for trading.

however, difficulties arose when the Oregon Indians in a skirmish with local Indians

captured twenty-two horses and mules

these animals were driven to Sutter's Fort where some of the Americans

claimed them as their property saying that they had been stolen

in the argument which ensued, an American, Grover Cook, known for his anti-Indian attitude,

killed Elijah Hedding in cold blood while inside Sutter's fort

Following the murder, the Oregon Indians hastily left for their homes

they were angry and filled with the desire for revenge

## CHIEF PEU-PEU-MOX-MOX LEARNS OF THE DEATH OF SON

When the group of Spokane, Cayuse, and Walla Walla natives returned home from California

Ellis, as Head Chief of the Nez Perce, was asked to call on sub-Indian Agent Dr. Elijah White

to see what he could do about the outrage

no doubt Ellis referred to the provision in the Tenth Article of the code of laws

that Dr. White had persuaded the Nez Perce and Cayuses to accept

this contained the provision that if a white man raised a gun against an Indian,

**“it shall be reported to Dr. White and he shall redress it.”**

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<sup>140</sup> Lancaster Pollard, *A History of the State of Washington*, P. 102.

this incident must have been most embarrassing to Dr. White  
as it had occurred in Mexican territory over which the United States had no jurisdiction.  
Peu-peu-mox-mox did not understand concept of limited jurisdiction  
indignation swept the tribes of the Columbia Basin  
there was talk of sending an army of two thousand warriors to plunder California in revenge,  
a threat that created panic along the Sacramento River  
and brought Elijah White hurrying back for still more conferences with the Indians  
All that Dr. White could do was to promise to write to the Mexican authorities  
asking them to right the wrong  
by fast talk Dr. White broke up the plans for the avenging army  
which the Indians probably could not have carried out anyway  
Dr. White also sought to appease the Indians by promising them many benefits,  
including the establishment of a boarding school  
for Indian youth in the upper Columbia country

#### OREGON COUNTRY'S PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT IS IN TURMOIL

Those who had arrived in Oregon [1844] wanted a stronger, more aggressive American government  
central issue that was debated locally was  
whether to establish a new constitution for an independent country  
or to continue with a government that was provisional -- that is temporary  
until a boundary could be established and official United States jurisdiction  
extended over Oregon Country  
This issue divided the settlers sharply along "Party" lines -- 1844  
"Independent Party" led by Robert "Doc" Newell and favored by early settlers and mountain men  
wanted to form an independent republic  
they had dominated the nine-man Provisional Legislative Council  
but now their power was slipping as new arrivals become politically involved  
"Mission Party" was interested in becoming a territory of the United States  
but was concerned about maintaining the huge land claims held by the Methodist Missions  
at Champoege (Mission Bottom) and Chemeketa  
"American Party" while waiting to become annexed to the United States as a territory or a state  
remained split regarding the role of Hudson's Bay Company in maintaining order  
"Moderate American Party" was sure Oregon would be made a United States territory  
as soon as the international boundary dispute was cleared up  
in the meantime, they were willing to tolerate Hudson's Bay Company's dominance

“Ultra American Party” goal of eliminating Hudson’s Bay Company and its property rights did not seem as important -- especially as sympathy rose for Dr. McLoughlin

## OREGON PROVISIONAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL GOES INTO SPECIAL SESSION

Legislative Council Speaker Morton Matthew McCarver called the special session to order in the Oregon City home of Provisional Recorder John E. Long -- December 16-[21], 1844  
all of the council members were present:

representing Twality County was Speaker McCarver, Peter H. Burnett and Matthew Gilmore and David Hill,

representing Champoeg County was Thomas D. Keizer, Robert “Doc” Newell, Daniel Waldo and Recorder Dr. John E. Long,

representing Clackamas County was Asa L. Lovejoy

Executive Committee members Peter G. Stewart and Osborne Russell presented a message to the Legislative Council addressing the opposing claims of the United States and Great Britain

both nations claimed the territory west of the Rocky Mountains and north of the California line

This session was conducted in a semi-formal fashion and the rules were frequently suspended among laws which were passed was an act incorporating Oregon City -- December 16, 1844

this was the first municipal incorporation west of the Rocky Mountains

Oregon Institute at Salem, under the auspices of the Methodist Church was also incorporated at the same session

Provisional Council members laid out and constructed or provided for roads, ferries and bridges

Provisional Council passed was an act prohibiting liquor -- title was: **“An Act to prevent the introduction, sale and distillation of Ardent Spirits in Oregon”**

according to an article the local newspaper, the *Oregon Spectator*: **“first section imposed a fine of \$50 for the importation or introduction of ardent spirits into Oregon, with intent to sell, barter, give or trade the same, or for offering the same for sale, trade, barter or gift. The second section subjected to a fine of \$20 the sale, barter, gift or trade of any ardent spirits, directly or indirectly, to any persons in Oregon. The third section declared any manufactory or distillery of ardent spirits a nuisance, subject to a fine of \$100, and an order directing the sheriff to seize and destroy the distillery apparatus. The fourth section provided the mode for seizing and destroying distillery apparatus, implements and spirituous liquors, and punishing those engaged in such illicit manufacture.”** (*Oregon Spectator*, Vol. I, No. 1, February 5, 1846.)

It was recognized the “Lash Law” portion of the Exclusion Act was far too severe

Provisional Council substituted a term of hard labor for the whip

black and mulatto people still were required to leave

however, they might remain if they posted a cash bond assuring their good behavior  
if a black person was tried and found guilty of being in the Oregon Country illegally (no bond)  
he or she was to be hired out publicly to whomever would employ them  
for the shortest amount of time  
after the period of forced labor expired the employer had six months  
to get the black individual out of Oregon  
failure to do so was punishable by a fine of \$1000  
(this law was designed to take effect in [1846]  
but was repealed in [1845] and thus was never directly enforced)  
owning slaves was widely tolerated in the Northwest  
while some slaves successfully sued for their freedom or the freedom of loved ones,  
no whites were ever forced to free their slaves upon entering Oregon Country after 1844  
some slave owners did follow through on promises to free their slaves after arriving in Oregon  
and a small population of free blacks gradually became established in the Pacific Northwest

#### PROVISIONAL COUNCIL PROPOSES MORE CHANGES TO THE ORGANIC LAWS

Positions on issues were so sharply divided along Party lines -- 1844  
that the Provisional Council faced severe doubts regarding its own legality  
Nine-member Provisional Legislative Council doubted its own legitimacy  
it was proposed a new constitution be written  
expanding the rights and authority of the local self-government  
three-man Executive Committee would be eliminated  
in favor of a single governor with veto power who would serve a two year term  
that would take effect in [June 1845]  
it also proposed the new House of Representatives would appoint a Supreme Judge  
it was even proposed the Legislative Council be replaced by a House of Representatives  
composed of no less than thirteen nor more than sixty-one members

#### NEW ARRIVALS IN OREGON WERE NOT SATISFIED WITH THE ORGANIC LAWS

Most of the immigrants arriving in Oregon Country did not accept the Organic Laws  
there was no organized Abolitionist movement in Oregon Country  
but many white friends of black settlers submitted petitions  
to the Provisional Council asking for exemptions from the Exclusion Law for their friends  
Peter H. Burnett who had introduced a law excluding Negroes from Oregon Country  
attempted to justify the Exclusion Law by arguing

that emigration was a privilege not an inherent right,  
and that this privilege could be denied to a particular class or race of people  
without denying them constitutional rights  
since blacks were not permitted to vote, he argued,  
it was better to deny them residence as well,  
as they would have no motive for self-improvement  
(later still, after he became the first governor of California Peter H. Burnett declared  
that if he could have predicted the Civil War he would not have supported such a law,  
and as the law was later modified no one should be blamed for supporting it)

#### NEW ARRIVALS HAVE A GREAT IMPACT ON OREGON COUNTRY

Approximately 1,200 pioneers arrived in Oregon Country  
to swell the American population to about 2,500 -- 1844  
these settlers were expansionists, aggressive, proud and sensitive  
inexperienced with foreigners and therefore suspicious they were anti-British and anti-Catholic  
they were confident they would soon be part of the United States  
new immigrants arrived in Oregon Country with no allegiance to Provisional Government  
some resented the Methodist mission group's control of affairs  
many hardy pioneers more congenial to Hudson's Bay Company than to the Methodists  
several lawyers who arrived in the Willamette Valley joined the Moderate American Party  
and began to challenge both the Provisional Government and Hudson's Bay Company  
Most of the 1844 immigrants reached their destination in a sorry state late in the autumn  
but their misery lasted only until the following (spring)  
and their transition was complete by the [fall 1845]

#### REVOLT IS ATTEMPTED IN CALIFORNIA

An effort to overthrow Mexican Governor Jose Manuel Micheltoarena drew the attention  
of Hudson's Bay Company Agent in Yerba Buena (San Francisco) William Glen Rae  
who furnished the rebels with \$15,000 worth of stores and ammunition  
Treaty of peace was signed -- December 1844  
Rae anticipated that the Mexican governor would punish Hudson's Bay Company  
for his unjustifiable interference

#### MICHAEL SIMMONS BECOMES INTERESTED IN LAND ON PUGET SOUND

Michael Simmons became the leader of an initial exploratory effort

to investigate land north of the Columbia River to escape prejudice of the Provisional Government  
Henry Williamson, James Loomis, and the three Owens brothers John, Henry and James  
were all members of the Simmons-Bush wagon train and joined in the search  
While Simmons' pregnant wife Elizabeth remained in their rented room in a shanty  
Michael and his companions journeyed north in search of land to homestead  
after a tedious trip attended with many hardships the party reached the forks of Cowlitz River  
where their provisions gave out  
this was the first attempt by emigrants from the United States  
to develop a settlement north of the Columbia River -- winter of 1844-1845

#### GEORGE WASHINGTON BUSH DECIDES TO MOVE NORTH OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER

It seemed the Columbia River could become the international boundary  
George and Isabella Bush decided to move north of Columbia River to the Puget Sound region  
beyond the practical reach of the Provisional Government's new legislation  
Treaty of Joint Occupation [1818] put Oregon Country under joint British and U.S. control  
in practice, the provisional government's authority extended  
only to the south side of the Columbia  
while the British Hudson's Bay Company still dominated the region north of the river

#### ST. MICHAEL'S MISSION IS REPLACED BY ST. IGNATIUS MISSION

Father De Smet had St. Ignatius Mission built four miles downriver from St. Michael's Mission  
this new mission named in honor of the founder of the Catholic Jesuit order  
was established for the Kalispel Indians  
(at a site located near present-day Cusick, Washington)  
Christmas was celebrated in a simple and crude chapel  
on the banks Pend Oreille River -- December 25, 1844

#### VICAR FRANCIS BLANCHET CONTINUES ON HIS JOURNEY TO MONTREAL

Father Francis Blanchet left Oahu, Hawaii-- January 12, 1845  
he traveled by ship to Tahiti and then rounded the dreaded Cape Horn  
he continued on way up the Atlantic seaboard sailing for Montreal

#### DEATH OF WILLIAM GLEN RAE

Dr. McLoughlin was still disregarding instructions to close the post at Yerba Buena (San Francisco)  
Hudson's Bay Company had done a good business at Yerba Buena

Dr. John McLoughlin's son-in-law William Glen Rae, as the agent for the Company, was responsible for the success although he had taken to drinking heavily legend also said he had squandered company money on a Spanish beauty Rae however strongly believed he had compromised Hudson's Bay Company's success when he supported a group of unsuccessful revolutionaries attempting to overthrow California Governor Jose Manuel Micheltoarena he feared the Mexican government would retaliate by executing him, seize his warehouses and confiscate the company's assets

Dr. McLoughlin's son-in-law pondered his missteps and felt that blame would be laid at his feet his depression grew deeper through excessive use of alcohol

About 8:00 A.M. Rae's clerk, William Sinclair, heard shouts from Rae's room -- January 19, 1845 he ran in and found Rae standing with his wife, his coat off and a pistol in his hand Sinclair seized the pistol before it could be fired and shouted for help a shot sounded and Rae fell dead -- he had a second pistol

#### ST. LOUIS CATHOLIC CHURCH IS BUILT IN THE VILLAGE OF ST. LOUIS, OREGON

Catholics built their first church in Oregon Country (as opposed to a mission) on the northern edge of the Willamette Valley (three miles northwest of today's Gervais, Oregon) Jesuit missionary Father Aloysius Verecuysse visited the early settlement [1844] he stayed to build a log church named to honor Saint Louis, King of France -- 1845 in the village of St. Louis, Oregon Country

(Sister Alphonse, who later visited the area with a view to establishing a school, reported, "...a **wooden building, painted white. The interior is quite nice and the sacristy contains some beautiful vestments. Everything orderly.**")

(St. Louis Catholic parish was not organized until [November 1947] when Father D. Delorme arrived and the original church was replaced in [1880])

#### FORT VANCOUVER REPRESENTS BRITISH INTERESTS IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Hudson's Bay Company post reached its full physical proportions -- 1845

Fort Vancouver proper was a parallelogram with dimensions of about 150 yards by 200 yards enclosed by a wooden wall made of pickets twenty feet high this wall was strongly secured by inside buttresses some 18-pounders were placed in the center of the stockade there was a bastion in the northwest corner where 12-pounders commanded not only the fort but the entire village as well



Within the walls were numerous wooden buildings arranged around a central court  
these served as offices, apartments for clerks and other officers  
and as warehouses for furs and imported English goods  
chief factor's two-story residence with its popular dining hall and public sitting room  
stood beside the other buildings

#### VANCOUVER VILLAGE IS LOCATED WEST OF THE FORT ITSELF

Fort Vancouver consisted not only of the stockade areas but also a sizable village  
located a few yards to the west -- 1845  
scattered about were irregularly placed dwellings -- most were homes of Company employees  
but also in the village was a Catholic church, schoolhouse and a stable  
both inside and outside the walls of the post were workshops for different mechanics,  
carpenters, blacksmith, coopers (barrel makers), wheelwrights and tanners  
there was a bastion in the northwest corner of the fort where 12-pounder cannons  
commanded not only the fort but the entire village outside the walls as well  
Immediately outside of the fort to the north was an orchard  
and on the east and south sides were cultivated fields  
a road passed by the south side of the Fort and connected to other roads that  
Columbia River ran a half mile to the south of the fort  
along the river southwest of the fort was the wharf, a pond surrounded by more homes,  
workshops, stables, pig sheds, storage sheds and a hospital

#### NISQUALLY FARM HAD INCREASED IN SIZE AND SIGNIFICANCE

Nisqually Farm included a partially stockaded fort, with residences, barns and storehouses for produce  
also a number of livestock pens and a dairy were located on site  
in addition there were gardens and about 220 acres of cultivated fields  
Other dwellings and outbuildings were constructed at varying distances from the main post  
several satellite farms featured a slaughter house, sheepfolds and a piggery  
There were almost six thousand sheep at Nisqually Farm and almost two thousand head of cattle  
both herds far exceeded the number of livestock  
located at any other post in the Columbia Department, including Fort Vancouver --1845  
Nisqually Farm ultimately may have included a total of 261 square miles  
(at least that was the claim of British agents in later testimony)

#### LIVING CONDITIONS IN OREGON COUNTRY REMAIN PRIMITIVE

Almost nothing came into the territory except personal possessions

most of these were worn out by the time the weary owners reached their destination

sometimes replacements could be found at Fort Vancouver

or at the stores set up on the lower Willamette River by Yankee ship captains

Clothing was a perpetual problem

available materials consisted of ill-fitting buckskin, canvas from discarded tents and wagon covers

and scratchy homespun from coarse wool

Cooking was done mostly in fireplaces, dishes were carved from wood,

everyday furniture was thrown together out of split cedar

Mothers doctored their families

with herbs (teas of sage and tansy or poultices of onions or mustard);

with whiskey mixed with peppermint was an ointment for burns or mixed with salt for gargling

and straight alcohol served as a disinfectant;

with superstition (rubbing bacon rind over a patient's body for scarlet fever;

and often with casual disregard for cleanliness such as using cobwebs to stop bleeding

But nothing distressed settlers as much as being isolated from one another and the outside world

their erratic transportation system was a huge detriment to business and living conditions

slowly, improvements were made:

- regular transportation routes were developed,
- postal system was established,
- express delivery one-day delivery services came into existence,
- paddlewheel steamers began to provide scheduled service

## CONTROL OF THE REGION NORTH OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER IS IN DISPUTE

Under whose domain did land north of the Columbia River lie?

this question was brought to a head by Henry Williamson, an [1844] arrival

who had joined Michael Simmons' winter effort to reach Puget Sound

After their return to Fort Vancouver -- February 1845

Williamson persuaded Isaac W. Alderman, another [1844] immigrant, to join him

in deliberating trespassing on acreage practically at the gates of Fort Vancouver

This pair of Americans defiantly piled up a few logs in the shape of a hut

in the woods west of Fort Vancouver

on a tree above the shanty Henry Williamson nailed a crude preemption notice

that he was taking over the land

when Dr. McLoughlin discovered the notice he ordered the house and sign destroyed

Williamson promptly rebuilt

he stridently marched into the fort with demands that the claim be reinstated  
and attempted to survey his claim

Chief Factor James Douglas, a justice of the peace under Canadian law,  
threatened the American with arrest for trespassing

Williamson reminded Douglas he had no authority over Americans nationals  
and added dark threats of vigilante action to burn Fort Vancouver to the ground  
(in fact, the summer before forest fires had devastated the region  
very close to the Fort Vancouver itself; thus the threat appeared very real)

Many Hudson's Bay Company men feared the Americans would take over their land claims  
so they sought Provisional Government protection

#### AMERICANS CONTINUE TO TRESPASS OUTSIDE FORT VANCOUVER

Chief factors McLoughlin and Douglas appealed directly to the settlers in the Willamette Valley  
they hoped most Americans would recognize the company's rights in the matter

Chief Factors McLoughlin and Douglas drew up a notice stating their side of the case  
they distributed the flyer throughout the valley

copies were sent to the three-man Provisional Executive Committee

(which was still functioning until the spring elections would designate a single governor)

Provisional Government triumvirate Executive Committee returned a conciliatory reply

Henry Williamson retreated and animosity subsided

in fact, the solution was largely the work of emerging leader Jesse Applegate

#### HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY PROTECTS ITS CLAIMS

In order to assure that the property around Fort Vancouver was properly protected

nine loyal company men filed claims under the provisional government to nine pieces of ground  
embracing the company's fields and orchards

now, at least according to Jessie Applegate, Americans could not trespass

Similar steps were taken to defend the choice lands of Cowlitz and Nisqually farms

#### MICHAEL SIMMONS LOOKS FOR LAND ALONG PUGET SOUND

When Colonel Michael Simmons learned that George Washington Bush had decided to settle  
north of the Columbia River away from the reaches of the Oregon Provisional Government  
and the twice-yearly required lashings imposed by the Exclusionary Laws

Simmons led an initial exploratory effort to investigate the region

under Hudson's Bay Company control  
Simmons, Henry Williamson, James Loomis and three Owens brothers John, Henry and James  
traveled from Washougal down the Columbia River to the Cowlitz River -- February 1845  
after their provisions ran out, along the Cowlitz they returned to Washougal  
to discuss options with the others of the Simmons-Bush wagon train  
who had made camp there for the winter

#### THREE-MAN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE THANKS DR. McLOUGHLIN

Provisional Government's Three-man Executive Committee thanked the Hudson's Bay Company  
for its restraint in dealing with the property rights crisis and the Joint Occupation Treaty  
they thanked McLoughlin and Douglas for their **"kindness of manner in dealing with a  
disregard of treaty obligations by a citizen of the United States."**<sup>141</sup>

Provisional Government continued in the hands of American settlers  
who were willing to cooperate with Hudson's Bay Company

#### DISLOYALTY TOWARD DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN SURFACES

Chief Factor James Douglas and other company leaders at Fort Vancouver  
had been writing in alarm to Governor Simpson about the huge sums in unsecured credit  
that McLoughlin had been advancing to the destitute American immigrants  
humanitarian yes, but, after all, the men in charge of the Columbia District  
would be held responsible for the losses

#### UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT ATTEMPTS TO ACQUIRE OREGON COUNTRY AND TEXAS

Unlike previous efforts, this time the United States House of Representatives passed a Bill  
to establish an Oregon government -- February 1845  
as it happened the Republic of Texas [since 1836] was also seeking to enter the Union  
some Congressmen hoped by admitting both new states at the same time  
they could balance pro-slavery Texas with anti-slavery Oregon  
However, this time the United States Senate refused to concur  
since the proposed House of Representatives Bill prohibited slavery in Oregon Country  
Southern Senators feared a loss of power in representing their section of the nation

#### ANTI-OREGON COUNTRY THINKING IS ALSO TAKING PLACE IN AMERICA

Not everyone was in favor of annexing Texas or Oregon

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<sup>141</sup> Letter of Osborne Russell and P.G. Stewart, Executive Committee, to John McLoughlin, March 21, 1845.

Louisville *Journal* voiced the sentiment of thousands of American conservatives: **“Of all the countries on the face of the earth, it is one of the least favored by Heaven. It is the mere riddlings of creation. It is almost as barren as the desert of Africa..., Russia has her Siberia and England has her Botany Bay; and if the United States should ever need a country to which to banish her rogues and scoundrels, the utility of such a region as Oregon would be demonstrated. Until then, we are perfectly willing to leave this magnificent country to the Indians.”**<sup>142</sup>

No less a figure than past Secretary of State [1841-1843] and Massachusetts Senator Daniel Webster was said to have noted in a senate floor speech: **“What do we want of the vast, worthless area, this region of savages and wild beasts, of deserts of shifting sands, of cactus and prairie dogs? To what use could we ever hope to put these great deserts, or these endless mountain ranges, impenetrable and covered to their base with eternal snow? ... What can we hope to do with the Western Coast, a coast of three thousand miles, rock-bound, uninviting and not a harbor on it? What use have we for such a country? I will never vote one cent from the public treasury to place the Pacific coast one mile nearer Boston than it is now.”**<sup>143</sup>

Senator George H. McDuffie of South Carolina also took a stand in opposition to Oregon Country:

**“It is not proper to hold out inducements to our citizens to engage in these adventurous pursuits. There are no advantages to be derived from them. The advantages of the fur trade have been highly extolled, but I have seen no results by the enormous wealth of John Jacob Astor and one or two others to justify the commendation. Are the honest mechanic and agriculturalist, engaged in honest pursuits of industry, to be taxed that inducements may be held out to the adventurous to engage in this trade which has enriched so few?**

**...I cannot think any man who has a strong feeling of patriotism -- who has a heart bound to his country as it ought to be, and endearing association inseparably connected with home -- would abandon his friends and family and all endeared to him, to emigrate to that country. No, sir. Captivating as it may be to one portion of the Union, this is a spirit we ought not to encourage; we ought rather to induce the honest and industrious classes to remain among us, and contribute to the support of their Government.”**<sup>144</sup>

#### JAMES K. POLK IS SWORN IN AS PRESIDENT

President James K. Polk’s election was won on an exuberant expansionist Democratic platform declaring in campaign literature the whole of Oregon Country the property of the United States President Polk in his inaugural address declared his intentions -- March 4, 1845

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<sup>142</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 207.

<sup>143</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 208.

<sup>144</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 212.

he asserted title America's rights to the whole of Oregon Country (42° north to 54° 40' north)  
in his words, ownership of **"the whole of Oregon was clear and unquestionable"**<sup>145</sup>

When he took office, President Polk was reminded by Senator E.A. Hannegan of Indiana  
that fifty-four forty was the only acceptable goal; to fall short would be **"...so profound -- a  
damnation so deep that the hand of resurrection could not reach him."**<sup>146</sup>

Former President Andrew Jackson added these ill-spelt words: **"Oragogon: ...expose England's  
perfidy [deceit] to the whole civilized wor[l]d. To prevent war with England a bold & undaunted  
front must be exposed. England with all her Boast dare not go to war."**<sup>147</sup>

Polk stated it was his duty to use constitutional means to defend America's right to Oregon Country:

- he recommended ending the [1818] Anglo-U.S. Convention for joint occupation;
- he called for the extension of United States jurisdiction over Oregon settlers;
- he called for military protection of the Oregon Trail;
- he called for establishment of an Indian agency beyond the Rocky Mountains

If Congress stood by the President war was almost inevitable -- unless Great Britain yielded  
strong support for the president's position came from the Old Northwest

Democratic voices of Sen. Lewis Cass (Michigan) and Rep. Stephen A. Douglas (Illinois)  
joined the growing expansionist chorus

(In fact, former American Secretary of State John Quincy Adams [1817-1825]  
secretly had already offered to accept 49° north latitude as the international boundary)  
in a blatant reversal of that position the United States government  
now advocated the extreme claim of western expansionists  
this created an even greater rift between the United States and Great Britain

#### BRITISH RESPONSE TO PRESIDENT POLK'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS WAS POINTED

Without some moderating influence regarding the establishment of an international border  
in one of the national capitols war was inevitable

When news of President Polk's warlike inaugural address arrived in London

Great Britain became uneasy about American belligerence -- war talk swept England

*London Times* declared that while Great Britain was **"unwilling to incur the ridicule of attaching  
importance to mere displays of ignorant rancor.... We are prepared to defend the claims of this  
country to the utmost, wherever they are seriously challenged."**<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> Joseph Schafer, *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, P. 178.

<sup>146</sup> Oscar Osburn Winther, *The Great Northwest*, P. 145.

<sup>147</sup> Oscar Osburn Winther, *The Great Northwest*, P. 145.

<sup>148</sup> Oscar Osburn Winther, *The Great Northwest*, P. 147.

*Wilmer and Smith's Liverpool European Times* responded: “**About whatever savors, even remotely, of intimidation, John Bull [England] is characteristically thin-skinned. There are certain animals that may be lead, but won't be driven -- John Bull is one of them.... The new president's peremptory style has stirred up his bile....**”<sup>149</sup>

*London Colonial Magazine* said: “**a war with America cannot but be productive of good. Never before were the states of the union in a worse condition for carrying on a war; never...was England better fitted.... To appease the United States would be merely ‘to pave the way for fresh insults’ from a country on which ‘little reliance is to be placed’.**”<sup>150</sup>

#### REV. JASON LEE DIES WHILE VISITING IN QUEBEC, CANADA

Rev. Jason Lee as an agent for the Oregon Institute went to work raising funds for the school hoping to return soon to Oregon

Sadly, this was a short-lived appointment and Jason Lee never saw Oregon again suffering from a persistent cold he slowly lost what had been generally robust health and strength and continued to waste away

While visiting his sister Rev. Jason Lee died at age forty-one -- March 12, 1845

in the presence of his family in Stanstead, Quebec

his remains were reinterred at the Lee Mission Cemetery (in Salem, Oregon [1906])

alongside his two wives and child

#### GEORGE WASHINGTON BUSH REACHES WASHOUGAL (WASHINGTON)

Popular mulatto pioneer George Washington Bush and Captain William Shaw set out from The Dalles accompanying Bush and Shaw were Bush's wife Isabella and their five sons William Owen Bush, Joseph Talbot Bush, Riley Bailey Bush, Henry Sanford, Bush and Jackson January Bush they safely swam the herd of animals they had tended all winter across the Columbia River and delivered the stock to the pioneers who had made up the Simmons-Bush wagon train and were now staying in Washougal (Washington) -- March 1845

Mulatto pioneer George Washington Bush was a man of intelligence

who demonstrated great force of character

he deservedly commanded the respect of his associates and neighbors

George Washington Bush was greatly cheered to discover Michael Simmons and other families had gone to search the Puget Sound area looking for suitable land

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<sup>149</sup> Oscar Osburn Winther, *The Great Northwest*, P. 147.

<sup>150</sup> Oscar Osburn Winther, *The Great Northwest*, P. 147.

## HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY CLAIMS JURISDICTION OVER LAND NORTH OF THE COLUMBIA

Hudson's Bay Company leaders Dr. John McLoughlin and James Douglas hoped the American would recognize the company's property rights regarding the Williamson trespass  
Chief Factors McLoughlin and Douglas decided on a direct appeal to the settlers in the Willamette circular was drawn up and distributed throughout the valley

stating the company intended to occupy the land north of the Columbia River  
copies were sent to the three-man Executive Committee -- March 18, 1845  
still functioning (until the spring elections should designate a single governor)

Threats were indulged in on both sides

but the Executive Committee stated its agreement with McLoughlin and Douglas  
Williamson finally backed down and antagonism relaxed

## DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN'S LAND IN OREGON CITY REMAINS UNDER DISPUTE

Exact status of Dr. McLoughlin's claims in Oregon City had never been clear  
sometimes McLoughlin acted as if he personally owned the property,

but in his reports to Governor Sir George Simpson he sometimes wrote  
as if he was holding the property for the Hudson's Bay Company

McLoughlin wrote to Hudson's Bay Company Governor Sir George Simpson -- March 20, 1845

in his letter he enclosed personal drafts (checks) totaling £4175 (more than \$20,000)  
to buy the land claims belonging to Hudson's Bay Company in Oregon City

but he added that he really did not intend for the company to accept his offer

McLoughlin said he was too old to start a new venture and was taking on the property

**“to further the Interests of the Company and Extend British influence...I find it absolutely necessary to do so to secure us and to prevent its [the real estate] falling to the possession of others who would make use of the Influence it would give them to injure us”<sup>151</sup>**

McLoughlin trusted the company would protect him from any personal financial loss  
and hoped the offer to purchase the Company's land would not be accepted

## CAPTAIN JOHN FREMONT'S REPORT IS PUBLISHED

In fact, Fremont explored no unknown region -- it all had been previously explored by mountain men  
yet he explored with the eye of a scientist eager to record and lay before the world

its rich topography, geology, flora and fauna and aboriginal inhabitants,

and to place the whole firmly within a framework of latitude and longitude

Back in Washington City from his travels with General John Charles Fremont

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<sup>151</sup> David Lavender, *Land of the Giants*, P. 250.



Cartographer Charles Preuss produced a major summary map  
to accompany Fremont's report to Congress

Preuss was very conservative in his work as a mapmaker

all locations on his maps were carefully computed from astronomical observations  
and elevations from his pioneering use of barometers

(or even, when those had been broken) from the temperature of boiling water  
which varies with height

with few exceptions, such as the coastal surveys of Naval Lieutenant Charles Wilkes,  
he incorporated only information that had been collected by the Fremont expeditions

Preuss's map showed the Columbia River to be the only river  
that flowed from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean

Fremont's report of his two expeditions was issued as a congressional document -- March 1845

*The Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the Year 1842  
and to Oregon and Northern California in the Years 1843-44* revealed the West  
with a depth and comprehensiveness equaled by no one who had gone before

Cartographer Charles Preuss's maps were included

Preuss' map is considered to have changed the entire picture of the western interior

This very popular report instantly became the primary guidebook for untold thousands of migrants  
Oregon farmers, Utah Mormons, (and shortly thereafter, California gold-rushers)

#### FREMONT'S REPORT AND PREUSS'S MAPS DID CONTAIN ERRORS

But they accurately described the road from the Missouri River to the Columbia River,  
the Cascade Mountains, the Sierra Nevada Mountains, the Wasatch Range and the Rockies

Ironically, despite the political power of Fremont's father-in-law Senator Thomas Hart Benton  
Fremont's two exploring expeditions brought little influence to bear on national policy

both the new president, James K. Polk, and his Secretary of War, William L. Marcy,  
looked on the young captain as an impractical enthusiast  
and his cartography as unpersuasive

Polk's administration, moreover, had won office on an ambitious platform of expansion  
and needed no prodding from a junior captain of engineers

But for thousands of Americans the report aroused longings for new lands and economic opportunities  
for the thousands of Americans who acted on the impulse the maps showed how to get there,  
especially after the publication of a new Preuss map of seven detailed sections  
of the Oregon Trail [in 1846]

## IDEA OF AN ALTERNATE TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROAD FUNDING PLAN IS PUBLISHED

Publisher George Wilkes was sued for libel, lost the case was imprisoned in New York City's jail  
he wrote a pamphlet on the conditions prisoners faced in that facility [1844]

Wilkes and a friend, Enoch E. Camp, began publishing the *National Police Gazette* -- 1845  
which dealt with crime reporting and other sensational topics

Wilkes also wrote *History of Oregon, Geographical and Political*, this was an inaccurate study  
damaged caused by the inaccuracy was compounded when an extract was also published:

*Project for a National Railroad from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean* --1845

George Wilkes criticized Asa Whitney's financing proposal and pronounced it a scheme  
to rob the government of its western lands for the benefit of Wilkes and his partners  
he pointed out that allowing him to sell government lands to procure funds  
was equivalent to presenting him with the desired railroad  
but in addition, only a portion of land would have to sold to acquire needed money  
and the balance of the land would remain in the hands of Asa Whitney's company

Wilkes presented an alternative plan

the government would sell its own lands and build its own railroad out of the proceeds  
the transcontinental railroad could be built with no burden to the government

he proposed to follow the route across the continent developed by emigrants

but he had not determined a Western terminus:

Puget Sound, mouth of the Columbia River or San Francisco were all discussed

## TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROAD FINANCING PLANS ARE DEBATED IN CONGRESS

Congress took up the debate on transcontinental railroad financing plans

Congressman Stephen A. Douglas's plan to organize territories to fund the project,

Financier Asa Whitney's land grant plan and George Wilkes' plans of government ownership  
were pressed forward with much zeal

Public interest was focused on the practical aspects of the problem of transportation

vast amount of discussion of the transcontinental railroad took place

but no plan could command the approval of Congress

## FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET RETURNS TOWARD FORT VANCOUVER

Setting out from Fort Colville Father De Smet traveled down the Columbia River

on his way to Fort Vancouver -- spring 1845

during his descent of the river he witnessed the deadly power of The Cascades Rapids firsthand

De Smet recounted the event in a letter to his superior: **“The melting snow had occasioned a considerable freshet, and our descent was very rapids approaching the rapids, they [a different boat] fearlessly hurried onwards drawn by the eddy into the centre of a whirlpool..the ill fated barge twirled upon the surface, and then sank, amid the despairing shrieks of the helpless crew !soon the waters resumed their wonted course, and left no trace of the sad catastrophe.”**<sup>152</sup>

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET ARRIVES AT FORT VANCOUVER

Father De Smet traveled from St. Ignatius Mission among the Kalispel Indians located on the banks of the Pend Oreille River to Fort Vancouver  
He wasted little time at Fort Vancouver before he set out for the Willamette Valley and St. Francis Xavier Mission under the direction of Father Peter De Vos who with his companions were hard at work constructing a building for their residence  
Somehow the mission had not been located on the site selected by Father De Smet  
De Smet ordered the building pulled down and rebuilt on the spot he had selected  
Father De Vos was reassigned to the Kalispel Mission  
newly-arrived Father Michael Accolti was placed in charge of St. Francis Xavier Mission

#### CATHERINE SAGER (MRS. CLARK PRINGLE) NOTES A FAMILY INCIDENT IN HER JOURNAL

Catherine Sager described how her brother Francis ran away: **“The spring after we arrived brother Francis resolved to run away to the lower country [Willamette Valley] with those who had wintered there [at Waiilatpu]. His reason was he disliked the strict discipline maintained. The doctor was away and when Francis started to go. Mrs. Whitman urged him pleasantly to stay, but he went on the run, mounted his horse, and was off before the wagons moved which he was to accompany. She had not succeeded in winning the boy’s confidence and affection, and Francis was stubborn. Efforts were made to overtake him and get him to come back, but they were unavailing. He went to the Willamette and remained there.**

**“On his return Dr. Whitman talked with John [Sager] and found he was willing to remain. He then made a proposal to aid the boys to get a start in cattle and horses so that they would be acquiring property. This was made known to Francis by a letter, and a horse was sent for him, so that in the fall we had the pleasure of again becoming a united family.”**<sup>153</sup>

#### TRANSLATION OF THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW IN PRODUCED IN FLATHEAD LANGUAGE

A portion of the Gospel of Matthew (chapters 1-3 and chapter 4 verses 1-23) was translated

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<sup>152</sup> Pierre-Jean De Smet, *Oregon Missions*, P. 95-96.

<sup>153</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 523-524.

from the original Greek into Flathead language at Tshimakain Mission  
Rev. Elkanah Walker and Rev. Cushing Eells with the help of a local Indian  
this book was printed at Lapwai Mission by Walker and Rev. Henry Spalding  
and the work was completed about April 1845

#### MANY INDIANS TRY TO ADAPT TO THE NEW WAYS OF THE PROTESTANTS

For almost a decade several Nez Perce and Cayuse Indians  
had sincerely tried to learn the white man's medicine  
warriors had stooped to such unnatural tasks as hoeing in the fields  
and carrying logs on their backs for Rev. Spalding's cabin at Lapwai  
they had forced their children to attend school  
At times they suffered from the hot temper of Rev. Spalding (and less frequently, Whitman also)  
who put them to the lash for trivial offenses  
this punishment had been intensified when the Catholics arrived  
at the Hudson's Bay Company forts of Walla Walla and Colville  
As a teaching aid the Catholics had developed a pictorial "Catholic ladder"  
to counteract the impact of this visual demonstration,  
Rev. Henry and Eliza Spalding drew a terrifying six-foot "ladder" of their own  
on it the path of Catholicism led straight to the eternal fire of the damned  
many of the Indians were confused and worried,  
they could see only the red fires of hell as the penalty  
for a mistake in choosing the wrong path

#### HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY ACCUSES DR. McLOUGHLIN OF TREASON

Based on unsettling dispatches from Chief Factor James Douglas and others at Fort Vancouver  
Hudson's Bay Company directors accused Dr. McLoughlin of treason  
McLoughlin had not closed the post at Yerba Buena (San Francisco) as ordered  
and his humane policies toward Americans were not in favor in London

#### CHIEF FACTOR PETER SKENE OGDEN IS ASSIGNED TO COLUMBIA DISTRICT

Peter Skene Ogden had been the Chief Factor of New Caledonia (British Columbia)  
for nine years [1835-1844] before taking a one-year furlough in London  
where Hudson's Bay Company directors was preoccupied with the looming Oregon question  
Peter Skene Ogden also was appointed by Hudson's Bay Company  
to serve on the newly formed triumvirate board composed of Chief Factors Dr. John McLoughlin,

James Douglas and Peter Skene Ogden to manage Columbia District

#### FIRST AMERICAN BABY IS BORN IN (TODAY'S WASHINGTON)

Elizabeth Simmons gave birth to she and Michael's sixth son

Christopher Columbus Simmons was born in Washougal -- April 14, 1845

he was the "First Native Son" born north of the Columbia River (in what became Washington)

#### FATHER DE SMET COMPLETES HIS INSPECTION OF COLUMBIA DISTRICT MISSIONS

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet had inspected and re-supplied the four Catholic missions -- spring 1845

St. Mary's Mission in the Bitter Root Valley,

St. Joseph's Mission among the Coeur d' Alene Indians,

St. Ignatius Mission (Cusick, Washington) had replaced St. Michael's Mission

St. Francis Xavier Mission in the Willamette Valley which he relocated

in addition, St. Michael's Mission

Father De Smet next turned his attention to exploring the region and visiting Indian camps

#### FATHER ANTHONY RAVALLI IS ASSIGNED TO SAINT IGNATIUS MISSION

Father Ravalli joined Father Adrian Hoeck at the mission of Saint Ignatius

among the Kalispel Indians on the upper Columbia River -- spring 1845

(after some time he was transferred to the Flathead Mission of St. Mary's

on Bitterroot River [in western Montana] where he remained until the mission

was temporarily abandoned on account of the hostile Blackfoot Indians[ 1850])

#### CATHERINE SAGER (MRS. CLARK PRINGLE) REPORTS AN INDIAN CONFLICT

She noted the early events of the incident: **"In the spring of 1845 the Cayuses were embroiled in war with the Snakes. A Cayuse family named Prince was going to the buffalo country to hunt, and on the way camped on a small stream in the Snake region, opposite a camp of Snake Indians. One morning Prince with his servant rode over to see the other camp. His horse stood all day tied at the Snake lodge, but the mother did not go to learn about him, because her daughter said it would be foolish. Toward night the horse disappeared, and during the night the Snake camp also disappeared. Going over there, the mother and daughter found the dead bodies of servant and master. War resulted in which many Cayuses lost their lives, including some of their chiefs. We saw them come home from their war raids, and heard and saw them singing war songs, dancing their war dances, and then they would change to a funeral dirge for their dead warriors. After a successful raid they would spend days in celebrating their victory and reciting the prowess of their**

own warriors. The beating of drums and their war-whoops and songs filled the air with savage sounds. The monotonous tones of the Indian flute mellowed the horrors of the din a little.”<sup>154</sup>

## GREAT BRITAIN BEGINS SECRET PREPARATIONS FOR WAR

Peter Skene Ogden was sent to Canada -- May 1945

he was to guide two British spies on a secret surveying trip

twenty-six-year-old artist Henry J. Warre and twenty-four-year-old engineer Mervin Vavasour

both were lieutenants in the British Royal Marines

their true identities were disguised as they posed as tourists

acting in strictest secrecy on behalf of the British government

Lieutenant Henry J. Warre and Lieutenant Mervin Vavasour were under special orders

from the British government to conduct a covert surveillance and note “...the practicability of forming military stans therein and conveying troops thither”<sup>155</sup>

Traveling as civilians, Warre and Vavasour were to produce a comprehensive report

on the possibilities for a British military defense of the Columbia District (Oregon Country)

if the Americans should attack and war was the result

they were to play the role of gentlemen sportsmen

hunting and fishing, observing the natural history and identifying spots of scenic interest

their baggage included fine beaver hats, frock coats, tweed pants, tooth and hair brushes

and extract of roses to complete the disguise

This situation indicated the depths to which relations

between Great Britain and the United States had deteriorated

## HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE OREGON TRAIL

American explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark explored a portion

of the future Oregon Trail through the Cascade Mountains [1804-1806]

Missouri Fur Company Scout Jediah Smith opened South Pass [1810]

Astorians led by Robert Stuart returned to St. Louis, Missouri from the Pacific Ocean

closely approximating the Oregon Trail [1812]

Captain Benjamin Bonneville was the first to travel the entire Oregon Trail [1832]

entrepreneur Nathaniel Wyeth organized the first wagon train at Independence, Missouri

they traveled the route of the Oregon Trail to Fort Hall (Idaho)

Wyeth built and traveled by boat down the Columbia River to Fort William

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<sup>154</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 524.

<sup>155</sup> David Lavender, *Land of the Giants*, P. 252.

which Wyeth built on Wapato Island (at the site of today's Portland, Oregon) [1834]  
Dr. Marcus Whitman opened the Oregon Trail to wagons as far as Fort Hall [1836]  
U.S. Army Lieutenant John C. Fremont mapped the route to Fort Walla Walla [1844]

#### MOTIVATIONS FOR MIGRATING ALONG THE OREGON TRAIL CHANGED OVER TIME

Traveling the 2,000-mile-long Oregon Trail averaged twelve mile a day and took six months or longer  
over the sixty years the trail was in existence there was an average of seventeen deaths to the mile  
Several motivating factors were frequently mentioned by the pioneers looking for a new start in life:

- furs, and religious zeal motivated travelers until about [1842];
- farming, rich soil and a better climate drew pioneers to the West [1842-1849]  
“Oregon Fever” hit the frontier folks in Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, and Kentucky  
as a restless spirit of unrest, the “Spirit of Adventure,” was widespread in America  
many held patriotic beliefs they could enhance America’s claim to the West  
for the men, going to the frontier sometimes fulfilled a mythic impulse  
a chance for proving oneself and moving up the economic ladder  
for women, more often it was a sad leave-taking, an uncertain enterprise filled with foreboding  
women and children perhaps had the most difficult time  
as dangers, hardships and suffering awaited their families on the trail;
- quest for gold and military exploits attracted a great variety of people [1849-1860]  
“Gold Fever” rocked the nation as tens of thousands rushed to California  
to move mountains by hand in their quest for easy and quick riches;
- Civil War drove adventurers to the undisputed lands of the Far West [1860-1870]  
to escape the draft and the ravages of the war or to claim the land promised to veterans  
many in the Midwestern states felt keenly about the evils of slavery  
which was causing violent agitation throughout the nation;
- economic depression forced starving pioneers to seek escape  
Americans had experienced economic hard times  
with low prices for manufactured goods and farm products  
these was almost no opportunity to improve the condition of their farms or businesses

#### SEVERAL TOWNS SERVE AS THE “JUMPING OFF PLACE”

Missouri River was the life line for goods going to the frontier  
towns along the river on the Western border of the State of Missouri  
were joined by numerous feeder lines from the East  
Westport (now Kansas City, Missouri), St. Joseph and Independence, Missouri

and slightly further northwest Nebraska City, Nebraska were gathering points  
Independence, Missouri was the most important starting point  
for some years it had been the outfitting center for companies of traders, trappers and emigrants  
this village, located a few miles from the Missouri River, was the radiating point  
for several wilderness highways including the Santa Fe and Oregon trails  
most of the small parties from Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana, Illinois and Iowa  
as well as Missouri gathered here

#### ORGANIZATION OF WAGON TRAINS OVER THE OREGON TRAIL VARIED LITTLE

Organization of emigrant companies was accomplished in winter and very early spring  
pioneers assembled at some prearranged rendezvous location  
usually near Independence or St. Joseph, Missouri which became the “jumping off place”  
where arrangements were made for the start of the journey to the West

Often advertisements were printed in newspapers saying in effect: **“If interested in joining the 1844 Oregon Train, come equipped with wagon and animals to Sapling Grove during the month of March.”**

#### COVERED WAGONS WERE ESPECIALLY MADE FOR THE JOURNEY WEST

Oregon Trail was too long and arduous for Conestoga wagons commonly used in the eastern U.S.  
and freight wagons on the Santa Fe Trail with their 6,000-pound freight capacity were too large  
teams of eight to ten animals were required

also Conestoga wagons could not navigate the tight corners often found on the Oregon Trail  
Prairie schooners approximately half the size of Conestoga wagons, were developed

they weighed about 1,300 pounds empty and could carry about 2,500 pounds of freight  
in the eleven-foot by four-foot wagon box two feet high

one wagon could carry enough food for six month’s travel for four or five travelers

as well as a short list of household and luxury items including clothing and ammunition

the wagon box supported a framework of hoop slats or stout oak bows

over which canvas or wagon sheet was stretched

some wagons had prows like a ship to ford rivers and streams more easily

some were water-tight and equipped with oarlocks

prairie schooners were painted bright colors

with a blue wagon bed and sides, red running-gear, yellow wheels

or perhaps, a green wagon bed and sides, yellow running-gear, bright red wheels

by the half way point to Oregon all of the color was gone



most prairie schooners had movable couplings which permitted the fashioning of a two-wheel cart  
in case of an accident

Prairie schooners were easily pulled by four to six oxen, or six to ten mules  
extra animals were recommended to replace dead, injured or strayed stock  
often late in the trip mixed teams including dairy cows were necessary  
about seventy percent or more of the wagons traveling west were pulled by oxen  
mule teams were a strong second -- initially there were almost no horse-pulled wagons  
oxen were slower but cheaper and more easily trained for the task  
they also survived better on the sparse grass available and did not stray at night  
also Indians were less interested in acquiring oxen than horses  
oxen drivers usually walked along the left side of the wagon  
steering the team with voice commands of "gee" (right) and "haw" (left)  
and encouraging them with a whip cracked over the animals' heads  
cattle from Illinois and Missouri were best suited for the trail as they were used to prairie grass  
New manufactured wagons like those built by Studebaker cost between \$85 and \$170  
cotton canvas covers of the wagons were doubled and treated with linseed oil  
to help keep out rain, dust and wind, though the covers tended to leak rain and dust eventually  
typical wagon with 40-to-50-inch diameter wheels that allowed it to easily move  
over rough ground, rocks and even over most tree stumps without becoming high centered  
wooden wheels were protected with an iron rim typically about 1.5 inches wide  
iron tires were installed hot so they would shrink tightly onto the wood wheel when cooled  
it was advisable to soak the wheel in water periodically as the desert air  
could dry the wheel so much that the iron tire would fall off  
Eventually it was found the standard farm wagon built by a company or wagon maker (wainwright)  
worked almost as well as prairie schooners and had only to be fitted with wooden bows  
and a canvas cover to be made ready  
Well-built wagons were generally reliable if maintained  
but they sometimes broke down and had to be repaired or abandoned along the way  
broken axles and broken wagon tongues were two of the most common problems  
limited storage capacity often required replacements be created out of whatever was available  
abandoned wagons were typically scavenged for needed parts

## EACH FAMILY CARRIES THEIR OWN BELONGINGS

Attached to the outside of the wagon was:

- a bucket of tar to lubricate wheels hung under wagon box,

- a water barrel, axe, and shovel were each strapped outside,
- a plow was sometimes lashed to the tailgate

Inside the wagon were the pioneer's belongings:

mattresses, feather bed, furniture and personal belongings

food: 140 pounds of flour per person; forty pounds of bacon, some rice, corn, dried fruit, coffee, tea and sugar

emigrants counted on wild game, fish, and purchases along the trail to keep going

a sheet-iron stove that could be used in the wagon was desirable

wind and the scarcity of fuel made fires on the ground a nuisance

with yeast and a reflector, fresh bread could be enjoyed throughout the trip

cholera was greatly reduced by boiling drinking water

Other equipment carried by the pioneers included a gun and ammunition and trade goods for Indians

a simple medicine kit: castor oil, rum for snake bite and peppermint essence

they also carried some seed for anticipated crops in Oregon

Milk cows followed along behind the wagon train as the jolting of wagon churned cream into butter

Ezra Meeker said: **“The milk can stood near by and always yielded up its lump of butter at night, churned by the movement of the wagon from the surplus of morning’s milk.”**<sup>156</sup>

other pets were usually also brought along

Sometimes two-wheel carts were pulled by the emigrant himself

or a wheelbarrow was pushed the entire route

## ORGANIZING FOR THE OREGON TRAIL

Council officers were usually elected at the rendezvous place -- election procedure was simple

each candidate for an office started walking in a fixed direction to be joined by voting members

who would fall in behind his choice for office

candidate with the largest following (literally)

was considered elected to the position of captain, sergeant, or whatever

First step in organizing the wagon train was adopting a body of rules

rules were made by a council of older men which became a court to keep order and settle disputes

only three widely separated trading posts provided civilization along the Oregon Trail

Fort Laramie (Wyoming), Fort Hall (Idaho) and Fort Boise (Idaho)

Next a captain was elected by the council who carried all of the authority of a sea captain

Finally came the job of choosing a pilot to conduct them along the trail and over the mountains

usually he was an experienced fur trapper or, perhaps, a pioneer making his second journey

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<sup>156</sup> George W. Fuller, *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, P.189.

## SETTING OUT ON THE LONG, DANGEROUS JOURNEY

Starting usually occurred about the first part of May  
official opening of the trail occurred when the streams had receded  
and grass was sufficiently high to feed the stock  
wetness of the spring season caused many delays  
forcing pioneers to reach the Western slopes very late and short on provisions  
From Independence or St. Joseph, Missouri emigrants followed the Santa Fe Trail  
an average of ten miles per day had to be maintained to reach the Willamette Valley  
before snow fell in the mountains or the rainy season began in Oregon

## FIRST PART OF THE OREGON TRAIL WAS DELIGHTFUL

Dry turf was hard enough to sustain traffic, and yet easy on the animals' feet  
game was plentiful and the prairie was rich in grass and flowers  
Women were kept busy preparing meals at stopping places and keeping house in the wagons  
washing clothes was done in the evening whenever they had plenty of water  
clothes were hung out to dry on the tongues of the wagons at night  
Food was for the most part salted or dried meat and corn bread cooked over an open fire  
or on a stove that might be set up in the wagon  
when buffalo was killed, fresh meat made the meal a feast  
sometimes berries or wild fruit were found along the way  
Few women brought the right kind of clothes  
older women were the first to adapt to a new manner of life as they shortened their skirts  
young women were more reluctant to abandon the fashions of the States

## PIONEERS ENDURED UNORGANIZED (KANSAS) TERRITORY

They reached Fort Leavenworth along the Kansas River [constructed 1827]  
this was the base for many trapper and exploring parties  
and maintained huge corrals and supply yards for outfitting wagon trains  
at stations like Fort Leavenworth pioneers were forced to pay exorbitant prices for everything  
and they were robbed by gamblers, liquor vendors and other "shapers"  
Here the immigrants broke contact with their flag and its protection  
pioneers had a tendency to meander across the Great Plains as the route was changed  
based on availability of water and grass, volume of traffic and the whims of the travelers  
Oregon Trail soon took on the appearance of a series of parallel and interlaced wagon ruts

several miles in width

Wagons proceeded up the Kansas River to (Topeka) as the Santa Fe Trail wormed its way  
along the Kansas River to Fort Riley [completed 1853]  
as primarily a base of operations against hostile Indians

Fort Riley was where the pioneers would leave the Santa Fe Trail for the Oregon Trail

Oregon Trail struck overland in a Northwesterly direction reaching the Big Blue River  
Big Blue was followed to the Little Big Blue River forty-one miles from Independence

#### INDIANS REFERRED TO THE OREGON TRAIL AS THE “GREAT MEDICINE ROAD”

Belongings were so often abandoned along the Oregon Trail that Indians marveled  
so much was left behind they thought the pioneers must be very rich  
so many people were “Westing” there must be no one left in the East  
Father De Smet tells of the Indians’ regard for the Oregon Trail

**“Our Indian companions who had never seen but the narrow hunting-paths by which they transport themselves and their lodges, were filled with admiration on seeing this noble highway which is as smooth as a barn floor swept by the winds, and not a blade of grass can shoot up on it on account of the continual passing. They conceived a high idea of the countless White Nation, as they expressed it. They fancied that all had gone over that road, and that an immense void must exist in the land of the rising sun. Their countenances testified evident incredulity when I told them that their exit was in no wise perceived in the land of the whites. They styled the route the Great Medicine Road of the Whites.”<sup>157</sup>**

#### PIONEERS ENTERED (TODAY’S NEBRASKA)

Following the Little Blue River until striking overland to the murky Platte River  
which often referred to as “the Big Muddy” and “the river that flowed bottom-side up”  
emigrants next traced the valley of the Platte River  
patches of clothes multiplied and bare feet appeared as sand wore out shoes

#### SUMMER TRAVEL PROVIDED NEW DANGERS

Hot summer air resulted in desolate desert wastes  
route along Platte River was littered with cast-off possessions  
wrecks of old and beautiful furniture -- heirlooms which proved too burdensome  
further on abandoned wagons appeared left as teams grew weaker or cholera killed the owners  
skeletons of perished animals mingled with human remains

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<sup>157</sup> George W. Fuller, *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, P. 189.

disinterred from graves by prowling Indians and wolves

Hazards could not be avoided altogether

sand and dust storms, thunder storms, hail, hard rain, dust and mud

monotonous food, lack of water and little grass for feed for the stock added to the dangers

Indians begging and stealing -- later some attacked wagon trains

aside from infrequent Indian attack thousands died from cholera and other diseases

children suffered from whooping cough and other children's diseases

they died from a lack of proper medical care

#### FORT CHILDS IS FINALLY REACHED

Fort Childs (Fort Kearny) was located near the head of Grand Island in the Platte River [built 1846]

despite lack of fortifications Fort Childs served as way station, sentinel post and message center

Fort Childs was the first real example of civilization along the Oregon Trail

and first supply post for travelers since leaving Fort Riley

#### PIONEERS JOURNEYED NORTHWEST FROM FORT CHILDS

Oregon Trail stretched along the south side of the Platte River for many miles to the fork in the river

before crossing to the North Fork of the Platte River

the route passed Ash Hollow, Courthouse Rock, Jailhouse Rock, Chimney Rock and Scott's Bluff

#### WAGON TRAINS NEXT ENTERED (TODAY'S WYOMING)

Pioneers arrived at Fort Laramie (originally Fort William built in [1834]

(650 miles from Independence, Missouri)

Fort Laramie was the second example of civilization along the Oregon Trail

emigrants rested, danced, overhauled their wagons and rearranged cargo

and prepared for the climb into the Rocky Mountains

Fort Laramie was also the sight of most of the great Indian treaty signings

Leaving Fort Laramie pioneers followed the Platte River

until they reached Independence Rock 838 miles from the Missouri River -- about July 4

here in an important ceremony many carved their family name into the rock

continuing on, the Overlanders arrived at Devil's Gate

beyond Devil's Gate, the Sweetwater River was joined -- 947 miles from the Missouri

#### PIONEERS WERE ABOUT TO ENTER THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

As they ventured Southwest up the Sweetwater River into the Rocky Mountains

the ascent was gradual to South Pass and over the Continental Divide to the West side  
many of the travelers were disappointed because the pass did not match their imaginings  
From South Pass the course was a steady descent down the Rockies

however, here [after 1844] the travelers faced an option:

- go Southwest through Sublette's Cutoff across the Green River  
to Fort Bridger 1070 miles from the Missouri River where stock could be rested,  
wagons repaired and supplies replenished before continuing along a short cut  
through the dry, barren country of heat and dust to Fort Hall (Idaho)
- or continue along the mountain trail and descend the Bear River northwest past Soda Springs  
directly to Fort Hall

Sublette's Cutoff saved about eighty-five miles and seven days off the main route  
but the decision to cross nearly forty-five waterless miles before reaching the Green River  
was not one to be taken lightly  
pioneers had to decide between time and the health of their livestock

#### EMIGRANTS NEXT ENTERED (TODAY'S IDAHO)

Eventually the pioneers reached Fort Hall

so far the route of the Oregon Trail had been slow, dreary and relatively easy  
Fort Hall [constructed 1834] twelve miles North (of today's Pocatello, Idaho)  
was a major landmark on the upper Snake River 1,288 miles from the "jumping off place"  
(Oregon Volunteer Calvary eventually patrolled the route from here for several years)

At Fort Hall yet another decision had to be made:

it was the key intersection on the Oregon Trail where the California Trail split off  
pioneers must decide whether to continue on to Oregon  
or take the California Trail along the Raft River

it was stated the California cutoff was marked by a gleaming pile of gold-laced quartz  
Northern fork was indicated by a sign pointing "To Oregon"  
clearly, boasted some, the literate chose Oregon

#### TRAVEL FROM FORT HALL WAS DIFFICULT AND DANGEROUS

Oregon Trail followed the Snake River northwest passed Salmon Falls to Fort Boise  
300 miles away along the trail which crossed and re-crossed the Snake River  
through sage-covered desert where travel became increasingly dangerous and difficult

In this later stage of the trip

some women who now had nothing left to wear were forced to put on party gowns to travel

during the month or more of travel along the Snake River  
much of their bedraggled finery was exchanged with the Indians for salmon

Indians wore new clothes regardless of age or gender

## PIONEERS FINALLY ENTER OREGON

Oregon Trail entered Eastern Oregon and the pioneers traveled overland northwest  
at Farewell Bend (near Huntington, Oregon) the Oregon Trail left the Snake River region  
and cut northwestward until it reached the eastern edge of the Blue Mountains

Once again, the pioneers faced a decision:

- at first the Oregon Trail led through the “Mission Cut Off” to the Whitman Mission at Waiilatpu  
and Fort Walla Walla on the Walla Walla River before continuing on to the Columbia River  
(“Mission Cut Off” route was discontinued after the Whitman Massacre [1847]  
Fort Walla Walla [1818] was moved and renamed Fort Walla Walla [1856])
- but by [1844] most of the wagons chose a more direct route to reach the Columbia River  
across the difficult Blue Mountains -- the next to last mountain range before the coast  
through the beautiful Grande Ronde River Valley -- a famous camping place  
Grande Ronde River was left behind crossing overland to the Umatilla River

When the Umatilla River was reached leading to the Cascade Mountains

Overlanders again faced two options

before facing the extremely dangerous passage through the rapids of the Dalles:

- they could follow the slow but passable cutoff from the Umatilla River to the Dalles;
- or they could follow the Umatilla River on to its confluence with the Columbia River  
if that route was taken their journey continued down the Columbia River to The Dalles

## PIONEERS REACH THE DALLES AND ONE LAST HORRIBLE DECISION

At the rapids of the Dalles the earliest emigrant parties were sometimes met at the main landings  
along the Columbia River by employees of the Hudson’s Bay Company  
who conducted them downstream to Fort Vancouver on company bateaux (barges)

Later when wagons reached the settlement of The Dalles emigrants had three choices [1843 to 1844];

- rent a barge from the Hudson's Bay Company for around \$80;
- buy a raft from enterprising Indians;
- build a pine log raft build of their own and precariously load their wagons and personal effects  
for the trip down the Columbia River to Fort Vancouver  
and the Willamette Valley -- their final destination

Many lives were lost in the rapids of the Dalles of the Columbia River  
there was a stretch of impassable rapids that had to be portaged  
relentless winds overturned many a raft  
worse still, families were often divided when the decision was made to drive their cattle  
over Lolo Pass on the northwest shoulder of Mount Hood to Eagle Creek and Oregon City  
Despite these hardships, almost one in every four emigrants chose the river route  
even after the Barlow Road was opened [1846]

#### USUAL ROUTE TO OREGON

Most of the [1845] emigrants followed the traditional route of the Oregon Trail  
up the Platt River from Missouri, through South Pass across the Rocky Mountains  
then down the Snake River and its upper tributaries to Fort Boise  
next they crossed the Snake River, proceeded up the Burnt River into the Grande Ronde Valley  
and then over the Blue Mountains eventually reaching The Dalles, Oregon  
at the east end of the Columbia River Gorge  
at The Dalles they abandoned their wagons and went down the Columbia River by canoe or boat  
to Fort Vancouver and eventually the Willamette Valley

#### WESTWARD MOVEMENT OF 1845 WAS ESPECIALLY CONFUSING

An estimated 3,000 emigrants traveled over the Oregon Trail to the Oregon Territory in 1845  
this was the biggest migration to date and was said to double the non-Indian population of Oregon  
some would attempt a new route

Oregon-bound emigrant companies responded to the waves of publicity portraying Oregon  
and California as the lands of opportunity -- the trickle of emigrants became a great flood  
An unprecedented number of Americans were gathering together to travel to Oregon Country  
almost 3,000 people in all started in companies of 20, 50, 75, 100 -- up to 200 wagons  
these new pioneers anticipated trouble in Oregon Country  
when they left Missouri the frontier was bubbling with nationalism  
they carried with them wild talk of war with Britain and Mexico  
and of efforts by Congress to promote settlement of the Pacific Northwest  
they were even more poorly prepared than previous Westward caravans  
they fragmented into small groups  
shattered by quarrels and the need to range far and wide for game and pasture

#### ST. JOSEPH, MISSOURI IS A PRINCIPLE STARTING POINT FOR EMIGRANTS



Wagons of what was called the St. Jo Company started rolling west -- early May 1845 according to the St. Joseph newspaper the caravans forming there were composed of: 223 wagons carrying 421 men, 138 women and 448 children with 545 firearms they drove 9,425 cattle and 108 horses and mules

Three separate wagon trains were forming for the journey to Oregon Country who called themselves the Savannah Emigrating Company be composed of sixty-six wagons, 100 armed men, 293 persons, 63 women under 14 and 56 women over 14, 624 loose cattle, 398 oxen, 74 horses and mules and 170 guns & pistols elections for officers were held in the usual manner

- Captain William G. T'Vault led sixty-one wagons and 300 people John Waymire was lieutenant and James Allen was sergeant,
- Captain Solomon Tetherow led sixty-six wagons and 293 people two families, the Officers and the Cooleys, provided a large number of adventurers: James and Evaline Granville (Cooley) Officer were accompanied by their nine children Christopher Columbus and Nancy R. (Officer) Cooley and their six children Christopher was Evaline (Cooley) Officer's brother Nancy R. (Officer) Cooley was James Officer's sister Jackson L. Cooley and his wife Harriet Lydia (Dimmick) and their nine children Mathias Cooley, a seven-year old orphan, traveled with William and Lucinda (McWilliams) Wilson twenty-three-year-old bachelor Eli Casey Cooley kept a diary of the journey in a book titled: *Journal of the Savannah Oregon Emigrating Company*<sup>158</sup>
- Captain Abner Hackleman with fifty-two wagons and 214 people and 666 head of cattle and a few horses this company organized under the name "New London Emigrating Company" John Clark was hired as pilot as far as the Independence-to-Oregon Trail

#### BRITISH SECRET AGENTS SET OUT ACROSS CANADA

In the strictest secrecy two British spies, Lieutenant Henry J. Warre and Lieutenant Mervin Vavasour, left Montreal looking like well-dressed young sportsmen -- May 5, 1845 with Hudson's Bay Company's Spring Brigade under the command of Peter Skene Ogden composed of fifteen Canadian and Indian voyagers

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<sup>158</sup> *The Transcribed Diary of Eli Casey Cooley as he came across the Oregon Train and Meek Cutoff in 1845.* Michael F. and Mary Lou Cooley for the Officer-Cooley Family Association. Published electronically November 2004.

## SAVANNAH EMIGRATING COMPANY BEGINS THEIR JOURNEY WEST

Savannah Emigrating Company set out from the Wolf River Rendezvous -- May 6, 1845

Eli Cooley reported the weather was fine; water and wood plentiful

six miles were covered that day when Brush Point (Missouri) was reached

it was common to assign a child to walk alongside one of the wagons

and count the number of revolutions a wheel made throughout the day

they knew the number of revolutions necessary to complete a mile

thus mileage could be approximated

## STEPHEN MEEK IS BACK IN INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI LOOKING FOR WORK

Stephen Hall Meek, noted guide and brother of Joe Meek had gone to St. Louis [1843]

over the past seventeen years, Stephen Hall Meek, the brother of Mountain Man Joe Meek,

followed animals' trails, Indian trails and fur company trails over much of the West

he joined in the great trappers' rendezvous and wintered with the Flatheads and Nez Perce

he traveled many of the West's significant rivers: Platte, Salmon, Snake, American, Greybull,

Yellowstone, Humboldt, John Day, Malheur, Owyhee, Columbia, Klamath and Shasta

he traveled in the company of the great mountain men and explorers of the American West

Jim Bridger, Captain Benjamin Bonneville and Hudson's Bay Company's Tom McKay

## CATHERINE SAGER (MRS. CLARK PRINGLE) NOTES THE ARRIVAL OF INDIAN TOM HILL

In her journal Catherine recorded: **“About this time the station had a visit from a band of Delaware Indians under the leadership of Tom Hill, who was very intelligent and could speak English as well as Cayuse. Dr. Whitman made a feast for them and invited the leading Cayuses and others. The indispensable item of an Indian feast was corn mush. A large kettle was suspended over a fire in the yard and the mush was made by putting in tallow and stirring in meal or flour. When cooled the kettle was taken indoors and placed on the floor. The doctor was master of ceremonies and the rest came in order of rank. The doctor and the chiefs dipped their spoons in the big kettle, but common people had dishes served and ate out of them. Some acted as waiters. They had tea, sweetened. We children were looking on, and it amused us to see what a quantity of sugar they used -- all that the tea could hold. It was evening and the family occupied a bench on one side of the big room which was crowded. It was well lighted with candles, and they ate in silence, excepting the sipping noise peculiar to Indians eating. Their performances at the trencher [wooden serving plate] were so amusing to us that occasionally Mrs. Whitman had to send us outdoors to have our laugh out.**

**“When the feast was over the room was cleared and put in order for the speech. Tom Hill delivered an address that lasted two hours and was quite eloquent. We could understand the Cayuse**

**talk, but the Indians did not know it. We were not allowed to learn it, and kept as much as possible away from the Indians, but constantly hearing the language spoken, we could not help but learn the meaning of it, though we could not speak it well. After the massacre they soon found out that we understood their talk. Mrs. Whitman always treated them politely and kindly, thanking them for every little favor they did for her.”<sup>159</sup>**

#### DELAWARE INDIAN TOM HILL HAS AN INFLUENCE ON INDIANS AROUND WAILLATPU

As a boy in the East Delaware Indian Tom Hill received an education at Dartmouth where he had learned to read, write and speak English well

he had seen his people lose their homes as they were forced to flee westward along the infamous Trail of Tears [1831]

Tom Hill had ridden off to the Rocky Mountains where, at aged twenty-three he joined Christopher “Kit” Carson’s band of free trappers [1834]

When falling beaver prices broke up Kit Carson’s trapping party

he married a Nez Perce woman [1839] and went to live with his wife’s people in a village of buffalo hunters at the head of the Missouri River

Soon Tom Hill assumed a leadership role

even for a Delaware Indian, he was exceptionally tall and powerful

he was handsome: his black hair fell, when loosened, to the bend of his knees

Protestant missionaries preached long and hard about the evils of sin

Indians, in worrying about their souls, had learned to fear hell

None of it, as Tom Hill frequently pointed out, seemed to do much good

#### DR. MARCUS WHITMAN WRITES TO THE AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Dr. Whitman wrote expressing doubt regarding the permanency of Wailatpu Mission -- May 1845

he especially mentioned the disturbing influence of Delaware Indian Tom Hill

Hill was warning tribes that if they encouraged whites great numbers would come and seize their land

#### MISSIONS EAST OF THE CASCADE MOUNTAINS ARE FAILING

Potential for the complete failure of the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions loomed on the horizon and Rev. Henry Spalding believed he knew why

he wrote an angry letter to the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions identifying Delaware native Tom Hill as the culprit

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<sup>159</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 525.

**“a most debased infidel half breed Delaware who has been some years in the Mts spreading his poison. ...They have abandoned all forms of worship.”<sup>160</sup>**

#### RUMORS OF WAR DISTURB OREGON PIONEERS

Americans reflecting on their situation became very concerned regarding their future talk of war between the United States and Great Britain elevated feelings of isolation in the Pacific Northwest If, as anticipated, war developed transportation to Oregon City and Fort Vancouver would be vital but Great Britain controlled the Columbia River and controlled a string of forts and posts Indians at the portages, were obedient to Hudson’s Bay Company, they could paralyze American travel through the Columbia River gorge

#### INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI ALSO WAS A GATHERING PLACE

Preparations were underway in Independence, Missouri for the overland journey companies leaving from Independence, Missouri traveled to about twenty miles they camped near the bank of the Big Soldier Creek, where, by prearrangement, they were to meet the “main company” and organize and elect officers approximately 233 wagons, 421 men, 138 women, 448 children -- 1007 people in all with 3,261 cattle, and 182 horses

Elections were held in the usual manner at Big Soldier Creek -- May 15, 1845

Dr. Presley Webb elected captain

he was to travel with whatever wagon train was in the lead

Joel Palmer traveling without his family led a train of twenty-three wagons was elected captain

Samuel Kimbrough Barlow was elected captain

Barlow traveled with wife, Susannah (Lee) and five children

William, John Lawson, James K., Elizabeth Jane (all unmarried),

and daughter Sarah who was married to Albert Gaines

Captain John Henry Brown who had traveled to California [1843]

led another wagon train out of Independence

Captain Brown led thirty-eight wagons and approximately 1,000 head of loose cattle

(he served as captain of company as far as Fort Laramie

where he was replaced by Captain William B. Ide)

about one-third of the immigrants followed Captain Ide to Fort Hall

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<sup>160</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 257.

guided by the trapper Caleb Greenwood  
a great effort was made at Fort Hall to turn this wagon train toward California)  
Stephen Hall Meek on his way back to Oregon Country overtook the outbound train  
he was retained by Captain Presley Webb at \$2.50 per wagon to serve as pilot to Fort Hall  
he was a noted guide and brother of Joe Meek  
Meek was accompanied by his young girl friend Elizabeth Schoonover  
whom he married somewhere on the road  
and also by a young man, Nathan Olney  
merchant from The Dalles who originally traveled the Oregon Trail [in 1843]

#### SAINT JO COMPANY REORGANIZES

Saint Jo Company was divided into three companies  
each division would take a turn traveling in advance for a week at a time  
Captain Presley Webb was to accompany whichever train was in the lead  
but each division was to choose its own officers  
Leaving Big Soldier Creek travel quickly became tedious and difficult -- May 19, 1845  
companies tended to spread out once travel was started for the day  
it was simply impossible for all of the emigrants in a company to stay grouped together  
however, most likely families and friends attempted to stay as close together as possible  
for the purpose of helping one another

#### VICAR FRANCIS BLANCHET TRAVELS TO EUROPE

(After leaving Oahu, (Hawaii [January 12, 1845] Vicar Blanchet's ship sailed to the islands of Tahiti  
then rounded the dreaded Cape Horn made its way up the Atlantic Ocean)  
Vicar Blanchet arrived at Deal, England -- May 21, 1845

#### CAPTAIN JOHN C. FREMONT BEGINS HIS THIRD EXPEDITION

(Captain Fremont had met with President James K. Polk in Washington City  
before traveling to St. Louis)  
In St. Louis John C. Fremont recruited sixty-two volunteers  
Fremont's Third Expedition left St. Louis guided by Christopher "Kit" Carson -- June 1, 1845  
officially Fremont was to map the source of the Arkansas River on the east side of the Rockies  
(what, if any, unofficial orders he carried remain unknown but his actions aroused suspicion)

#### BRITISH SECRET AGENTS TRAVEL ACROSS THE CONTINENT

Peter Skene Ogden led the Hudson's Bay Company's Spring Brigade and the two British spies as they traveled in two large canoes from the Ottawa River to the Great Lakes then westward they reached Fort Garry and the Red River

(both located in the vicinity to today's Winnipeg, Manitoba)

they had covered 2,300 miles in less than a month -- early June 1845

While at Fort Garry, Henry J. Warre and Mervin Vavasour assured their commanders in their first official report that secrecy regarding their true identities had been maintained

## SETTLERS ELECT NEW PROVISIONAL LEADERS UNDER THE REVISED ORGANIC LAWS

Three political schools of thought were represented by the three candidates

Osborne Russell represented the feelings of the mountain men of the Independent Party

A.L. Lovejoy spoke for the Moderate American Party which advocated becoming a territory

George Abernathy was supported by the Mission Party interests

In the election of officers under the revised Organic Laws 480 votes were cast -- June 3, 1845

Independent Party members had no hope of winning the election

they threw their support behind Abernathy to defeat the more aggressive American Party

old mountain men of the Independent Party no longer exerted their earlier influence

but they continued to be respected and valued members of the community

George Abernathy was elected from the pool of three candidates

as he received a plurality of ninety-eight votes for the position of Provisional Governor

Abernathy was on a business trip to Hawaii at the time of the election

Other officials who were elected all were supported by the Moderate American Party

•James Willis (J.W.) Nesmith was elected Supreme Judge with 473 votes

•Joe Meek was elected Sheriff with 267 votes

•George Wood Ebbert was elected Constable

•John E. Long was elected Recorder and Chief Clerk

•Marcus Forb received the most votes for Attorney General

•Francis Ermantinger, Hudson's Bay Company Chief Trader at Willamette Falls,

was elected Treasurer after carrying the French-Canadian vote

Moderate American Party took twelve of thirteen seats in the Provisional Legislative Council

representing Champeog were Medard Godard (M.G.) Foisy, Joseph M. Garrison, Barton Lee,

and Robert "Doc" Newell the Independent Party leader who was reelected

representing Yamhill District were Jessie Applegate and Abijah Hendricks

representing Twality District were David Hill, J.W. Smith

and Morton Mathew (M.M.) McCarver Speaker of the House

representing Clackamas District were William H. Gray, Henry A.G. Lee and Hiram Strait  
representing Clatsop District was John McClure

#### DR. McLOUGHLIN LEARNS OF THE SUICIDE OF HIS SON-IN-LAW

Word of McLoughlin's son-in-law William Glen Rae's scandalous suicide reached the Chief Factor  
this shocked Dr. McLoughlin into tardy obedience of Company policy  
as he ordered the closing the San Francisco post -- June 1845  
this blow was followed in quick succession by other equally painful actions

#### GOVERNOR SIR GEORGE SIMPSON ENSNARES DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN

When Dr. McLoughlin's letter [of March 20, 1845] arrived in London  
Governor Simpson accepted the money as if the £4,175 draft was a legitimate offer  
he ordered all company real estate in the Willamette Valley transferred to John McLoughlin  
It was an act of deliberate malice  
Governor Simpson appeared dedicated to discrediting Dr. John McLoughlin  
and to forcing the Chief Factor to resign

#### GOVERNOR SIMPSON IMPOSES CHANGES IN HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY OPERATIONS

Many Company men feared the Americans would take over their land claims  
so they sought Provisional Government protection  
Governor Sir George Simpson also feared American plundering of company property  
equally important, he wanted to save Fort Victoria and Vancouver Island for the British  
Governor Simpson issued new orders to move Hudson's Bay Company supplies  
at Fort Vancouver to Fort Victoria on Vancouver Island -- 1845  
Hudson's Bay Company mill was sold to Catholic priests at St. Paul Mission -- 1845  
who changed the name of the operation to Mission Mill  
Hudson's Bay Company's Governor Sir George Simpson began to impose his vision  
he shifted fur operations northward to Peter Skene Ogden in New Caledonia

#### HAWAIIAN CHAPLAIN KANAKA WILLIAM ARRIVES IN OREGON COUNTRY

William R. Kaulehelehe, better known as Kanaka William, traveling with wife Mary S. Kaai  
arrived from Hawaii to a largely hostile reception from the Hawaiian community -- June 1845  
Some Hawaiians (Kanakas) hoped he would act as an agent of the Hawaiian king  
to address the prejudice directed toward the Hawaiians by Americans and French-Canadian alike

Kanaka William wrote: “...the Hawaiians have repeatedly and daily asked me to see about their trouble of being repeatedly abused by the white people without any cause. They thought I had come as an officer to settle their difficulties. I said no, I did not come to do those things. I had no instructions from the king and ministers of the government of Hawaii to do those things. All that I have come for was the word of God and school.”<sup>161</sup>

Other Kanakas feared the new chaplain intended to force them to observe the Sabbath their only free day for gardening, carpentry and horseback riding

#### PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL CONVENES TO ORGANIZE

Second regular session of the Provisional Government Legislative Council met at the Willamette Falls home of Felix Hathaway -- June 18, 1845  
nine-member Legislative Council had expanded to thirteen members  
Morton Matthew (M.M.) McCarver was elected Speaker of the Council

#### THREE-MEMBER PROVISIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CONTINUES TO FUNCTION

Governor George Abernethy had not yet returned from Hawaii to be inaugurated so the Three-man Executive Committee remained in effect  
Peter G. Stewart and William J Bailey continued in office  
while Osborne Russell who had been defeated by George Abernathy for governor resigned

#### PROVISIONAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WRITES ANOTHER MEMORIAL TO CONGRESS

Thirteen-member Legislative Council session was convened by Speaker M.M. McCarver in the Oregon City home of Recorder John E. Long -- June 24-[July 5] 1845  
With renewed confidence provided by the voters, the Provisional Council resumed its functions they voted to rewrite the Organic Laws  
Twelve Council members drafted their own Memorial to Congress -- June 24, 1845 informing the federal government of the establishment of a new Provisional Government they asked for military protection and financial aid in the event of an emergency they ask for early establishment of a Territory in Oregon under federal law

#### PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT SENDS ANOTHER MEMORIAL TO CONGRESS

Five members of the Provisional House of Representatives were selected to form a committee

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<sup>161</sup> Yvonne Mearns Klan, “Kanaka William,” *Beaver Magazine*, P. 40-41.



**“to draft a memorial to the Congress of the United States, setting forth the condition, situation, relation and wants of the country.”<sup>162</sup>**

William H. Gray, Jesse Applegate, Henry A.G. Lee, John McClure and David Hill

wrote the memorial which passed the Provisional House of Representatives -- June 27, 1845  
that informed Congress of the establishment of the new Provisional Government  
it asked for military protection, and financial aid in event of an emergency  
it also asked for early establishment of a Territory in Oregon under federal law  
in addition a resolution was passed providing the Executive Committee, Supreme Judge  
each member of the Legislative Council should also sign

When all of the signatures were gathered the petition was delivered to the settlement of Vancouver  
where sub-Indian Agent Dr. Elijah White was then preparing to travel to Washington City  
to arrange an adjustment of his accounts with the Indian Bureau,  
and also to apply for the governorship of the territory of Oregon  
as it was expected Congress would create this office very soon

#### JESSE APPLGATE EMERGES AS A NEW LEADER IN OREGON COUNTRY

Jesse Applegate had spent each daylight hour and many a night since his arrival [fall 1843]  
building a home, farming, surveying land for his neighbors  
and earning a small profit speculating in a herd of California cattle  
he did not want political office but his neighbors thought differently  
without his knowledge he was elected to the provisional legislature [June 3, 1845]

Faced with the fact of his election and objecting strenuously to some of the constitutional revisions  
his [1843] traveling companions had made -- he agreed to serve

Jesse Applegate entered the Provisional Legislature from Yamhill District

he forcibly pointed out that as long as Joint Occupation was in place in Oregon Country  
the only recognizable sovereign authority came from the people themselves  
in other words from the provisional government itself  
land claims, Applegate argued, could be maintained only with approval of that government  
therefore, anyone could establish a claim on any unoccupied piece of ground anywhere,  
even at the very gates of Fort Vancouver, unless prevented by a prior claim  
duly recognized by the provisional government

Dr. John McLoughlin could envision his property at Oregon City being taken by Americans

#### PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT PROTECTS DR. McLOUGHLIN'S OREGON CITY PROPERTY

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<sup>162</sup> Elwood Evans, *History of the Pacific Northwest: Oregon and Washington: Embracing ...*, Volume 1, P. 268

Onerous anti-McLoughlin Article 4 of the Provisional Land Law [1843] was repealed 1845

Dr. John McLoughlin threw his considerable support to the Moderates

he recognized they were the only American organization to tolerate Hudson's Bay Company

Moderate American Party gained in power and prestige with his support

However, the Provisional Legislature faced a crisis of severe doubts regarding its own legality

Legislative Council decided to adjourn and call for a vote of the people

to elect a new Legislative Committee and thus confirm their role

## PROVISIONAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PASSES THE SECOND ORGANIC LAWS

Under Jesse Applegate's leadership the Provisional Council passed a complete revision

of the old Organic Laws [1843] which became known as the Second Organic Laws [1845]

this resulted in making the Provisional Government a unifying factor in Oregon Country

Organic Act of 1845 was drafted to revise and clarify the original [1843] version

and to divide the Provisional Government into three departments

an executive branch, a legislative branch and a judiciary branch

Oregon Country's Provisional Governor was to ensure that laws were "faithfully executed:"

- he recommended legislation to the Provisional Legislative Council;
- he was to sign bills into law;
- veto power was conferred on the governor subject to the right  
of the Legislative Council to over-ride with a two-thirds affirmative vote;
- he was to commission all public officers;
- he was to appoint persons to fill vacancies in public offices;
- he was able to grant pardons and reprieves;
- he was commander of the local militia

Organic Act of 1845 replaced the twelve-man Provisional Legislative Committee

with a thirteen-member Provisional Legislative Council and defined the responsibilities:

- "representative government" was to replace the presently required direct vote of the people  
under the original [1843] Organic Law a law was to be submitted to a popular vote  
before it took effect  
under the new proposal voter approval was replaced by the Legislative Council
- Legislative Council was to consist of at least thirteen and no more than sixty-one men  
which convened and passed necessary laws  
members were apportioned among the various districts according to population  
members were popularly elected and vacancies were to be filled by special election
- Legislative Council was given the power to appoint a Supreme Judge

and provided a new power: to impeach all civil officers with a three-fourths majority vote  
•Legislative Council had the power to create counties, apportion legislators, require licenses,  
levy taxes, regulate Indian-white trade, establish post offices, declare war,  
organize the militia, call out the militia, regulate currency, create lower courts,  
regulate the internal police, regulate liquor manufacture and sales,  
and pass laws for the general welfare of the people of Oregon Country

Provisional Legislative Council was required to meet the (first Tuesday of December)

Oregon Country's Provisional Supreme Judge was to be elected by the people

other court officers were to be appointed by the Provisional Legislative Council

An oath of office was modified to allow all citizens, whatever their nationality, to participate in the government: **"I do solemnly swear that I will support the Organic Laws of the Provisional government of Oregon, so far as said Organic Laws are consistent with my duties as a citizen of the United States, or a subject of Great Britain, and faithfully demean myself in office."**

This new document was passed by the Provisional Legislative Council -- July 2, 1845

they were to be submitted to a vote of the settlers at a special election [July 26, 1845]

if approved by the popular vote, the amendments were to go into effect

newly amended Organic Law would become known as the Second [1845] Organic Laws

#### PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT ADDRESSES MONEY ISSUES IN OREGON COUNTRY

Provisional House of Representatives addressed the system of taxation in Oregon Country

out went the voluntary taxation by subscription -- July 4, 1845

improvements on town lots, mills, pleasure carriages, watches and livestock were taxed

sheriff was the tax collector -- he received a commission of ten per cent of what was collected

those who were delinquent in the payment of their taxes were penalized at a lesser rate

than had previously been required

but the lost their vote and the right to be heard in court -- literally they were outlaws

Hudson's Bay Company was not to be taxed on its crown-chartered operation

but only on the goods brought into the country for sale to the settlers

these were taxed at a rate of one-eighth of the value of the merchandise

Jesse Applegate negotiated this arrangement for the Provisional Government

Oregon Country taxation question was settled in favor of the government

#### OREGON PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT ABOLISHES ITSELF

In an effort to make the frequently-changed Organic Laws stable if dubiously legal

Provisional Legislative Council called for a vote of the people to adopt the Second Organic Laws

which would establish a new Provisional Government under the new 1845 Organic Laws  
then the Legislative Council adjourned -- July 5, 1845

Executive Committee members Osborn Russell and Peter G. Stewart

who governed as a majority of the committee retired at the close Legislative Council  
to turn the reins of office over to Provisional Governor George Abernathy

#### MICHAEL SIMMONS LEADS A PARTY TO PUGET SOUND IN SEARCH OF LAND

Colonel Michael Simmons visited Puget Sound, accompanied by William Shaw, George Wanch,  
David Crawford, Ninian Everman, Seyburn Thornton, David Parker

and two others probably, Michael Moore and John Hunt -- July 1845

Passing Cowlitz Farms, they learned that John R. Jackson had preceded them

he had located a claim and returned to the Willamette Valley for his family

#### AMERICA FEELS ITS MANIFEST DESTINY

Four months after publication of John Fremont's report

which combined the reports of both expeditions into one book

New York newspaper editor John O'Sullivan coined the phrase

in an editorial for the expansionist magazine: *Democratic Review* -- July 1845

O'Sullivan wrote: **"Our Manifest Destiny, or God given mission, is to overspread the  
continent given to us for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions."**

This editorial both motivated and explained the thinking of a large segment of the American public:

- United States was destined to grow from sea to sea
- settlers would be necessary to expand across the continent

This powerful ideology taught that God, or Nature, or Fate had decreed that the United States  
representing political democracy, economic opportunity, social mobility, and religious freedom  
would expand its boundaries to the Pacific and, some said, even beyond

Two arguments developed to support the spreading of Americans over land not owned by the U.S.:

- countries, like things in nature, must grow or die
- "natural growth"** for the country must reflect physical expansion
- "American multiplication table"** noted the possibility that future generations  
could face a critical land shortage

this was America's justification for expanding across the North American continent

Pacific Northwest became the target of this growth

importance of the Pacific Coast's rivers and potential harbors to Manifest Destiny

and the United States foreign and domestic policies tend to be overshadowed by the by the role

of upcoming westward movement of pioneering emigrants  
in reality, the favorable anchorages played a very significant role in political events of the day

#### GEORGE ABERNATHY IS SWORN IN A OREGON PROVISIONAL GOVERNOR

Returning from a business trip to Hawaii George Abernathy took the oath of office  
in Oregon City -- July 14, 1845

**“I do solemnly swear that I will support the organic laws of the provisional government of Oregon, so far as the said organic laws are consistent with my duties as a citizen of the United States, or a subject of Great Britain, and faithfully demean myself in office, so help me God.”**

Abernathy would be the only governor under the Provisional Government  
he served a second term after his reelection in [1847] until [1849]

#### MANIFEST DESTINY FOCUSES ON THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

America justified its desire to expand across the North American continent  
interest continued, and even increased, to bring Christianity to the Native Americans  
Westward movement of agrarian emigrants dominated the expansion effort  
Naval Lieutenant Charles Wilkes published his full report --1845

*Narrative of the U.S. Exploring Expedition During the Years 1838, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842*

also published were a number of maps showing the potential provided by Pacific coast harbors  
that enhanced the demand to expand

Captain John C. Fremont's report and Charles Preuss's map generated phenomenal enthusiasm  
U.S. foreign and domestic policy reflected all of these mandates  
American interest in the Pacific Northwest reached epic proportions

#### BRITISH TAKE UP GUNBOAT DIPLOMACY

During the tense summer of 1845 the British Admiralty dispatched the fifty-gun Man-of-War *America*  
under Captain Sir James Gordon as a gesture of defiance to the United States

(to be followed later by the sloop-of-war *Modeste* and later still, the frigate *Fisgard*)

by coincidence (or something more) the brother of Lord Aberdeen, George Hamilton-Gordon  
was on Captain Gordon's staff as was Lieutenant William Peel  
the third son of the British Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel

This was gunboat diplomacy aimed at intimidating the Americans

and demonstrating to Hudson's Bay Company employees Britain's pledge to support them  
Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin was not impressed with the show of force  
*America* was too large to enter the Columbia River over the sandbar

she had to be stationed on Puget Sound where there were no Americans to intimidate

#### BRITISH SECRET AGENTS CONTINUE THEIR TRAVELS WITH PETER SKENE OGDEN

Leaving Fort Garry the two British spies, Lieutenants Henry J. Warre and Mervin Vavasour, traveled with Peter Skene Ogden as he maintained standard brigade speed which withered many a civilian traveler

Within four weeks they reached Fort Edmonton (Alberta) -- July 1845

Ogden was unimpressed with the grumbling, complaining pair of undercover British lieutenants

#### COLONEL STEPHEN WATTS KEARNY ATTEMPTS TO PACIFY THE PLAINS INDIANS

Colonel Stephen Watts Kearny (pronounced Kar-ney) was placed in command of five companies of the U.S. 1<sup>st</sup> Dragoons

this was one of two cavalry regiments in the United States Army

Two ideas of the type of military force necessary in central North America had developed

John C. Fremont and others believed a chain of forts would provide stepping stones of protection for emigrants crossing the continent

however, most professional soldiers believed a strong display of mobile military force could better convince the Indians to refrain from attacking emigrant wagon trains

Colonel Kearny was of this opinion and relished his orders to demonstrate convincingly by word if possible, by force if necessary the futility of harassing pioneers

these differing approaches contrasted Fremont's optimistic view of the West

as a garden inviting settlement and Kearny's pessimistic view of it as an uninhabitable desert

Kearny's specific assignment was to gather information and map the plains country,

protect emigrants on the Oregon Trail as far as South Pass, visit Bent's Fort

and convoy traders' wagon caravans from Santa Fe to St. Louis -- summer 1845

he would follow the Oregon Trail to South Pass and in the process visit Bent's Fort (Colorado),

Fort Laramie (Wyoming) and Fort Leavenworth (Kansas)

he would hold councils with the Oglala bands of the Sioux, the Cheyenne and the Arapaho Indians

#### ESTHER PARISEAU BECOMES SISTER JOSEPH (LATER MOTHER JOSEPH)

(Esther Pariseau was born to Joseph and Françoise Pariseau [April 16, 1823])

she was the third of twelve children born to on their farm in St. Elzear, Quebec, Canada

this dark-haired, gray-eyed girl served as a second mother

to her younger brothers and sisters -- a role she relished

Esther's father was a respected coachmaker and young Esther spent a great deal of time with him

working in his shop where she learned carpentry and design skills

she became a capable craftsman

Esther at age seventeen was enrolled by her mother in a newly-opened Saint Martin de Laval boarding school [1840]

her mother was determined that her daughter's intellect, talents and skills

be broadened and enriched beyond what the family's home education could provide when Esther Pariseau turned twenty years old her school was visited by Monseigneur Bourget

he told the students of a new order of nuns, the Sisters of Providence,

who served the poor with wonderful works of charity for the sick and destitute in Montreal

their training was taking place at Asile of Providence convent

Esther began to think about life as a devout woman

within a few months she entered the Asile of Providence convent to become a nun [1843]

Esther Pariseau took her vows of poverty, chastity, obedience and service to the poor

to honor of her father she took the name Sister Joseph -- July 21, 1845

Sister Joseph expanded the carpentry skills she had first developed while working with her father,

she was the nurse at Mother Gamelin's bedside as she lie dying of cholera [185]

she was named as assistant to the community's new superior, Mother Caron [1856]

#### VICAR FRANCIS NORBERT BLANCHET BECOMES BISHOP BLANCHET

After spending a month in England Vicar Blanchet sailed from Deal, England

Blanchet sailed to Boston then traveled overland to Quebec and Montreal

Vicar Blanchet was greeted in Montreal by Right Rev. Dr. Bourget

While in Montreal, Vicar Blanchet was consecrated Blanchet was consecrated Bishop of Drasa in Saint James Cathedral in Montreal -- July 25, 1845

Bishop Blanchet was assigned to Columbia District (Oregon Country)

Bishop Francis Blanchet sailed out of Montreal to Europe to raise funds and seek volunteers

#### OREGON COUNTRY'S SECOND ORGANIC LAWS OF OREGON 1845 ARE APPROVED

Oregon Country [1843] Organic Laws were so greatly modified that a vote of the people was required large majority of those voting gave resounding support to the proposals -- July 26, 1845

one change in the original proposal was that the Provisional Legislative Council

was to be replaced by a House of Representatives initially with thirteen members and permitted to have up to sixty-one legislators

this House of Representatives had the authority to change the laws by vote

without a need to submit changes to a popular vote of the people

It was a feat as astounding, politically speaking, as the more highly touted formation of self-governing bodies by the California miners (four years later [1849]) because no international tensions were at work in California war between the United States and Great Britain was a distinct possibility -- 1845 while antagonists in the United States Congress and the British House of Commons hurled inflammatory pronouncements at the other country and international diplomats exchanged stiff notes as they regularly altered their positions on the boundary dispute the people of Oregon Country, ignored by the federal government, worked out a peaceable solution with their British counterparts

#### WAGON TRAIN GUIDED BY STEPHEN HALL L. MEEK REACHS FORT HALL

When guide Stephen Meek arrived at Fort Hall this ended the mountain man's service as guide to the pioneers -- early August 1845

At Fort Hall, promoters encouraged the newly-arrived emigrants to travel south to California to take advantage of Captain John Sutter's offer of free land at New Helvetia

Sutter's promoters encouraged the emigrants and others warned them of the potential for Indian attack along the main stem of the Oregon Trail

and of the dangers of crossing the Blue Mountains

it was made known to the 1845 pioneers that the Walla Walla and Cayuse Indians,

who lived along the Oregon Trail route in the country west of the Blue Mountains,

were somewhat disposed to be unfriendly to the whites

and that they had threatened to make themselves troublesome to immigrants

passing through their country

Looking for work once again, Stephen Meek and Nathaniel Olney hit upon a novel idea

they devised a plan to save time and bypass the dangers ahead

they would travel directly west from the Oregon Trail

where it crossed the Malheur (pronounced malare) River

Meek would offer to guide the 1845 emigrants over an old trappers' pack trail

through central Oregon to The Dalles on the Columbia River

to avoid anticipated Indian harassment on the **"regular"** northern route

Meek and Olney were convinced they could connect a route through central Oregon,

over the Cascade Mountains and into the Willamette Valley

Sub-Indian Agent Dr. Elijah White, traveling to Washington City from the Willamette Valley, was at Fort Hall at this time



he encouraged the emigrants to try the “new” route  
although he, himself, had never attempted it  
Several wagons of pioneers turned south toward California from Fort Hall  
all of the others continued west along the Oregon Trail

#### STEPHEN MEEK SELLS HIS PLAN WHILE ON THE TRAIL FROM FORT HALL TO FORT BOISE

After leaving Fort Hall and while traveling toward Fort Boise  
Stephen Meek continued to warn the immigrants of the dangers ahead along the usual trail  
he noted both the Blue Mountains of eastern Oregon and the fearsome rapids at the Dalles  
he informed everyone who would listen that he knew a shortcut to avoid these perils  
along the Malheur River, to the John Day or Deschutes River to The Dalles  
Meek rode up the Snake River Trail offering his services to the lead wagon train members  
with the assistance of Nathan Olney, Meek made a crude map of the routes he had taken  
when he crossed the Malheur, Owyhee, and the John Day rivers [1834] with Bonneville)  
he informed them there would be no Indian trouble as the land of the Snakes would be avoided  
his proposed route through central Oregon would give the Cayuse and Walla Walla country  
a wide berth and enable emigrants to avoid all contact with the supposedly hostile Indians  
he also promised to eliminate 100 or 200 miles from the grueling crossing  
all of this for \$5.00 per wagon and provisions for himself, his wife and Nathan Olney  
a very reasonable price, indeed

#### FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET ESTABLISHES TWO NEW CATHOLIC MISSIONS

Father De Smet spent several months at St. Mary’s Mission in the Bitter Root Valley  
visiting with the Flathead Indians -- August 1845  
He again took up his travels going to Fort Colville located near Kettle Falls on the Columbia River  
he completed his inspection and resupplying of the missions he had founded Columbia District  
Father De Smet now turned his attention to exploring the region and visiting Indian camps  
he stopped at a village located below Kettle Falls  
being built by about seventy families of mixed French-Canadian and Cree blood  
their village included a chapel, which Father De Smet named St. Francis Regis -- August 1845  
this mission located at (today’s Chewelah, Washington) eventually was placed under the care  
of under Father Louis Vercruyse [1848]  
Father Pierre-Jean De Smet built a temporary building above Kettle Falls  
to serve the more than eight-hundred Indians who assembled there annually for the fishing season  
two of the new recruits he brought with him from Europe, Father Anthony Ravalli

and Father Adrian Hoecken, were placed in charge of the new St. Paul Mission  
to serve the Colville Indians

#### CAPTAIN COUCH MOVES FROM OREGON CITY

Captain John H. Couch of the Cushing and Company trading firm  
grew tired of fighting the Clackamas rapids below Oregon City  
He found a place lower down the Willamette River  
where deep water lay conveniently close to the bank for oceangoing ships to unload  
Captain Couch took up a claim at what became known as "Couch's Addition" -- August 1845  
soon others moved in  
Couch and others built a covered wharf so that goods could be handled during the winter rains  
when the land rush came they were ready

#### MEEK SEEKS ADVICE AT FORT BOISE REGARDING ROUTES TO THE WILLAMETTE

When the Stephen Meek's Oregon bound wagon trains reached Fort Boise  
Hudson's Bay Company Factor at Fort Boise, James Craigie said to his knowledge  
Stephen Meek had passed through the fort three times  
Craigie confirmed the existence of an old American Fur Company pack trail  
reached across Eastern Oregon

#### CAPTAIN JOHN C. FREMONT REACHES THE ARKANSAS RIVER

After reaching the Arkansas River Fremont suddenly left the upper river  
and traveled from Great Salt Lake through Mexican Territory south of the 42<sup>nd</sup> parallel  
strait to Sutter's Fort on the Sacramento River in California  
no explanation was given for this decision leading to speculation of a secret purpose  
to assist the United States, in case of war with Mexico, to gain possession of California  
It was during this portion of his expedition that Fremont renamed Mary's River  
(originally named in the 1820s by Hudson's Bay Company trapper Peter Ogden)  
henceforth it was known as the Humboldt River  
and quickly became a principal route across the Great Basin

#### MICHAEL SIMMONS AND HIS PARTY REACH PUGET SOUND

Colonel Simmons and his eight traveling companions reached Puget Sound -- August 1845  
they acquired canoes and investigated the region  
they traveled around the head of Whidbey Island and returned to the east side of the island

through Deception Pass

they ultimately decided to settle at the head of Budd Inlet where they found land that met with their approval

Simmons was attracted by the waterfalls on the Deschutes River

and the natural harbor of Budd Inlet at the southern end of Puget Sound

Convinced the Budd Inlet region could be profitably developed

Simmons and his companions hurried back to Washougal where their families

and others who had made camp there for the winter were waiting to discuss options preparations for the move to Puget Sound were begun

#### AMERICANS AT WASHOUGAL NEED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Preparations were underway by five families of the Simmons-Bush wagon train at Washougal

they intended to travel to Puget Sound and homestead over the strong objections

of the Hudson's Bay Company who preferred they settle in the Willamette Valley

reluctantly Chief Factor James Douglas gave George Washington Bush, Michael Simmons,

James McAllister, David Kindred and Gabriel Jones a generous letter of reference

and a written order to Dr. William F. Tolmie for supplies on Fort Nisqually: **"They have**

**all conducted themselves in a most neighborly, friendly manner, and I beg to recommend them to your kind assistance and friendly offices."**<sup>163</sup>

#### PROVISIONAL HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES GOES INTO SESSION

With renewed confidence provided by the voters Oregon's newly-elected House of Representatives

went into Special Session in Oregon City -- August 5, 1845

once again M.M. McCarver was elected Speaker

and Judge J.E. Long was elected Territorial Recorder and Clerk

Mr. Shaw was elected Sergeant-At-Arms

under the Second Organic Laws business was conducted in a semi-formal fashion

rules were frequently suspended

three new standing subcommittees were created at this session

Claims, Elections and Indian Affairs

#### DUELING OUTLAWED IN OREGON COUNTRY

Early in the 1845 session, Jesse Applegate is reputed to have rushed breathlessly

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<sup>163</sup> Clinton A. Snowden, *History of Washington*, Vol. 2, P. 430.

into the legislative chamber and promptly asked the rules be suspended  
to permit him to introduce a Bill to prohibit dueling

Applegate wanted to prevent a duel which appeared imminent  
between Dr. Elijah White and Samuel M. Holderness

Provisional House of Representatives put aside the rules -- a Bill was read once for information  
and twice simply by title and then passed

Within the hour of when Applegate had rushed onto the floor,  
the Bill had become law and the duel had been averted -- August 11, 1845

#### BRITISH SECRET AGENTS CONTINUE THEIR JOURNEY TO THE COLUMBIA DISTRICT

Leaving Fort Edmonton Ogden's brigade moved toward the greatly-anticipated Rocky Mountains  
they crossed the Bow River and began an ascent of the foothills

directly into the smoke of an enormous forest fire

changing direction, Peter Skene Ogden led his party over Whitehead Pass (near Creston, B.C.)  
south of the usual route across the Continental Divide

On the West side of the Rockies they cut to the upper Kootenai River  
their descent in miserable weather led to another mountain pass

before their guide led them to the north-running Columbia River (near Radium Hot Springs)  
where they turned south to the Kootenai River again

Reaching St. Mary Lake Henry J. Warre and Mervin Vavasour stopped to visit with Father De Smet  
before continuing to the Pend Oreille River

Finally once again reaching the Columbia River

at Fort Colville they traveled by Hudson's Bay Company bateau -- August 12, 1845  
past Grand Rapids between Kettle Falls and the mouth of the Spokane River

#### OREGON COUNTRY'S NEGRO EXCLUSION LAW IS REMOVED

Idea of the exclusion of black people was repulsive to some Oregonians  
most believed themselves remote from pressing racial issues in the United States  
anti-slavery clause included in the [1843] Organic Laws

had reflected the influence of pioneers arriving from the Midwestern states

Provisional House of Representatives received a petition signed by 113 settlers  
activists who signed, including Jesse Applegate, favored repeal of the [1844] Exclusion Law  
Negro exclusion act was thrown out

(however, during the drive for statehood shortly before the Civil War

Oregon's territorial government passed a new black exclusion law [September 1849]

that would be become the basis for the black exclusion law  
included in the Oregon state constitution of [1859])

#### PROVISIONAL AND COMPANY LEADERS REACH AN AGREEMENT

After considerable negotiation between the leaders of the Oregon Provisional Government  
and the Hudson's Bay Company's officers at Fort Vancouver  
Provisional Committee on Apportionment of Representation  
addressed a communication to Dr. John McLoughlin -- August 14, 1845

**“Do you think the gentlemen of the company, over which you preside, will become parties to the Articles of Compact, by the payment of taxes and in other respects complying with the laws of the Provisional government?”<sup>164</sup>**

Provisional Government formalized an agreement with Hudson's Bay Company -- August 15, 1845  
matter of allegiance had been addressed by the new Oath of Office

#### PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT AND FORT VANCOUVER OFFICERS REACH AN AGREEMENT

Chief Factors Dr. John McLoughlin and James Douglas promptly replied  
to the Provisional Government inquiry -- August 15, 1845

**“Viewing the organization as a compact of certain parties, British and American subjects residing in Oregon, to afford each other protection in person and property, to maintain the peace of the community, and prevent the commission of crime -- a protection which all parties in this country feel they particularly stand in need of, as neither the British nor American governments appear at liberty to extend the jurisdiction of their laws to this part of America; and, moreover, seeing that this compact does not interfere with our duties and allegiance to our respective governments, nor with any rights of trade now enjoyed by the Hudson's Bay Company -- we, the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company, consent to become parties to the articles of compact, provided we are called upon to pay taxes only on our sales to settlers.”<sup>165</sup> P. 495.**

Americans had won a significant victory

both Dr. McLoughlin and James Douglas submitted to the authority of Provisional Government  
they agreed to place the company's forts and farms under the jurisdiction of the Americans  
who would protect all of Hudson's Bay Company property from American trespass  
Peter Skene Ogden, the third member of the company triumvirate, was not on hand to sign,  
he had gone east some months earlier

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<sup>164</sup> Elwood Evans, *History of the Pacific Northwest: Oregon and Washington: Embracing ...*, Volume 1, P. 270.

<sup>165</sup> Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Oregon, 1886-88*, P. 495.

## OREGON COUNTRY BECAME A SELF-SUPPORTING AMERICAN COLONY

Americans and British in Oregon Country (Columbia District) mutually agreed to help each other to maintain peace, prevent crime and protect persons and property

Factions of Oregon's population had become more firmly united

emphasis on Provisional (temporary) nature of the government was dropped

and a more satisfactory judiciary was empowered

However, the company's annual supply vessels were ordered, for the first time in their history, to avoid the Columbia River and unload their cargoes at Fort Victoria as a precaution

## DR. ELIJAH WHITE RESPONDES TO THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

Sub-Indian Agent Dr. Elijah White had received two messages from the Provisional Government to be delivered to Congress

one was a resolution from the Legislative Council **“to the favorable consideration of Congress the just claims of Dr. E. White, sub Indian agent, for a remuneration for the heavy expenses by him incurred in attempting to discover a southern passage through the Cascade Mountains”**<sup>166</sup>

second was the Memorial to Congress from the newly elected House of Representatives with a copy of the newly adopted Second Organic Laws

Dr. White addressed a note to the Oregon House of Representatives -- August 17, 1845

**“To the HONORABLE etc.,**

**“Gentlemen: Being on my way, and having but a moment to reflect, I have been at much of a loss which of your two resolutions most to respect, or which to obey; but at length have become satisfied that the first was taken most soberly, and, as it answers my purpose best, I pledge myself to adhere strictly to that. Sincerely wishing you good luck in legislating, I am, dear sirs, very respectfully yours,**

**E. WHITE”**

Dr. White stated clearly that he intended to lobby Congress in his effort

to become governor of Oregon Territory and to receive payment for expenses incurred to date (he will be notably unsuccessful in both endeavors)

## PROVISIONAL HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REACTS TO DR. ELIJAH WHITE

Provisional House of Representatives was horrified by the note they received

from sub-Indian Agent Dr. Elijah White advocating his selected as Oregon Territory governor

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<sup>166</sup> Elwood Evans, *History of the Pacific Northwest: Oregon and Washington* Vol. 1., P. 269

it was resolved that proper procedures had not been followed in sending Dr. White with the packet for Congress

therefore the House: **“Resolved, that the clerk dispatch for them a messenger to Vancouver, with authority to bring said documents back, and that he deliver them to the secretary; and that the expenses incurred be paid by the members of this House who voted for the resolution.”**

On the next day the House resolved: **“That whereas, the Speaker of this House has signed certain documents, ordered to be sent to the United States, by a vote of this legislature, from a mistaken sense of duty, and not from...contempt for this House; therefore,**

**“Resolved, that M.M. McCarver, said Speaker, have leave of absence for the purpose of following Dr. E. White to Vancouver; and this House enjoins that said Speaker erase his name from said documents, to wit: the Organic Law and two resolutions in favor of Dr. E. White.”**

It was further **“Resolved, that it was not the intention of this House, in passing resolutions in favor of Dr. E. White, to recommend him to the government of the United States as a suitable person to fill any office in this territory;”**

and it was further **“Resolved, that the Clerk of this House forward, by some suitable person, an attested copy of this resolution, to the United States government.”**

#### VANCOUVER COUNTY IS CREATED NORTH OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Act of the Provisional House of Representatives extended American jurisdiction north of the Columbia with the creation of Vancouver County -- August 20, 1845

Vancouver County was carved out of the Clackamas District and comprised all of Oregon Country north of the Columbia River, west of the Rocky Mountains and south of Russian-America

Hudson’s Bay Company insisted on naming the newly created district “Vancouver” while the Provisional House of Representatives demanded “Lewis and Clark” this petty wrangle was quickly cast aside by the Americans

Provisional Government had extended jurisdiction over land north of the Columbia although Great Britain had not officially relinquished its authority

however, Hudson’s Bay Company’s authority in Vancouver County was recognized as the only settlements the county were the Hudson's Bay Company establishments Fort Vancouver, Fort Victoria Cowlitz Farms, Fort Nisqually, and the French-Canadian settlement at Cowlitz

Village of Vancouver was designated the District seat of government

movement was begun to change the name of the town of Vancouver to Columbia City (this idea was spurned by the Washington Territorial Legislature [1855])

Vancouver County came under domain of Provisional Government  
but Hudson's Bay Company would control appointments for judge and sheriff  
most of the district government positions were given to British residents  
in exchange for Hudson's Bay Company assistance in controlling the Indians  
and the Company's contribution in taxes

Vancouver County judges:

- Hudson's Bay Company Chief Factor James Douglas
- manager of Cowlitz Farms Charles Forrest
- American Michael Simmons who was, incongruously enough, illiterate

two new sheriffs in Vancouver District were selected:

Colonel Michael Simmons of New Market

John R. Jackson of the Cowlitz Plains

To make sure that Fort Vancouver was properly protected,  
nine loyal company men filed claims, under the provisional government,  
to nine pieces of ground embracing the company fields and orchards  
now, according to Jesse Applegate, there could be no trespass by Americans  
similar steps were taken to defend choice lands of the Cowlitz and Nisqually farms

When Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin agreed to place company forts and farms  
under the jurisdiction of the provisional government he was performing  
his last significant act in the Northwest

With than great step forward in resolving local American-British relations  
the Provisional House of Representatives adjourned -- August 20, 1845

#### SHERIFF JOE MEEK TAKES A CENSUS OF OREGON COUNTRY

Sheriff Meek enumerated the population in the six counties of Oregon Country -- 1845

Clackamas and Champoeg east of Willamette River

Twality, Yamhill and Clatsop west of Willamette River

Vancouver County north of the Columbia River

Meek counted French-Canadians, Methodist and independent missionaries

he counted American remnants of Astor and Wyeth expeditions

he counted American free fur trappers and pioneers who had arrive by wagon train and boat

he also counted a few British subjects

As a result of his census Sheriff Meek counted 2,109 Americans

1,259 men and 851 women -- 5,000 free, male inhabitants were required to become a territory  
population of Oregon Country had nearly doubled with the arrival of 1845 immigrants



French-Canadians found themselves in the minority  
as the American now outnumber British subjects  
this forced a new tolerance toward the American Provisional Government

#### LIEUTENANT WILLIAM PEEL INVESTIGATES THE COLUMBIA RIVER REGION

British Prime Minister's son Lieutenant William Peel arrived at Fort Vancouver  
he asked questions everywhere of everyone -- but only casually of Dr. John McLoughlin  
the implications were obvious -- Lieutenant Peel was gathering military information  
but because McLoughlin helped so materially in furthering American strength in Oregon,  
British government was not sure of his loyalties and he was not taken into confidence  
by coincidence (or perhaps something more) Lieutenant Peel arrived in time  
to exchange views with British spies Henry J. Warre and Mervin Vavasour

#### STEPHEN MEEK CONVINCES FOUR WAGON TRAINS TO ACCOMPANY HIM

Stephen Meek convinced four parties of pioneers, some 1,000 people in 200 wagons,  
to break away from the main wagon train because his route was safer and shorter  
they did not know that Stephen Meek, personally, had never crossed this country  
he had been a trapper in the vicinity and he had heard others speak of such a pass  
it was well known that Southeastern Oregon was less mountainous than the northern region  
Meek assumed from this information a more feasible route could there be found  
he also believed a lower and better pass through the Cascade Mountains existed

Parties who chose to follow Stephen Meek into the wilderness were composed of:

- Savannah Oregon Emigrating Company composed of the Officer and Cooley families
- a party known as the English group composed of Sam Barlow and Susannah (Lee) Barlow,  
James and Dorcas McDonald, Henry Montgomery and Elizabeth (Martin) Knighton parties

These fifty wagons guided by Stephen Meek were fairly evenly divided  
into four companies of around fifty wagons each  
within these companies were traveling parties and small groups of families  
followed by thousands of heads of livestock

(These four wagon trains were later joined by companies headed by:

- Joel Palmer and his wife Catherine (Caffey) Palmer,
- Abner Hackleman and his wife Elizabeth (Lines) Hackleman,
- John Henry Brown led those who remained with him after Captain William B. Ide  
turned off for California at Fort Hall

## 1845 EMIGRANTS REACH WHAT BECAME KNOWN AS MEEK'S CUTOFF

From Fort Boise all of the 1845 pioneers traveled westward into central eastern Oregon  
on the main branch of the Oregon Trail

Following the route of the Oregon Trail Stephen Meek and his lead wagon train  
reached what became known as Meek's Cutoff (very near present-day Vale, Oregon)  
two hundred wagons left the main trail to follow guide Stephen Meek  
across the barren and desolate high sage plains east of the Cascade Mountains  
where no road existed except an old pack trail existed  
while the main body of emigrants chose to continue over the Oregon Trail  
toward Fort Walla Walla and the Columbia River

Stephen Meek's four wagon trains set out on successive days

Captains Nicholas Ownbey and Samuel Parker and the members of their wagon train  
left the main trail sixteen miles from the Owyhee River -- August 24, 1845  
next came Captain James B. Riggs, following the route set out by Meek departing [August 25]  
then another company, perhaps led by Alexander Liggett, that left the same day on the same trail  
finally Captain Solomon Tetherow leading the Savannah Oregon Emigrating Society  
followed the preceding wagon trains departing [August 26]

Among those following Meek were James Field, Eli Casey Cooley, Jesse Harritt,  
John Herren, John Howell and Samuel Parker -- each kept a record of the journey

## OWNBEY AND PARKER CARAVAN SET OUT GUIDED BY STEPHEN MEEK

Stephen Meek, an experienced mountain man, led Captains Nicholas Ownbey and Samuel Parker  
and their wagon train as they turned away from the Oregon Trail

sixteen miles from the Owyhee River -- August 24, 1845

they would be followed by three other wagon trains

roughly 1,500 people in fifty wagons would follow Stephen Meek

they turned a little south of west following a good road

across the arid plains west of (Vale, Oregon) toward the eastern slopes of the Cascades  
(there is a highway kiosk on the west end of Vale adjacent to Oregon State Highway 20  
which discusses the passage of these emigrants)

terrain was tolerable and grass was plentiful that day however, the route became frightfully dusty

dust frequently more than shoe deep lay on the desert ground

when the wind happened to blow length-wise with the trail,

dust was so thick the next wagon ahead in line could not be seen

they progressed up a major Snake River tributary, the Malheur River

that flowed from west to east through central Oregon

Eli Cooley, now traveling with the lead wagon train of Nicholas Ownbey and Samuel Parker noted the event in his daily journal -- Sunday, August 24

**“Mr. Meek this morning started to pilot us the new rout. Wee left the old rout and turned to the left. Crossed the Mallaer River whare wee camped and have traveled up it to day though only in site of it until wee camped. Struck it and camped on it. The road has been verry good. Weather fine. The corse has been nearly west. 8 miles [traveled that day]”**<sup>167</sup>

Camp was made on the Malheur River near a fork in the road (very near present day Vale, Oregon) where they found grass for feed and willows to burn

#### STEPHEN MEEK GUIDES THE LEAD WAGONS OF A CARAVAN OF FOUR TRAINS

On the second day following the new route, guide Stephen Meek led the Ownbey-Parker wagon train bearing a little south of west along the rocky banks of the Malheur River -- August 25, 1845

Two other wagon trains followed the trail set out by Meek

Captain James B. Riggs' Caravan left Meek's Cutoff -- August 25

they followed the track of Ownbey-Parker wagon train

over the next three days [August 25-28] Riggs' party traveled thirty miles

over rough trail whose sharp rocks cut their animals' hooves

another company, perhaps led by Alexander Liggett,

left Meek's Cutoff later on the same day along the same trail

Meek-led Ownbey-Parker wagon train moved up and over rocky and rough bluffs

sharp, hard volcanic stones made the cattle flinch with pain at each step

route taken by the emigrants was the old American Fur Company Trail

by the way of Burnt River and the Grande Rounde Valley

and across the Blue Mountains to the waters of the Umatilla River

at this point the wagons were proving to be very maneuverable

however, oxen and emigrants had a very difficult time with the route

some of the pioneers moved more quickly than did others

after following the Malheur River for a few miles (and crossing it several times),

Meek turned the caravan up a creek

Travel of the Ownbey-Parker train leading the others was recorded in Eli Cooley's diary:

**“Traveled up Mallear to day. Come about 1 mile and ½ and crossed the River and in a few hundred yards crossed it again and in about 1 mile crossed again and in a short distance crossed**

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<sup>167</sup> NOTE: References to the Cooley diary are from Michael F. and Mary Lou Cooley for the Officer-Cooley Family Association, *The Transcribed Diary of Eli Casey Cooley as he came across the Oregon Trail and the Meek Cutoff in 1845.*

**again and there turned to the right up the bluff and in about 2 miles struck it again. Went ½ mile up it and camped. Plenty of grass and willow here. The road to where we crossed the first time is very good; it then is quite broken and rough to where we struck it the last time; it then is very good. Weather fine to day.”<sup>168</sup>**

Meek’s route was turning out to be very tough on man, beast and equipment  
already three or four oxen had given out

#### FIRST LEGEND OF THE BLUE BUCKET MINE

Several accounts of finding the Blue Bucket Mine varied  
in the course of their travels several oxen were lost -- August 25, 1845  
three young men (or three boys or a single girl) soon went out in search of the stock  
they walked well into the late afternoon before coming to a small stream  
after quenching their thirst, they picked up fifteen to twenty unusually colored pebbles  
from the creek bed

Finding their oxen later in the day, they returned to the wagon train  
where they showed their stones to an older man who pronounced them to be copper  
when the young men were asked if there were a lot of these stones one of boys replied:

**“We could have filled one of these blue buckets.”<sup>169</sup>**

One of the pioneers, Mrs. Fisher, kept a single nugget  
leaving behind the other stones the wagon train continued its journey  
(This story was forgotten until three years later when gold was discovered in California  
Mrs. Fisher discovered the stone she had kept was actually gold  
thus the first legend [there are two] of the Blue Bucket Mine was born  
however, this story may have been a ruse to put gold-seekers on the wrong path)

#### CHIEF FACTOR PETER SKENE OGDEN ARRIVES AT FORT VANCOUVER

Peter Skene Ogden had served Hudson’s Bay Company  
as the Chief Factor of New Caledonia (British Columbia) from [1831] to 1845  
after receiving new orders from Governor Sir George Simpson  
he arrived at Fort Vancouver -- August 25, 1845  
with him came two inquisitive individuals  
British lieutenants Henry J. Warre and Mervin Vavasour who had been assigned

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<sup>168</sup> NOTE: References to the Ownbey-Parker wagon train are from Michael F. and Mary Lou Cooley for the Officer-Cooley Family Association, *The Transcribed Diary of Eli Casey Cooley as he came across the Oregon Trail and the Meek Cutoff in 1845*.

<sup>169</sup> *Meek Cutoff 1845*, Compiled by Karen Bassett, Jim Renner, and Joyce White, Published electronically, 1998.

to scrutinize the possibility of a British plan of defense of the region  
if the Americans should attack and begin a war

#### BRITISH SECRET AGENTS WARRE AND VAVASOUR ARRIVE AT FORT VANCOUVER

British lieutenants Henry J. Warre and Mervin Vavasour were to make recommendations  
on how best to protect British interests  
they were to advise the British government regarding how to fortify the Columbia River  
and how to protect various British forts against American attack  
they also had to assess the feasibility of transporting troops overland to the Pacific coast  
in their report to their commanders and in other reports that followed,  
Warre and Vavasour complained about the lawless nature of the American settlers  
in the Willamette Valley  
they fretted that Dr. John McLoughlin and James Douglas  
were too kind to American expansionists

#### MEEK'S LEAD WAGON TRAIN REACHES HARPER VALLEY

Meek led the Ownbey-Parker wagon train through (today's Harper Valley)  
north fork of the Malheur River was crossed four times -- August 26, 1845  
Meek, Ownbey and their companions made camp that night (near present-day Harper, Oregon)  
white chalk cliffs on the north side of the Malheur Valley were very discernable from here  
Eli Cooley failed to mention them  
he often failed to mention geographic features recorded in other diaries  
his concern seemed to focus on road conditions, water, wood and grass  
Samuel Parker left the lead company  
he fell in with the trailing Captain James B. Riggs' Company -- August 26, 1845  
this was not uncommon as companies tended to spread out once travel was started  
it was simply impossible for all of the emigrants in a company to stay grouped together  
pioneers moved from company to company and back again  
reasons for these actions were usually not recorded but were simply accepted  
Captain James B. Riggs' Company, keeping on the Malheur River, crossed it twice -- August 26  
they were eventually forced to take to the bluffs to get across several narrow bends in the river  
these detours were rocky and hilly and seemed to become increasingly difficult  
but the pioneers acquired the impression the wagons could go anywhere  
Captain Alexander Liggett probably led the third wagon company directly and followed Captain Riggs  
having set out from Meek's Cutoff later on the same day as the Riggs Company

Captain Solomon Tetherow led out the last of the four wagon trains attempting the short cut  
his Savannah Oregon Emigrating Society started from Meek's Cutoff -- August 26, 1845  
All told there were roughly 200 wagons that departed on the 1845 Meek Cut-off  
miles stretched between small groups roughly following Meek's route  
in some cases the companies followed just a day behind the lead,  
others followed several days later

#### GOVERNOR SIMPSON ORDERS HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY HEADQUARTERS MOVED

Governor Sir George Simpson feared American continued plundering of company property  
equally important, he wanted to save Fort Victoria and Vancouver Island for the British  
Hudson's Bay Company's Governor Sir George Simpson began to impose his vision  
he shifted fur operations northward to Peter Skene Ogden in New Caledonia  
Governor Simpson issued new orders to move Hudson's Bay Company supplies  
at Fort Vancouver to Fort Victoria on Vancouver Island -- 1845  
Hudson's Bay Company mill was sold to Catholic priests at St. Paul Mission -- 1845  
who changed the name of the operation to Mission Mill

#### LEADERSHIP OF FORT VANCOUVER CHANGES

Dr. John McLoughlin's humane policies toward Americans were not in favor in London  
he was forced to share authority as one member of a triumvirate  
Governor Sir George Simpson put into place a Three-man Board of Management Directors  
who led Hudson's Bay Company's operations throughout the Pacific Northwest  
Dr. John McLoughlin, James Douglas and Peter Skene Ogden shared power  
it may have been a greater kindness to fire him outright  
McLoughlin's domain was cut, his salary reduced by five hundred pounds a year  
and his power taken away  
obediently at the age of sixty-one Dr. John McLoughlin absorbed the humiliations  
All three Directors held differing views regarding the intentions of the Americans  
James Douglas attempted to ignore the encroaching pioneer government;  
Peter Skene Ogden believed the settlers were plotting  
to expel those who were not Americans from the districts south of the Columbia River;  
Dr. John McLoughlin took up residence in Oregon City -- south of the Columbia River

#### TRAVEL OVER DETERIORATING ROADS BECOMES INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT

In the Meek-Ownbey lead wagon train Eli Cooley noted in his diary -- August 28, 1845

**“The road to day has been verry broken and rough to day. Had some rain to nite. Traveled up the hollow over some verry large hills. About 9 mile is a small spring near the road and about 3 mile further some out of the way to the left whare wee camped is a small spring and some wood and grass. Some oxen give out today.”**

(that the oxen were giving out this early in the trek is an ominous sign  
worse terrain and much more difficult hardships lay ahead for the emigrants  
if they been aware of the increasing dangers, they probably would have turned around)

Captain James B. Riggs’ following wagon train, according to Samuel Parker,  
struggled along **“Bad Road”** -- August 28

Trailing wagon trains led by Captain Alexander Liggett and Captain Solomon Tetherow  
led their companies in the wake of the Meek-Ownbey and James B. Riggs caravan  
along the course chartered by Stephen Meek

#### TRAVEL CONTINUES TO BE DIFFICULT FOR THE MEEK CARAVAN

Meek-Ownbey wagons turned slightly south of west (at present-day Westfall)  
they began to climb into the mountains -- August 29, 1845

Eli Cooley described Captain Ownbey’s progress in his journal -- August 29

**“The road to day has been quite broken and rough. To day weather fine. Road quite crooked. Come about 6 miles and camped on a hill. Plenty of grass and willow here. West the general corse has been about 6 miles.”**

Samuel Parker traveling with Captain James B. Riggs’ caravan  
reported emphatically in his diary -- August 29

**“Verry bad Road, Broak 3 wagens this day.”**

#### PETER SKENE OGDEN VISITS THE MOUTH OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Just arrived with the Hudson’s Bay Company Brigade, Ogden hurried to the mouth of the Columbia  
there he began work on a post he said was for trade purposes

but Dr. John McLoughlin was too familiar with the land to believe that story  
in fact, Ogden had been ordered by Hudson’s Bay Company directors in London  
to purchase Cape Disappointment to enhance British claims to the region

Down from the British Man-of-War *America*, came a young lieutenant William Peel

Peel asked questions everywhere of everyone -- but only casually of Dr. McLoughlin

#### CONDITIONS DO NOT IMPROVE MUCH FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE MEEK CARAVAN

Lead Meek-Ownbey wagon train had easier travel on this day -- August 30, 1845

Diarist Eli Cooley reported

**“The road to day has been broken but tolerable good. A sprinkle of rain this evening. Come about West [written in left margin: “crossed a small branch”] for about 4 miles and struck Mallaer River and camped. Plenty of grass and wood here. Traveled down the creek wee camped on last nite about 1 ½ and left it on our left. Come to the left of a verry high mountain leaving it on our rite. 4 miles.”**

Samuel Parker in the trailing wagons expressed in his diary that Captain Riggs’ caravan faced

**“Rock all day, pore grass, more swaring than you everheard....”** -- August 30

#### FURTHER HARDSHIPS ARE EXPERIENCED ALONG THE MALHEUR RIVER

Meek guided the Meek-Ownbey wagon train across harsh terrain

Eli Cooley wrote in his journal regarding the hardships -- August 31, 1845

**“The road to has been verry broken and some rock. Crossed the [Malheur] River this morning & there turned to the rite over the hills and in about 1 ½ miles come near the River then left it again. Went over the hills. Again here a verry steep hill, then struck the river again and come about 1 mile up it and camped. Plenty of grass and wood here. Weather fine. Freemonts peak [Castle Rock]. 5 miles”**

(Castle Rock is the highest geologic feature in this part of the country

located west of present-day Westfall, Oregon

it can be seen in different directions for many miles

most likely the name “Fremont” was provided for the peak by Stephen Meek

who was the only person on the trek anywhere near this location before)

camp was made once more on Malheur River in the Blue Mountains

near “Freemonts Peak”

Captain James B. Riggs’ trailing company traveled about five miles that morning -- August 31

before camp was constructed several miles behind Meek and Ownbey

#### BRITISH LIEUTENANT WILLIAM PEEL GOES TO VANCOUVER TO GATHER INFORMATION

British Man-of-War *America* under Captain Sir John Gordon, remained anchored

in Strait of Juan de Fuca showing the British colors -- August 31, 1845

one of the young officers on board was Lieutenant William Peel the son of British Prime Minister

In order to obtain firsthand military view of Oregon, Captain Gordon sent Lieutenant Peel

overland from Puget Sound to examine Fort Vancouver and to cross the Columbia River



and journey up the Willamette River **“to examine and procure information of the present state of the new American settlement on the Willamette.”**<sup>170</sup>

#### STEPHEN MEEK LED THE MEEK-OWNBEY TRAIN FROM CASTLE ROCK

From Castle Rock, a prominent landscape feature north of (today's Beulah Reservoir)

Meek-Ownbey wagons guided by Stephen Meek moved west only as fast as the oxen could go

bad roads made it exceedingly difficult for the pioneers to make adequate progress

breakdowns, as well as problems with the oxen's sensitive hooves were the cause of delays

rocky ground cut and bruised the animals' feet leaving behind a bloodstained track

scarred by the iron-stained wagon wheels which also left red stain on the sharp rocks

Eli Cooley traveling with Captain Ownbey's Company recorded in his journal -- September 1, 1845

**“Weather fine to day. Road verry rough and broken. Crossed the creek this morning and come up a hollow which is verry rockey. Come about 4 miles and struck a branch - only water in holes. Come about 1 mile down it and after crossing it 3 times left it to our left and turned up a hollow and in about 5 miles further struck a branch and camped. Plenty of grass and willow here. Plenty of wood and grass on the branch wee crossed 3 times. The corse has been a little West of South. 10 miles”**

they probably passed Warm Springs Creek on this date

as they headed toward (the present site of Beulah Reservoir)

Captain James B. Riggs' Caravan continued to follow Meek, but traveled an independent course

about five miles were again made before camp was established on the Malheur River

Samuel Parker noted: **“the worst Road you ever seen, 5 wagons Broak;”** -- September 1, 1845

#### TRAVELING CONDITIONS DID NOT IMPROVE ALONG THE MALHEUR RIVER

Meek-Ownbey wagon train covered ten miles on this day -- September 2, 1845

(they passed by the vicinity of today's Drewsey, Oregon)

once again Eli Cooley recorded progress: **“The road to day has been broken. Weather fine.**

**Crossed the branch this morning and traveled about South for about 5 miles and struck a creek and traveled up it a short distance and crossed it then left it to our rite and in about 5 miles struck a Drean (Stream) of the creek and camped. The drean (stream) has only water in holes. Plenty of grass and willow on the creek and also here the road for about 7 miles is clear of rock; then is some what rocky to the bottom of the drean (stream) on which wee camped.”**

Captain James B. Riggs' Company covered about fifteen miles

along the worst road seen yet in a direction but little west of south

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<sup>170</sup> Joseph Schafer, *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, P. 183.

camp was made on a small branch of the Malheur River -- September 2  
Because of continual bad roads there was a great deal of dissatisfaction developing  
among all four companies regarding Stephen Meek's new route

#### ANOTHER DAY OF SLOW TRAVEL

Eli Cooley reported the conditions faced by the Meek-Ownbey party: **"The road to day has been verry broken and rocky. Weather fine. Crossed the Drean (stream) this morning and have traveled about a South West corse - in about 7 miles crossed a Drean (stream) after coming down a verry steep hill. Some grass and wood. Water in holes and in about 1 mile furthur crossed a branch and camped. Some grass and wood here. Some scattering seder on the hills now for about 30 or 40 miles."**

that night they camped on the South fork of Malheur River again

Captain Riggs' Company went only about six miles on very rocky ground -- September 3, 1845

as they were forced to stop and put in a new axle-tree on a wagon

that night they camped on the South fork of Malheur River again

Joel Palmer traveling with the Riggs party recorded, perhaps in a fit of frustration,

Stephen Meek's promise made early on to those who journeyed with him:

**"September 3, 1845...At this place are two trails; the fork is in the bottom above the crossing of the creek, and there is a possibility of emigrants pursuing the wrong route. I do not deem it amiss to give some particulars in relation to this road. Mr. Meek, who had been previously engaged as our pilot, but had previously went in advance of the companies who had employed him, and who after reaching Fort Hall fitted up a party to pilot through to Oregon, informed the emigrants that he could, by taking up this stream to near its source, and then striking across the plains, so as to intersect the old road near to the mouth of Deschutes or Falls river, save about one hundred and fifty miles travel; also that he was perfectly familiar with the country through which the proposed route lay, as he had traveled it; that no difficulty or danger attended its travel. He succeeded in inducing about two hundred families to pursue this route; they accordingly directed their course to the left, up this creek, about ten days previous to our arrival at the forks."**<sup>171</sup>

Solomon Tetherow's Savannah Oregon Emigrating Society was traveling a day or two

behind Captain James Riggs' Company

death hit the Tetherow Company along the North Fork of the Malheur River

Sarah King Chambers suddenly succumbed to a "camp fever" contracted a few days before  
she was buried six miles east of the mouth of Crane Creek

her husband, Rowland, and the party placed a large stone marker on her lonely grave

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<sup>171</sup> *Meek Cutoff 1845*, Compiled by Karen Bassett, Jim Renner, and Joyce White, Published electronically, 1998.

inscribed: Mrs. S. Chambers Sept. 3rd 1845

her's was the first death among those following Stephen Meek

#### TRAVEL CONDITION IMPROVE FOR THE LEAD WAGON TRAIN

Stephen Meek was traveling with Meek-Ownbey company one day's journey ahead of the others  
an effort was made to climb (today's Stinkingwater Mountains)

(they were a few miles from where today's Highway 20 goes through Stinkingwater Pass)  
their progress was recorded by Eli Cooley -- September 4, 1845

**“Weather fine to day and the road has been broken for a pease and then first rate.**

**Crossed the main divide to day which is about 7 mile from whare wee camped and about 3 miles further to a valley. This far the road is verry broken and rough and some seder (cedar) and pine timber. After wee got in to the valley the road was first rate to whare wee camped which was on a small dreaan (stream) about 4 miles from whare wee struck the valley. Some willow and plenty of grass. Here as wee come over the divide wee saw the Cascade Mountains at a considerable distance.**  
[Actually they were looking at the Steens Mountains to the south rather than the Cascades which are not visible from there.] **Here the valley appears to be perfectly level as far as the eye can reach. Saw some Indians here. The corse is about South West to day. 14 miles”**

(“perfectly level” valley Eli Cooley refers to would be the Harney-Malheur Lake Basin)

Captain James B. Riggs' caravan covered about eighteen miles -- September 4, 1845

only a few miles of road were rough and rocky

as they crossed Eastern Oregon south of the Blue Mountains

whenever possible, Riggs reached the campground left behind by Meek-Ownbey train

there the new arrivals would find a note buried at the foot of a stake

stating the distance to the next camp, and the (often incorrect) names of nearby streams  
their first glimpse of the rugged Blue Mountains were destitute of trees

but as they continued on they began to see some low-growing cedar

climbing the ever-rising hills that day, cedar gave way to tall pine trees

when they crested the last hill they looked into a hollow surrounded by tree-topped hills  
that evening they camped at the head of a small branch of the South fork of Malheur River

#### STEPHEN MEEK SEEMS TO BE CONFUSED

Matters worsened when Stephen Meek and the Meek-Ownbey wagon train

crested the Stinkingwater Mountains above the Harney Valley -- September 4, 1845

broad Malheur Lake, which he expected to see, was gone

in its place was a large, marshy and stagnant pool

its water was too brackish for both pioneer and beasts  
grasses became drier in the valley and water grew increasingly scarce  
John Day River is one of three major Oregon south-to-north flowing tributaries  
which empty into the Columbia River between the Umatilla River on the east,  
and the Deschutes River further west  
Stephen Meek, pilot leading the company on this route, rather than following the Oregon Trail  
could easily lead his companies up one of the northern tributaries of the Malheur River  
and then down the John Day, but whether he had told them he would do so is doubtful  
By now no one in the four wagon trains seemed to know exactly where Meek was headed  
it was growing apparent that Stephen Meek did not intend to travel to the Columbia River  
via the John Day River at all as he told them on leaving Fort Boise  
he still might lead them down the John Day or, perhaps, the Deschutes rivers to The Dalles,  
or across the Cascade Mountains and directly into the Willamette Valley  
still following a south-west route they were evidently  
now attempting to cut through the Blue Mountains -- September 4  
it is now said by members of the train that Meek's intention  
was to take them to the head of the Willamette River  
if he found a place along The Cascades Rapids which would allow passage of wagons  
and if not they would continue down the Deschutes River to the Columbia

#### GUIDE STEPHEN MEEK PUT UP A BRAVE FRONT

Stephen Meek told the Meek-Ownbey party traveling with him

**“I have brought you here and will take you off.”**

An Indian led the Meek-Ownbey train to the forks of the (most likely) Malheur Sough

(Meek believed they had reached the John Day River)

experience of the Meek-Ownbey travelers was documented by Eli Cooley -- September 5, 1845

**“The road to day has been first rate and level. Weather fine. Crossed the dreen (stream)  
this morning and left it on our left and have traveled about a South West corse. Crossed a small  
creek and camped. It runs to the left. Plenty of grass and willow here. Saw a few Indians to day. 15  
miles”**

camp that night (probably) on the Malheur Sough or one of its branches

(south of today's Ochoco National Forest)

Captain James B. Riggs' Company covered fifteen miles -- September 5

route they had followed for the past few days led across the Blue Mountains

this course over the high desert grew steadily steeper toward the west

eventually passes in excesses of 4,700 feet high were climbed  
(Snoqualmie Pass is 3,022 feet high)

#### CONFUSION INCREASES FOR THE PIONEERS

Their map of the country incorrectly indicated they had passed the head of the John Day River  
(Malheur River was shown to flow much further south than the John Day  
yet they continued a south-south-west course away from the Malheur River)  
this confusion suffered by the trailing pioneers regarding the local geography  
was a result of the notes Stephen Meek left each night  
under a stake driven into the ground to indicate the night's campsite  
Meek had changed his mind about where they were three times in three days  
going from being on what he believed was the South Fork of the Malheur River,  
to the Lake Fork of the John Day River (whatever that was),  
to finally thinking he was on the Crooked River,  
the main southeasterly tributary of the Deschutes  
these were not just minor errors over the names of the streams either  
three rivers named by Meek occupied entirely separate watersheds  
So far the route Meek had originally described and the route he followed were vastly different  
he had apparently invented his story about being familiar with the region  
to get them to use this route -- he would now take them wherever he pleased  
Meek was creating the impression that he was hopelessly lost  
not only did he not know where they were,  
but apparently he did not seem to even know where they were going

#### FATHER PIERRE JEAN DE SMET VISITS WITH THE BLACKFEET NATIVES

Father De Smet, seemingly inexhaustible, set out to visit the Blackfoot Indians  
he took Father Nicholas Point with him leaving Father Joseph Joset at St. Joseph's Mission  
After an exhausting journey, Father De Smet and Father Point found a Blackfoot hunting party  
this was also a war party that had suffered the loss of men and animals  
they had also been exposed to a smallpox epidemic that claimed many of their numbers  
these Blackfoot were ready for some kind of change and were willing to try Christianity  
Father Point stayed with the Blackfoot Indians and founded a mission among them  
Father Pierre-Jean De Smet continued with his travels  
unfortunately he became hopelessly lost with an inept guide and spent the winter in Canada

## STEPHEN MEEK GUIDES HIS "LOST WAGON TRAIN"

Members of the Meek-Ownbey wagon train discovered -- September 6, 1845

Stephen Meek had no intention of following the John Day River to the Columbia

Eli Cooley indicated in his journal -- September 6

**"The road to day is first rate. Weather fine. Come about 3 miles and crossed a small creek. Plenty of grass and willow here on the creek. In about 1 mile further passed the point of a ridge leaving it to the rite and in about 14 miles further camped by a lake. Leaving it to the left the creek runs to the left. Plenty of grass, no wood, some sage here. The corse has been a little West of South. 18 miles"**

(Wright's Point far to the south would be the "point of a ridge" referred to by Cooley

this very prominent feature about ten miles south and west of present-day Burns, Oregon)

even today it is easy to see why the emigrants had to divert to the south to get around it

camp was probably made at the end of Malheur Lake

this lake fluctuates dramatically in size with the season

Other companies emerged from the lower end of the Blue Mountain range

travel became ever more difficult as pioneers worked through the area (near today's Drewsey)

they were actually proceeding from various branches of the Malheur River,

crossing the (Stinkingwater Mountain) heading toward (Malheur Lake)

they were, in actuality, moving Southwest -- away from the Columbia River

## MEMBERS OF THE MEEK-OWNBEY WAGON TRAIN SUFFER A GREAT SHOCK

Route taken by the Meek-Ownbey lead wagon train was described by Eli Cooley -- September 7, 1845

**"The road to day has been good. Weather fine. Come about 10 miles and struck a creek and camped. Plenty of grass and willow here. The creek runs to the left and thrugh (through) the lake and then round to the rite in to Jays river round the mountains. [This was the name Stephen Meek used for the John Day River which was in an entirely different drainage system draining to the Columbia at least seventy-five miles north of this point] Wee left holes (?) to the rite and left. The corse has been about South West or near so. Traveled allmost towards a high point or peak [probably Wagontire Mountain] and to the rite is and other (another) some distance off (probably Sheep Mountain). Crossed a small dream (stream) just befor it."**

there can be no doubt that Meek was very lost

Meek-Ownbey pioneers camped in the Harney Valley on the north edge of Harney Lake

this shallow, alkali lake in southeastern Oregon was filled with brackish water

what remained of the sludgy lake being was surrounded by tall rushes

divisions of men wandered for miles searching for fresh spring water

its miserable, stagnant water unfit for drinking was filled with ducks, geese and cranes  
emigrants also found that the valley was a haven for game birds  
as Meek-Ownbey Company was camped on Harney Lake -- September 7  
their wagon train was approached by Paiute Indians living along the shores of the lake  
although Indians had often been seen in small groups at a distance,  
this was their first direct encounter with the Piauxes since leaving the main Oregon Trail  
these natives confirmed the lack of water in this season and offered no solution  
pioneers did find small diversions from their anxiety at Harney Lake  
large deposits of alkali along the dried lake shore could be used as baking powder  
crystals were eagerly collected for making bread

Captain James Riggs' company traveled all day to cover sixteen miles -- September 7

Riggs' wagon train made camp at Malheur Lake

near Harney Lake where Nicholas Ownbey and Meek had camped their company  
Malheur Lake is located almost due southwest from where the companies had started  
they had been traveling in a steady southwesterly direction  
away from the source of the South Fork of the John Day River  
and also away from The Dalles on the Columbia River

pioneers' animals enjoyed excellent grass,

but the travelers were forced to pack wormwood half a mile for fuel -- September 7  
during the night fifteen head of horses and mules escaped

#### PIONEERS' CONCERNS CONTINUE TO MOUNT

All of the companies had entered into the central Oregon high plateau  
with its long stretches of flat, monotonous arid desert as far as the eye could see  
September's first week was ending  
various groups were concerned that their situation would worsen  
rumor and frustration mounted within the four camps as they came to realize they were lost

#### BISHOP FRANCIS BLANCHET ARRIVES IN EUROPE

On his voyage from Montreal Bishop Blanchet landed in Dieppe, France -- September 7, 1845  
Bishop Blanchet remained on the continent for seventeen months  
raising money and gathering missionaries  
was received in the Courts of Belgium, Austria, France, Germany and Rome  
where he requested the addition of bishops to assist him  
in administering the vast Columbia District (Oregon Country)

Bishop Blanchet recruited six secular priests, four Jesuit priests, three lay brothers and seven Sisters of Notre Dame of Namur: Sister Laurence, Sister Alphonse Marie, Sister Renilde, Sister Odelie, Sister Francisca, Sister Aldegonde, and Sister Mary Bernard

#### CATHERINE SAGER (MRS. CLARK PRINGLE) NOTES THE ARRIVAL OF A TEACHER

Catherine Sager described new arrivals at Wailatpu in her journal: **“One Sunday morning in the autumn of 1845 two men arrived at the station. One of them, Andrew Rodgers, was a young man of about twenty-five, tall and slender, sandy hair and sallow looking that betokened ill-health. He sang hymns and played the violin, so the ‘Seceders,’ to which church he belonged, turned him out. [Seceders had broken away from the Presbyterian Church in Scotland -- 1733] His gentlemanly appearance and intelligence won the admiration of Dr. and Mrs. Whitman. He came to procure room and care for a friend who was ill with consumption [Tuberculosis]. He succeeded in this and was also engaged to teach school the ensuing winter. Going to Umatilla he soon returned with his friend, Joseph Finly, who took board with the family of Mr. [Josiah] Osborne, his relative. He had made the journey to Oregon hoping for improved health. For awhile he improved and seemed stronger. Dr. and Mrs. Whitman became much attached to him. He was one day taken worse when at their house and never left it. They made him conformable and attended to him as if he were a son or brother. He died very happy, bidding all good-bye and thanking his friends for all their care of him. All gathered round the deathbed, and the scene was very impressive as he gave his last farewell to all around him.”**<sup>172</sup>

#### MEEK-OWNBEY TRAIN LEFT LAKE HARNEY

Stephen Meek-Nicholas Ownbey Caravan moved from Harney Lake traveling all day surely the emigrants' situation could not get much worse details of the day's journey through extremely dry country with water becoming very limited was recorded by Eli Cooley -- September 8, 1845

**“The road to day has been good except one little rocky place. Weather fine. Traveled up the creek around the head of it. Towards the peak the creek runs along by the side of a bluff [this appears to be Silver Creek] and we come along by the point of the bluff leaving it to the left. Here at the point of the bluff is a exalent (excellent) spring. Some grass, no wood except sage. Then on about a South west corse and by the point of another bluff leaving it to the rite then on near the peak leaving it to the left then on to an other high bluff or bench and camped. No water here though we found some water in a hole to the left up a hollow which was sufficient for cooking. Here some of the**

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<sup>172</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 524-525.



**oxen was tied up all night; others left out. Those that was left out went back to the spring from where wee camped last nite. To the spring is about 5 miles. From the spring to where wee lay at nite is about 6. [Almost] 11 miles”**

it appears they crossed Silver Creek and continued in a primarily westerly direction  
this is extremely dry country and water is becoming very limited

Death found Captain James B. F’ company at Malheur Lake

fever was sweeping through the wagon train causing additional suffering for many  
there were a number of pioneers sick in camp -- the majority complained of fever  
lack of good drinking water and unknown micro-organisms were the logical cause  
Elkanah Packwood, twenty-one-month-old son of Elisha and Paulina Packwood,  
died suddenly of a strange fever -- in the evening of September 8  
the child was buried in the barren hills

this mysterious disease, which was to soon become widespread on the Meek Cutoff route,  
did not strike any of the other 1845 emigrants who stayed with the usual Oregon Trail  
both sets of wagon trains were about the same size and had similar supplies of food  
except that those on the regular route had a continuous and reliable source of fresh water

#### DOUBTS REGARDING MEEK SURFACE IN THE MEEK-OWNBEY PARTY

Following Meek’s led the pioneers camped at tiny Silver Lake -- night of September 8, 1845  
leaders of the wagon train called a meeting

guide Stephen Meek thought it best to stay on the American Fur Company trapper’s trail  
and cross through the central Cascades into the Willamette Valley

Meek probably intended to follow the Crooked River down to the Deschutes  
where an old fur trading trail would take them to The Dalles

however, having lost all faith in Meek’s abilities and suspicious of his motives,  
members of the train refused to follow him if he attempted the difficult route

necessary to escape the region and reach the Crooked River

pioneers argued that it would be better to abandon the trappers’ trail

and head straight for the Deschutes River, cross it and work toward the Cascade Mountains  
then, if they could not find a pass through the mountains,

they could still travel up the Deschutes River to The Dalles -- and safety

Meek’s authority and assertions about the lack of water in the region were ignored by the pioneers  
emigrants dismissed his opinions and demanded to impose their plan

Meek agreed to strike a westerly direction in an effort to reach the Deschutes River  
by way of (Wagontire Mountain) as the weary and fearful pioneers insisted

he well knew there was little grass or water across this section of desert  
and he informed the travelers of the difficult prospect  
members of the Meek-Ownbey party pressed him to make the attempt, anyway

#### PIONEERS HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO MOVE ON

Nicholas Ownbey train followed a route of their own

in opposition to the advice of their guide the lead wagon train of the caravan of four trains  
set out on a slow, dry pull to Wagontire Mountain

Eli Cooley noted slow progress as the pioneers now set their own course -- September 9, 1845

**“Some rock to day. Weather fine. Some of the wagons started early this morning though some of them did not get off until 10 o’clock. Come around the bench leaving it 2 of 3 to the rite. Come around and down in to the valley along it for some distance leaving the peak that we saw to the rite a little to the rite come along and went over a ridge; some seder on it; leaving 2 ridges between us and the peak and about 2 miles through a valley then over another ridge with seder on it. Still laving (leaving) the peak to the rite then turned to the left leaving the peak nearly behind us for about ½ or 2 mile and camped - to a first rate spring. Plenty of grass and some wood here. The corse is about west. The road should not come so near the first peak nor over the ridge or bench but after leaving the spring the road should turn more to the rite leaving the first peak further to the left and strike across to the rite hand peak leaving it a little to the rite and struck the road again.”**

travel conditions across the high desert were very difficult

a strenuous fifteen miles to the west were covered, including necessary retracing of the route,  
during this passage more than one hundred horses and mules escaped to find food and water  
neither time nor energy could be spared to pursue them

they must have reached the location of (present-day location of Oregon State Highway 395)

perhaps a dozen miles north (of today’s Wagontire, Oregon)

they were headed toward a point between (Wagontire Mountain and Sheep Mountain)

their route was becoming mountainous and full of rim rocks

Cooley’s original diary contains a freehand map showing lines of rim rocks they passed

and then had to backtrack out of and try a different route

camp was made at a first-rate spring with sufficient grass and some wood

their situation was critical:

- after three weeks of travel

  - it became obvious Stephen Meek had no knowledge of the country;

- there was little confidence in Meek’s knowledge of the route they should follow;

- animals still suffered from the painful effects of rocky roads their hooves had endured;

- fever was spreading though the wagon train;
- they were crossing a barren desert during the hottest part of the summer;
- lack of water was having an effect

#### RIGGS-PARKER WAGON TRAIN LEAVES THE SAFETY OF MALHEUR LAKE

Captain James B. Riggs' wagon train moved away from Malheur Lake -- September 9, 1845  
 concerned about animals (or humans) stealing from the grave of little Elkanah Packwood  
 pioneers took care the following morning to roll their wagon wheels  
 over the small burial mound smoothing the ground so that there would be no hint  
 of the child's body within  
 cases of illness increased throughout the wagon train which traveled only six miles this day  
 Riggs' wagon train reached Crane Springs on the western side of tiny Silver Lake  
 camp was set up near a spring which smelled badly where it came out of the ground

#### BRITISH SECRET AGENTS INVESTIGATE THE REGION

Lieutenants Henry J. Warre and Mervin Vavasour posing as tourists and hunters  
 spent the next six months exploring the Columbia District  
 they prowled about Fort Vancouver making sketches  
 Mervin Vavasour prepared maps of a number of British forts including Fort Vancouver  
 he drew a map of the entrance of the Columbia River  
 with suggestions for possible fortifications  
 they went into the Willamette Valley and asked innumerable questions  
 about the able-bodied males, supplies, politics, national sympathies,  
 and other matters unrelated to hunting -- but they did not consult Dr. John McLoughlin  
 Warre and Vavasour traveled north up the Cowlitz River to Fort Nisqually  
 and drew a map with defensive proposals shown  
 they crossed Puget Sound to visit Fort Victoria located at Cammusan Harbour  
 (now Victoria Harbour) at the south end of Vancouver Island  
 on another map, Vavasour showed a plan for Fort Victoria  
 Returning to the Columbia River they kept up their ruse as they spent the winter at Fort Vancouver  
 Dr. McLoughlin, not at all deceived by their story, believed they had been sent  
 by Governor Sir George Simpson to spy on him  
 Throughout these travels Lieutenant Warre completed numerous landscape sketches of the region  
 he painted watercolors of the post and the American village of Oregon City

(Warre published a book reproducing his watercolor drawings [1846] *A Sketch of the Journey Across the Continent of North American from Canada to Oregon Country and Pacific Ocean*)

#### BRITISH LIEUTENANT WILLIAM PEEL LEARNS THE CENSUS RESULTS

Lieutenant William Peel, the son of the British Prime Minister, learned the population in Oregon Country now favored the Americans according to Sheriff Joe Meek who had conducted a haphazard census counting in addition, the next year's immigration, reputed to the largest yet, was forming in St. Louis Peel learned the Americans in Oregon and those on the way were frontiersmen better able to use guns than the Hudson's Bay Company French-Canadians even more significantly, if American families could journey overland in a matter of months, American troops could easily do the same All of this accumulated information young Lieutenant Peel dutifully took back to Captain Sir John Gordon aboard the British Man-of-War *America* anchored in Puget Sound

#### BRITISH SECRET AGENTS' REPORT ATTACKS DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN

Lieutenants Henry J. Warre and Mervin Vavasour of the British Royal Marines investigated the condition of Columbia District (Oregon Country) and of the charge that officers of the Hudson's Bay Company, particularly Dr. McLoughlin, had encouraged American settlement

Warre and Vavasour's report noted: **"They (Fort Vancouver officers) had sold goods to American settlers cheaper than to British subjects; they had joined the Provisional government, without reserve, save the mere form of oath. They were accessory to the appropriation of the territory by the American settlers."**

(Dr. McLoughlin later responded to these charges of treachery to his country and the company in an autobiographical memorandum: **"By British demagogues I have been represented as a traitor. For what? Because I acted as a Christian, - saved American citizens, men, women and children, from the Indian tomahawk, and enabled them to make farms to support their families. American demagogues have been base enough to assert that I had caused American citizens to be massacred by hundreds by the savages. I, who saved all I could.... I felt it my bounden duty as a Christian, to act as I did, and which I think averted the evil** (a disturbance here which might have led to a war between Great Britain and the States), **and which was so displeasing to some English demagogues, that they represented me to the British government as a person so partial to American interests as to sell the Hudson's Bay Company's goods, in my charge, cheaper to American interests**

**than I did to British subjects. On the other hand, though, if the American immigrants had been my brothers and sisters, I could not have done more for them....”<sup>173</sup>)**

#### TWO COMPANIES MAKE CONTACT

Suffering from exhaustion and even more from thirst the Ownbey pioneers stopped for the day their situation was rapidly becoming very desperate

Eli Cooley reported the party remained in camp this day -- September 10, 1845

**“The Company laid by to day (probably to hunt for water). Weather fine. Yesterday Mr. Wilborn started out to hunt water and lost his horse and when he got in to camp was almost ded (dead). He was found in the road seting down resting and one of the men [from Riggs’] company come there to nite from (Crane Springs) ...gave him his horse and he got in to camp about 1 hour by Sun. Also about 100 head of cattle was let go off yesterday and was not got until the other company got in - several lost.”**

James Riggs’ caravan covered about thirty miles -- September 10

Riggs’s people found most of the water-famished cattle lost by the Ownbey pioneers

although they looked miserable, the animals were successfully driven by the discoverers

only a few of the animals gave out on the way

camp was not established until just after midnight that night

#### TRAVEL IS SLOW FOR THE LEAD WAGON TRAIN

Since guide Stephen Meek had lost control of the Ownbey wagon train

it took two days to travel the twenty-five miles from Silver Lake to Wagontire Mountain

tensions also rose in camp as Eli Cooley wrote -- September 11, 1845

**“The company started after considerable confusion and 1 fite...”**

progress of only four miles provides some indication of the harsh traveling conditions

Captain James B. Riggs’ company set out from camp about noon -- September 11

this tardy start was due to the lateness of establishing camp the night before

these emigrants were in a great deal of confusion and had no confidence remaining in their guide

many of the men attempted to hunt for a trail through the desert on their own

camp was made after only six or seven miles

#### MEMBERS OF THE MEEK-OWNBEY WAGON TRAIN MAKE CAMP AFTER MIDNIGHT

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<sup>173</sup> Henry Laurenz Wells, *A Popular History of Oregon from the Discovery of America to the Admission of the States into the Union*, P. 239.

After traveling into the night, camp was set up camp at a spring  
just after midnight -- September 12, 1845

Eli Cooley noted **“Plenty of grass and some wood and willow.”**

(it might have actually been Lost Creek on the north face of Wagonfire Mountain)  
pioneer Betsey Bayley (four years later) reflected on their situation:

**“We camped at a spring which we gave the name of ‘The Lost Hollow’ [Lost Creek]”  
because there was very little water there. We had men out in every direction in search of water. They  
traveled 40 or 50 miles in search of water but found none. You cannot imagine how we all felt. Go  
back, we could not and we knew not what was before us. Our provisions were failing us. There was  
sorrow and dismay depicted on every countenance. We were like mariners lost at sea and in the  
mountainous wilderness we had to remain for five days.”<sup>174</sup>**

Alarm and grief overtook the pioneers

they could not retrace their route back to safety

ahead lay a mountainous wilderness unknown even to their suspect guide

much like sailors lost at sea, deliverance lay in their own abilities and strength

For days there were at least a hundred men on horseback

who rode out into the desert looking for the next watering hole

scouts traveled up to forty miles west of the Lost Creek and still found no water

each night they returned without achieving any successful

pioneers in camp could do nothing but remain trapped in the Oregon high desert

**ONLY ONE-THIRD OF THE OWNBEY WAGON TRAIN HAVE THE STRENGTH TO GO ON**

Guide Stephen Meek pressed those members of Ownbey train who were able  
to break the Lost Creek camp -- September 13, 1845

About a third of the lead wagon train pioneers were brave enough and strong enough  
to attempt to cross the desert

they were desperate:

- they were running dangerously low on food;
- cases of fever continued to increase;
- unrelenting heat nearly suffocated wagon occupants under the heavy wagon covers;
- weakened oxen trudged steadily onward even with the extra weight of passengers;
- stronger women and children plodded alongside wagons tripping over sharp rocks  
now and then an ox fell never to get up -- and a cow was yoked in its place;
- occasionally the contents of a wagon had to be transferred and the empty wagon left behind

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<sup>174</sup> *Meek Cutoff 1845*, Compiled by Karen Bassett, Jim Renner, and Joyce White, Published electronically, 1998.

while the team was hitched to someone else's wagon;

- they could not go back the way they had come

and they had no way of anticipating the terrors that may lay ahead;

- each of these calamities was simply background noise to the ever-present lack of water

Stephen Meek and Nicholas Ownbey led about one-third of Ownbey Company

in an attempt to cross the desert -- diarist Eli Cooley joined the effort

this vanguard left behind at the Lost Creek two-thirds of their wagon train

and, somewhere in the vicinity, the other three caravans

#### RIGGS' WAGON TRAIN DECIDES TO TRAVEL IN THE COOL OF THE NIGHT

After journeying west only about six miles from their previous camp, the Riggs' caravan discovered

two-thirds of the Ownbey Company still in their camp at the Lost Creek

after more than twenty-four hours -- 2:00 A.M. September 14, 1845

the other third had set out with the Pilot Stephen Meek and Captain Nicholas Ownbey

Captain James B. Riggs' Company shared the Lost Creek campsite near Wagontire Mountain

with the remaining members of the Ownbey party

#### MERGED WAGON TRAIN LEAVES THE LOST CREEK CAMP

Riggs' wagons combined with the remaining two-thirds of the Ownbey Company

still at the Lost Creek camp

United they started out in the morning -- September 14, 1845

with the expectation of a long drive across the plain following the trail of Meek and Ownbey

About four miles out they met Stephen Meek's wife, Elizabeth, traveling toward them with a friend

she delivered the news the leading party had found no water as yet

she requested all who were at the Lost Creek to remain there

until her husband found a campsite and returned or he sent word back for them to come on

Nothing remained for the pioneers to do but return to the Lost Creek camp they had just left

as Eli Cooley noted in his diary, **"The men that first started had to bring their oxen back to the spring for they had found no water and took water back to the famileys to drink."**

#### COMBINED WAGON TRAIN UNDER CAPTAIN RIGGS RETURNS TO LOST CREEK CAMP

Riggs' pioneers combined with two-thirds of the Ownbey train returned to the Lost Creek campsite

they found Captain Solomon Tetherow's company there -- September 14, 1845

by now the small camping site was nearly destitute of pasture

because of overgrazing the preceding days

There were natural springs at Wagontire Mountain, but there were not many of them  
and those few did not provide a great deal of water

#### LOST CREEK CAMP PROVIDES LITTLE SECURITY

Under the pressure of overuse, the spring's flow was nearly depleted -- September 14, 1845  
water was carried back to camp -- but it was not enough to last long  
as Captain Solomon Tetherow noted: **"198 wagons, 2299 head of cattle, 811 head of oxen, 1051  
souls all consume a heap of water"** -- which was quickly becoming very polluted  
Autumn was close a hand  
daytime temperatures soared and the little water in camp froze at night

#### STEPHEN MEEK AND NICHOLAS OWNBEY LEAD THEIR PARTY BACK TO LOST CREEK

One-third of the emigrants led by Meek and Ownbey had attempted the move west  
across the desert from Lost Creek

They now returned carrying their equipment and empty water kegs  
and leading their teams and cattle -- evening September 14, 1845  
their wagons had been left behind on the desert seven miles away  
no water had been found within thirty miles or more of where they stopped

By now at least the four companies were reunited  
but these wagon train members who had placed their trust in Stephen Meek faced a crisis  
company captains, emigrants, and livestock numbering more than 4000 cattle, oxen and sheep  
were in an extremely dangerous condition

All confidence in guide Stephen Meek had been lost

Meek was forced to escape from the emigrants into the desert hidden in a wagon  
there he stayed, but he sent orders for everyone to remain in camp until the next morning  
when ten or twelve men would accompany him with spades to dig in a dry creek bed  
where he thought water could be found

#### SUSPICION OF STEPHEN MEEK WAS REPLACED BY ANGER

In addition to all their other problems, the crisis was closing in on guide Stephen Meek  
because of the delays there were those who were now nearly out of provisions  
Lost Creek was not a suitable place to stay

There was speculation around the various evening campfires that Meek had lied from the beginning  
some speculated that Meek had been paid by Hudson's Bay Company or by the Indians  
to lose the pioneers in the desert



some decided he should be hanged

they arranged their wagons to form a gallows from a tripod of wagon tongues

others argued that Meek was their only hope for escape

he was the only man among them who had been in this region of the country before

Meek's life was only as good as the route he chose to deliver them to civilization

and there was a rapidly diminishing time constraint on that prospect

Meek came in after dark and said that from the top of a mountain (Glass Butte) a short distance away

he had discovered a cut in the side of a mountain approximately sixteen miles distant

bright green appearance of the willows and grass showed the probability of water ahead

Meek requested some horsemen accompany him

to search the mountainsides more closely the next morning

he thought there would be no danger in some wagons starting out tomorrow

That night a local Warm Springs Indian who was hungry and looking for a meal

arrived in Solomon Tetherow's camp -- September 14, 1845

after he was fed the pioneers described their need for water

they were provided information that offered potential access to water

(probably Buck Creek, the first southern branch of the South Fork of Crooked River

the main tributary of the north-flowing Deschutes River)

Captain Riggs accompanied by brothers Francis and Ralph Wilcox immediately set out

to find water in the direction indicated by the Warm Springs Indian

#### TETHEROW AND MEEK LEAD A WAGON TRAIN NORTH FROM LOST CREEK

While they were camped at Lost Creek, the wagon trains reorganized

Tetherow's mixed caravan now consisting of about forty wagons and a hundred people

filled beef hides and anything else they could use with water

Stephen Meek, who had returned to camp after his unsuccessful morning search for water,

would accompany this wagon train

Although there was considerable sickness in the company

Tetherow's wagon train set out from the Lost Creek camp

at three o'clock in the afternoon seeking the cut in the mountains -- September 15, 1845

they moved in a northeasterly direction toward the Deschutes River

where water could possibly be found

several groups of wagons followed in their wake but did not join the main expedition

As the Tetherow-Meek wagons moved on, scouts ventured out to find water

regardless of their illness, those traveling with Tetherow and Meek traveled all afternoon

as Tetherow's party journeyed, they listened intently for the sounds of gunfire  
those blazing a route agreed to fire three shots in quick succession when water was found  
continuing into the night as they followed a line of small sagebrush fires  
set by the advance scouts and Meek who had plotted their course

#### TETHEROW-MEEK WAGON TRAIN MAKES CAMP

After a trek of six or seven miles from Lost Creek they reached "the Sinks of Lost Creek"  
where Lost Creek goes completely underground  
there camp was set up for the night -- but even then folks continued to look for water  
animals were turned out to feed on all the grass they could find and to partake of the fresh dew  
While Stephen Meek was out with several others scouting for water  
a meeting was convened in camp -- night of September 15, 1845  
hostility toward the guide and the danger he had brought to them was heatedly reiterated  
When the guide returned to camp several persons reported the discontent and threats to Meek  
he was asked why he guided the wagon train so far south when The Dalles was north and west  
Meek recounted the dilemmas, discussions and decisions that led to the present situation  
he noted that he had yielded to the will of the people rather than rely on his own good judgment  
and now he was being blamed for their present crisis  
he stated, in essence, that since he had gotten them into this mess he would lead them out of it  
Meek was not convincing and his friends persuaded him to hide away in a wagon  
this was a safe place where he could still put his instincts and experience to good use  
while at the same time he could remain hidden

#### HOPE COMES TO THOSE REMAINING AT LOST CREEK CAMP

Captain Riggs accompanied by brothers Francis and Ralph Wilcox after the previous all-day trek  
toward the mountains to the spot where water might be found,  
and an all-night trek back, they returned to Lost Creek-- daybreak September 16, 1845  
They reported they had found plenty of water and grass  
(perhaps they saw either the southern-most branch of the South Fork of the Crooked River,  
or the main eastern tributary of the north-flowing Deschutes River)

#### RIGGS-PARKER COMPANY LEADS THE WAY FROM LOST CREEK CAMP

Preparations were begun but because the cattle were so scattered they were slow to complete  
Riggs-Parker Company leading the way broke camp at Lost Creek -- late afternoon September 16  
traveling north in the direction of the Maury Mountains

(wagon ruts can still be seen today up to Steen's Ridge)  
(they probably passed the present-day settlement of Hampton along Oregon State Highway 20)

#### REMAINING WAGONS DEPART FROM LOST CREEK CAMP

Some had chosen not to follow Tetherow-Meek wagon train into the night  
weakened animals, illness, or broken spirits, motivated people to wait at Lost Creek  
until they were sure that water was ahead -- September 16, 1845  
(Over the next several days, remaining groups of wagons pulled out of Lost Creek,  
they followed wagon tracks and bonfires at night to the northeast  
left by the Riggs-Parker Company moving toward the Crooked River  
a number of these people were sick  
camp fever, lack of water and limited rations of rancid beef  
compounded the difficulties of already difficult travel conditions  
some wagons traveled a dozen miles, some only half a dozen  
good weather and clear night skies made tracking the leading wagon train an easy, cool task)

#### TETHEROW-MEEK CARAVAN CONTINUES ON TOWARD THE DESCHUTES RIVER

Good weather made travel easier on this day  
sadly Emaline McNamee, baby daughter of Job and Hannah McNamee, died -- September 16, 1845  
still the trek continued stopping only briefly along the way to bury the infant  
after traveling about five miles south and west, this caravan turned north  
In the evening the oxen were rewarded with a little water carried from Lost Creek before continuing  
their trek throughout the night toward the Deschutes River -- September 16-17, 1845

#### RIGGS-PARKER WAGON TRAIN STOPS FOR THE MORNING

Lead wagons of the Riggs-Parker company reached the much-sought spot in the mountains  
earlier identified by Captain James B. Riggs and the brothers Francis and Ralph Wilcox  
Camp was established on the south fork of the Crooked River -- daybreak September 17, 1845

#### TETHEROW-MEEK WAGON TRAIN TRAVELS THROUGH THE NIGHT

Early morning dew provided enough moisture enough to keep the animals alive -- September 17  
(today there is a great deal of speculation regarding the route taken by Solomon Tetherow  
sights such as Pilot Butte, Cline Falls on the Deschutes River, Powell Butte and Smith Rocks  
are all mentioned by members of the wagon train  
speculation also has been presented that Tetherow-Meek train

passed the location of present-day communities of Alfalfa, Bend and Redmond on this trek but no one has really been able to pin down his route with certainty because no diary was ever found that described the route)

Eli Cooley who was part of a group of wagons following the Tetherow-Meek trail

recorded in his journal, **“News come [from Captain Solomon Tetherow] that there was water and this evening we started and got to a branch [of the trail] onset morning at sun rise. Traveled down the hollow out at the Mouth which is about 2 miles and along the way we first started for about 3 miles further. The course this far is about South west (he meant northwest). Then we turned to the right and traveled about a North course for about 19 miles and camped on a branch (probably Buck Creek, a tributary of the South Fork of the Crooked River). Plenty of grass and some willow and plenty of sage here. For 5 miles the road is good; then rocky and some what broken for about 15 miles then good and level to the branch”.**

#### TETHEROW-MEEK WAGON TRAIN FINDS WATER AS DAWN APPROACHES

Before sunrise members of the Tetherow-Meek wagon train

heard the sound of gunshots -- September 17, 1845

additional firing was heard in the direction of their travels, but nearer to them this time

finally a man was seen riding toward them at full gallop

Stephen Meek had returned with news he had found water

this fortunate discovery of water by the scouting party restored hope -- at least for the present

Motivated by the signal travel continued through the night

Tetherow-Meek train stopped to rest along Buck Creek -- about sunrise, September 17

cattle were provided an opportunity to graze on all the grass they could find

Tetherow-Meek caravan took the day to rest

Riders were sent to the Lost Creek camp

they reported that a source of water had been found thirty miles to the north

#### MANY WAGONS FOLLOW IN THE TRACKS OF THE RIGGS-PARKER WAGONS

That night the trailing wagons had a clear, full moon as they followed the North Star

on their toilsome way as they traveled twenty-four miles to the northeast

across the Maury Mountains toward Crooked River -- September 17, 1845

#### THREE LARGE WAGON TRAINS TRAVELING AS ONE BECOMES IMPOSSIBLE

Many of the wagons following the route of the Riggs-Parker wagon train were united in camp along the Crooked River

Coordination of three large wagon trains proved to be very difficult -- September 17, 1845  
many pioneers thought the gigantic company should separate  
as nothing was being accomplished by remaining together  
some in the party wanted to go north directly to The Dalles;  
others however, wanted to go west to the Deschutes River  
and, if there was no pass into the Cascades, follow that river north to The Dalles  
Time was taken to create smaller companies that were formed (in today's Ochoco National Forest)

#### TETHEROW-MEEK WAGON TRAIN ACCOMPANIED BY ELI COOLEY MOVES ON

Tetherow-Meek wagon train was again under way -- about noon September 17, 1845

Chronicler Eli Cooley traced the progress of his traveling party: **"...in about 6 miles struck a spring creek and camped near the head. Plenty of grass, some sage, no willow. Mr. Tetherow started this morning and camped just below us. Weather fine."**

striking "a spring creek" on this day implies they found water here -- September 17, 1845

this may account why they only traveled six miles and stopped

Mention of Solomon Tetherow is very significant

(historians and diarists are in general agreement that Solomon Tetherow lead his wagons further to the west than the other wagon trains

Eli, in all probability, was in a wagon train that followed by Solomon Tetherow and covered the same route on their trek to The Dalles

Eli's record for September 17 verifies that they are on the same route two full days after the emigrants left the vicinity of Lost Creek on Wagontire Mountain)

there is every reason to believe they continued to travel the same route all the way to The Dalles

Cooley recorded, **"Weather fine to day. Road tolerable good. Come down the creek [probably Bear Creek] North west about 3 miles and crossed it and in about 11 miles further struck a hollow and come down about 1 mile further and camped at a spring. Plenty of grass and some wood on the bluff here."**

They had arrived at the bottom of a long hill -- September 17

#### RIGGS-PARKER WAGON TRAIN CONTINUES ON THEIR TRAVLES ALONG CROOKED RIVER

Camp on the south fork of the Crooked River which had been set up about sunrise

was now broken -- about noon, September 17, 1845

as the pioneers set out for the Cascade Mountains in an effort to find a passage through them

Traveling with great difficulty, the sick and weary pioneers followed the south fork

they covered fourteen miles this day -- September 17, 1845

that evening they camped on another fork of Crooked River

## SECOND LEGEND OF THE BLUE BUCKET MINE

Traveling in good weather on adequate road, the Tetherow-Meek wagon train journeyed about fifteen miles before camp was made (probably at Bear Creek) -- September 18, 1845

Legend tells that somewhere on the trail a little girl traveling with the Tetherow-Meek party loaded her blue water bucket with sand and shiny rocks -- September 18 she carried them to back to the wagon train the child had to leave her pretty rocks behind -- but some were carried by a blacksmith who later pounded some of them into fishing weights and tossed them into his toolbox (after the [1849] California gold discovery, someone realized the rocks were gold) legend or not, the gold would have been of little value to the desperate emigrants nonsense or not, the tale (or tales) of the Blue Bucket Mine entered Western folklore and provided great motivation for many prospecting trips to Oregon

## RIGGS-PARKER WAGON TRAIN PARTY CONTINUES ITS STRUGGLES

Now the widespread group traveled along the south fork of the Crooked River to Cold Springs they turned northwest from Crooked River -- September 18, 1845 Pressing on, they worked across the sagebrush plain before again joining the Crooked River just west of the mouth of Camp Creek

## TETHEROW-MEEK WAGON TRAIN FOLLOWS THE ADVICE OF A LOCAL INDIAN

Eli Cooley traveling with a group of wagons on a course similar to the Tetherow-Meek train wrote in his diary, **“Road tolerable good today. Weather fine. Come down the branch about 2 mile and turned to the left up the hill and in about 5 mile struck the same creek wee crossed yesterday and traveled down it about 3 mile and camped. Plenty of grass and some willow. Tetherow just below on the creek** (this is evidence they were traveling along the same route toward The Dalles) **The corse to the creek is about North west** (consistent with Bear Creek in this area) **then down the creek this far about west to north west. Some good to see us** (this implies they were happy to be camping near each other again)”

Eli reported that ten miles were traveled on this day -- September 19, 1845

## PARKER-RIGGS WAGON TRAIN PRESSES ON

These suffering pioneers struggled through hills, valleys and even through the waters of Crooked River

moving northwest toward the center of Oregon (near the present town of Post)  
Leaving the valley they continued across the sagebrush plains  
before again joining the Crooked River just west of the mouth of Camp Creek  
Along the way thirteen-year-old Eliza Harris, the daughter of Phillip and Sarah Harris, died of fever  
pioneers stopped to bury the teenager -- September 19, 1845

#### ELI COOLEY REPORTED THE PROGRESS OF HIS WAGON TRAIN

**“Badd road to day. Weather fine. Traveled down the creek to day and generally in the bottoms of it some scattering seder and pine timber on the hills. They is plenty of grass and willow to camp any whare on the creek. Camped on the creek. Plenty of grass and wood here.”**

Twelve miles were reportedly traveled by the Tetherow-Meek train this day  
before reaching the area (of today's Alfalfa, Oregon) -- September 20, 1845  
they buried one, if not two, traveling companions

#### RIGGS-PARKER WAGON TRAIN CONTINUES TO FOLLOW THE CROOKED RIVER

After resting overnight, the sick and exhausted group  
struggled over rocky ledges and through thick timber before reaching Wikiup Creek  
They crossed the Crooked River again at Wikiup Creek,  
then moved north onto a dry and sparsely timbered high plateau  
After crossing (Dixie Meadow) and (Combs Flat)  
they slowly moved to Ochoco Creek and followed it (into today's Prineville, Oregon)  
they continued west on their course back to the Crooked River  
That night camp was again placed along the Crooked River

#### MEMBERS OF THE TETHEROW-MEEK WAGON TRAIN CONTINUE THEIR TREK

Leaving (today's Alfalfa) they turned northwest -- September 21, 1845  
at what appears to be a nooning place, someone carved “Lost Meeks 1845”  
into the lower limb of a large juniper  
they continued toward the Deschutes River following a route expected to lead to a mountain pass  
That evening camp was made a little south of Cline Falls (today's Redmond, Oregon)  
while in camp the scouts returned and reported they were unable to find a route  
through the Cascade Mountains in the time allotted  
Members of the wagon train decided to put off finding a pass through the mountains  
instead they would turn toward The Dalles

## RIGGS- PARKER WAGON TRAIN APPROACHES THE CASCADE MOUNTAINS

Riggs-Parker Company moved on through the vicinity (of Prineville) in a northwesterly direction they kept along the Crooked River to Lytle Creek

An ever increasing number of people fell ill with camp fever  
there was water enough and plenty of grass for the livestock,  
but food for the humans was ever-diminishing  
hurrying to The Dalles was essential, but nearly impossible

## ELI COOLEY REPORTED ON CONDITIONS FACED BY THE PARTY HE ACCOMPANIED

Eli Cooley wrote in his diary -- September 21, 1845

**“Still bad road. Weather fine. Traveled down the creek to day and have crossed it several times to day and have camped on it. Plenty of grass and willow here and all along on the creek still seder and pine on the hills. West.”**

Progress was listed as twelve miles

## WAGON TRAINS CROSSING ON THE OREGON TRAIL REACH THE DALLES

Traveling along the usual Oregon Trail route The Dalles was the end of the wagon road  
six caravans arrived at The Dalles -- 1845

289 wagons with 1765 people:

- forty wagons led by Samuel Brown;
- thirty wagons led by Lawrence Hall;
- forty wagons led by Samuel Hancock;
- fifty-two wagon led by Hackleman;
- sixty-one wagons led by W.G. T’Vault;
- sixty-six wagons led by Sam Barlow

to their surprise they found the Stephen Meek caravan had not yet arrived in The Dalles  
but Stephen Meek, himself, had just shown up in town

## CONFUSION REIGNS AT THE DALLES

There was a snarl of terrible congestion at The Dalles created by the survivors  
of the Stephen Meek ordeal whose food was gone

local food stores were dangerously low on supplies

Transportation would have to be down the Columbia River in whatever conveyance was available  
only a handful of Hudson’s Bay Company bateaux were available  
and one or two ramshackle ferries put into operation by settlers already established



livestock was normally driven down the north side of the Columbia River  
by drovers on foot or horseback

When Sam Barlow and his family arrived at The Dalles -- September 1845  
as many as sixty families were waiting for river transport  
a wait of more than ten days was expected and the transportation "exorbitantly" priced  
local inquiries turned up little information about traveling over the mountains  
except that water, timber and grazing were plentiful

#### SAM BARLOW DEVELOPS A PLAN AT THE DALLES

Barlow decided to attempt the first wagon crossing of the Cascade Mountains around Mount Hood  
rather than wait indefinitely at The Dalles for the usual raft trip down the Columbia River  
or attempt the impossible route created by Rev. Daniel Lee to drive a small number of cattle  
from the Willamette Valley to The Dalles

Barlow proposed to find a mountain pass and develop a route  
from The Dalles to the Willamette Valley that would be safer and cheaper  
than the expensive journey down the Columbia by barge or raft  
they would travel thirty miles to the south of The Dalles to (today's Tygh Valley  
where an Indian trail cut through the mountains to the west  
if they found this to be too difficult, the volunteers would return in time  
to reach The Dalles for the winter, or to go down the Columbia River to their destinations

After resting a few days and recruiting his followers, teams of oxen and cattle,  
notice was given that the company's captain, Samuel K. Barlow, was going to cross the Cascades  
with his family, wagons and possessions

an invitation was extended to any and all who felt disposed to join his expedition

but he wished none to follow him who had ever learned the adaptability of the word "can't"

Old mountaineers, who had trapped all over the mountains, missionaries and Hudson's Bay men  
said it was a useless attempt, particularly at this season of the year  
as the rainy season would soon set in;  
with only jaded teams to undertake the effort everyone said it would be hazardous

#### SAM BARLOW PREPARES TO FIND A ROUTE ACROSS THE CASCADE MOUNTAINS

William L. Rector was the only volunteer to answer Sam Barlow's announcement

Barlow and his extended family were accompanied by Rector and his family  
as they prepared for their hazardous (some said fool-hardy) undertaking

Preparations soon were as complete as possible under the circumstances

Barlow's company of seven wagons was well equipped with provisions and money  
for a journey of a few weeks

#### RIGGS-PARKER WAGON TRAIN LEAVES THE CROOKED RIVER

After they broke camp they struck a north-northwesterly route  
away from the Crooked River -- September 22, 1845

They came in sight of a tremendous hill that was necessary to ascend  
at first sight there appeared to be string of wagons from the bottom to near the top  
several companies were engaged climbing the hill at the same time

Riggs-Parker wagon train joined the long, hard pull to ascend the hill in the morning  
but once at the top they felt amply repaid for their trouble -- ahead were the Cascade Mountains  
stretching along the western horizon not more than forty miles away  
forming a dark outline broken by an occasional snow-covered peak

that would rise lofty and spire-like, as if it were a monument to some departed greatness

Eli Cooley traveling with a group of wagons noted: **“Bad road to day. Weather fine. Come down the  
creek about 2 miles and then turned to the rite and left it after crossing it 3 times. Here wee had a  
verry steep hill to pull up and about 8 miles further struck a creek and camped in the forks. The  
creek wee camped on is to our rite. Some seder [cedar] on the hills. The corse to whare wee left the  
creek is about west then about North to here.”**

#### SAM BARLOW SETS OUT TO FIND A ROUTE ACROSS THE CASCADE MOUNTAINS

Sam Barlow accompanied by three men set out on foot to scout ahead of the seven wagons  
to select and blaze a route to the promised land

while earlier Indians and fur trappers had crossed the Oregon Cascades  
none had driven wagons over the mountain range

Those of the Barlow party, nineteen adults and several children,

were to follow the marked pathway with their seven wagons

and cut out the road for their wagons so that in case the leaders found a pass

they would be that much farther on their journey;

or, should it prove a failure, they would have a road

on which to make the trip back to The Dalles

#### TETHEROW-MEEK WAGON TRAIN BECOMES INCREASINGLY DESPERATE

After a full day of effort, they stopped for the evening at Rim Rock Springs -- September 23, 1845  
(located just east of present-day U.S. Highway 26 ten miles or so after the highway

swings northwesterly heading toward today's Madras, Oregon and the Deschutes River beyond)  
These pioneers, at last, had plenty of fresh water  
but the entire migration led by Stephen Meek now carried with them  
an unwelcome traveling companion -- typhoid fever due to poor-quality drinking water  
which they had unknowingly acquired along the route

#### WAGON TRAIN CARRYING ELI COOLEY IS IN BETTER CONDITION THAN THE OTHERS

Cooley wrote in his diary -- September 23, 1845

**“The road to day has been tolerable good. Weather fine. Crossed the creek this morning near its mouth where it runs into the same creek we have been traveling down and come about 3 miles down the creek here leaving it to our left and have traveled about a South West course. About 3 miles from where (where) we left the creek is a spring and plenty of grass and some few willow. Camped about 8 miles further at a branch or spring. Plenty of grass and some cedar (cedar) wood on the hills to the left about ¼ mile.”**

More than twelve miles we traveled this day

#### RIGGS- PARKER WAGON TRAIN

As September's days grew shorter and the group neared the Cascade Mountains  
emigrants noted the beautiful mountains to the west  
against that magnificent backdrop, ever more people fell ill with camp fever

Samuel Parker kept a record of the sick and dying and noted:

**“Buried 4 persons here.”** -- September 23, 1845

they were camped just beyond Willow Creek, northwest of Lytle Creek

for the first time fever had been taken an alarmingly large number of people -- four in one day

these deaths may not all have occurred on the same day as the burials,

but the emigrants' situation for the time being was desperate

Twelve miles had been made on this day

#### SAM BARLOW SCOUTS AHEAD OF HIS WAGON TRAIN

Barlow and three companions entered the foothills of Mount Hood from the east near Tygh Creek  
they came within perhaps twelve miles of Mount Hood

and thought they saw the Willamette Valley

they learned from the Indians there was a trail around the south side of Mount Hood

leading to Oregon City

## RIGGS-PARKER WAGON TRAIN REACHED RIM ROCK SPRINGS

Emigrants departed from the vicinity Willow Creek

working their way along a northwest route for about ten miles

before they turned west with the expectation of striking the Deschutes River

They arrived at Rim Rock Springs where camp was made -- September 24, 1845

after Tetherow's Company had spent the previous night there

Wagon driver James Field, who had recorded the events of the adventure in a daily diary,

made this uncharacteristically terse comment: **"Went about 15 miles, camping at a spring in the midst of the plains, without a single landmark to tell its situation."**

there was a reason for his brevity of this entry dated September 24

it was the last entry James Field recorded in his diary

on that day, exactly one month after the company had started out on the Meek Cutoff

strapping and healthy twenty-two-year-old Riggs party's lead teamster

was overcome by the deadly camp fever

## TETHEROW-MEEK WAGON TRAIN PRESSES ON AROUND THE CLOCK

After leaving Rim Rock Springs, Tetherow-Meeker pioneers

traveled around the clock for two days -- September 24-25, 1845

a growing shortage of food caused alarm among the pioneers

dangerous effects of Typhoid fever escalated that alarm into terror

every effort must be made to reach The Dalles before all was lost

Once across the Crooked River, Tetherow and Meek turned their wagons

to a north-northwesterly course over the plateaus and Juniper Ridge, through (today's Madras)

they continued their journey through the night

## CONDITIONS OF ALL OF THE PIONEERS WERE RAPIDLY DETERIORATING

Tetherow-Meek and Riggs-Parker wagon trains had followed separate but parallel routes

as they worked their way northward

Tetherow-Meek had pursued a more Westerly course than the others

## TETHEROW-MEEK CARAVAN CONTINUES ON THROUGH THE NIGHT

Completing the trek from (Madras, Oregon) through the night of September 24-25

the exhausted pioneers struck water about 10:00 A.M. September 25, 1845

south of where the northeasterly-flowing Deschutes is joined by Trout Creek

(near present-day Willowdale, Oregon)

Camp was set up (near the present-day Jefferson-Wasco County line)  
sixty-five miles had been covered during this two day trek  
(some of the exertion involved scouting efforts northwest of Madras  
looking for a place to cross the Deschutes River)

#### RIGGS-PARKER COMPANY MAKES AN EARLY START

They proceeded northward about eight miles -- September 25, 1845  
they knew the Deschutes River was just to the west and that to get to The Dalles  
they would eventually have to descend the steep canyon and cross the river  
While the main body of the wagon train continued on their parallel course to the river  
several scouts were sent ahead to locate a crossing  
Camp was made on a hill about one-and-a-half miles from the Deschutes River (on the rim above)  
cattle were driven down a hollow to find water  
(they were probably near the community of present-day Gateway, Oregon)  
Several scouts were sent ahead to locate a crossing of the Deschutes River  
but the river was daunting and unyielding -- there seemed no easy way down to the river's water  
and no safe place to ferry the wagons and animals across the water

#### WAGON TRAIN OF ELI COOLEY IS IN THE SAME VICINITY AS THE RIGGS-PARKER TRAIN

Eli Cooley recorded the encounter of the two companies -- September 25, 1845

**“The road to day has been tolerable good except some few rocky places. Weather fine. This morning we started early and traveled nearly North for about 8 mile and camped on the hill about 1 ½ mile from Shoots or Fales (Deschutes) River (probably near the community of Gateway, Oregon) and drove our cattle down a hollow to water. Some seder (cedar) wood here and some grass. The rite hand road is some nearest as the company behind made a cut off on us.”**

(this seems to imply the Riggs-Cooley company was catching-up and passing  
Tetherow's "splinter group" traveling with Eli Cooley

#### JOEL PALMER LEADS A WAGON TRAIN OUT OF THE DALLES INTO THE CASCADES

Joel Palmer led fifteen men, several with their families, in twenty-three wagons  
following Sam Barlow's trail south from The Dalles into the mountains  
Palmer was joined by J.C. Caplinger, Andrew Hood, John M. Bacon and Reuben Alonzo Gesner  
who were among the few volunteers who traveled thirty miles south and crossed Tygh Creek  
(just a little upstream from where Stephen Meek's Lost Wagon Train  
wound cross the Deschutes River the very next day)

Palmer crossed Tygh Valley before turning west to follow the north bank of the White River and begin the climb through the Cascade Mountains  
everything moved along harmoniously and without special incident for the first forty miles

#### RIGGS-PARKER WAGON TRAIN TRAVELS LATE INTO THE NIGHT

Sagebrush Springs was reached where camp was set up near mid-night -- September 25, 1845  
in fact, it was too dark to see the worn path created by the Tetherow- Meek wagon train  
just a few hours earlier  
Among those with the Riggs-Parker emigrants at least one, and perhaps two, more had died

#### TETHEROW-MEEK AND RIGGS-PARKER WAGONS UNITE AT SAGEBRUSH SPRINGS

It was nearly miraculous that the Tetherow-Meek and Riggs-Parker wagon trains  
which had traveled separate routes for ten days arrived at Sagebrush Springs  
at nearly the same time  
it also appears Eli Cooley and, perhaps the train he had accompanied, also arrived in camp  
Camp fever, hunger and illness had taken the lives of the Lost Wagon Train members  
thirty-two people were so sick that spring water had to be carried to them  
six more burials brought the total deaths from camp fever to ten persons in only four days  
however, a chord of hope was struck at Sagebrush Springs that nigh -- a baby was born  
Pioneers decided to camp together and proceeded on again as one wagon train  
as before, the wagon train took hours to get started -- families packed and left when they could  
for those who left family members behind, the departure must have been agonizing  
Eli Cooley noted the day's journey -- September 26, 1845

**“The road to day has been tolerable good except one Big hill to come down which is rocky.  
Weather fine. Traveled about a North East corse and camped at a spring. Plenty of grass here, some  
seder wood some distance off.”**

#### COMBINED WAGON TRAIN CONTINUES TO STRING OUT

Pioneers, as they could, packed up and continued on their way -- September 27, 1845  
they worked their way northward, following a course roughly parallel to the Deschutes River  
knowing the river was just to the west and that to get to The Dalles,  
they would eventually have to descend the steep canyon and cross it  
several scouts were sent ahead to attempt to locate a crossing site  
Eli Cooley continues writing in his diary of the day's six miles of travel-- September 27

**“Some rock in the road to day. Weather fine. Traveled about a North East corse. Come about 2 ½ mile and struck a hollow and turned to the left and in about ½ mile is a spring. Plenty of grass; no wood and in about 1 mile further struck a small creek and traveled about 2 mile up it and camped. Plenty of grass and wood on the creek. Saw a few Indians this morning.”**

All of the members of the wagon train continued to suffer  
several more had become ill including Samuel Parker’s wife Elizabeth  
who was then pregnant with their ninth child  
also sick was one of their daughters, one-year old Virginia

#### AN ADVANCE PARTY SETS OUT TO FIND THE DESCHUTES RIVER

Stephen Meek, Elizabeth, Nathaniel Olney and several others reached (Buck Hollow Creek)  
above the Deschutes River -- September 27, 1845

When they reached the river they found it to be daunting and unyielding  
there seemed no easy way down to the Deschutes River’s edge

and no safe place to ferry the wagons and animals across the water

where they arrived at the Deschutes presented the worst place for crossing that could be imagined

Samuel Parker, a member of the scouting party, noted: **“The place at which we struck the Deschutes river presented the most unfavorable place for crossing that could be imagined. The river is, at that point, four rods (sixty-six feet) wide, flowing between perpendicular walls of basalt, the water very deep and the current very rapid.”**

#### STEPHEN MEEK’S LIFE IS THREATENED

Meek and his advanced party reached Sherars Falls on the Deschutes River -- September 28, 1845  
(this waterfall was probably first discovered by Peter Skene Ogden [September 1826])

Scouting party climbed down the canyon to see if the wagons could cross the river in this area  
they found the smoothest path down a very steep slope

working together, as they had done so many times before, they set up drag teams

to move their wagons to the bottom of the canyon

Deschutes River proved to be a greater barrier than the Cascade Mountains

it was too swift to ford or to navigate

Advanced party watched Indians fish from platforms

drying racks were set up at intervals

leaving plenty of room for the anticipated trickle of wagons to park

before being ferried across the river

An ingenious solution to the problem of crossing the river was suggested

some of the tighter wagon beds could be calked with tar to make them watertight  
pioneers could pull these wagons back and forth across the river using ropes  
in this way all of the travelers and their belongings could be ferried across  
One of the members of the Lost Wagon Train who had lost two sons came gunning for Meek  
Meek and his wife Elizabeth were taken across the Deschutes River with the help of local Indians  
Once across the Deschutes, Stephen Meek estimated they were thirty miles from The Dalles  
while the main party of scouts returned to the wagon train to explain their plan  
Stephen Meek, Elizabeth Meek, and Nathaniel Olney rode ahead to The Dalles  
on horses borrowed from local Indians  
to purchase the necessary supplies and alert Wascopam Mission  
and tell the community that the 200 families and their wagons were coming in

#### MAIN BODY OF THE COMBINED WAGON TRAIN CONTINUES ON

All day was spent as the wagon train slowly pulled east through Lyle Gap-- September 28, 1845  
preparations began for the horrendous double-teamed ascent up Bull Mountain from the south  
this long, steep, uphill climb was required to reach Shaniko Flats (near Shaniko, Oregon)  
a looming challenge that would continue for days as wagons continued to appear  
at the top of Bull Mountain at least one group made a dry camp at Criterion Summit  
(south of today's Maupin, Oregon)

Eli Cooley noted the day's travel of eight miles -- September 28

**“The road to day has been verry rocky. Weather fine. Come up the creek a short distance to a dry fork and turned to the left up a verry steep hill then the road is level but rocky. Camped at a spring in a hollow. Plenty of grass here; wood scarce. Saw a few Indians here.”**

(Eli is probably in the vicinity of present-day Shaniko, Oregon where the terrain is relatively flat but a long steep uphill climb would be required to reach it from the south)

#### MAIN WAGON TRAIN CONTINUES TOWARD THE DESCHUTES RIVER

Water was in short supply as arriving wagons continued the struggle up Bull Mountain  
Health and moral of the immigrants deteriorated more rapidly each day  
there was no possibility of taking time to find an easier route -- even if one existed  
(one does farther north)

Samuel Parker, keeping his grim record, again noted: **“beried 3 heare.”** -- September 29, 1845  
Many accounts of the wagon train's circumstances mention emigrants who died and were buried  
at almost every campsite over the last few days  
all of the emigrants were under extreme stress by now -- September 29



they were in a headlong dash for The Dalles -- nearest site of civilization and relative safety  
Eli Cooley skipped his entry for the day [he added it between October 4 and 5]

#### REACHING THE DESCHUTES RIVER BECAME THE FOCUS OF THE PIONEERS

Traveling all day and into the night, the scattered caravan covered thirty-five miles -- September 30

Samuel Parker's group found a camp site on Booten Creek

at the crossing place along the Deschutes River (at today's Maupin, Oregon)

there according to Parker's diary "**5 beried heare.**"

death toll had reached eighteen in only a week

This day's travel of six miles was recorded by Eli Cooley, "**The road to day has been quite rocky. Weather fine. Had a verry steep hill to pull up to day and also to come down. Camped at a spring. Some wood and grass here. A short distance back is an other spring.**"

that portion of the wagon train carrying Eli Cooley had descended Buck Hollow Canyon  
and was moving toward the Deschutes River

#### STEPHEN AND ELIZABETH MEEK REACH THE SETTLEMENT OF THE DALLES

Stephen and Elizabeth Meek arrived at The Dalles Methodist Mission of Wascopam  
in the afternoon -- September 30, 1845

only to learn the missionaries' work was for the Indians, not for emigrants -- help was denied

Meek met an old Mountain Man he knew who was visiting the mission: Moses "Black" Harris  
fearing for his life Meek persuaded his old friend to take provisions

back to where the wagon train was trapped at the Deschutes crossing

Harris also volunteered his services as pilot

In the community, Meek paid out of his own pocket for axes, ropes and pulleys

needed for crossing the Deschutes River and for food for the starving emigrants

Moses "Black" Harris, along with several others, started in search of the lost company

#### BRITISH FRIGATE *AMERICA* DEPARTS FROM THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

After a one month visit to Puget Sound Captain Sir John Gordon

decided the wilderness he saw from shipboard was not worth a fight

Turning the dull job of watchful waiting over to the *Modeste*

(and to the frigate *Fisgard*, due to arrive shortly) Captain Gordon sailed to Hawaii -- October 1845

(In Hawaii, Captain Gordon dispatched Lieutenant Peel to London aboard a ship bound to Mexico  
with instructions that the lieutenant should cross the country as rapidly as possible

and catch the first available transport to England

where, as son of the Prime Minister, he was sure to make his report heard)

#### STEPHEN MEEK'S LOST WAGON TRAIN CONTINUES DOWN BUCK HOLLOW CANYON

Main body of emigrants wound their way down Buck Hollow Canyon into the Deschutes Gorge  
nine miles were made down the steep descent -- October 1, 1845  
difficult conditions presented by the surrounding terrain  
forced them to take the wagons single-file down to the river bottom

#### MOSES "BLACK" HARRIS ARRIVED AT THE DESCHUTES RIVER

Supplies were moved from The Dalles in the direction of the Deschutes River as quickly as possible  
Moses "Black" Harris' relief party was welcomed by all when he arrived at the Deschutes River  
at a place (now known as "Shears Bridge")  
carrying ropes, pulleys and supplies Stephen Meek had bought at Wascopam Mission  
Harris found the wagon train members reduced by deprivation -- October 1, 1845  
their provisions were nearly exhausted, they were weakened by constant exertion  
and fearful of never again reaching civilization  
This first contact with civilization after unbelievable suffering generated unrestrained excitement  
pioneers sent some of the supplies up the canyon to waiting companions, together with the news  
that they now had the ropes, pulleys, axes and other implements  
needed to conquer this one final obstacle

#### WORK WAS BEGUN IMMEDIATELY TO CROSS THE DESCHUTES RIVER

One of the pioneers, William A. Goulder, reported the activity:

**"Our friends, white and red, are on the opposite bank of the river having arrived from The Dalles, bringing axes and ropes and other implements and materials to assist in the task of crossing. They are led by a brave old mountaineer, one of the noblest...who was known to everybody as 'Black Harris.' They are soon at work improvising temporary floating structures and suspension bridges. Pretty soon an Indian is seen to plump into the river with the end of a long rope in his mouth, and swim over to our side. Now it is necessary for some of our party to be on the other side to look out for the running gear of the wagons that are fastened to the ropes and thus dragged through the water. In order to test the strength of the rope and the safety of this method of transit, the rope was passed around my body, just under my arms, and I was dragged through the raging torrent to the other side. I could but feel that I was in the hands of my friends, nor could I be insensible to the fact that the water was of icy coldness, just being lately arrived from the snowy brow of Mt. Hood. It has been my good fortune to enjoy some very cool and refreshing baths, but nothing in my experience**

ever equaled this one. Several of the young men followed my example, while the main body of the company waited for more elaborate contrivances.”<sup>175</sup>

#### PIONEERS CONTINUE FERRYING EQUIPMENT AND GOODS

Incredibly with the Indians’ help, the livestock, people, and wagons

began moving across the Deschutes Gorge -- October 2, 1845

at a very narrow defile with a falls -- (Shears Bridge on today’s Highway 216)

(this crossing would later be referred to as “the most amazing feat of all”

especially given how sick and thoroughly worn out these stricken emigrants were

on this, their thirty-ninth day from Meek’s Cutoff)

Crossing the Deschutes River would take two weeks

wagon by wagon they maneuvered the entire wagon train over the river

those who were most ill were ferried across first

Like the day before, this day was spent disassembling wagons to be carried across the Deschutes River

wagon parts were placed in the watertight wagon bed and pulled across by ropes

Two-thirds of the emigrants were suffering from camp fever

Parker notes that Mrs. Catherine (Bonnet) Butts died -- October 2, 1845

her body was carried for three more days since no ground suitable for a grave could be found

#### FIRST MEMBERS OF THE LOST WAGON TRAIN ARRIVE AT THE DALLES

Moses “Black” Harris piloted the lead wagons of the Lost Wagon Train on the last leg of their trek

from (present-day Dufur, Oregon) into The Dalles -- October 3, 1845

By the time the safety of civilization had been reached members of the Lost Wagon Train

had suffered forty days of privation and agony

number of emigrants that died on the trip from camp fever, accidents, drowning, and other causes

was estimated to range from twenty-three to fifty

(legend says forty-four members of the Donner Party disaster

died crossing the Sierra Mountains of California [1846-1847] on the way to California)

where forty-one pioneers died)

Still at the Deschutes River, Samuel Parker’s own wagon

was taken apart and pulled across the Deschutes River -- October 3

in addition to his pregnant wife Elizabeth, five of their eight children were all ill

Pricilla 13, Susan 7, Gideon 6, George 3, and Virginia 1

only Sarah 16, Newton 11, and Armanda 9, had been spared so far

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<sup>175</sup> *Meek Cutoff 1845*, Compiled by Karen Bassett, Jim Renner, and Joyce White, Published electronically, 1998.

## SAMUEL PARKER'S FAMILY CONTINUES ON IN SPITE OF ILLNESS

After crossing the Deschutes River, three miles were made before they reached a small creek camp fever continued to take an increasing toll as the total rose to twenty-one -- October 5, 1845  
Mrs. Catherine Butts, her body having been carried for three days  
until they finally got out of the steep river canyon allowing them to bury her  
was buried on the open prairie along with three others -- October 5

## JOEL PALMER'S WAGON TRAIN CATCHES UP WITH SAM BARLOW'S WAGONS

Joel Palmer's party came upon the seven wagons belonging to Sam Barlow and camped  
thirty wagons were now joined in the search for a new route around the south side of Mount Hood  
Joel Palmer spent the next two days searching up the White River and into the mountains to the west  
they returned to where the wagons were camped and found Sam Barlow with his three companions  
had returned from scouting in the same general area

## SAMUEL PARKER'S FAMILY ARRIVES AT THE DALLES

After forty-five days on the Meek Cutoff, The Dalles was finally reached -- October 7, 1845

(a week later, Parker buried his wife Elizabeth and newborn James Luther at the mission  
just days later his young daughter, Virginia, died from fever and also was buried there)

Parker wrote: **"...got in a house with my family -- got something to eat -- this was the first day we had done without something to eat. But some of the Company had been with out bread fore 15 days and had to live on pore beef with out any thing else."**<sup>176</sup>

(pore beef was the term used for beef usually from oxen so thin and emaciated  
from pulling the wagons across the country, that it was so tough and tasteless  
as to be near worthless for eating and was used only as a last resort  
sometimes pioneers referred to it as "blue and glue")

Sarah Cummings, whose family followed Sam Barlow and his family

and then took the Oregon Trail's main route avoiding the Meek Cutoff watched

as the members of the Meek wagon train struggled into town and she noted: **"One day shortly after our arrival in The Dalles a man was seen approaching...he told us that his wife, and five other mothers had died. The children and the remainder of the party were in camp about a day's travel up the river. They were dying of starvation... One woman whose death occurred in this party was Mrs. Sam Parker. She left a large family of children...."**<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> *Meek Cutoff 1845*, Compiled by Karen Bassett, Jim Renner, and Joyce White, Published electronically, 1998.

<sup>177</sup> *Meek Cutoff 1845*, Compiled by Karen Bassett, Jim Renner, and Joyce White, Published electronically, 1998.

Eli Cooley ended his journal report of the Lost Wagon Train by noting the prices at The Dalles:

**“Flower is \$8 per hundred; Beef 6 cts per pound; Potatoes 60 cts per Bushel”** -- October 7  
these prices must have seemed extraordinarily high to the emigrants

#### BARLOW-PALMER COMBINED WAGON TRAIN SENDS OUT PARTIES

Members of the combined Barlow-Palmer wagon train decided to send some men ahead to drive the loose cattle over the Rev. Daniel Lee cattle trail around the north side of Mount Hood to Oregon City and then return with provisions another small party went to The Dalles as provisions were running low and there was an immediate need Joel Palmer and Sam Barlow were to scout ahead with Harrison Locke searching for a mountain pass others were to remain with the wagons and work on advancing the road into the wilderness

#### MOUNT HOOD IS CLIMBED TO SCOUT THE TRAIL AHEAD

Sam Barlow, Joel Palmer and Harrison Locke left the wagons traveling on foot -- October 11, 1845 they intended to scout far enough ahead to find a route the wagons could travel they pushed through heavy timber and brush so thick it was almost impossible to penetrate after a hard struggle they reached the top of a ridge where they continued to investigate (what later became known as Barlow Pass) as they reached the 4,155-foot Cascade summit they were effectively lost

#### BARLOW, PALMER AND LOCKE SCOUT THE SOUTHERN FLANK OF MOUNT HOOD

Crossing (the future Barlow Pass) the three scouts searched for a westward route off Mount Hood Palmer regarded the spectacular mountain (he later wrote) **“I had never before looked upon a sight so nobly grand.”**<sup>178</sup> they crossed a wide, stone-filled field, then continued up the mountain for a better view ahead they reached a wide, steeply sloped ravine so deep the timber below resembled miniature Christmas trees (they were probably looking across Zigzag Canyon) Palmer’s journal describes the spot: **“A precipitate cliff of rocks, at the head, prevented passage around it. The hills were of the same material as that we had been travelling over, and were very steep.”**<sup>179</sup>

Sam Barlow, Joel Palmer and Harrison Locke decided to climb higher up the mountain hoping to find a path into the Willamette Valley -- October 12, 1845 when snow was encountered Palmer, in better physical condition than the others, went on alone

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<sup>178</sup> Joel Palmer, *Journal of travels over the Rocky Mountains, to the Mouth of the Columbia River*, P. 60

<sup>179</sup> Joel Palmer, *Journal of travels over the Rocky Mountains, to the Mouth of the Columbia River*, P. 61.

he ventured out onto (what is probably) Zigzag Glacier

Palmer climbed about one-third of the distance from the timberline to the summit,  
although his moccasins had worn thin and he traveled much of the distance barefoot  
he took detailed notes regarding the surrounding ridges and rivers

looking south out over the country Palmer saw the Big Sandy and Clackamas rivers running  
down to where they emptied into the Willamette

he could see a low gap in the mountains that might provide a passage for the wagons

When Joel Palmer rejoined his companions they had only one biscuit each to eat

they headed back for wagons gathering berries as they descended

#### SAM BARLOW AND HIS TWO COMPANIONS RETURN TO THEIR WAGON TRAIN

Returning to the wagons Sam Barlow, Joel Palmer and Harrison Locke met the road-building crew  
on Barlow Creek and arrived in camp near Tygh Creek about 11:00 that night

about five days after their departure from The Dalles

they had scouted twenty or twenty-five miles into the Cascades and had not found a wagon route

but they had found a likely camping spot at (present-day Summit Meadows)

if that option became necessary

At about this time H.M. Knighton decided the venture was impractical and gave up

he returned to The Dalles

#### JOEL PALMER SCOUTS AHEAD FOR A ROUTE ONCE AGAIN

Joel Palmer insisted on giving the effort one more attempt

he led a scouting party into the Cascade Mountains once again -- October 13, 1845

he noticed the weather which had been clear for months began to cloud up

in the morning light birds and squirrels seemed to indicate the approach of a storm

Palmer and his party realized that more labor would be necessary than was possible

to clear a road before the rainy season began with its prospects of snow

even worse, those waiting with the wagons were near starvation

#### SAM BARLOW'S WAGON TRAIN FACES A CRUCIAL DECISION

Joel Palmer felt responsible for convincing others to follow him into the Cascade Mountains

his conscience would not allow him to continue to endanger so many families

Palmer decided to return to the wagons and explain the difficulties they faced

they needed to find a suitable place to camp, build a cabin, leave their wagons

and return to The Dalles

everything they could not pack out would be left in the care of someone  
they could continue the effort to cross the mountains in the (spring)  
when they were not encumbered with their families and cattle

#### AN AGREEMENT IS REACHED TO LEAVE THE WAGONS IN THE MOUNTAINS

When he reached the wagons, Joel Palmer explained the dire straits  
faced by the members of the wagon train and proposed leaving their property in the mountains  
Sam Barlow agreed with Joel Palmer's proposal  
after some discussion a crucial decision was made that altered the fate of these pioneers  
instead of continuing on with their wagons and possessions it was decided  
to pack out the women and children on the few animals they had left  
they would be spared what could have become a terrifying and disastrous situation  
two or three trusty young men would be left with the wagons and goods until (spring)  
Sam Barlow and William Rector set out to see if they could walk the proposed wagon road  
down the Cascade Mountains to Oregon City  
Barlow said that as soon as the work could be done (in the spring)  
he would return with a gang of men to cut a road through the mountains  
and carry everything out

#### ARRANGEMENTS ARE MADE TO LEAVE THE WAGONS IN THE MOUNTAINS

All thirty wagons were moved to a suitable place near the summit of the Cascade Mountains  
located just east of the newly blazed trail over (what is now known as Barlow Pass)  
that had been identified earlier where they could leave their heavy goods and wagons  
they named this place "Fort Deposit" -- October 15, 1845  
A cabin was soon constructed on Barlow Creek to hold the goods likely to spoil from dampness  
or from a heavy weight of snow  
When everything was put away, preparations for moving began  
packing had to be well organized  
each woman packed her own domestic possessions,  
cramming her wardrobe and indispensables into as small parcels as possible  
as the number of horses was very limited  
and no one knew how the oxen would stand the pack saddle  
Next the limited supply of provisions was divided among those staying with the wagons all winter  
and those attempting to go on to the Willamette Valley  
William Berry volunteered to stay alone in the mountains so less food was necessary

and John M. Bacon and William Barlow could accompany their families  
and help ease their hardships

#### LAST OF MEEK'S WAGON TRAIN ARRIVED IN THE DALLES

As written by Samuel Hancock in mid-October: **“After crossing the river we had everything made ready for starting in the direction of Waller’s mission [at The Dalles], which we had reached the following day; here Mr. Waller had wheat, peas and potatoes, which he sold to the half famished emigrants, who were too hungry to cook their food more than half done, before eating it, in consequence of which, before morning many of them were very sick, and my most intimate companion on this journey had died from the effects: the others all recovered but I felt the loss of my friend most sensibly.”**<sup>180</sup>

Once at The Dalles, many of the emigrants who followed Stephen Meek recuperated with strength restored, they continued on to the Willamette Valley a number of others died at The Dalles, but specific information is difficult to obtain Marla King wrote a letter to her parents noting:

**“Sickness and death attended us. Upwards of fifty died on the new route.”**

Hiram Smith described their suffering and the loss of **“near fifty souls, young and old. The greatest number that died were children. Those that traveled the old road got in well and in good time.”**

Samuel Parker deserves the last word on the exploits of the Meek caravan:

**“I will just say pen and tong [tongue] will both fall short when they gow [go] to tell the suffering the company went through.”**<sup>181</sup>

#### TANGLE OF IMMIGRANTS AT THE DALLES

Meek's wagon train members only added to the terrible congestion already at The Dalles food was gone, rains threatened, transportation was limited to a handful of Hudson's Bay Company bateaux and one or two dilapidated ferryboats put into service by already established settlers There were so many suffering members of the Meek Expedition arriving at The Dalles' Wascopam Mission -- mid-October that the person in charge wrote to Rev. George Gary in Oregon City asking what to do with so many people suffering Meek's new route had been a tragic mistake of the first magnitude it was by far the worst disaster in the annals of the Oregon Trail,

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<sup>180</sup> *Meek Cutoff 1845*, Compiled by Karen Bassett, Jim Renner, and Joyce White, Published electronically, 1998.

<sup>181</sup> *Meek Cutoff 1845*, Compiled by Karen Bassett, Jim Renner, and Joyce White, Published electronically, 1998.



and perhaps even the entire western migration  
Emigrants' animosity and mistrust of Stephen Meek was sustained for years  
pioneers' bewilderment, anger, and losses stigmatized Meek and all who participated  
Although the first effort across the high desert was permeated with loss and fury,  
Meek's route served as a conduit for permanent roads  
(in later years, rumors of the Blue Bucket gold discovery inspired many eager prospectors  
back onto Meek's trail in the 1860s)

#### SAM BARLOW AND WILLIAM RECTOR SET OUT FOR OREGON CITY TO ACQUIRE SUPPLIES

Sam Barlow and William L. Rector left their families with the others at Fort Deposit  
they set out on foot to walk the proposed route to Oregon City to bring back supplies  
following the Big Sandy River this disastrous expedition left both men starving and lost  
they encountered a group of drovers (near present-day Zigzag, Oregon)  
who were driving cattle along a trail around the north side of Mount Hood  
that had first been used by Rev. Daniel Lee to drive cattle to the Willamette Valley  
by way of Lolo Pass [in the late 1830s]  
this was far too difficult a route to be used successfully by wagons)  
(Sam Barlow and William L. Rector turned southwest to reach (today's Eagle Creek, Oregon)  
and continued on to Philip Foster's farm near present-day Clackamas)  
they finally reached Oregon City where they secured provisions  
(Sam Barlow took the opportunity while in Oregon City to request financing to build a trail  
around the southern slope of Mount Hood from The Dalles to Oregon City  
Barlow and Rector then set out on the return trip to Fort Deposit)

#### MOST OF THE MEMBERS OF THE BARLOW WAGON TRAIN LEAVE FORT DEPOSIT

Shortly after Sam Barlow and William L. Rector set out for Oregon City  
Fort Deposit was hit by a heavy snow-storm  
Joel Palmer, William Buffams and his Caroline and Arthur Thompson's wife Miriam  
decided to leave the miserable conditions at Fort Deposit and head down the mountain  
Palmer noted the narrow Rev. Daniel Lee Trail used to drive cattle  
linking the Willamette Valley with Wascopam Mission  
they proceeded along the trail in the direction of Oregon City  
Several families, traveling in wagons that were ill-suited to crossing through the wilderness in (winter)  
remained at Fort Deposit while the remainder returned to The Dalles

## JOEL PALMER AND HIS PARTY MEET A PARTY FROM OREGON CITY CARRYING SUPPLIES

Rescuers from Oregon City sent by Sam Barlow and William L. Rector after they reached Oregon City were encountered on the Rev. Daniel Lee cattle trail from Oregon City -- October 19, 1845  
Joel Palmer turned back to Fort Deposit with the rescue party  
Mr. and Mrs. William Buffams and Mrs. Miriam Thompson went on to Oregon City  
(where they arrived [October 22])

## AMERICANS TRAVEL NORTH OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER IN SEARCH OF LAND

Colonel Michael Simmons led the first American immigration to Puget Sound -- October 1845  
Simmons, George Washington Bush, James McAllister, David Kindred, and Gabriel Jones and their families were accompanied by two single men, Samuel Crockett and Jesse Ferguson  
twenty-eight pioneers insisted in making their homes north of Columbia River  
on land claimed by Hudson's Bay Company and the British government  
they journeyed down the Columbia to the Cowlitz River and up that river to Cowlitz Landing  
Peter Bercier of the French-Canadian Cowlitz settlement acted as a guide from the Cowlitz Prairie  
they followed the Cowlitz Trail through mud and uncut forest as women drove the oxen and cattle over country that George Washington Bush had explored years before  
they spent fifteen days industriously chopping a sixty-mile ox-team road through the dense forest between Cowlitz Landing and the falls of the Des Chutes River near Budd Inlet  
this is the worst part of the whole journey

## ARRIVAL OF THE BUSH PRAIRE SETTLERS CAME LATE IN THE YEAR

Puget Sound became home to the first white settlers as Elizabeth (Kindred) Simmons, Isabella (James) Washington Bush, Charlotte (Smith) McAllister, Talitha (Ramey) Kindred and Keziah (Bishop) Jones arrived with their husbands and children  
arrived at Des Chutes Falls (in today's Tumwater, Washington) -- October 1845  
These pioneers were forced to hurry construction of a crude log twenty-by-forty foot cabin belonging to David and Talitha Kindred before (winter) arrived  
it was located at the edge of the prairie (about two miles south of Tumwater)  
all twenty-eight pioneers lived in the communal building

## SAM BARLOW PETITIONS THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT TO BUILD A ROAD

Sam Barlow considered the route over the Cascade Mountains he had attempted to open  
he petitioned the Oregon Provisional Legislature for permission to build a road  
his estimated cost of \$4000 was lower than the bids of others familiar with the route

## JOEL PALMER ONCE AGAIN SETS OUT FOR OREGON CITY

Joel Palmer again left Fort Deposit as he took to the Rev. Daniel Lee cattle trail to Oregon City  
he met Sam Barlow and William Rector on their way back to Fort Deposit -- October 25, 1845  
(Joel Palmer, himself, reached at Oregon City [November 1, 1845])

## FORT NISQUALLY PROVIDES ASSISTANCE TO THE AMERICAN SETTLERS

Hudson's Bay Company had good relations with the Puget Sound Indians,  
whom they treated as trading partners and allies  
with Dr. Tolmie's encouragement, the Simmons-Bush party followed that example  
Michael Simmons, George Washington Bush, James McAllister, David Kindred, and Gabriel Jones  
and their families, Samuel Crockett and Jesse Ferguson were welcomed  
using the letter of credit provided by Chief Factor James Douglas they purchased wheat, peas,  
potatoes and beef cattle on credit from Dr. Tolmie at Fort Nisqually  
in lieu of cash they cut hand-made wooden shingles to work off their debt  
these settlers visited Nisqually Farm operated by the Puget Sound Agricultural Company  
near Fort Nisqually  
interestingly, of the five family names, only Bush does not appear on the Fort's credit list,  
apparently corroborating that he brought sufficient cash to pay for their supplies  
Newly-arrived Americans also were welcomed by Nisqually Indians led by Leschi  
who brought horse-loads of supplies  
local Indians taught newcomers from the Midwest to take advantage of the unfamiliar seafood  
which the region provided in abundance  
they soon learned to find oysters, dig for clams and harvest salmon returning up the rivers,  
as well as how to use many native plants

## FORT DEPOSIT IS DESERTED

Most of the pioneers traveling in small groups made their way out of the mountains to Oregon City  
with what belongings they could pack out without their wagons  
some on foot, some on horseback using the Rev. Daniel Lee cattle trail  
at least one woman rode a cow to Oregon City -- by November 1, 1845  
William Rector took his wife Ann back to The Dalles  
Sam Barlow, his wife Susannah accompanied by Arthur and Anna Caplinger set out for Oregon City  
this last party reached Oregon City (on Christmas Eve)

## COLONEL MICHAEL SIMMONS SETTLES AT NEW MARKET

Michael Simmons was attracted by Des Chutes Falls and natural harbor of Budd Inlet  
he laid out a community he called New Market at the waterfalls -- early November 1845  
(later this became Tumwater, Washington)

Christopher Columbus Simmons was the first white infant to live beside Puget Sound  
Simmons and Gabriel Jones built a water-powered sawmill and a gristmill  
industry began in the region

## GEORGE WASHINGTON BUSH WORKS HIS LAND

George W. and Isabella Bush and their sons settled farther up the Deschutes River  
on a fertile open prairie a few miles south of New Market that soon became known as Bush Prairie  
they began a farm using seeds they had carried with them

George Washington Bush's first harvests were small but he continued to improve his farm  
he was a skilled farmer and quickly made progress

he constantly produced bumper crops of wheat, corn, beans and pumpkins  
which he frequently gave to starving new arrivals  
in addition to his grain and vegetable crops, Bush established fruit trees  
he grew from seeds he had carried over the Oregon Trail

## DAVID KINDRED AND JAMES McALLISTER SETTLE ON BUSH PRAIRIE

David Kindred and James McAllister and their families took land nearby  
Leschi, a Nisqually Indian, met them when they arrived and helped them select a building site  
he even invited McAllister to join his tribe

James McAllister developed a two-story home  
he taught Leschi and Quimuth how to plant wheat and potatoes  
both of the Nisqually Indian brothers grew crops on their Muck Creek farm  
Leschi adopted the Catholic faith and began to dress as the white settlers dressed

## SIMMONS-BUSH PARTY MEETS WITH SUCCESS

Michael Simmons built his first sawmill at New Market (Tumwater) and lumber was sold for cash  
Simmons and George Washington Bush constructed the first grist mill on Puget Sound  
at Simmons' claim at Deschutes Falls  
its millstone was chiseled out of granite boulders found on the beach  
settlers could grind their own flour for the first time rather than depending on Fort Nisqually

(Simmons-Bush Party is credited by some historians as having been in large part responsible for bringing the land north of the Columbia River into the United States they established a presence that attracted other settlers and strengthened the American claim to the area in later debates between Great Britain and the United States over partitioning Oregon Country)

#### SAM BARLOW'S WAGONS REMAIN IN THE CASCADE MOUNTAINS

Crossing the Cascade Mountains had taken more than two months

William Berry, perhaps with a companion, returned to Fort Deposit from Oregon City to stay in the now-deserted fort and guard the party's supplies, wagons and possessions throughout the harsh winter of 1845-[1846]

(William Barlow, the son of Sam Barlow, settled in Oregon City and eventually he bought his father's land claim [1852] where the community of Barlow, Oregon was to stand and speculated in land development Barlow, Oregon was named in honor of William rather than his father Sam)

#### PIONEERS ARRIVE IN OREGON COUNTRY IN GREATLY INCREASING NUMBERS

Immigration of 1845 far exceeded in number any of its predecessors

it was estimated three thousand new arrivals doubled the population to about 6000 in that immigration, Oregon received valuable additions to her population

among the number were Joel Palmer, Solomon Tetherow, William T'Vault, Joseph Avery, Frederick Waymire, John Waymire, John Fleming, Stephen Staats and Dr. Ralph Wilcox thereafter, the number of American occupants vastly outnumbered the British

#### BRITISH WAR SHIP RAISES AMERICAN CONCERNS IN OREGON COUNTRY

British sloop-of-war *Modeste* (18-guns) under command of Captain Thomas Baillie returned to the Columbia River after a year's absence arriving -- November 29, 1845 as a consequence of the election of James K. Polk to the presidency

*Modeste* was to show the British flag in the Columbia District as a warning that Britain was not prepared to give up the area without a fight

British government had shipped a barrel of silver dollars to help pay the crew

this provided a much needed and a greatly appreciated infusion of cash into Oregon's economy

However, *Modeste* was regarded by the Americans as an ominous presence

to ease resentment, British sailors and mariners planned several shipboard parties, and entertainment events for the public

and the British crew brought new energy to the social scene at Fort Vancouver  
Lieutenant Henry J. Warre apparently relished the company of other British officers  
Secret Agents Warre and Mervin Vavasour had a difficult time maintaining their cover  
especially when Warre bragged about how much his uncle, Sir Richard Jackson,  
commander-in-chief of all forces in British North America, paid his cook  
Still, the popularity of *Modeste*'s officers and their entertainment failed to convince Americans  
to appreciate, or even accept, her presence -- many regarded her presence as a standing menace  
there was no mistaking the destructive power the ship possessed

#### PRESIDENT POLK DELIVERS A MESSAGE TO CONGRESS REGARDING OREGON COUNTRY

President James K. Polk made several recommendations to Congress -- December 2, 1845  
he noted the failure of negotiations to draw an international boundary  
he stated **“no compromise the United States ought to accept can be affected.”**<sup>182</sup>  
and announced a year's notice to end joint occupation with Great Britain  
he demanded to extend United States jurisdiction over Oregon settlers  
he proposed an Indian Agency West of the Rockies be founded  
and recommended that a line of forts be constructed from the Missouri River to the Rockies  
with a force of riflemen to provide military protection along the Oregon Trail  
President Polk also demanded to extend United States jurisdiction over Oregon Country settlers  
Expansionists Senators led by Senator Lewis Cass (Michigan)  
and Senator Stephen A. Douglas (Illinois) agreed with the president  
Expansionist agenda of President Polk and the Democratic Party  
created the possibility of two different, simultaneous wars  
relations between the United States and Mexico were tenuous  
as the Republic of Texas sought to be annexed into the United States  
Great Britain offered no progress on resolving the Oregon boundary dispute

#### PRESIDENT JAMES K. POLK ANNOUNCES AN END TO JOINT OCCUPATION OF OREGON

Convention of [1818] required President James K. Polk  
to give Great Britain one year's notice to end Joint Occupation  
In his annual address to Congress President James K. Polk recommended  
giving the British the required one-year notice of termination -- December 2, 1845

#### PROVISIONAL HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONVENES

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<sup>182</sup> William Denison Lyman, *The Columbia River*, P. 199.

Regular session of the Provisional House of Representatives  
was required to meet (on the first Tuesday in December)  
this session was held at home of Theophilus McGruder in Oregon City -- December 2-[19], 1845  
Political leadership selected for this session was composed of many newcomers  
Peter H. Burnett [who arrived 1844]  
Robert "Doc" Newell [arrived 1840] served as Speaker of the House through December 2-[10]  
his wife, Kitty, was the daughter of a Nez Perce sub-chief  
Henry A. G. Lee (he had arrived 1840 with John C. Fremont) assumed the post of Speaker  
until the conclusion of the session -- ([December 10-19]  
Dr. John Edwin Long [arrived 1843] served as Recorder and Chief Clerk  
Supreme Judge -- James W. Nesmith (arrived in 1844 with Burnett's wagon train)  
he was twenty-five years old when elected to the Provisional House of Representatives  
although he held a law license, his occupation was farming and running a mill  
he was the first judge elected by the Provisional House of Representatives 1845-[1846]

#### CONGRESS GOES INTO SESSION

Twenty-ninth Congress convened in Washington City -- December 4, 1845  
Committee on Foreign Relations in both the national House of Representatives and Senate  
introduced a resolution to notify England at once of the close of the Joint Occupation Treaty  
Democratic expansionists from the Midwest called for war with the United Kingdom  
rather than accepting anything short of all of Oregon up to 54° 40' north  
(54° 40' was then the southern boundary of the Russian claim to Alaska)  
excitement rose to a fiercely heated level

#### PROVISIONAL HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ADDRESSES FINANCES

Hard money was scarce in Oregon Country  
Provisional Government pass a law relating to the currency -- December 4, 1845  
this new law made **"...gold and silver, treasury drafts, accepted orders on solvent  
merchants, and good, merchantable wheat at market price, delivered at a customary depot for  
wheat, lawful tender for the payment of taxes, judgments rendered in the courts, and for all debts  
contracted in the territory where no special contract had been made to the contrary."**<sup>183</sup>  
those paying taxes in wheat were required to deliver the grain at the warehouse  
or place designated for the county as depots for receiving public revenue  
person in charge of the warehouse was authorized to give a receipt stating the amount offered

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<sup>183</sup> Elwood Evans, *History of the Pacific Northwest: Oregon and Washington: Embracing ...*, Volume 1, P. 271.

which should be placed to the credit of the treasurer of the respective counties  
in another act the Provisional Government voted to agree to accept hides tallow, beef, pork,  
lumber and similar exportable goods as legal tender

#### SUB-INDIAN AGENT DR. ELIJAH WHITE DELIVERS THE 1845 MEMORIAL TO CONGRESS

Dr. Elijah White was presented in the United States Senate by Thomas H. Benton -- December 8, 1845 regarding the 1835 Memorial, the senator noted: **“These petitioners stated that, for the preservation of order, they had, among themselves, established a Provisional and temporary government, subject to the ratification of the United States government. The petition sets forth, in strong and respectful language, arguments why the citizens residing in that section of country should be protected for the purpose of preserving their rights, and also as a means of preserving order. The memorial was drawn up in a manner creditable to the body by which it was presented, to the talents by which it was dictated, and to the patriotic sentiments which pervaded it; and the application was worthy of a favorable consideration for its moderation, reasonableness and justice. As the best means of spreading the contents of this petition before the country, and doing honor to the ability and enterprise of those who presented it, he moved that it be read at the bar of the Senate.”**<sup>184</sup>

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#### BARLOW ROAD IS AUTHORIZED BY THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

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<sup>184</sup> “Congressional Globe,” Vol. XV, page 24, first session twenty-ninth Congress, 1845-6.

<sup>185</sup> “Congressional Globe,” Vol. XV, page 24, first session twenty-ninth Congress, 1845-6.



Morton Mathew (M.M.) McCarver reported a bill to the Provisional House of Representatives authorizing Samuel K. Barlow to open a road across the Cascade Mountains this bill passed by a vote of eight to two it was signed by Provisional Governor George Abernathy -- December 18, 1845

#### PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT ADDS NEW COUNTIES IN OREGON COUNTRY

Twality District, Yamhill District, Clackamas District and Champooick District, Clackamas District and Vancouver District became known as counties

Former Vancouver District divided into two counties -- December 21, 1845

Lewis County was created to include all land north of the Columbia River and west of the Cowlitz River

this county was named to honor American explorer Meriwether Lewis this better reflected American claims to the land

Vancouver County comprised the remainder of the Vancouver District<sup>186</sup>

#### PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT ADDS ANOTHER NEW COUNTY IN OREGON COUNTRY

Polk County named in honor of President James K. Polk

was located on the west side of the Willamette Valley south of Yamhill County and into the foothills of the Coast Mountains including land between Willamette River and Pacific Ocean

Polk County was established by the Oregon Provisional Legislature -- December 22, 1845

#### PROVISIONAL HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES SESSION ADJOURNS

Speaker Henry A. G. Lee gaveled the legislative body to a close -- December 22, 1845

Much had been accomplished

taxes were collected, property was better protected, contracts were enforced, new counties had been created and a school was established

#### ANOTHER ENCROACHMENT ON HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY PROPERTY

Amos and Esther Short and their eight children arrived at Fort Vancouver -- Christmas Day, 1845

after Amos had explored parts of the Willamette Valley for a suitable farm

he settled in the wilderness near Fort Vancouver

eastern boundary of his land was marked by a Balm of Gilead tree

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<sup>186</sup> Vancouver County was renamed Clark County on September 3, 1949 to honor George Clark of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. From 1854 until 1925, it was actually spelled "Clarke County" as the result of a spelling error.

on the banks of the Columbia River  
all of the mile square area was forest except near the western boundary  
where level bottomland suggested an opportunity to raise crops  
to the Shorts this tract of land was just a place to raise potatoes  
but to the British it was an encroachment to be looked on with suspicion and resentment  
Amos and Esther Short build a log cabin  
almost before the British were aware of their new neighbors  
Hudson's Bay officials, although they had no legal right to evict settlers from this territory,  
said the eastern boundary of the Short farm encroached on their property  
Several additional settlers moved north of the Columbia River

**“What started out as a thin trickle of American settlers into the area [around Fort Vancouver] turned into a surging flood of homesteaders who either settled on acreage which had been cleared and cultivated by the Company, or built on land claimed by native Indians. The inevitable conflicts between settlers and Indians gave rise to fears of a bloody, full-scale Indian uprising....”<sup>187</sup>**

#### BRITISH CONCERN REGARDING UNITED STATES BOUNDARY PROPOSAL

Apparent readiness of Americans to fight for Oregon Country caused concern in England  
British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Lord Aberdeen (George Hamilton-Gordon)  
and Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel both were men of peace  
their dreams of free-trade agreements could become a reality  
only in an atmosphere of international calm

British Cabinet was also a peace Cabinet

British Foreign Secretary, Lord Aberdeen (George Hamilton-Gordon) seemed to be intimidated  
by the threat of war in this difficult-to-supply region of the British Empire  
and by the apparent determination of the Americans to control the Pacific coast

Lord Aberdeen told Parliament: **“My lords, I consider war to be the greatest folly, if not the greatest crime of which a country could be guilty, if lightly entered into.”<sup>188</sup>**

Lord Aberdeen set out to win over the British Cabinet and the nation to his point of view  
without loss of national pride

by clever use of propaganda he convinced his party and his people trade and prosperity  
were more important than a region threatened by “border ruffians”

#### BRITISH REQUEST ARBITRATION BE USED TO LOCATE THE INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY

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<sup>187</sup> Yvonne Mearns Klan, “Kanaka William,” *Beaver Magazine*. P. 42.

<sup>188</sup> James A. Crutchfield, *It Happened in Washington.*, P. 36.

British Minister to the United States Richard Pakenham met with Secretary of State James Buchanan and proposed a request that the question of the international boundary be submitted to arbitration by some third party -- December 27, 1845

This proposal was rejected by President James K. Polk who had been nominated for office on a platform claiming the “whole” of Oregon

President Polk held the position that Great Britain had no claim to any part of Oregon Country although America, in fact, had already offered to accept 49° north as the international boundary

#### FEELINGS OF MANIFEST DESTINY RAPIDLY SPREADS ACROSS AMERICA

Journalist John O’Sullivan used the phrase in his influential newspaper the *New York Morning News* -- December 27, 1845

when he addressed the ongoing dispute over the international boundary question

O’Sullivan argued the United States had the right to claim “the whole of Oregon”

he wrote: **“And that claim is by the right of our manifest destiny to overspread and to possess the whole of the continent which Providence has given us for the development of the great experiment of liberty and federated self-government entrusted to us.”**

O’Sullivan believed that God had given the United States a mission to spread “republican democracy” throughout North America

Great Britain would not make this effort in Oregon thus her claims could be disregarded Manifest Destiny was a higher moral law that superseded international laws and agreements

#### FORMER-SECRETARY OF STATE JOHN C. CALHOUN IS CAUGHT IN A DELIMMA

U.S. Senator John C. Calhoun from South Carolina had previously served as Secretary of State [1817-1825]

Calhoun had first been previously served the United States Senate [1833-1843]

Calhoun had recently returned to the United States Senate representing South Carolina

Sen. Calhoun was managing the “Oregon Question” on the floor of the Senate

he found himself in a difficult position as he did not really wish to annex all of Oregon Country

because he feared the negative effect that would have on the expansion of slavery

yet he dare not oppose the tremendous spirits of patriotism and ambition

that was raging in the nation

compromise was his only recourse

powerful moderate leaders from both nations brought their influence to bear

#### LONE STAR REPUBLIC (TEXAS) BECOMES PART OF THE UNITED STATES

Texas, formerly an independent nation (Republic of Texas), entered the Union as the 28<sup>th</sup> state and became known as the “Lone Star State” when President Polk signed the enabling act into law -- December 29, 1845

With the arrival of a new slave state, Southern politicians including U.S. Senator John C. Calhoun immediately lost interest in Oregon Country

status of slavery in American territories in general and Oregon Country in particular to the pleasure of Southern political leaders, remained unresolved

#### WAR WITH MEXICO -- BACKGROUND

Mexico did not recognize the Lone Star Republic [1836- 1846] and believed it was a rebel province

Mexican government had long warned that annexation would mean war with the United States

Britain and France, which both recognized the Lone Star Republic

repeatedly tried to convince the Mexican government not to declare war

British efforts to mediate the situation failed

in part because additional political disputes (particularly the Oregon boundary dispute)

that arose among Mexico, Britain and the United States

Mexico was further provoked when the U.S. offered admission to the Union to Texas ([March 1, 1845]

Texas ratified the proposal [July 4, 1845]

creation of the State of Texas -- December 29, 1845

did not change the status of rebel province for the Mexican government

(nor did the transfer of governmental power from the Lone Star Republic

to the State of Texas [February 19, 1846]

#### AMERICAN EXPANSIONISTS ARE NOT SATISFIED WITH ACQUIRING TEXAS

United States expansionists also wanted California

as a means of stopping supposed British ambitions in the area and to have a Pacific Ocean port

President James K. Polk in an attempt to purchase Mexico’s Alta California

and Santa Fe de Nuevo -- both territories of Mexico

had sent diplomat John Slidell to Mexico City [1845]

Polk authorized Slidell to forgive the \$4.5 million owed to American citizens

for damages caused by the Texas War of Independence [1835-1836]

and to pay another \$25 to \$30 million in exchange for the two territories

#### CAPTAIN JOHN C. FREMONT REACHES SUTTER’S FORT

John C. Fremont was quickly becoming known as “The Pathfinder” -- winter 1845-1846

accompanied by Christopher “Kit” Carson and fifty-four other men  
arrived at Captain John Sutter’s New Helvetia -- winter 1845-1846  
because of the number of American immigrants who had settled in California,  
Mexican authorities became suspicious and hostile  
they ordered Fremont out of the province  
Sutter issued Fremont a passport to travel to Monterey, California to meet with Mexican officials  
Fremont made camp near the summit of a mountain overlooking Monterey, fortified his position,  
and raised the United States flag  
he promptly set to work stirring up the patriotic enthusiasm of the American living there  
he promised that if war with Mexico began his military force would protect them  
he nearly provoked a battle with Mexican General Jose Castro near Monterey, California  
Fremont then fled Mexican-controlled California traveling toward Oregon Country

#### FUTURE OF THE AMERICAN BOARD MISSIONS IN DOUBT

Protestant missions east of the Cascade Mountains were in danger of collapse -- close of 1845  
Rev. Henry Harmon Spalding believed he knew why

it was the fault, he sputtered in an angry letter to his Board of Tom Hill, **“a most debased infidel half breed Delaware, who has been some years in the Mts spreading his poison.... Perhaps 1000 have joined his party including a or 9 chiefs. They have abandoned all forms of worship.”**<sup>189</sup>

#### GOVERNOR SIR GEORGE SIMPSON SEALS DR. McLOUGHLIN’S FATE

Dr. John McLoughlin received a letter from Hudson’s Bay Company Governor Sir George Simpson responding to his offered to purchase all Hudson’s Bay Company land claims in Oregon City  
Chief Factor was shocked to read -- January 4, 1846  
that Simpson was selling him all of Hudson’s Bay Company’s land claims in Oregon City  
and had cashed McLoughlin’s checks for £4175 (more than \$20,000)  
In a rage, Dr. McLoughlin replied in writing that he had no intended the offer to be taken seriously  
he could not afford the more than twenty thousand dollars it would cost him  
yet even as he wrote the Chief Factor realized the sale could not be undone

#### DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN RESIGNS HIS POSITION AS CHIEF FACTOR

Feeling humiliated and cheated by Governor Sir George Simpson,  
Dr. McLoughlin sent a letter of resignation to the directors of Hudson’s Bay Company  
as Governor Simpson must have known he would

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<sup>189</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 257.

it was the only path open to him to maintain his self-respect

but the rules of the Company required one year's notice before an officer could resign

he was forced to accept his lesser status for one year

After his resignation Dr. John McLoughlin left the great fort he had built -- January 4, 1846

and moved up the Willamette River to the growing village by Willamette Falls

John McLoughlin took up residence south of the Columbia River

where he kept a store and lived at Oregon City

as far as he was able, he maintained the same hospitality and humane treatment

he had exercised when he was Chief Factor at Fort Vancouver

Dr. McLoughlin was by no means destitute

for several years he received profits from his Hudson's Bay Company partnership stock

his reluctantly-acquired Willamette sawmill was rented for a thousand dollars a year

this was part of the company property he had purchased

but did not want the company to honor

his other Oregon City property was leased or sold for considerable sums

Provisional Governor George Abernathy became sole owner

of the Oregon Milling Company and its property located on Governor Island

he kept a grist mill that he ran himself

#### U.S. EFFORT TO END JOINT OCCUPATION REACHES A CLIMAX

American pioneers had rushed in and settled Oregon Country

where the British had exercised control for three decades

through the Northwest Company and Hudson's Bay Company

As required by the Convention of ([1818] a resolution for terminating joint occupation

passed the United States House of Representatives (142-46) -- January 5, 1846

(to be effective one year later [1847])

this resolution was sent on to the United States Senate for their consideration

#### DAVID THOMPSON, LIVING IN CANADA, WORKS ON A MANUSCRIPT OF HIS LIFE

At age seventy-six, David Thompson, the old Nor'Wester still found the strength

to weave his journals and his memories into his manuscript: *Travels*

his writings show he had a remarkable power of description

Thompson took great satisfaction in being the outsider:

- a white man among the Indian,
- a Welshman among the Scots,

•a pious man among the colorfully profane French *voyagers*

Public interest in Thompson's explorations on the Columbia River momentarily arose,  
but waned quickly as Mexican War pressure diminished the dispute for ownership of Oregon  
even in Great Britain and Canada

#### SAM BARLOW SENDS A PARTY TO ASSIST WILLIAM BERRY

William Berry had volunteered to return to Fort Deposit on the slope of Mount Hood  
he had remained diligent to his duties protecting the Barlow train's wagons and goods  
Sam Barlow's oldest son William and J.E. Eaton returned up the Western slopes of the Cascades  
with necessary supplies -- early January 1846  
after a hike of four days they reached the cache

Appreciative of the flour, bacon, sugar and coffee, Berry decided to continue on alone  
caring for the property

William Barlow and J.E. Eaton returned to the Willamette Valley  
as the weather became very cold and the snow deep  
trees buried in snow had to be uncovered to find the blaze marks for the trail  
on one occasion a horse had to be dug out of a drift  
they arrived in Oregon City just eight days after they had departed on their mission

#### CAPTAIN JOHN C. FREMONT REACHES SUTTER'S FORT

Fremont was quickly becoming known as "The Pathfinder" as he led his Third Expedition west  
he was accompanied by Christopher "Kit" Carson and fifty-four other men  
who arrived at Captain John Sutter's New Helvetia -- winter 1845-1846  
Because of the number of American immigrants who had settled in California,  
Mexican authorities became suspicious and hostile  
they ordered Fremont out of the province

Sutter, who was an official in the Mexican government, issued Fremont a passport  
to travel to Monterey, California to meet with Mexican officials

Fremont made camp near the summit of a mountain overlooking Monterey, fortified his position,  
and raised the United States flag

he promptly set to work stirring up the patriotic enthusiasms of the Americans living there  
he promised that if war with Mexico began his military force would protect them

he nearly provoked a battle with Mexican General Jose Castro near Monterey, California

Fremont then fled Mexican-controlled California traveling toward Oregon Country

## FATHER JEAN-PIERRE DE SMET ARRIVES AT VANCOUVER (WASHINGTON)

After spending the winter in Canada Father Jean-Pierre De Smet arrived at Fort Vancouver before continuing on to St. Mary's Mission on the Bitterroot River (Idaho) arriving there De Smet learned the Flathead Indians had gone to war with the Crow Indians he and Father Nicholas Point pursued the Flatheads but were unable to overtake them until after the battle had been decided Flathead Indians had been victorious and the Crow had fled the area There were a few Blackfoot Indians traveling with the Flatheads they offered to take Father De Smet and Father Point to the main Blackfoot camp located on an island in the Missouri River near Fort Benton (Montana) De Smet and Point brokered a peace between the Blackfoot and the Flatheads

## OREGON CITY NEWSPAPER *OREGON SPECTATOR* BEGINS PUBLICATION

Oregon City had a population of less than five hundred pioneers in and around Oregon City were determined to have a newspaper Oregon City businessmen organized the Oregon Printing Association as an outgrowth of the Oregon Lyceum to publish the first American newspaper west of the Rocky Mountains *Oregon Spectator's* goals were identified: **“To promote science, temperance, morality and general intelligence; to establish a printing press; to publish a newspaper.”**<sup>190</sup> paper's motto was: *Westward the Star of Empire takes its way*

Oregon Printing Association officers were:

- William G. T'Vault became president and the first editor  
he was an attorney and former wagon train captain -- his salary was \$300.00 per year,
- Supreme Judge James W. Nesmith, well known political leader, was vice-president,
- John P. Brooks, Oregon Lyceum member, was secretary,
- Chief Clerk John E. Long, Provisional Council and House of Representatives Recorder, trustee,
- Sea Captain John H. Couch was a second trustee,
- Robert “Doc” Newell, well known pioneer and political leader, served as publisher  
he exerted a great deal of influence over the newspaper,
- Provisional Governor George Abernethy was the treasurer  
as a Whig, he used his position on the *Oregon Spectator's* Board of Directors to squelch Democratic editors (including T'Vault) by demanding that the paper not become involved in political debates

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<sup>190</sup> Elwood Evans, *History of the Pacific Northwest: Oregon and Washington: Embracing ...*, Volume 1, P. 273.



in fact, the first four years the Oregon Printing Association  
did not allow political discussions in the paper  
Subscription agreement was prepared and enough pledges at ten dollars a share were secured  
to raise approximately twelve hundred dollars  
that money was entrusted to Governor Abernethy and forwarded to New York  
a hand-press, type, cases and other items needed in a printing plant, including a supply of paper,  
were purchased and sent to Oregon City in a sailing vessel via Cape Horn  
Arrangements were made with John Fleming, a printer from Ohio  
he came across the plains to Oregon City to do the printing  
First issue was published on a hand press obtained by George Abernathy while visiting in the East  
four tabloid pages 11½ by 15½ inches were distributed -- February 5, 1846  
each page had four columns  
every two weeks the newspaper printed old news and editorials  
(William T'Vault served for thirteen months as editor when he was fired  
he said this was because of his political activism as a pro-slavery Democrat  
Oregon Printing Association officers said it was because of his poor spelling  
T'Vault was succeeded by Henry A.G. Lee, who shortly gave place to George L. Curry  
(Curry resigned the next year [1847]  
because of publisher Robert "Doc" Newell's strict censorship of his work)  
*The Oregon Spectator* continued until [March 1855]  
becoming staunchly Democratic, it influenced political and cultural life in Oregon Country)

#### OREGON COUNTRY GETS ITS SECOND CATHOLIC CHURCH

St. John the Apostle Catholic Church was the second Catholic parish dedicated in Oregon Country  
after St. Louis Catholic Church [1845]  
St. John's replaced Mission Du Walamette (also had been known as the Log Church)  
St. John's was constructed to serve as the cathedral of the Oregon City Archdiocese  
60,000 bricks from pits behind the church were fired on site for the two-foot walls  
building was dedicated -- February 8, 1846

#### LIEUTENANT WILLIAM PEEL REPORTS TO LONDON

Conservative British Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel's son William  
after crossing the Atlantic Ocean from Mexico returned to London -- February 9, 1846  
Peel gave a full report of his firsthand knowledge of the situation in Columbia District to his father  
young Peel's report confirmed the American population was increasing rapidly on the Pacific coast

American settlements running south from Willamette Valley  
would soon unite with American settlements running north from Sacramento  
this would make American possession of the port of San Francisco inevitable  
Peel noted the extent of settlement that had developed along Puget Sound  
Lieutenant Peel reported British traders were willing to withdraw from the Columbia River area  
and described that Hudson's Bay Company felt so powerless  
they had abdicated authority to the local government dominated by Americans  
he suggested the British would have great difficulty defending the Northwest  
against a determined American attack

#### FORT WALLA WALLA CHANGES LEADERS

Hudson's Bay Company found Fort Walla Walla was on United States soil  
when the border was moved much further north to the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel by the Oregon Convention  
this treaty did allow Hudson's Bay Company navigation rights on the Columbia River  
to supply their fur trading posts and forts  
Hudson's Bay Company maintained title to these properties and could sell them if they wanted  
Fort Walla Walla would be maintained by the Company (for another decade)  
Hudson's Bay Company Factor Archibald McKinlay was replaced by William McBean  
as superintendent at Fort Walla Walla -- February 1846

#### INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY TALKS CONTINUE

Changing situation in Columbia District forced the British government  
to recede from their position on the international boundary  
British Foreign Secretary Lord Aberdeen (George Hamilton-Gordon)  
and probably Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel, could accept 49° north as the boundary  
however, modifications of the American positions regarding Vancouver Island  
and free use of northern ports and of the Columbia River would be necessary  
British Foreign Secretary Lord Aberdeen (George Hamilton-Gordon)  
developed a compromise proposal to the American demand of 54°40' north  
in the form of a draft treaty presented to the United States:

- forty-ninth parallel from the crest of the Rockies as far as the Columbia River  
and then down the river to the sea would give the British all of Vancouver Island  
and free access to ports in that region
- Lord Aberdeen also demanded free British navigation of the Columbia River

Lord Aberdeen offered free port facilities for American ships north of 49°

Lord Aberdeen directed British Minister Richard Packenham to revive negotiations which previously had been rudely broken off by the Americans  
American Secretary of State James Buchanan informed Louis McLane, United States Minister at London -- February 26, 1846 that discussions would be reopened if the British took the initiative but there was strong resistance in the British government to making any further concessions

#### FORT COLVILLE INCREASES IN IMPORTANCE

With the controversy regarding the international boundary on the verge of war an inventory of properties at Fort Colville was taken -- 1846 no less than nineteen separate buildings were listed ranging from a store twenty-five feet by sixty feet to a pigeon house nine feet by nine feet all were surrounded by a protective stockade  
Fort Colville had 340 acres under cultivation, blacksmith and carpenter shops, flour mill and bakery in effect, it was self-sufficient

#### UNITED STATES-MEXICO RELATIONS DETERIORATE

Mexico was neither inclined to propose, nor able to negotiate, an agreement with the United States over the Texas statehood issue  
Mexican presidency changed hands four times, the war ministry six times, and the finance ministry sixteen times in 1846 alone  
public opinion and all political factions agreed that selling the territories to the United States would diminish national honor  
Mexicans who opposed open conflict with the United States, including President Jose Joaquin de Herrera, were viewed as traitors he was accused of treason and deposed  
General Mariano Paredes y Arrillaga, a more nationalistic leader, came to power  
In the United States, the war was a political issue most Democrats, representing the American South and West supported war fueled by the popular belief in Manifest Destiny and the opportunity to expand slavery most Whigs, from the North and East, were opposed to the war and feared the spread of slavery  
President Polk loudly banged the drum of war but the United States Senate did not comply  
In Mexico, the war was considered a matter of national pride

#### CHANGE OF COMMAND TAKES PLACE AT FORT VANCOUVER

John Work replaced Dr. John McLoughlin as Hudson's Bay Company triumvirate

taking a place with Sir James Douglas and Peter Skene Ogden

they now faced the problems of operating in an area under dispute with the United States

Ogden zealously followed the company's orders to exclude Americans north of the Columbia

In spite of President James K Polk's intention to extend American sovereignty over the Oregon

Hudson's Bay Company remained the recognized authority in much of the area

British were accustomed to having their word taken as law

but the arrival of increasing numbers of pioneers from the east disrupted the stable relations

with the Indians upon which the trading activities of Hudson's Bay Company depended

Douglas, Ogden and Work were astonished by the encroachment of Americans

Amos and Esther Short and their family at the very gate to Fort Vancouver

Naturally there was trouble

while Amos Short was away, Esther and her eight children were loaded on a boat by the British

they were taken across the Columbia River where they were told to stay

they immediately returned to their home -- but so did the British

again catching the family unaware, Ogden's men loaded the family onto a scow

Amos, Esther and their children were cast adrift on the Columbia without a single oar

this time when the family returned to their cabin Amos kept his rifle handy

there was trouble in the making after that

a Hudson's Bay Company man came to the cabin door and struck Ester in the face with a club

Amos carried his rifle with him after

#### BRITISH SECRET AGENTS LEAVE COLUMBIA DISTRICT

British Lieutenants Henry J. Warre and Mervin Vavasour departed Fort Vancouver -- March 1846

with the Hudson's Bay Company Spring Brigade

Keeping up their pretense of being visiting sportsmen, they detoured from Fort Walla Walla

overland to Palouse Falls where Warre painted the scene

#### HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY CLOSES ITS YERBA BUENA (SAN FRANCISCO) POST

After the death of William Glen Rae, British vice-counsel at Monterey, James Alexander Forbes,

took charge of Hudson's Bay Company's affairs

Dugald McTavish arrived to close the business -- March 1846

Hudson's Bay Company's operations in California, limited in size from the start, now ended

#### DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN IS NOT ACCEPTED IN OREGON CITY

Dr. John McLoughlin built a beautiful home near the falls of the Willamette River and brought his wife, son David, daughter Eloisa and her three children to reside there -- only to be met with hostility from his neighbors who feared the former Chief Factor's continued domination of life in Oregon Country. It was a tremendous blow to the very proud former Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company he had assumed a large part of the debt owed to the company by American pioneers as his own private responsibility but these debts caused his countrymen such as snoopers Harry Warre and Mervin Vavasour to suspect Dr. McLoughlin was pro-American.

#### ST. JOSEPH'S MISSION IS MOVED TO A BETTER LOCATION

St. Joseph's Mission had been planned as a permanent facility but after three years of service this location on the Saint Joe River flood plain proved to be unsatisfactory since the fields flooded (each spring) hampering farming and mosquitoes caused illness. Father Joseph Joset had succeeded Father Nicholas Point at St. Joseph's Mission. Father Joset surveyed Lake Coeur d'Alene and the river region. St. Joseph's Mission's original building site and structures were abandoned -- spring 1846.

#### SACRED HEART MISSION REPLACES ST. JOSEPH'S MISSION

Father Joseph Joset relocated St. Joseph's Mission near an Indian village and burial site. This new site was chosen about thirty-five miles from St. Joe River -- spring 1846 on a grassy knoll above the Coeur d'Alene River (by today's Cataldo, Idaho). Construction of the new mission consisting of an interim chapel made of bark, a rudimentary barn and a trio of log houses was begun amid wheat, potato and oat fields. This was named Sacred Heart Mission and Father Joseph Joset was placed in charge. Father Joset was appointed Vice-Provincial of the Missions of the Northwest under the supervision of Father Pierre-Jean De Smet (Father Joset learned the language of the local Indians continued to serve them until his death at age ninety [1900]).

#### SAM BARLOW SETS OUT TO CONSTRUCT A ROAD

Captain Samuel K. Barlow formed a partnership with his financial backer Philip Foster. They organized a crew of forty men to develop a pass through the Cascade Mountains and to construct a wagon road leading from The Dalles to Oregon City. As soon as the weather permitted -- spring 1846.

men and oxen started to build a road to retrieve the supplies and goods cached at "Fort Deposit" located at the extreme western side (of today's as Tygh Valley)

they retraced the route Barlow, son William and John Bacon had followed a few weeks before beginning at Philip Foster's farm near present-day Clackamas in the Willamette Valley and traveling east into the Cascade Mountains

Sam remembered something he had neglected to mention in his application for \$4000 -- bridges! several would have to be built to cross such rivers as the Sandy, Zigzag, White, and Salmon

#### CONSTRUCTION EFFORT ON THE BARLOW ROAD IS VERY DIFFICULT

Barlow's crew hacked a narrow road as they followed an Indian trail to within ten miles of the north side of Mount Hood

here the year before William L. Rector and Sam Barlow had discovered a natural gap in the range of mountains

here they determined to blaze the path

and afterwards construct a road through to the Willamette Valley

here all traces of human footsteps or wild animal trails disappeared

From here on the road was made

through tangled forests and fallen trees that crossed and re-crossed on each other in unruly piles across rivers, swamps and marshy meadows

they conquered rocks, canyons crisscrossed and interlaced with briars and vines and innumerable other barriers and obstacles

Not much could be done about Laurel Hill -- the worst part of the whole Oregon Trail

here canyons, steep rocks, swamps, sand-hills, angled forests, fallen trees,

lush shrubbery of briars and vines all met the construction crew (and later the pioneers)

Barlow Road's elevation was also a source of difficulty for the emigrants

as snow and icy fog were commonplace on the mountain (during the fall) when they arrived

Sam Barlow proclaimed the old Indian trail was now a toll road and built a toll gate

on the east end of the Barlow Road

Barlow Road covered a distance of about eighty miles from The Dalles to the Willamette Valley

in preparation for the first Oregon Trail travelers, who would be arriving (by September)

for the first fifteen years of its existence, the route was one way -- west

#### BRITISH SLOOP *MODESTE* REMAINS IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Members of British Sloop-of-war *Modeste* had remained anchored off Fort Vancouver to soften American resentment toward their presence

British crewmen presented a series of plays attended by many Oregon City residents  
first known theatrical performance was given -- spring 1846  
they also provided dances, curling matches, horse races and visits to the settlers

#### SECOND BRITISH WAR SHIP ARRIVES ON PUGET SOUND

British frigate *Fisgard* anchored at Fort Nisqually to support the sloop-of-war *Modeste*  
then stationed at Fort Vancouver -- spring 1846

This additional implied threat caused American settlers to form a company of mounted riflemen  
“Oregon Rangers” elected Charles Bennett their captain

#### DR. MARCUS WHITMAN CONSTRUCTS A WATERPOWERED SAWMILL NEAR WAILLATPU

Previously some pine timber had been hand-sawed in the Blue Mountains  
these planks were dragged to the mission by horses

Whitman felt a dire need for a water-powered sawmill

among other things, he wanted to replace his leaky, earthen roofs with boards

He picked a spot on a stream in the foothills about twenty miles from Wailatpu Mission  
soon the sawmill ready for operation --1846

#### DR. MARCUS WHITMAN HAS AN ENCOUNTER WITH A BAD INDIAN

Catherine Sager (Mrs. Clark Pringle) described a conflict Dr. Marcus Whitman

had with the Indian Tam-a-has: **“The next spring Mr. [Andrew] Rogers was away much of the time at the Spokane mission, conducted by Messrs. [Elkanah] Walker and [Cushing] Eells. Dr. Whitman was absent at the saw mill or breaking up land for the Indians and putting in their crops. Mrs. Whitman and the girls spent the time at home and found enough to employ them to prevent feeling lonesome. We studied botany with her and rambled over the country in search of flowers and plants.**

**“A bad man was named Tam-a-has, meaning murderer, as he had once killed a man. One day the doctor was at work in his field when this man rode up and ordered him peremptorily, to go and grind grist [grain] for him. When the doctor objected to his talking and acting so, he [Tam-a-has] said he could grind it for himself, and started for the mill. The doctor could walk across sooner and did so. Tam-a-has came at him there with a club, but saw an iron bar in his [Dr. Whitman’s] hand. They had a serious time of it, both with words and blows, but the iron bar was a full match of the club, and Tam-a-has finally agreed to behave himself and have his grist ground. Exhausted in mind and body the doctor came to the house and threw himself down, saying that if they [Indians] would only say so he would gladly leave, for he was tired almost beyond endurance.**

**“It is hardly possible to conceive of a greater change than Dr. Whitman had worked in the life of the Cayuses. They had now growing fields, could have good homes, a mill to grind their meal, and they were taught things of the greatest use, yet some of them could not realize that he was unselfish in all of this.”<sup>191</sup>**

#### UNITED STATES ACCEPTS BRITISH OFFER FOR A BOUNDARY

President James K. Polk asked the U.S. Senate’s advice on a draft treaty proposed by Lord Aberdeen with its boundary to run along 49° north except for Vancouver Island

President Polk was urged by the Senate to accept it

Resolution to accept Lord Aberdeen’s proposal was introduced in the U.S. Senate after lengthy debate (including a Senate filibuster led by Southern Democrats)

it passed the Senate (42-10) -- April 23, 1846

this proposal also passed the U.S. House of Representatives the same day

This Congressional advice was sent on to the President for his consideration

but the Senate and House vote was not binding on the President

as this was a treaty -- not a law

#### MEXICAN INCIDENT

Mexican government was encouraged by the fact

that America was facing an international crisis with England over possession of Oregon Country

To exert an American influence in Mexico

President Polk ordered General Zachary Taylor to march to the Rio Grande River

Mexican army, in response to a manifest by their president,

crossed the Rio Grande River -- April 25, 1846

they attacked an American scouting party inside the southern border of Texas

(or inside the northern border of Mexico) as the case was interpreted by Mexico

#### CONGRESS PASSES RESOLUTION TO END JOINT OCCUPATION

Both houses of Congress adopted a Joint Congressional Resolution ending the Convention of [1818] thus ending the joint occupation agreement

this action, again, was advisory only and not binding on the President

President Polk signed the Congressional resolution -- April 27, 1846

which authorized the President to give the required year’s notice at his discretion

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<sup>191</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 526.



moderation had won out over calls for war

#### PRESIDENT POLK NOTIFIES THE BRITISH OF THE END OF JOINT OCCUPATION

President's Polk's administration made it known that the British government should offer terms to settle the joint occupation of Oregon -- April 30, 1846

Time was of great concern to Americans as the government of British Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel was on the verge of falling -- negotiations would have to begin again with a new government British Foreign Secretary Lord Aberdeen (George Hamilton-Gordon) worked out an agreement with American Minister to the United Kingdom Louis McLane this was quickly sent to the United States

#### CAPTAIN JOHN CHARLES FREMONT IS ONCE AGAIN IN OREGON COUNTRY

Fleeing California to escape from Mexican officials concerned with his presence in their country

Captain Fremont reached Oregon Country and made camp at Klamath Lake

Modoc Indians attacked members Fremont's Third Expedition during a night -- May 9, 1846

Fremont lost three men as the Modoc chief of the war party was killed

Fremont chose to attack the Klamath Indian fishing native village of Dokdokwas,

located at the junction of the Williamson River and Klamath Lake -- May 10

Fremont set an ambush and extracted a heavy toll from pursuing natives

this village was completely destroyed

Christopher "Kit" Carson was nearly killed by a Klamath warrior later that day

when the warrior took aim with a poison arrow and Carson's gun misfired

Fremont raced his horse to trample the native

A few days later as Fremont was proceeding toward the Willamette Valley

Captain Fremont received word that war between Mexico and the United States was imminent

from an American secret agent, Archibald Gillespie, an officer in the U.S. Marines

who disguised himself as a whiskey merchant

Gillespie carried new instructions that caused Fremont to retrace his steps back to California

and, perhaps, to consider plans for provoking a war with Mexico

American Consul Thomas O. Larkin stationed in Monterey, California on hearing rumors of war tried to keep peace between his country and a small local Mexican military garrison

#### CONGRESS DECLARES WAR ON MEXICO

Congress received news of the [April 25] attack on an American Army scouting party

still General Zachary Taylor's army remained in a region claimed by Mexico

President James K. Polk declared war on Mexico -- May 13, 1846

American excitement and oratory about Oregon Country was diverted

(it took almost two months [mid-July 1846] for definite word of war to reach California)

#### SPIRIT OF INDEPENDENCE REMAINS ACTIVE IN OREGON COUNTRY

Some pioneers in Oregon Country continued to agitate for an independent government

one candidate for the Provisional House of Representatives stated in a stump speech

that he believed the people of Oregon Country had a right to govern themselves

rather than fall under the control of either the United States or Great Britain

he resented the prospect of government officials being appointed by political leaders far away

who would impose their political will -- May 1846

#### JOINT OCCUPATION COMES TO AN END IN OREGON COUNTRY

After passage of the [April 27, 1846] Joint Congressional Resolution to end Joint Occupation

President Polk faced two possibilities:

- negotiate a new treaty to resolve the boundary dispute,

- or go to war with Great Britain

Following the advice of Congress, President Polk served official notice to Great Britain

he would end the Convention of [1818] thus ending Joint Occupation -- May 26, 1846

#### EAST END OF BARLOW ROAD IS REACHED BY CONSTRUCTION GANG

Sam Barlow's Road covered a distance of about eighty miles to The Dalles

Barlow busily began building a toll gate -- late spring 1846

in preparation for the first Oregon Trail travelers, who would be arriving (by September)

for the first fifteen years of its existence, the route was one way -- west

Barlow Road could be used or \$5 a wagon and team; 50¢ for each single animal;

\$1.00 per man or woman -- payable in cash, note, or "in-kind" (goods or services)

for this amount they had the privilege of clearing downed trees, rock slides and other debris,

maneuvering across seemingly bottomless swamps and steep grades,

fording countless and dangerously-swollen streams,

and even having to lower their wagons with ropes down the steep cliffs

of the infamous Laurel Hill

Sam Barlow himself tended the gate for the two months of "immigrant season" 1846-[1847]

many immigrants were unable to pay the toll

in every case they were allowed to pass free and use all the privileges of the road

## JOE MEEK BECOMES A MEMBER OF THE PROVISIONAL HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sheriff Joe Meek collected taxes, summoned juries and witnesses, arrested miscreants  
and even took another census

Meek was elected to the Provisional House of Representatives -- June 1, 1846

## TERMS OF THE CONVENTION OF 1846 (OREGON TREATY) ARE AGREED TO

British government, not yet aware of the United States war with Mexico,  
decided not to run the risk of war with the United States

they suggested 49° North as the international boundary line

British Foreign Secretary, Lord Aberdeen, submitted a draft treaty  
which reached Washington City -- June 6, 1846

this offer, which was full of problems, was to counter the American claim of 54°40' north

**Article I: Extend boundary from Rocky Mountains along 49° North to the “middle of the channel which separates the continent from Vancouver's Island; and then southerly through the middle of said channel.”**

Problem: there are two channels -- 172 islands of the San Juan Archipelago lay in between

**Article II: Navigation of Columbia River to remain “free and open to the Hudson's Bay Company and all British subjects trading with the same...”**

Problem: free and open did not mean equal access to the Americans

**Article III: “The possessing rights of the Hudson’s Bay Company and all British subjects...were to be represented.”**

Problem: advancement of American settlers lowered land value to Hudson's Bay Company

**Article IV: “Properties of Puget Sound Agricultural Company were confirmed however...the property should be transferred at an agreed upon evaluation.”**

Problem: United States could set the date of sale as property values were lowering

However, the treaty was ambiguously phrased regarding the route of the boundary through Puget Sound  
it stated the international border was to follow “the deepest channel”

out to the Strait of Juan de Fuca

there were two main channels: the Strait of Haro and the Strait of Juan de Fuca  
in between lay the San Juan Islands archipelago

## BEGINNING OF THE BEAR FLAGE REPUBLIC (CALIFORNIA)

Several hundred Americans were scattered throughout California

most settled either in the Sonoma-Napa area, or north of Sutter’s Fort

(near present day Sacramento)

very few of them obtained land grants from the Mexican authorities

Mexican Governor Jose Castro proclaimed that the purchase or acquisition of land by foreigners who had not been naturalized as Mexicans would be illegal

and the trespassers expelled whenever the Mexican government felt it convenient rumors began to spread that Castro's edict would soon be enforced,

and that Native Americans had been encouraged to burn the foreigners' crops

Several leaders of the Americans discussed their concerns regarding Mexican aggression with U.S. Army Captain John C. Fremont who had returned to California

Fremont encouraged the American settlers to resist

About thirty American settlers calling themselves "Osos" (Spanish for bears)

put themselves under the leadership of Ezekiel "Stuttering" Merritt

they set out to assault the town of Sonoma -- June 9, 1846

this town was home to the very influential Mexican General Mariano Vallejo

however, the town was not strongly garrisoned

#### OREGON TREATY (CONVENTION OF 1846) IS ACCEPTED BY THE U.S. SENATE

President James K. Polk, at the suggestion of his Cabinet, deemed it proper

to take the unprecedented course of laying the British proposal before the Senate for its advice

President Polk presented Britain's proposed draft treaty to Senate -- June 10, 1846

he wanted instructions from the Senate

he reminded them of his proposal for a boundary along 54°40' north

senators advised President Polk to accept the British offer (37-12) -- June 12

#### BEAR FLAG REPUBLIC GAINS A FOOTHOLD IN CALIFORNIA

Encouraged by Captain John C. Fremont, some thirty settlers calling themselves Osos

staged a revolt led by Ezekiel Merritt as they seized the small Mexican garrison in Sonoma

just north of San Francisco) -- surprise was so complete not a shot was fired -- June 14, 1846

General Mariano Vallejo was awakened and taken prisoner with others

they were then transported to Sutter's Fort in Sacramento

this became known as the Bear Flag Revolt

William Ide was elected Commander-in-Chief of the Osos

he proceeded to declare California an independent republic

Osos insurgents raised the famous Lone Star flag (Texas)

with a rudely-shaped figure of a grizzly bear painted on it

(some thought it was a porcupine)  
by capturing Sonoma, the rebels sought to protect the American settlers in the area  
“Bear Flag” of the California Republic flew over Sonoma  
(California’s state flag today is based on this original Bear Flag  
and still contains the words “California Republic”)

#### INTERNATIONAL POSITIONS ON THE BOUNDARY SOFTEN

Democrats in Congress passed a reduction of the tariff on British goods  
this new tariff pleased the British -- and they softened their disposition toward the loss of Oregon  
Whigs charged Oregon Country was purchased by the reduction in tariff  
die-hard Democrats were still shouting “Fifty-four forty or fight”  
in reality, modification in the tariff created good feelings in both countries  
Senate voted to accept the British draft proposal as final (41-14) -- June 15, 1846  
opposition came from expansionists elements in the Old Northwest who still wanted 54° 40’ north  
however, President Polk had not yet signed the treaty  
this this the only time in American history that a treaty was ratified by the U.S. Senate  
before it was signed by the president

#### JOINT OCCUPATION AGREEMENT WRITTEN IN BRITAIN ARRIVES IN THE UNITED STATES

Official agreement to end Joint Occupation written in Great Britain  
was received in the United States -- June 18, 1846  
British Minister to the United States Richard Pakenham and Secretary of State James Buchanan  
drew up a formal treaty known as the “Oregon Treaty” which was sent to the U.S. Senate

#### OREGON CONVENTION OF 1846 (OREGON TREATY) IS SIGNED

Polk signed the Oregon Convention as ratified by the Senate -- June 19, 1846  
as opposed to the official proposal delivered by the British Minister Richard Pakenham  
dispute between the United States and Great Britain was resolved with the Oregon Treaty  
all of the spying efforts of British Lieutenants Henry J. Warre and Mervin Vavasour  
were rendered unnecessary  
This treaty was called a “Convention” by Americans so as to not embarrass the British  
a gesture largely lost in significance as the treaty was called the “Oregon Treaty” by the British  
Convention of 1846 set the international boundary between the U.S. and Canada at the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel  
Oregon Country had become the property of the United States  
no one bothered to notify the Northwest

it took five months for the news to reach Oregon Country  
when a newspaper brought by ship from the Sandwich islands arrived in Oregon  
Provisional Government remained in place as no territorial government had been put into place  
Boundary settlement removed all international barriers to establishing the Territory of Oregon  
however, several loose ends remained to be tied:

- ownership of San Juan Islands remained unresolved,
- fair compensation for Hudson's Bay Company property which was left behind,
- Fort Nisqually remained in British hands -- an English island in an American sea  
but once again Congress was slow so act

#### BRITISH SECRET AGENTS ISSUE THEIR FINAL REPORT

Secret agents British lieutenants Henry J. Warre and Mervin Vavasour continued on their journey  
leaving Palouse Falls they eventually reached Red River Colony [Winnipeg, Alberta]  
where they wrote final reports of their impressions of the possibilities  
for a British military defense of the Oregon Country  
unaware that the Oregon Boundary Treaty was then being signed -- mid-June 1846  
(Warre published a book reproducing his watercolor drawings entitled: *A Sketch of the Journey Across  
the Continent of North American from Canada to Oregon Country and Pacific Ocean -- 1846*)

#### HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY TEMPORARILY KEEPS FORT VANCOUVER

After the signing of the Oregon Convention, Fort Vancouver was officially on American property  
however, the British continue to operate the fort for several years  
James Douglas, Peter Skene Ogden and John Work  
continued to serve as Chief Factors of Columbia District (for the next three years)  
(Ogden was in command at Fort Vancouver when Americans arrived to occupy the fort  
Chief Trader at the fort was Archibald McKinley)

#### U.S. CAPTAIN FREMONT TAKES COMMAND OF THE "BEAR FLAGGERS"

Given the small number of American rebels at Sonoma  
and the threat of a Mexican assault on the town led by Governor Jose Castro  
U.S. Army Captain John Charles Fremont dropped all pretense of neutrality  
he departed for Sonoma with a force of about ninety men  
Fremont arrived at Sonoma, California with his Army Corps of Topographical Engineers  
who played a prominent role in the American effort to separate California from Mexico  
Fremont discussed with Osos insurgent Commander-in-Chief William Ide the prospect

of having the Osos join with Captain Fremont's sixty-man Army of Topographical Engineers to form a "California Battalion" which varied in size from 160 to 400 men  
Captain Fremont took command of the insurgents then in control of Sonoma -- June 23, 1846  
Marine Lieutenant Archibald H. Gillespie, who had first met Fremont at the Oregon border, was chosen by Fremont to serve as his Adjunct

#### SITUATION IN CALIFORNIA REMAINS CONFUSED

Insurgents had run the Bear Flag up the flagpole in Sonoma  
but most of the people present believed it was simply an amusement without significance  
everyone wondered what role, if any, the United States represented by Captain John C. Fremont would play in future developments  
Fremont spoke to the crowd but said nothing to clarify the situation  
Three companies of men were formed in Sonoma to serve as an American militia

#### CAPTAIN JOHN C. FREMONT MARCHES ON SAN SOLITO

Captain Fremont advanced to San Solito (today's Sausalito) with his California Battalion -- late June  
he launched an assault on the undefended Mexican fortification Castillo de San Joaquin  
built to protect San Francisco Bay on the south side of the Bay entrance  
seven cannon were "spiked" (disabled)  
Yerba Buena (San Francisco) fell to the Americans  
Fremont sent several men to patrol the bay and prevent any passage of Mexican forces

#### CAPTAIN JOHN C. FREMONT COMMITS WAR ATROCITIES

After the success at San Solito (Sausalito) Fremont intercepted three Mexican men at San Rafael Mission who were crossing San Francisco Bay near San Quentin Island  
Fremont ordered Kit Carson to execute the men -- June 28, 1846  
in revenge for the deaths of two Americans  
when Carson questioned the orders Fremont yelled that Carson was to do his duty  
all three were shot dead  
Jose de los Reyes Berrevesa whose son, the Alcalde (mayor) of Sonoma, had been recently imprisoned by Fremont  
the other two men, twin nineteen-year-old brothers Ramon and Francisco De Haro were the sons of Francisco de Haro the first Alcalde (mayor) of Yerba Buena  
(Fremont's unprovoked killing of these three men later hindered his political career as he was prevented from becoming the first American governor of California)

and possibly being elected as the President of the United States)

#### ROBERT "DOC" NEWELL BEGINS A NEW BUSINESS

Robert "Doc" Newell's wife Kitty died

Doc Newell remarried --his second wife was Rebecca (Newman) -- June 28, 1846

Doc Newell began a river boat service transporting goods between Oregon City and Willamette Falls with two keel boats

#### COLONEL STEPHEN WATTS KEARNY IS PROMOTED TO THE RANK OF GENERAL

General Kearny's command consisted of Kearny's own 1<sup>st</sup> Dragoon Regiment of 300 Dragoons

they were occupied with patrolling the Oregon Trail and Santa Fe Trail -- June 30, 1846

General Kearny's command was expanded by two regiments of Missouri volunteers,

artillery and infantry battalions and the 500 volunteer soldiers of the Mormon Battalion

in all Kearny led a military expedition of 1,700 cavalymen and artillerymen

a third regiment, the 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment of New York Volunteers

(would travel by ships to California and would muster out and remain in California)

General Stephen Watts Kearny and his "Army of the West" shared the overland trails with emigrant wagons that summer

their mission was to show the flag and the military power of the "Great Father" (President)

to the Indian tribes and warn them to leave the white travelers alone

guided by Tom "Broken Hand" Fitzpatrick, the dragoons rode as far as South Pass,

then swung south along the Front Range of the Rockies to return to their base

at Fort Leavenworth by way of Bent's Fort and the Santa Fe Trail

#### SIR ROBERT PEEL'S CONSERVATIVE GOVERNMENT COLLAPSES

British Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel was replaced -- June 30, 1846

newly-elected Prime Minister Lord John Russel was a leading liberal politician in Great Britain

his Whig government adopted a conciliatory approach toward the question of the boundary

#### VAGUE INTERNATIONAL TREATY LANGUAGE CAUSES PROBLEMS

Boundary commissions representing the United States and Great Britain respectively

decided on the 49th parallel as the international borders

boundary ran from Lake of the Woods, Minnesota to Washington Territory

running down the main channel between Vancouver Island and the U.S. mainland

With the loose wording of "the main channel," a dispute arose over which was the main channel



two primary channels exist: Haro Strait and Rosario Strait -- with San Juan Island in between  
both countries claimed ownership over the island

Problems with agreement could have been easily resolved but United States was still involved with:

- Mexican War,
- Conquest of California,
- slavery controversy

#### UNITED STATES NAVY ARRIVES OFF CALIFORNIA

United States Navy Commander John Drake Sloat, commander of the U.S. Navy Pacific Squadron then reconnoitering off Mazatlan had no knowledge of the U.S. declaration of war on Mexico however, after hearing of the revolt in Sonoma, he raced north to defend California

(the British were reportedly interested in California

and there were American fears California would be lost as the Britain's Pacific-based ships then off California were stronger in vessels, guns and men)

Commodore Sloat arrived in Monterey, California on the frigate *Savannah* -- July 1, 1846

*Savannah* joined two sloops, *USS Cyane* and *USS Levant* already in Monterey Bay

#### CELEBRATION IN OREGON COUNTRY

Presence of British war ships gave rise to a full measure of American patriotic zeal

British sloop-of-war *Modeste* was stationed at Fort Vancouver

British frigate *Fisgard* watched Puget Sound from Fort Nisqually

British war ship *Cormorant* had arrived and patrolled Puget Sound and Vancouver Island

Salem was the location of a July 4th commemoration in the Willamette valley

during the grand demonstration guns were fired

toasts were followed by patriotic speeches -- Peter H. Burnett was the day's orator

and a grand ball closed the festivities

Still there was no news about the establishment of the international boundary

#### U.S. COMMODORE SLOAT DECIDES TO SEIZE MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

U.S. Captain William Mervine of the *Cyane* went ashore at Monterey, California

with a small landing party from the ship *Savannah* -- 7:30 A.M. July 7, 1846

they demanded the surrender of the port from Mexican commander Captain Mariano Silva

Silva replied that he did not have the authority to surrender

in fact, the troops supposedly under Silva's command did not exist

as the California soldiers had already left the town defenseless and gone to Los Angeles

Commodore John Drake Sloat landed sailors and marines from his three warships -- 10:00 A.M.  
they marched to the Monterey Customs House where he read a proclamation written by himself  
that stated war existed between the United States and Mexico and California was now annexed  
Commodore Sloat declared himself Military Governor of California  
the only shots fired were a twenty-one-gun salute from each of the three American war ships  
in honor of the new United States flag  
British war ships observed but took no action  
Commodore Sloat then wondered if Captain Fremont would cooperate  
With the raising the American flag in California, the Bear Flag Republic was no more  
it has lasted twenty-four days

#### MEXICO DECLARES WAR ON THE UNITED STATES

Faced with ongoing events along their northern border  
Mexican Congress passed a declaration of war -- July 7, 1846  
(sometimes the manifest from Mexican President Mariano Paredes [May 23, 1846]  
is considered a declaration of war,  
but only the Mexican Congress had the power to officially declare war)

#### YERBA BUENA IS CAPTURED BY THE AMERICAN NAVY

U.S. Navy Commodore John Drake Sloat sent a message to Captain B. Montgomery  
aboard the *Portsmouth* telling him to capture Yerba Buena (San Francisco)  
which was done -- 8:00 A.M. July 9, 1846  
Montgomery replaced the Bear Flag with the Stars and Stripes of the United States  
with a twenty-one-gun salute  
Captain Montgomery sent a messenger to notify Captain John C. Fremont at Sonoma

#### NORTHERN CALIFORNIA IS CONTROLLED BY THE UNITED STATES ARMY AND NAVY

U.S. Army Captain John Charles Fremont in Sonoma received word of the capture of Monterey  
by Navy Commodore John D. Sloat -- July 10, 1846  
Fremont raised the American flag over Sonoma  
American settlers in the region became convinced by Fremont's actions that war had broken out  
some of them decided to declare California independent of Mexico  
American under U.S. Army Captain Fremont, U.S. Navy Commodore Sloat  
and U.S. Navy Captain Montgomery had easily taken over Northern California  
within a matter of days they controlled Sonoma, Monterey, Yerba Buena (San Francisco)

and Sutter's Fort in Sacramento

Captain John C. Fremont named himself the California Republic's military governor although Commodore Sloat had already taken the position for himself

Fremont added those U.S. Navy sailors and marines in the vicinity to his California Battalion

#### CAPTAIN FREMONT MEETS WITH COMMODORE JOHN DRAKE SLOAT

Captain Fremont, now acting as the California Republic Military Governor left Sonoma when he and his California Battalion arrived at Monterey

he met with Commandant John Drake Sloat aboard the *USS Savannah*

When the two military governors of California met

Commandant Sloat requested Fremont show him the orders under which he had been operating Fremont had none

Sloat abruptly ended the meeting and refused to do anything more until orders arrived from Washington City

#### UNITED STATES SCHOONER *SHARK* ARRIVES IN OREGON COUNTRY

*USS Shark* under Lieutenant Neil M. Howison sailed from California

*Shark* arrived at the mouth of the Columbia River -- July 15, 1846

just inside of Cape Disappointment she was met by a boat containing

Rev. Henry Spalding, William H. Gray and General Asa L. Lovejoy, mayor of Oregon City who assisted the ship in avoiding a nearly disastrous entrance into the river

#### U.S. NAVY COMMODORE ROBERT F. STOCKTON ARRIVES IN MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

Commodore Robert F. "Fighting Bob" Stockton took over command of the Pacific Squadron from ailing Commodore John Drake Sloat -- July 23, 1846

Sloat sailed home to the United States

Commodore Stockton's Pacific Squadron was now composed of his command ship, *USS Congress*, three frigates with about 480 men each, four sloops with 200 men each, one ship-of-the-line with about 780 men and three store ships

Stockton had the strongest naval force in California and was the senior officer in command

Captain John C. Fremont would now report to Commodore Robert Stockton

since the two men were very much alike in character they got along exceptionally well

Commodore Stockton recognized the California Battalion as an American fighting unit Fremont was promoted to Major and given command of all volunteer militias

## VICARIATE APOSTOLIC OREGON IS DIVIDED INTO THREE DIOCESES

Pope Pius IX divided the Vicar Francis Blanchet's vicar apostolic into three dioceses -- June 24, 1846  
Oregon City Dioceses, Walla Walla Dioceses and Vancouver Island Dioceses  
would each become the responsibility of a Catholic bishop

Vicar Frances Blanchet was elevated to the position of Catholic Bishop of Oregon City  
St. John the Apostle became the mother parish of the new Archdiocese of Oregon City  
when it was dedicated this was the first Catholic cathedral north of San Francisco

## U.S. SCHOONER *SHARK* REACHES FORT VANCOUVER

After a near disaster at the entrance of the Columbia River lasting four days

*Shark* anchored off Astoria [July 19, 1846]

five days later she dropped anchor at Fort Vancouver -- July 24, 1846

where she entered into the company of the British warship *Modeste*

and two barks and a ship belonging to Hudson's Bay Company

Master of the USS *Shark* Lieutenant Neil M. Howison's remarks to the Americans indicated: **“At this time we had not heard of the settlement of the boundary question, and intense excitement prevailed among all classes of residents on this important subject. I enjoined it by letter on the officers under my command to refrain from engaging in arguments touching the ownership of the soil, as it was our duty rather to allay than increase excitement on a question which no power hereabouts can settle. Besides the sloop-of-war *Modeste*, anchored in the river, the British government kept the frigate *Fisgard* in Puget Sound, and the strongly armed steamer *Cormorant* in the Sound and about Vancouver Island. These unusual demonstrations produced anything but a tranquilizing effect upon the American portion of the population; and the presence of the British flag was a constant source of irritation.**

**“The English officers used every gentlemanly caution to reconcile our countrymen to their presence, but no really good feeling existed. Indeed, there never could be congeniality between persons so entirely dissimilar as an American frontiersman and a British naval officer. But the officers, never to my knowledge, had to complain of rude treatment. The English residents calculated with great certainty upon the river being adopted as the future dividing line, and looked with jealousy upon the American advance into the northern portion of the territory, which had some influence in restraining emigration.”<sup>192</sup>**

Lieutenant Neil M. Howison could report only that the United States Pacific squadron  
was assembling farther to the south

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<sup>192</sup> Report of Lieutenant Howison, U.S. Navy, House of Representatives, thirtieth Congress, first session. Miscellaneous Documents No. 29.

this might imply anything: war with Mexico, war with England, war with both  
or merely that the United States navy was undertaking maneuvers

It was a further blow to American patriotic attitudes when ten sailors deserted almost immediately  
drawn to the prospect of free land and escape from the potential rigors of America at war  
only two men were ever turned in even after a reward of thirty dollars was offered

#### SHEEP RAISING MOVES TO THE PUGET SOUND AGRICULTURAL COMPANY

Although the sheep business came to be located primarily at Fort Nisqually,  
sheep farming continued to be a significant activity at Fort Vancouver -- at least through 1846  
six employees, including two shepherds listed on the Fort Vancouver labor rolls,  
were employed by the Puget Sound Agricultural Company

Hudson's Bay Company London Governor Sir John Pelly

reported to Lord Palmerston of the British Foreign Office -- July 1846

Puget's Sound Agricultural Company had 1,977 sheep at Fort Vancouver, valued at £2,037

On the plus side, Puget Sound Agricultural Company shareholders received a dividend -- 1846

#### AMERICAN TROOPS ARE ORDERED INTO TEXAS

After Mexico's declaration of war, Americans prepared for a war on two fronts -- August 1, 1846

United States War Department sent General Zachery Taylor

(known as "Old Rough-and-Ready" for his indifference to hardship in the War of 1812)

was ordered to move his forces across the Louisiana-Texas border

into Texas (Northern Mexico)

accompanying General Taylor was second in command General John E. Wool

who trained and marched his own army composed mostly of western volunteers

General Winfield Scott

(known as "Old Fuss and Feathers" because he focused on each soldier's appearance)

would an amphibious attack on the coastal Mexican town of Vera Cruz

#### U.S. PACIFIC SQUADRON LANDS IN SAN PEDRO, CALIFORNIA

Commodore Robert F. Stockton aboard the USS *Congress* sailed into San Pedro

(south of today's Los Angeles) -- August 1846

Commodore Stockton then led a march on Pueblo de Los Angeles capturing it without a fight

Stockton left Marine Lieutenant Archibald Gillespie in command of a small garrison

before sailing for northern California

## JOHN CHARLES FREMONT IS PROMOTED BY COMMODORE STOCKTON

U.S. Navy Commodore Stockton was so taken with U.S. Army Captain John C. Fremont that Fremont was elevated to the rank of U.S. Army Major and Fremont's California Battalion was taken into the United States Army they were used to maintain order in towns that had surrendered and drew regular army pay Major Fremont was ordered to take his California Battalion aboard the *USS Cyane* to San Diego Commodore Stockton followed with a force of sailors Combined Army-Navy force won battles in both San Diego and Los Angeles Commodore Robert F. Stockton proclaimed himself Governor of California -- August 17, 1846

## GENERAL STEPHEN KEARNY MARCHES HIS ARMY TO CALIFORNIA

U.S. War Department sent now-General Stephen W. Kearny with his Army of the West from Fort Leavenworth down the Santa Fe Trail to Santa Fe, New Mexico to seize that Mexican province Lieutenant William B. Franklin went along to record scientific data and added his own map to a growing cartographic library of the Topographical Engineers Kearny and his troops took possession of Santa Fe without a battle -- August 18, 1846 General Kearny promptly established a territorial government in New Mexico over the protest of Texas officials who claimed the region as their own General Kearny was named military governor of New Mexico within just one month he ensured that a civilian government was in place

## WHEAT PROVIDES THE CASH CROP IN OREGON COUNTRY

Wheat was the money crop and the Willamette Prairie produced grain in abundance -- 1846-[1848] crops were sown just in (autumn) before the winter rains arrived and were harvested the following (summer) with hand scythes and awkward cradles wheat could be harvested up to three years without re-tilling the soil Grain was sold to Hudson's Bay Company to supply the Russians (in Alaska) flour was easier to ship than grain, and so grist mills sprang up wherever there was water power if no mill was nearby, the grain was bagged and hauled over poor roads to the nearest river landing where it was loaded on a raft or barge or sail-rigged keelboat Production of wheat in Oregon Country increased dramatically with the arrival of more farmers market price steadily declined as the rapidly increasing numbers of immigrants began raising more grain than the Hudson's Bay Company could use or sell there was no corresponding reduction in price on other goods

commodities costs were 300% to 400% higher than in the mid-West  
There was little currency  
small transactions were conducted by barter  
or by promises to pay in cattle, timber, or labor at some future time  
large deals were based on warehouse receipts for stored wheat  
but the credit system was becoming unreliable as Hudson's Bay Company lost its influence

#### SALEM, OREGON IS ESTABLISHED

Mrs. Chloe (Clark) Willson was the first teacher at the Oregon Institute [1844]  
In anticipation of Oregon eventually becoming a territory of the United States  
directors of the Oregon Institute appointed William H. Willson as their agent  
to create a town plat with real estate lots to sell  
to provide needed income for the institute -- 1846

William H. Willson platted a town site

local leaders insisted on replacing the Indian name of Chemeketa "meeting place or resting place"  
but the origin of the newly-chosen name of "Salem" remains in dispute

William Willson may have wanted

an Americanized version of the Biblical word "Shalom" meaning "peace"  
or Rev. David Leslie, President of the town's Trustees may have wanted a Biblical name  
and suggested using the last five letters of "Jerusalem"

or the town may be named after Salem, Massachusetts where Leslie was educated

*Oregon Spectator* advertised city lots to be sold at auction on August 20, 1846

#### U.S. SCHOONER *SHARK* IS SCHEDULED TO LEAVE THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

USS *Shark* ended her tour of duty at Fort Vancouver -- September 1, 1846

Lieutenant Neil M. Howison's instructions were to leave the mouth of the river

However, the ship was detained in Baker's Bay where for several days

she undertook an examination of the bar at the mouth of the Columbia River

#### JOHN C. FREMONT IS NAMED MILITARY COMMANDER OF CALIFORNIA

Commodore Robert F. Stockton believed the conquest of California was complete

he decided to sail south in an effort to engage in the main United States war effort in Mexico

Stockton named Major John C. Fremont military commandant of California -- September 2, 1846

and divided the state into three military departments under his jurisdiction

## U.S. SCHOONER *SHARK* LOST

USS *Shark's* visit was a comforting American counter to the British *Modeste* or would have been if the American vessel had not embarrassed everyone by wrecking herself on the bar of the Columbia River

Attempting to exit the river, *Shark* was completely wrecked -- September 10, 1846 stranded sailors carved their names on a rock

(near today's 13<sup>th</sup> and Exchange Streets in Astoria

part of the rock was removed and is now in the Maritime Museum while the remainder was buried under fill for a parking lot)

a portion of the *Shark's* hull and three cannons were taken twenty-five miles south and became the namesake of Cannon Beach, Oregon

Several officers and crew of the *Shark* eventually reached San Francisco after chartering the Hudson's Bay Company's schooner *Cadboro*

## CALIFORNIA-OREGON TRAIL HAD LONG BEEN AN INDIAN TRADE ROUTE

California-Oregon Trail began as an ancient overland Indian trail linking the Willamette Valley with California

It was first expanded when Indians guided Hudson's Bay Company trader Peter Skene Ogden leading a company brigade over the Siskiyou Summit [1827]

After several years use as a fur brigade route Ewing Young had driven cattle over the route [1834] to provide animals for Americans in the Willamette Valley

With increasing use two divisions of the track separated by the Willamette River had developed

## APPLEGATE TRAIL (OLD SOUTH ROAD) IS CONSTRUCTED

Construction began on a second route into Oregon

road building from the Willamette Valley south across the desert was motivated

by the memory of the two family members the Applegates had lost at the Dalles [1843]

as well as the need for an alternate route from Fort Hall into the Willamette Valley that could be used in the event of war with Great Britain

Old South Road Company, was organized -- late summer 1846

by the Applegate brothers Jesse and Lindsay, the Scott brothers Levi and John, along with Moses "Black" Harris and ten others

each of the fifteen men equipped himself with a saddle-horse and a pack-horse, rifle and other essentials

Applegates along with the others followed the Westside California-Oregon pack trail



which they developed into an emigrant wagon trail to California -- 1846

they pushed south out of the Willamette Valley and into Umpqua and Rogue river valleys  
crossing the Klamath River they discovered a way out of the Cascade Mountains  
onto the bleak deserts of the interior

Road builders proceeded in a southeasterly direction across northern California and Nevada  
until they reached the Humboldt River intersection (today's Nevada) with the California Cutoff  
they traced the California Cutoff northeast toward the main line of the Oregon Trail at Fort Hall  
Indians killed one of the road construction gang, and thirst nearly did in the rest  
but an advance party at last broke through to Fort Hall  
Old South Road, as it became known, bypassed English forts  
at crossed northern Nevada and California to the Rogue River near Grants Pass  
then turned almost due north to the Willamette Valley and Oregon City

#### PRESBYTERRIAN CHURCH REACHES OREGON COUNTRY

Rev. Lewis Thompson organized the first Presbyterian Church in Oregon Country  
in home of William H. Gray-- September 19, 1846

four members were active in the church: William H. and Mary Gray, Alva and Lillian Condit  
Rev. Thompson served as Pastor of the Clatsop Plains Presbyterian Church for twenty-two years

#### GENERAL STEPHEN KEARNY MARCHES TO CALIFORNIA

Less than a month after being positioned as military governor of New Mexico

General Kearny led his Army of the West, a force of only 300 men, from Santa Fe  
en route he met noted scout Christopher "Kit" Carson who was carrying messages  
from California Military Commandant John C. Fremont to Washington City  
Carson incorrectly informed General Kearny that California  
had already surrendered to John C. Fremont and Commodore Robert Stockton  
Kearny enlisted Carson to guide him to southern California -- September 25, 1846  
and the messages Kit Carson was carrying were given to another courier  
thinking California was secure, Kearny sent 200 of his troops back to Santa Fe

#### GIFT FROM THE U.S. SCHOONER *SHARK* TO AMERICANS IN OREGON COUNTRY

Before leaving San Francisco, Captain Howison presented to the Oregon Provisional Government  
*Shark's* flag and cannon which had been salvaged and taken to the Willamette Valley  
these became Oregon City's first official emblem and armament

in his letter to Provisional Governor George Abernethy, Howison said: **“To display this national emblem, and cheer our citizens in this distant territory by its presence, was a principal object of the *Shark’s* visit to the Columbia; and it appears to me, therefore, highly proper that it should henceforth remain with you, as a memento of parental regard from the general government. With the fullest confidence that it will be received and duly appreciated as such by our countrymen here, I do myself the honor of transmitting the flags to your address; nor can I omit the occasion to express my gratification and pride that this relic of my late command should be emphatically the first United States flag to wave over the undisputed and purely American territory of Oregon.”**<sup>193</sup>  
dated September 27, 1846

Governor Abernethy gracefully and gratefully received the colors

on behalf of the American settlers of Oregon, and responded: **“We will fling it to the breeze on every suitable occasion, and rejoice under the emblem of our country’s glory, sincerely hoping that the ‘star-spangled banner’ may ever wave over this portion of the United States.”**<sup>194</sup>

#### FATHER AUGUSTINE MAGLOIRE ALEXANDER (A.M.A.) BLANCHET BECOMES A BISHOP

Father Augustine Magloire Alexander (A.M.A.) Blanchet

was the younger brother of Bishop of Oregon City Francois Norbert Blanchet

Father A.M.A Blanchet was born on their father’s farm [August 22, 1797]

near the village of Saint-Pierre, Riviere du Sud, Canada

A.M.A. Blanchet was sent to Quebec with his brother Francis to study for the priesthood

after his ordination Father A.M.A. Blanchet served as a parish priest for a year

he next become a missionary at Cape Breton Island, Canada

for the next twenty years he served as priest to four successive parishes

he was elevated to Canon of the Montreal Cathedral

Father A.M.A. Blanchet in Montreal was ordained Bishop of Walla Walla -- September 27, 1846

#### FATHER PIERRE JEAN De SMET HAS GREAT SUCCESS

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet departed from the Blackfoot Indians on their Island in the Missouri River

he traveled on a small boat to St. Louis where he arrived -- September 28, 1846

Father De Smet spent the next two years 1846-[1847] visiting very frequently

with all of the missions and tribes of the Northwest where he exerted his Catholic influence

Indians everywhere liked and respected him as he took up the new role of peace negotiator

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<sup>193</sup> Elwood Evans, *History of the Pacific Northwest: Oregon and Washington: Embracing ...*, Volume 1, P. 274.

<sup>194</sup> Report of Lieutenant Howison, U.S. Navy, House of Representatives, thirtieth Congress, first session. Miscellaneous Documents No, 29.

## FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET WAS ALWAYS ON THE MOVE

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet had traveled 50,000 miles or more between the years [1840-1847]  
creating new missions and seeking their support  
he made nineteen crossings of the Atlantic Ocean  
one voyage around Cape Horn  
two trips from East to West by way of Panama  
a tower of strength, he traveled an estimated 180,000 miles in his lifetime  
Father De Smet numbered his Catholic converts in the thousands  
eventually he held the confidence of every tribe from Minnesota to the Oregon coast  
beloved, protected and all but worshiped by the Flathead Indians  
his positive attitude and good works spread rapidly  
as he often served as a mediator in private and governmental issues  
(Father Pierre-Jean De Smet was kept busy with church business in St. Louis [until 1851]  
he left a graphic and interesting report on religious progress in his book *Oregon Missions*  
also he provided a charming descriptions of scenery and the natural beauty  
in his book *Western Missions and Missionaries*)

## NEWS OF JOHN C. FREMONT'S PROMOTION ARRIVES IN CALIFORNIA

President James K. Polk had promoted John C. Fremont to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel [May 1846]  
Fremont previously had officially held the rank of U.S. Army Captain  
he had been brevetted (elevated in rank in the field) to Major by Commodore Robert Stockton  
and named Military Commandant of California also by Stockton  
with his rank of Lieutenant-Colonel Fremont was to organize a new regiment of mounted riflemen  
to fight in the Mexican-American War

## REVOLT IN PUBLIO DE LOS ANGELES

Mexican Nationals known as the Californio militia rebelled against what they regarded  
as the needlessly harsh American military rule of U.S. Marine Lieutenant Archibald Gillespie  
and his small garrison  
Besieged by insurrectionists who took control of the town (today's Los Angeles)  
United States military men fled in disgrace to San Pedro -- October 1846  
Several attempts by Gillespie's men to retake Los Angeles were unsuccessful

## ANOTHER EPIDEMIC SWEEPS ACROSS OREGON COUNTRY

Catherine Sager (Mrs. Clark Pringle) described the arrival of measles and whooping cough: **“The doctor [Whitman] made his fall visit to the [Willamette] valley, bringing back something for each one of us. He always remembered the children when he went to the valley, and brought us all some token of his love. He piloted the emigrants by a nearer and better route to The Dalles, and learned with apprehension that the last of the train was afflicted with measles and whooping cough. He knew they would spread throughout the native camps and feared the consequences. None of his own family had had the measles and but few of the others [either].**

**“This fall brother John had his horse saddled to return to The Dalles to reside, but at Dr. Whitman’s earnest request he consented to remain. Had he gone there he might now be living! Laying aside his gun, he now devoted himself to his studies. He rose early at 4 o’clock and wrote, but I never knew what he wrote about as the papers were all destroyed after the massacre.**

**“The measles were among the natives, and in the doctor’s absence Mrs. Whitman was their physician. All arrangements were made for the winter, teachers were employed, and all things were in order. The emigration had brought a Canadian half-breed named Jo Lewis, who was so disagreeable that they [a wagon train] refused to let him travel farther in their company. Dr. Whitman reluctantly gave him some work. He tried to send him below [to the Willamette Valley] with a company, but in a few days he was back again, so the doctor reluctantly engaged him for the winter. He was destitute of clothes and was supplied. We all disliked him, but he was well and kindly treated. Yet this wretch laid the careful plans and told the terrible lies that led to the massacre, and took an active part in murder and robbery.”<sup>195</sup> -- fall 1846**

#### TRAVELING THE OREGON TRAIL WAS ESPECIALLY DIFFICULT

Transportation choke points had always existed at the rapids of the Dalles and the Columbia Gorge even in the earliest times it was necessary to portage around the ferocious torrents of water Wascopam and Waiilatpu missions were flooded (each autumn) by thousands of starving emigrants facing the last great barrier of the Oregon Trail -- the Cascade Mountains  
Pioneers could not drive their wagons west through the Columbia Gorge  
steep cliffs dropped right to the water’s edge  
they had to abandon the wagons or disassemble them, load them on rafts or bateaux  
float down the Columbia River to Fort Vancouver or the mouth of the Willamette River

#### 1846 PIONEERS CAN USE THE BARLOW ROAD

Barlow Road was completed early enough to enable, as Barlow noted,  
145 immigrant wagons and 1,559 head of livestock to pass that season -- fall 1846

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<sup>195</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 526-527.

wagons, with their contents, finally reached Oregon City  
this was the vanguard of many years of immigration over the Barlow Road  
Reuban Gant was recorded as the driver of the first wagon across the new road -- 1846  
as reported by Sam Barlow to the *Oregon Spectator*

Very few who made the trek had fond memories of the experience

Laurel Hill was such a nightmare that even after months of heat, dust, disease and death  
most diarists proclaimed it the single worst stretch of the Oregon Trail -- bar none  
it was reported wagons were chained to trees to keep them from running over the oxen  
pioneers used downed trees and limbs attached to the rear of the wagon  
to rake the ground to act as crude brakes over rocks, moss and alder trees

Laurel Hill's steepest part was known as "The Chute"

a mossy terror in autumn it was slick all the way -- all the time  
it was so steep on the western slope, 60% grade for half a mile,  
that wagons had to be let down dragging hundred-foot-long tree trunks behind  
tree branches were jammed in a wheel passed under the wagon bed and out the other wheel  
winding ropes around Douglas Fir trees were tied to the end of each vehicle  
as wagons were slowly lowered down from level bench to level bench

Adrietta Applegate Hixon wrote in her diary: **"It looked as if we had come to the jumping-off place. It seemed almost perpendicular and such a long descent.... The locked wheels made a most dismal screeching sound that echoed back and forth through the woods."**<sup>196</sup>

#### SAM BARLOW BECOMES ONE OF THE MOST HATED MEN IN OREGON COUNTRY

Barlow's original toll gate was on the east side of the mountain

Barlow Road could be used or \$5 a wagon and team; 50¢ for each single animal;  
\$1.00 per man or woman -- payable in cash, note, or "in-kind" (goods or services)  
for this amount they had the privilege of clearing downed trees, rock slides and debris,  
maneuvering across seemingly bottomless swamps and steep grades,  
fording countless and dangerously-swollen streams,  
and even having to lower their wagons with ropes down the steep cliffs  
of the infamous Laurel Hill

despite being cheaper than renting a Hudson's Bay Company bateaux  
and (perhaps) being safer than rafting down the Columbia River  
many emigrants were incensed at the idea of having to pay a toll  
for the last eighty miles of a 2000-mile journey

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<sup>196</sup> Adrietta Applegate Hixon, *On to Oregon*.

Sam Barlow himself tended the gate for the two months of “immigrant season” 1846-[1847]  
many immigrants were unable to pay the toll  
in every case they were allowed to pass free and use all the privileges of the road  
weary and frustrated emigrants cursed Barlow for collecting tolls “from dead people”  
that is, charging tolls to people who would die  
while attempting to follow his road into the Willamette Valley

#### BARLOW ROAD IS NOT A SOURCE OF INCOME FOR ITS BUILDER

After the opening of the Barlow Road  
it was estimated fewer than one in four people chose the old Columbia River route  
however, this was not enough as the Barlow Road proved to be a financial failure  
many pioneers lacked the payment price and years later “forgot” to pay  
as bad as it was, the Barlow Road encouraged many settlers to turn toward Oregon  
rather than journey to the north side of the Columbia River

#### TOLL ROADS PROVIDE FOR OVERLAND TRANSPORTATION

Most roads in Oregon Country were privately owned  
often they were just paths through the woods wide enough for a wagon  
low and wet spots were roughly filled in with blocks of wood or “corduroyed”  
to make them passable  
streams were made fordable  
Toll gate at one end was tended by the gatekeeper who collected the toll  
toll charges usually were moderate -- but necessary to cover cost of construction

#### POPULATION OF OREGON COUNTRY DOUBLES ONCE AGAIN

More than of 1,500 immigrants arrived over the Oregon Trail -- fall 1846  
region’s population was double what it had been in [1845] and was four times that of [1844]  
population on French Prairie was between six hundred and seven hundred inhabitants  
Willamette Valley’s choicest farm lands were already inhabited  
*Hunt’s Merchants’ Magazine* noted -- 1846

**“Their ploughs turn its sods, their axes level its timber...no power on earth, nor all the powers of the earth, can check the swelling tide of the American population....”<sup>197</sup>**

Oregon City develops as a population of 500 at the Falls on the Willamette River  
including four tailors, two hatters, two silversmiths, carpenters, and cabinet makers

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<sup>197</sup> Oscar Osburn Winther, *The Great Northwest*, P. 121.

building included a Methodist Church, two saloons, two blacksmith shops  
and newly constructed St. John The Apostle Catholic Cathedral  
several families had settled near what was to become (Eugene City) -- 1846  
at the southern end of the valley floor and the upper end of water navigation  
still others opened the Umpqua and Rogue river valleys

#### INDIANS RESENT WHITE INVADERS

Littered campsites, slaughtered deer and devoured grass all defaced their native land  
As the natives grew more aggressive, the whites responded with surprising submissiveness  
pioneers with worn-out teams and wagons; with frightened families; low on supplies  
were not eager to deal with trouble  
Cayuse, Wascopam and Chinook Indians began bullying small emigrant parties and stealing horses  
whites, in retaliation stole replacement animals from unguarded Indian herds  
resentment was matched by bitterness and the cycle deepened

#### EDUCATION IN THE ROUGH

As various missionaries shied away from the natives and toward white settlers  
the desire to foster an education rapidly developed  
Elementary "Term Schools" began to appear in Oregon City  
first of these was organized by John E. Lyle -- 1846  
given the dignified name "Jefferson Institute"  
this school was a log house located in Yamhill County  
in a memoir [published in 1929] Harriet Nesmith McArthur  
recalled that her mother had attended Mr. Lyle's school  
she wrote: **"The institute was a log building.... Benches made of log planks were placed  
near the walls. The children, however, sat facing the walls, with wide boards set on props against  
the walls for desks. Pupils usually wrote with goose quills which Lyle kept in condition, and the only  
pencils ever used were pointed lead bullets. The writing paper was blue, and is believed to have been  
purchased from the Hudson's Bay Company. School books were those which pioneers had brought  
with them, and indispensable was the Bible from which each child read a verse at the beginning of  
the school day. In all, twenty-five students, including three Applegates, attended the first year, and  
the experiment was considered a success."**<sup>198</sup>

Tabitha Moffat Brown, or "Grandma" as she became affectionately known,  
arrived by wagon train in Oregon Country at age sixty-six -- 1846

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<sup>198</sup> Oscar Osburn Winther, *The Great Northwest*. P. 210.

she first settled at West Tualatin where she found some fifteen or twenty immigrant orphans  
these she gathered into a school using a log church  
(at what became the campus of Pacific University)  
here she taught 3 Rs, how to cook, sew and perform other useful tasks

#### MORE SETTLERS ARRIVE IN SOUTH PUGET SOUND

Levi Lathrop Smith was a personable young man who suffered from epilepsy  
among his many friends was Maine fisherman Edmund Sylvester  
who had first reached Portland, Oregon on a Cushing and Company trading ship  
Sylvester accompanied Smith to Puget Sound to care for the epileptic during his seizures  
they formed the Puget Sound Milling Company along with eight settlers -- October 1846  
Together they took up adjoining claims to 320 acres along Budd Inlet  
at the mouth of the Des Chutes River  
about two miles north of Michael Simmons' New Marker (at what will become Olympia)  
local Squaxon tribe had a winter settlement there they called "Cheet-woot" or bear  
(at high tide, the shoreline resembled a bear)  
young epileptic Levi Smith chose as his claim a two-acre clearing  
where he built a sixteen-foot-square shingle-roofed log hutch  
with a magnificent view of Mount Rainier to the east  
and of the Olympic Mountains to the northwest  
Smith named the property Smithfield  
Edmund Sylvester settled on the edge of Chambers Prairie  
Together they began the lumbering industry in the area  
when they dictated their wills Sylvester and Smith even made each the other's heir

#### SENSE OF COMMUNITY GROWS NORTH OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Richard and Anna Covington arrived at Fort Vancouver by ship from England  
both husband and wife worked as teachers at the fort's school and ran a boarding school  
they brought with them a violin, guitar, and the region's first piano  
(few years later George Barnes of Olympia imported another piano)  
Covington's log cabin became known as a center of hospitality and musical entertainment  
music was played and taught to the children

#### STAGECOACH SERVICE ARRIVES IN OREGON CITY

First mention of a commercial stage line appeared in the *Oregon City Spectator* -- November 29, 1846



Stephen H.L. Meek, proprietor announced that his new company the Telegraph Line with “Eight Ox Power” would operate on a semi-weekly basis between Oregon City and the Tualatin settlement

**“rain or shine -- mud or no mud -- load or no load, but not without pay”<sup>199</sup>**

#### LACK OF A POSTAL SERVICE CREATES A HARDSHIP

When letters were to be sent to the United States [before 1850]

one simply waited for someone who might be going East

and would be willing, at prices based mostly on dickering, to deposit the letter in a mailbox when reaching Missouri

Congress after deciding against building a post road between Missouri and the Columbia River -- 1846 appropriated \$100,000 to provide bimonthly mail service

between the states and Astoria across the Isthmus of Panama

(later the United States Government scheduled a steamship run around Cape Horn

however, the first mail vessels were sidetracked by the California gold rush they never reached Oregon)

#### STAGECOACH TRAVEL WAS PRIMITIVE

Travel by stagecoach whetted the appetite and contributed to the enjoyment of a good night’s sleep stations were usually at ten to fifteen-mile intervals along the country roads

Frequently the stations were rude farmhouses where overworked housewives “took in boarders”

at some of these, stops were made only long enough for a hasty exchange of horses

at such places passengers hastened to get out of the coach to stretch their cramped legs

if the stop was at meal time or late at night they partook of whatever services

such places had to offer

here the hungry and much bounced-about traveler was as one person noted: **“fed chiefly on small squared bits of tough, fried meat, with fried potatoes, and sometimes pie. (This last you would eat of more freely were it not for the legions of houseflies, which dispute with your every mouthful!)”<sup>200</sup>**

#### DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN APPLIES TO BECOME A CITIZEN OF THE UNITED STATES

Former Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin’s long association with the Hudson’s Bay Company

led the Americans in Oregon City to avoid him as pro-British -- November 1846

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<sup>199</sup> Oscar Osburn Winther, *The Great Northwest*, P. 187.

<sup>200</sup> Oscar Osburn Winther, *The Great Northwest*, P. 202.

McLoughlin consulted Jesse Applegate and Provisional Government Supreme Judge Peter H. Burnett about taking the oath of allegiance to the United States and taking out naturalization papers Burnett had no authority from the United States or other jurisdiction to administer such an oath this provided McLoughlin's enemies opportunity to claim he was a British subject and had not taken the oath of allegiance to the United States nor had he applied to become a citizen of the United States thus his land claims were not legal

#### UNOFFICIAL WORD OF THE BOUNDARY SETTLEMENT REACHES OREGON COUNTRY

Captain Nathaniel Crosbie was master of the American bark *Toulon* sailed into Portland harbor -- November 12, 1846 he brought the first (unofficial) word of the international boundary settlement with Britain Benjamin Stark came to Portland as a super-cargo (master if the cargo) aboard the bark *Toulon* he established a merchandising business in the village of Portland, Oregon

#### PORTLAND, OREGON EXPANDS

After the famous coin toss to name the settlement was won by Francis W. Pettygrove [1844] sixteen city blocks and four streets had been cleared from the forest [1845] Asa L. Lovejoy (who lost the coin toss) sold his interest in 640 acres which constituted the village of Portland to just-arrived Benjamin Stark for five thousand dollars' worth of tanned buckskins -- 1846 Daniel Lownsdale built the first tannery in the Northwest Francis W. Pettygrove joined with Dr. McLoughlin's son David as a partner -- 1846 (within two years they had a granary constructed at Champoeg later Pettygrove moved to California before returning to found the village of Port Townsend [1851]) James Terwilliger established a claim to the South of Portland where he built a blacksmith shop

#### PROVISIONAL HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONTINUES TO FUNCTION

Provisional House of Representatives convened under Speaker Asa Lovejoy -- December 1, 1846 there were serious faults in the existing liquor laws fines were divided among informers, witnesses and officials who tried the case making all parties interested in securing a conviction Provisional House of Representatives passed a license law to regulate the manufacture and sale of liquor

Provisional Governor Abernethy vetoed the new liquor law

#### OFFICIAL NEWS OF OREGON CONVENTION OF 1846 REACHES OREGON CITY

Although the Oregon Treaty between the U.S. and Great Britain had been signed [June 19, 1846] official news did not reach Oregon Country until December 3, 1846

Terms of the Convention of 1846 (Oregon Treaty) when received in Oregon was not considered to be all good news

it was noted Oregon was restricted to the territory south of the 49° north latitude thus giving up the hope of 54°40' as the northern boundary

Although disappointed by the surrender of so much land to Great Britain,

Americans were jubilant their homes would be within the United States of America, they would be citizens of one of its territories

entitled to share the protection and blessings of the Union

and they would be able to officially file their land claims

many American settlers hailed the prospect that their highest hopes were soon to be realized

#### GENERAL STEPHEN WATTS KEARNEY LEADS THE ARMY OF THE WEST TO CALIFORNIA

General Stephen Kearny and his 100 dragoons reached California -- early December

Kearny encountered Marine Lieutenant Archibald Gillespie and about thirty men who gave the news of the ongoing revolt taking place in Los Angeles

Despite the exhaustion of his men as a result of their long march from Santa Fe,

Kearny ordered a surprise attack by his Army of the West on the Californio militia in hopes of a swift victory-- December 6-7

his weary troops were fought to a standstill by the Mexican cavalry as neither side

could claim a decisive victory in the Battle of San Pasqual -- December 6-7, 1846

Kearny himself was slightly wounded

General Stephen Kearney was forced to retreat to nearby ridge and wait

Christopher "Kit" Carson, who had guided Kearney into California, got through the Mexican lines

and returned to San Diego where he informed U.S. Navy Commodore Robert F. Stockton of General Kearny's plight

#### APPLEGATE TRAIL (OLD SOUTH ROAD) RECEIVES TRAVELERS

Once at Fort Hall, Jesse Applegate and the road builders persuaded several pioneers

that the route they had just completed building was shorter and easier

than the water ride down the Columbia River or the newly available Barlow Road

More than one hundred wagons swung into line -- late fall 1846

guided along the South Road by Levi Scott accompanied by Jesse Applegate and other builders

They soon wished they hadn't made the attempt as the terrain was harsh and dry

heat, shortage of pasture, and ill-judged stopovers encouraged by Jesse wore them down

one pioneer, Jesse Quinn Thornton wrote: **"We had toiled on amidst great suffering. We found a desert as dry and blasted, as if it had just been heaved upon from some infernal volcano."**<sup>201</sup>

Thornton never forgave Jesse Applegate

quarrels, brought on by months of hard travel and constantly facing challenges,

delayed the party long enough that winter rains caught them

in the dense forests of southern Oregon

remainder of the journey was a nightmare of rain, mud and flooded streams

Moses "Black" Harris, using his knowledge and skill as a guide,

helped rescue the group stranded on the Applegate Trail in southern Oregon

(he participated in efforts to explore the Cascade Mountain in search of better routes

and continued to guide wagon trains until dying of cholera [1849])

#### APPLEGATE TRAIL (SOUTH ROAD) OPENS SOUTHERN OREGON

Southern route into Oregon had been found to be possible

if not any more practical than any other route

land south of the Willamette Valley had been opened to settlement

(Applegates themselves [two years later in 1848]) cleared new farms for their families

in the Rogue and Umpqua valleys

increasing use of the route would initiate necessary improvements

(In later years the emigrants' worst fears occasionally came true

Klamath Indians sometimes raided passing wagons

more than one wagon train over the years had to be rescued by Army troops or irregulars

riding out of the Willamette Valley)

#### PRESIDENT POLK URGES THAT A TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT BE CREATED IN OREGON

President James Polk urged Congress to create a territorial government in Oregon -- December 8, 1846

he noted that provisional laws excluded slavery from the region

Ensuing debates in Congress raised the issue of the constitutional power of Congress

to prohibit slavery in the territories of the United States

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<sup>201</sup> Winther, Oscar Osburn, *The Great Northwest*, P. 112.

## GENERAL KEARNEY'S ARMY OF THE WEST FINDS SAFETY IN SAN DIEGO

After the Battle of San Pasqual Kearny's battered Army of the West was escorted to safety by U.S. Marines and U.S. Navy bluejacket sailors from San Diego sent by Navy Commodore Robert Stockton they returned to Stockton 's headquarters at San Diego -- December 11, 1846

## COMMODORE STOCKTON AND GENERAL KEARNEY JOIN FORCES AT SAN DIEGO

Commodore David Stockton and General Stephen Kearny initially disputed over the right of command as the American forces combined -- December 12, 1846

Commodore Stockton's more than 600 sailors and marines was assured the command position over General Kearny's remaining force of about sixty dragoons of the Army of the West and two companies of Lieutenant-Colonel John C. Fremont's California Battalion

## PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT SCALES BACK

In light of the international agreement the political agenda was pared back to only essential business with the international boundary settled but no territorial government in place,

Provisional Government filled the void

it provided for laws governing land claims, maintained taxation and a court system pioneers assumed the next session of Congress, which was just about to begin,

would establish a territorial government for Oregon Country

they knew this was also the desire of President James K. Polk

with little to accomplish the Provisional House of Representatives adjourned -- December 19, 1846

## COMMODORE STOCKTON AND GENERAL KEARNEY COMBINE THEIR FORCES

Stockton's conquest of California would not be complete unless he could rein in unruly Los Angeles Stockton, Kearny and Fremont set out toward Los Angeles with their combined force accompanied by six cannons -- December 29, 1846

## PUGET SOUND AGRICULTURAL COMPANY CONTINUES TO EXPAND

An employee of Puget Sound Agricultural Company

stated that about twelve hundred acres were enclosed

these were subdivided by fences and ditches into fields of convenient size

from fifty to one hundred acres

portions of this land were under cultivated grasses, and pastures were fully stocked

Altogether, 1,432½ acres were under cultivation by the company -- winter 1846-1847

crops included wheat, oats, barley, peas, turnips, beans and potatoes

## OREGON COUNTRY NOT COMPLETELY FORGOTTEN

After approving the U.S.-Canadian international boundary

Congress had failed to further act in behalf of Oregon Country -- 1846-1847

President Polk felt a deep interest in bringing the Far West into the Union

this caused Secretary of State James Buchanan to write a letter to people of Oregon Country encouraging them to expect favorable action at the next Congressional [1847] session  
Congress was already meeting when the letter arrived at its destination

U.S. Senator Thomas Hart Benton (Missouri) also wrote a letter received in Oregon Country

he threw the blame for inaction on John C. Calhoun, but declared: **“You will not be outlawed for not admitting slavery.... I promise you this in the name of the South, as well as of the North....”**<sup>202</sup>

## PEOPLE LIVING AT THE WAILLATPU MISSION FACE A VERY COLD WINTER

In her journal Catherine Sager (Mrs. Clark Pringle) described the effects of the very cold winter

on the natives: **“The following winter [1846-1847] was very cold, the coldest ever known in the country, and the Indians charged the whites with bringing the cold weather upon them. Old Jimmy, a Catholic Indian, claimed the power of working miracles, and said he brought the cold upon them (the Indians) to punish them for their unbelief and wickedness. They paid him liberally to bring about a change and finally a thaw did come and he claimed the merit of it.”**<sup>203</sup>

## AMERICANS FIGHT A BATTLE IN CALIFORNIA

U.S. Navy Commodore Robert Stockton, General Stephen Kearny and Lieutenant-Colonel Fremont fought a pitched battle against the Californio militia under General Jose Maria Flores while crossing the San Gabriel River -- January 8, 1847

Kearny ordered the artillery unlimbered to cover the crossing -- January 8

but Stockton countered the order and began to move across the river

this crossing proved to be especially difficult as the 560-man force came under fire

Kearny led and commanded the assault force while Stockton stayed with the cannons

Battle of San Gabriel lasted an hour and a half and was decisive in achieving control of Los Angeles (and today's southern California)

## LOS ANGELES FALLS TO THE AMERICANS

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<sup>202</sup> Joseph Schafer, PhD., *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, P. 187.

<sup>203</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 526.

Stockton, Kearny and Fremont pursued General Flores's Californio militia from the San Gabriel River west toward the Los Angeles River where they defeated Flores's Californio militia in the Battle of La Mesa -- January 9, 1847

After two days of fighting the combined Stockton-Kearny force reoccupied Los Angeles -- January 10 all of southern California was secure

#### AMERICAN TROOPS TAKE CONTROL OF CALIFORNIA'S GOVERNMENT

Mexican General Flores's Californio militia surrendered and the Treaty of Cahuenga was signed Lieutenant-Colonel Fremont proposed terms of the treaty that were so lenient that native Californians held Fremont as a friend -- January 13, 1847

#### CONTROL OF THE NEW CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT IS IN DISPUTE

Command issues between General Kearny and Commodore Stockton heated up General Stephen Kearny, as ranking the Army officer, claimed leadership of California Commodore Robert Stockton had named himself the Military Governor of California unfortunately the War Department had not worked out a protocol for who would be in charge Stockton seized on the Treaty of Cahuenga as the beginning of the American government in California Stockton appointed his aide, John Charles Fremont military governor of California Kearny claimed the military governorship for himself but was ignored

Lieutenant-Colonel Fremont refused to recognize General Kearny as his superior officer (General Stephen Kearny established his military headquarters at Monterey, California he asked Lieutenant-Colonel John C. Fremont to report there for duty

Fremont refused to obey Kearny's orders and Kearny had him arrested charges of insubordination and mutiny were pressed against Fremont

General Kearny left California for St. Louis accompanied by Fremont [May 31, 1847]

Commodore Robert F. Stockton left California [June 20, 1847]

following a court martial in Washington City that found him guilty, Fremont resigned (President James K Polk commuted Fremont's conviction)

#### BILL TO CREATE OREGON TERRITORY PASSES THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

United States was deeply divided on the issue of slavery

thirteen pro-slavery states were represented by 136 Congressmen and twenty-six U.S. Senators

thirteen anti-slavery states were represented by 91 Congressmen and twenty-six U.S. Senators

Oregon Country's Provisional Government had outlawed slavery in the Organic Laws

they had included in the Organic Laws Thomas Jefferson's words in the Ordinance of 1787 that: **“neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime”** would ever be permitted

U.S. House of Representatives with its greater number of northern (anti-slavery) Congressmen passed the “Oregon Bill” creating a new territory -- January 16, 1847

#### REV. HENRY SPALDING ENJOYS LITTLE SUCCESS AT LAPWAI MISSION

Rev. Henry Spalding commenced a long series of letters regarding Lapwai Mission to the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions -- February 1847  
he described the desertion of the mission by nearly all the Indians at Lapwai  
he noted the closing of his school  
he described destruction of property and acts of personal violence carried out by the Indians  
he related the natives general return to gamboling, licentiousness and sorcery

#### JESSE QUINN THORNTON INFLUENCES OREGON COUNTRY

Abolitionist Attorney Jesse Quinn Thornton and his wife Agnes (usually known as Nancy) had come west to escape the ravages of slavery and as a response to editor Horace Greely's call: “Move West Young Man”  
they had arrived in Oregon Country with the first crossing of the Applegate Trail [1846]  
trail leaders led their party into severe hardships and suffering on their new southern route  
Thornton maintained his great bitterness toward Jesse Applegate and David Goff  
Provisional Governor George Abernethy selected Jesse Quinn Thornton to serve as Provisional Supreme Judge -- February 20, 1847

#### BISHOP FRANCIS BLANCHET SAILS BACK TO THE PACIFIC COAST

Bishop Francis Blanchet found passage to the Pacific coast on a French ship, *L'Etoile du Matin* accompanied by six secular priests, four Jesuit priests, three lay brothers and seven Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur: Sister Laurence, Sister Alphonse Marie, Sister Renilde, Sister Odelie, Sister Francisca, Sister Aldegonde, and Sister Mary Bernard  
Bishop Blanchet and his traveling companions sailed from France -- February 22, 1847

#### BILL TO CREATE OREGON TERRITORY STALLS THE U.S. SENATE

Oregon Bill to create Oregon Territory moved to the United States Senate where it was presented by U.S. Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois  
Oregon Bill was strongly opposed by pro-slavery leaders like John C. Calhoun of South Carolina



Oregon Bill was tabled (delayed) in the U.S. Senate -- March 3, 1847  
in an effort was led by pro-slavery Southern Democrat Senators  
who were concerned about the balance of power in the United States Senate  
this kept alive the issue of slavery in the West  
which had been forbidden Mexican Territory under Mexican law

#### SOME PEOPLE IN OREGON COUNTRY ARE CONCERNED ABOUT TERRITORIAL STATUS

As anxious as most of the people in Oregon Country were for the protection of the United States  
that would be provided with territorial status the idea of self-government remained strong in places  
it was believed that President James K. Polk had a list of territorial officials already made out  
pioneers in Oregon called for a convention of delegates **“for the purpose of  
recommending to the Executive of the United States suitable persons to fill the various offices that  
will be created upon the passage of a bill establishing a territorial government in Oregon”**<sup>204</sup>

#### BISHOP A.M.A. BLANCHET TRAVELS FROM MONTREAL TO HIS NEW ASSIGNMENT

Bishop of Walla Walla Augustine Magloire Alexander (A.M.A.) Blanchet  
traveled from Montreal, Canada toward St. Louis on his way to his new assignment  
in Oregon Country -- March 4, 1847  
Bishop A.M.A. Blanchet was accompanied by Father Jean-Baptiste Brouillet  
Father Louis Roussau and four lay Brothers  
at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania Blanchet declared his intention to become an American citizen  
at St. Louis Father Charles A. Richard and two deacons joined the pilgrimage

#### 1<sup>ST</sup> REGIMENT OF NEW YORK VOLUNTEERS ARRIVES IN CALIFORNIA

Colonel Jonathan D. Stevenson had raised ten companies of seventy-seven men each  
to form the 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment of New York Volunteers  
they had traveled in three merchant ships and the sloop USS *Preble*  
these ships reached San Francisco Bay during the month of March 1847  
after desertions and deaths in transit had taken their toll 648 men arrived in California  
these troops finally allowed General Stephen Kearny to assume command of California  
as the ranking Army officer  
(additional troops would continue to arrive throughout the year)

#### BUSINESS DEVELOPMENTS IN OREGON COUNTRY

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<sup>204</sup> Oregon Historical Quarterly, Volume 11, P. 346.

John W. Shively opened first post office west of the Rockies in Astoria -- March 9, 1847

William G. T'Vault, Oregon City's first postmaster,  
replaced George Curry as editor of the *Oregon Spectator*

T'Vault maintained the strongly Democratic support for which the newspaper was known  
Michael Simmons constructed first sawmill on Puget Sound at Tumwater Falls -- 1847

Simon Plamondon, one of the first British settlers north of the Columbia River,  
built the first brick kiln was built on his Cowlitz River farm -- 1847

Mission Mill at the falls of the Willamette River was again sold -- this time to James McKay  
who operated both a flour mill and a lumber mill at the dam on the river

Mission Mill remained in operation for over forty years

#### WASCOPAM MISSION IS SOLD TO DR. MARCUS WHITMAN

Dr. Whitman was conscious of impending disaster as his own letters show

he had been repeatedly warned of Indian trouble by Hudson's Bay Company men

Cayuse had become so insolent and surly that Dr. Whitman seems to have thought seriously  
of abandoning the mission and removing his family

Wascopam Mission at the Dalles, one hundred sixty miles downstream from Waiilatpu,  
was sold to Dr. Whitman for \$600 -- April 1847

at least partly to keep the increasingly active Jesuits from getting it

Dr. Whitman established a Presbyterian Mission at the site

Whitman wrote to the American Board that he did not know **“whether to stay or go, nor at what time. Whether it be demanded by the Indians or the Board, I think in the course of the ensuing summer I shall locate a claim for land in the lower country to be ready in case of retirement.”**<sup>205</sup>

#### END OF THE METHODIST MISSIONARY ERA CAME WITH SUDDENNESS

Methodist missionaries had had little success

fourteen years after establishing Mission Bottom (Champoeg)

Methodist's ended their missionary effort in the Willamette Valley

they had 348 Methodist Church members in Oregon County -- eight were Indian

Rev. George Gary having replaced Rev. Jason Lee as Methodist missionary leader

Gary closed Methodist Chemeketa (Salem) Mission and sold all of the properties -- 1847  
keeping only Wascopam Mission at the Dalles

#### PROVISIONAL GOVERNOR GEORGE ABERNETHY ELECTED AGAIN

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<sup>205</sup> George W. Fuller, *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, P.145.

Once again Provisional Governor George Abernathy who represented the Methodist Party interests who wished to protect the large tracts of land claimed by the Methodist missions ran against A.L. Lovejoy representing the interests of the American Party and the desire for Territorial status

In a very close election Abernathy defeated his competitor General A.L. Lovejoy -- June 1847 Willamette Valley and all other counties but one had given Abernathy four hundred and seventy-seven votes while Lovejoy received five hundred eighteen Lewis County, north of the Columbia and last to be heard from, gave sixty-one votes for Abernathy and two for Lovejoy, changing the result Provisional Governor Abernathy retained his office by a margin of sixteen votes

#### GENERAL STEPHEN KEARNY TAKES COMMAND IN CALIFORNIA

After the arrival of the 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment of New York General Kearny was able to assume command Commodore David Stockton left California overland -- June 20, 1847 (he arrived at Washington City [about December 1, 1847]) 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment of New York took over Stockton's Pacific Squadron military and garrison duties along with Lieutenant-Colonel John C. Fremont's California Battalion and Mormon Battalion General Kearny, as the new commander, appointed his own territorial military governor a he ordered Lieutenant-Colonel John C. Fremont to resign his position

#### BISHOP FRANCIS BLANCHET ARRIVES AT ASTORIA

After completing the voyage from France, Archbishop Blanchet reached Astoria -- August 15, 1847 also aboard the ship *L'Etoile du Matin* were four Jesuit priests, six secular priests, secular priests had not taken vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience a they lived in the world at large rather than in a religious institute seven Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur: Sister Laurence, Sister Alphonse Marie, Sister Renilde, Sister Odelie, Sister Francisca, Sister Aldegonde, and Sister Mary Bernard and three lay brothers all of whom had joined Blanchet in Europe

#### GENERAL STEPHEN KEARNY LEAVES CALIFORNIA

General Kearny left California and returned to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas -- August 1847 he ordered Lieutenant-Colonel John C. Fremont to accompany him (Fremont was arrested when they arrived at Fort Leavenworth -- August 22, 1847)

he was charged with mutiny, disobedience of orders, assumption of powers,  
along with several other military offenses

he was ordered by General Kearny to report to the adjutant general in Washington City  
to stand for court-martial

Fremont was convicted of mutiny, disobedience of a superior officer and military misconduct  
and ordered that he receive dishonorable discharge

while approving the court's decision, President James K. Polk

quickly commuted Fremont's sentence due to the services he had rendered over his career

Fremont resigned his commission in the U.S. Army in disgust and settled in California

his colorful career was well publicized and created additional interest in Oregon Country:

he published his exploits in the West: *To Oregon and Northern California*

his memoir was reprinted many times under different titles

Fremont was later elected one of the first U.S. senators from California

and was the first presidential candidate of the new Republican Party [1856]

General Stephen Kearny remained military governor of California through August

(when he traveled to Washington City and was welcomed as a hero

he was reassigned to duty in Mexico where received a brevet promotion to major general

over the heated opposition of John C. Fremont's father-in-law Senator Thomas Hart Benton

General Fremont served as military commander at Veracruz

and later at Mexico City until an attack of yellow fever ended his career)

#### BISHOP FRANCIS BLANCHET REACHES OREGON CITY

Bishop Francis Blanchet arrived at St. Paul Mission in the Willamette Valley -- August 26, 1847  
after an absence of almost three and a half years

(Bishop Francis Blanchet with untiring devotion labored for the next thirty-two years

among his people -- he eventually served 1,200 local parishioners

at St. John The Apostle Cathedral in Oregon City)

Seven Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur brought with them from Belgium two weaving machines,  
shoe-making equipment, new stoves and utensils

these and other items were placed in the attic over the kitchen at St. Paul Mission

in anticipation of their use in the Oregon City house

Six other sisters of Notre Dame de Namur were already in residence in Oregon Country

they had opened Sainte Marie De Willamette Academy for girls opened

in the small Catholic community of St. Paul, Oregon [1844] by the

Recently arrive seven sisters of Notre Dame de Namur planned to open another school

this one to be located in Oregon City where Dr. John McLoughlin had given a block of his Oregon City claim to the Sisters [1846] four blocks north of the Catholic church it was anticipated a new home for the Sisters would be built on this block

#### REV. HENRY SPALDING ARRIVES AT WAILLATPU

He journeyed from Lapwai Mission to deliver seventeen mule loads of grain and to put Eliza, his ten-year-old daughter, in the Waiilatpu school Indians in the area of the Lapwai appeared to be nervous

#### BISHOP A.M.A BLANCHET REACHES FORT WALLA WALLA

Bishop of Walla Walla Augustine Magloire Alexander (A.M.A.) Blanchet accompanied by Vicar-General Very Rev. J.B.A. Brouillet, Father Louis Roussau, Father Charles A. Richard, two deacons and four lay Brothers arrived at Fort Walla Walla -- September 4, 1847

Bishop A.M.A. Blanchet was surprised to find no settlement but only a rough fort he immediately began working to identify potential sites for mission stations he met with Hudson's Bay Company officials, local tribal leaders and Dr. Marcus Whitman and Rev. Henry Spalding at the fort Rev. Spalding agreed to send the Catholics needed supplies

#### GENERAL WINFIELD SCOTT WINS VICTORIES DURING THE MEXICAN WAR

General Winfield Scott invaded southern Mexico and captured Vera Cruz after an unbroken string of victories he moved on Mexico City which he captured -- September 14, 1847

#### CONGRESS HAD DONE NOTHING TO ORGANIZE A GOVERNMENT FOR OREGON

Even though the international boundary question had been settled the year before and armed troops intended to protect the Oregon Trail were supposed to be on the way in fact, these soldiers had been diverted to the Mexican War at a minimum, the attack at Waiilatpu Mission showed the need for protection and law in Oregon Provisional Government continued to function as best it could there was great fear of additional attacks if the upriver tribes should unite and destroy all of the white people in Oregon Country but locally little advanced preparation had been made for such an attack by the natives

## TERRIBLE MEASLE PIDEemics ARRIVE IN OREGON COUNTRY

When white settlers increased dramatically in numbers in Oregon Country  
Indians became alarmed and commenced to molest them  
it was an ominous introduction to the 4,000 to 5,000 immigrants  
who made up the migration of 1847

Immigration to Oregon Country on Great Medicine Road

convinced the Indians that Delaware Indian Tom Hill's predictions were correct  
he had stated an endless stream of whites would take all of the Indians' land

When the wagons began straggling out of the Blue Mountains they brought measles with them  
many of their children were sick with a virulent form of measles

Measles spread rapidly from The Dalles through Snake Indian Country

Indians had no immunity and as a result more than half the Cayuse tribe died  
in conditions of unutterable filth and misery

## DR. MARCUS WHITMAN COMES UNDER INDIAN SUSPICION

Dr. Whitman did what he could as he treated both whites and natives sick with measles  
many natives who were treated by Dr. Whitman died  
whites naturally suffered less from the illness

Suspicion arose that Dr. Whitman was allowing Indian children to die or was trying to kill them  
or at the least he was not trying to cure them

Dr. Whitman knew of the Indians' feelings -- but paid little attention  
his own affairs were devouring most of his time

he had just purchased the Wascopam Mission at The Dalles,  
partly to keep the increasingly active Jesuits from getting it  
transfer of ownership of the mission had to be put in order  
he was involved in transporting equipment upriver for a new grist mill at Waiilatpu Mission  
and in establishing a sawmill in the Blue Mountains  
as usual, a number of destitute immigrants had congregated at his station

## BISHOP A.M.A. BLANCHET OPENS THE FIRST MISSION IN WALLA WALLA DIOCESE

St. Rose's Mission, the first Catholic mission in the Walla Walla Dioces  
was located at the confluence of the Columbia and Yakima rivers  
about forty miles northwest of Waiilatpu Mission

St. Rose's Mission was placed in the charge of Father Pascal Ricard

## OREGON PIONEERS REMAIN CONCERNED ABOUT THE CREATION OF OREGON TERRITORY

Many questions remained unresolved in Oregon Country regarding their new status when Oregon became a territory of the United States  
great concern was expressed among independent-minded Oregon pioneers  
great concern that remained unresolved regarding the ownership of land  
would the Methodist missions be able to retain their vast properties under U.S. law  
what rights would British subjects have to possess land  
most notable was the dispute over the Oregon City claim of Dr. John McLoughlin  
Numerous meetings were held to discuss these and similar issues  
but, of course, solutions lay 3,000 miles to the east in the nation's capital  
it was decided to send a delegate chosen by the people of Oregon Country -- fall 1847  
to represent their interests in Washington City  
however, this effort ended in failure as no delegate could be agreed on

## OREGON PIONEERS REQUEST A VOICE IN SELECTING THEIR TERRITORIAL OFFICIALS

Independent-minded pioneers of Oregon Country held a convention in Lafayette, Oregon for the purpose of memorializing President James K. Polk and members of congress  
to appoint Oregon Country settlers to territorial offices rather than outsiders-- fall 1847  
delegates to the convention selected a committee of three members  
to draft a Memorial to Congress upon the needs of Oregon  
Judge Peter H. Burnett, George L. Curry and L.A. Rice were selected  
although all three committee members signed the petition  
it was written in Burnett's handwriting

This Memorial was a protest against further neglect of the region by the United States government

- it depicted the needs of settlers to receive additional considerations:
  - set forth settlers' inability to deal with Indians and criminals,
  - settlers asked that the title to the lands earned by them might be protected;
- it portrayed the resources and importance of the territory;
- it concluded: **"We think we merit the respectful consideration of our government. It is with**

**our country whether she will hear us or not."**<sup>206</sup>

Lafayette Convention did not attempt to reconcile who might be the proper person to carry this Memorial to the seat of government to urge these considerations on the President and Congress

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<sup>206</sup> Elwood Evans, *History of the Pacific Northwest: Oregon and Washington: Embracing ...*, Volume 1, P. 275.

## SECOND CATHOLIC MISSION IN THE WALLA WALLA DIOCESE IS OPENED

Bishop of Walla Walla Augustine Magloire Alexander (A.M.A.) Blanchet

and Father Jean-Baptiste Brouillet left Fort Walla Walla

and established St. Anne's Mission in a cabin on the Umatilla River near The Dalles  
about twenty-five miles south of Waiilatpu Mission

Bishop A.M.A. Blanchet settled at The Dalles -- his field of labor as the Bishop of Walla Walla

extended from the summit of the Cascade Mountains to the Great Divide of the Rockies  
and from Fort Hall on the Snake River in the south  
to the Canadian Kootenay Country in the north

Bishop A.M.A. Blanchet endured many hardships and braved hostile animals

and even more antagonistic men:

- he established missions, built churches, founded academies and colleges,
- he started schools for the Indians,
- he begged for priests in Canada and abroad
- he obtained Catholic sisters to open hospitals and other institutions

## CATHOLIC CHURCH ARRIVES IN THE KITTITAS VALLEY<sup>207</sup>

(Lay missionaries Charles M. Pandosy, Eugene Casimir Chirouse and Celestin Verney  
had departed from their native France)

they crossed America with a wagon train and arrived at Fort Walla Walla -- October 5, 1847

Yakama chief Owhi visited Fort Perces and asked that missionaries be sent to his people

in response, Brother George Blanchet (no relation to the Catholic Bishop brothers)

and another missionary, Brother Celestine Verney, traveled to the Kittitas Valley

they started building a small structure on Manastash Creek to serve as a mission,

but were unable to complete their work on the Immaculate Conception Mission

In the meantime, Charles M. Pandosy, Eugene Casimir Chirouse prepared themselves for the ministry

## MEMORIAL TO THE PRESIDENT AND CONGRESS IS TAKEN TO WASHINGTON CITY

Provisional Governor George Abernathy wanted a Presidential appointment

as the governor if the new territory

Jesse Quinn Thornton resigned as Supreme Judge -- November 7, 1847

he was a young attorney, but also a strait-laced abolitionist who supported the mission group

Governor Abernathy, acting on his own authority, sent Thornton by ship to Washington City

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<sup>207</sup> Paula Becker, Essay 7496, Historylink.org, October 12, 2005.



he carried the Lafayette Memorial to the President and Congress  
to plead for official recognition of Oregon Country  
Thornton also was given a letter stating George Abernathy spoke for all Oregonians  
this letter did a great deal to solidify opposition against Provisional Governor Abernathy  
as he did not speak for all Oregonians

#### JESSE QUINN THORNTON JOURNEYS TO WASHINGTON CITY

Sailed on bark *Whiton* -- November 10, 1847  
bound for San Francisco where he was to sell flour and other commodities to defray expenses  
Thornton found the sloop-of-war *Portsmouth* at San Jose, California  
he secured passage bound for Boston

#### ANTI-ABERNETHY POLITICAL PARTY FORMS IN OREGON COUNTRY

Governor Abernathy was sharply criticized for sending his own emissary, Jesse Quinn Thornton,  
to carry the Memorial to Washington City  
many felt Thornton represented the interests of the Methodist Missions and George Abernathy  
rather than the settlers in general  
this overstepping of his authority allowed Abernathy's enemies an opportunity  
American Party members depicted him as grasping for power and control  
American Party members became focused on depriving Provisional Governor George Abernathy  
of any possibility to becoming the governor of Oregon Territory when that came about  
they formed the Anti-Abernathy Party -- November 1847

#### DR. MARCUS WHITMAN'S WAILLATPU MISSION CONTINUES TO GROW

Waiilatpu Mission had become a small settlement by the end of November 1847  
and served as an important stop on the Oregon Trail  
Waiilatpu was fast becoming the most substantial and comfortable of all the stations  
from time to time, the other missionaries showed signs of envy toward the Whitmans  
Dr. Marcus and Narcissa Whitman's immediate family consisted of nine children:  
Perrin B. Whitman -- seventeen-year-old nephew who arrived in [1843]  
David Malin Cortez (age 10) -- a Spanish-Indian waif  
seven Sager children: John age 17, Francis age 15, Catherine age 13, Elizabeth age 10,  
Matilda Jane age 8, Hannah Louise age 6, Henrietta age 4  
also living at the mission as borders and attending school were two half-breed girls:  
Mary Ann Bridger (age 11) daughter of Jim Bridger

Helen Mar Meek (age 10) daughter of Joe Meek  
eighteen additional children of wintering pioneers also lived at the mission station  
a small cabin was built at the sawmill to house two emigrant families  
whom Dr. Whitman hired that autumn for a season of sawing  
In all, Dr. Whitman and Narcissa were providing for fifty-nine people  
living at the Waiilatpu Mission:  
seventeen men, thirteen women, and twenty-nine children  
twenty-two in the mission house  
twenty-nine in the immigrant house  
eight in the blacksmith shop  
in addition two emigrant families, thirteen people, whom Dr. Whitman hired that autumn  
for a season of sawing lived in a small cabin twenty miles away

#### POOR RELATIONS BETWEEN THE RACES EXISTED AT WAILLATPU MISSION

Indians held grievances against Dr. Marcus Whitman:

- measles epidemic wiped out half of the Cayuse Tribe -- Indian children died of the disease
- poison meat to kill wolves was put out by William Gray and eaten by the natives
- Dr. Whitman always appeared to be siding with whites against the natives

Jo Lewis and Tom Hill two Eastern metis Indians

circulated the charge that Whitman had caused the measles epidemic

Lewis seems to have become possessed with the idea of a massacre

he circulated the idea Dr. Whitman was poisoning the natives

#### CATHERINE SAGER (MRS. CLARK PRINGLE) NOTED CONDITIONS AT WAILLATPU

Catherine set the scene for the coming events: **“In the fall of 1847 the emigration over the mountain brought the measles. It spread among the Indians, and owing to their manner of living it proved very fatal. It was customary for emigrant families who arrived late to winter at the station, and some seven or eight families had put up there to spend the winter of 1847. Among the arrivals was a half-breed named Jo Lewis, who had joined the emigration at Fort Hall. Much against his will the doctor admitted this person into his family for the winter. We none of us liked him; he seemed surly and morose. There was also a Frenchman named Joseph Stanfield who had been in the doctor’s employ since the year of 1845. Up to the year of 1847 the Protestant missions had been the only religious influence among the [Walla Walla] Indians. In the fall of this year the Catholic Church established missions among them, and the teachings of the two clashed. The Indian mind is so constructed that he cannot reconcile the different ‘isms,’ consequently they became much worked**

up on the subject. Many long talks occurred between them and Dr. Whitman in reference to the two religious systems. Owing to the sickness and these other causes, the natives began to show an insolent and hostile feeling. It was now late in the season and the weather was very inclement. Whitman's large family were all sick, and the disease was raging fearfully among the Indians who were rapidly dying. I saw from five to six buried daily. The field was open for creating mischief, and the two Joes [Jo Lewis and Joe Stanfield] improved it. Jo Lewis was the chief agent; his cupidity had been awakened and he and his associate expected to reap a large spoil."<sup>208</sup>

#### REV. HENRY SPALDING ARRIVES AT WAILATPU MISSION

Rev. Henry Spalding brought his daughter, ten-year-old Eliza to attend school at Wailatpu Mission

Catharine Sager reported in her journal, "**She was the second child born of white parents west of the Rocky Mountains, Dr. Whitman's child [Alice Clarissa] being the first. She had lived her ten years of life among the natives, and spoke the language fluently.**"<sup>209</sup>

#### DR. MARCUS WHITMAN IS CALLED TO THE UMATILLA VALLEY

Dr. Whitman received a request for medical assistance -- November 27, 1847

from a native lodge in the Umatilla Valley thirty-some miles to the southwest of Wailatpu he was reluctant to go

several of the people at the mission were sick,

including three of the seven orphaned Sager children,

besides, each day Indians were dying within sight of Wailatpu

there were other pressing needs that demanded his attention at home but he was aware

Bishop A.M.A. Blanchet was opening St. Anne's Catholic mission in the Umatilla Valley

Dr. Whitman was concerned about the influence this might have on the Indians

Dr. Whitman reluctantly answered the request for assistance

he was accompanied to the Umatilla Valley by the recently arrived Rev. Henry Spalding

Catherine Sager reported: [Dr. Whitman and Rev. Spalding] "**...rode to the Umatilla to visit the Indians there and hold a meeting for worship with them upon the Sabbath. They rode all night in heavy rain.**"<sup>210</sup>

as the two missionaries rode through the stormy night -- November 27, 1847

Rev. Spalding's horse fell, wrenching the rider's knee

because of the injury Spalding, amicably enough, accepted an invitation

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<sup>208</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 528.-529

<sup>209</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 529.

<sup>210</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 529.

to spend the next day and following night at the Catholic mission

#### DR. WHITMAN TREATED SICK INDIANS OF THE UMATILLA VALLEY

Leaving Rev. Henry Spalding at the Umatilla Valley St. Anne's Catholic mission,

Dr. Whitman went to the village home of the sick natives -- November 28, 1847

Catherine Sager relates: **"Dr. Whitman spent the next day visiting the sick, and returned to the lodge where Mr. Spaulding [sic] was staying, late in the afternoon, nerly worn out with fatigue. The condition of his family [at Waiilatpu] made it imperative that he should return home, so arrangements were made for Mr. Spaulding to remain a few days on the Umatilla to visit among and preach to the Indians."**<sup>211</sup>

#### DR. WHITMAN MEETS A FRIEND ON THE TRAIL FROM THE UMATILLA VALLEY

Under cover of darkness Dr. Whitman's Indian friend, Sticcus, came to the doctor

risking his own life, Sticcus told Whitman of threats against his life -- November 28, 1847

Catherine Sager relates the incident in her journal: **"As Dr. Whitman was mounting his horse to leave, Stickas, a friendly Christian Indian, who was the owner of the lodge [where Rev. Spalding was staying] came out and told him that 'Jo Lewis was making trouble; that he was telling his (Stickas's) people that he doctor and Mr. Spaulding [sic] were poisoning the Indians so as to give their country to his own people.' He said, 'I do not believe him, but some do, and I fear they will do you harm; you had better to away for awhile until my people have better hearts'."**<sup>212</sup>

After accomplishing as much as he could for the sick natives -- November 28, 1847

Dr. Whitman returned to St. Anne's Catholic mission to check on Rev. Spalding

Whitman announced that he felt he must return straight home

he borrowed a mule from the Catholics to replace his own exhausted horse,

and hurried off through the deepening November dusk

#### DR. WHITMAN REACHES WAILLATPU

Catherine Sager continues her account: **"Dr. Whitman arrived at home about 10 o'clock that night having ridden twenty-five miles after sundown. He sent my two brothers, who were sitting up with the sick, to bed saying that he would watch the remainder of the night. After they had retired he examined the patients one after the other. )I also was sick at the time.) Coming to Helen, she spoke and told his wife, who was lying on the bed, that Helen was dying. He sat and watched her for some**

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<sup>211</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 529.

<sup>212</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 529

**time, when she rallied and seemed better. I had noticed that he seemed to be troubled when he first came home, but concluded that it was anxiety in reference to the sick children.”<sup>213</sup>**

Narcissa was still up when the doctor returned home

she was watching Helen Mar Meek and Louise Sager, one of her adopted daughters

both girls were desperately ill

Catherine Sager relates the Whitman’s conversation

talking as privately as possible with his wife, “...he related to her what Stickas [sic] had told him that day.... After conversing for some time his wife retired to another room and the doctor kept his lonely watch. Observing that I was restless, he surmised that I had overheard the conversation. By kind and soothing words he allayed my fears and I went to sleep. I can see it all now and remember just how he looked.”<sup>214</sup>

Narcissa was devastated by the news

she seemed so weary that Marcus, who had had little enough sleep himself, sent her to bed

Narcissa locked herself in her room and cried all night

Dr. Whitman continued the vigil himself until breakfast

#### FATEFUL DAY BEGINS AT WAILLATPU MISSION

After breakfast, Dr. Whitman went wearily outside to make arrangements for killing a beef

an activity that always took place in the yard of the mission house

Catherine Sager describes the day -- Monday, November 29, 1847

**“The [day]...dawned a cold, foggy morning. It would seem as though the sun was afraid to look upon the bloody deed the day was to bring forth, and that nature was weeping over the wickedness of man. Father’s (Dr. Marcus Whitman) brow was serene, with no trace of the storm that had raged in his breast during the night. He was somewhat more serious than usual. Most of the children were better, only three being dangerous; two of these afterwards died. We saw nothing of mother (Mrs. Whitman). One of the girls put some breakfast on a plate and carried it to her. She was sitting with her face buried in her handkerchief, sobbing bitterly. Taking the food, she motioned the child to leave. The food was there, untouched, next morning.**

**“An Indian child had died during the night, and was to be brought to the station for burial. While awaiting the coming of the corpse, Dr. Whitman sat reading and conversing with his assistant, Mr. [Andrew] Rogers, upon the difficulties that seemed to surround him....**

**“Being informed of the arrival of the corpse, he arose, and after calling his wife and giving her directions in regard to the sick children, he wended his way to the graveyard.**

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<sup>213</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 529.

<sup>214</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 529-230.

**“A beef had to be killed for the use of the station and my brother, Francis, accompanied by Jo Stanfield, had gone early to the range and driven it in, and three or four men were dressing it near the grist mill, which was running, grinding grists for the Indians.”<sup>215</sup>**

Late morning found the beef hanging from a tree and the butchering in progress

Jo Stanfield, Nathan Kimball, Jacob Hoffman, and perhaps one other were butchering the animal

Andrew Rodgers, Dr. Whitman’s assistant, was working in the garden

Walter March was in the grist mill where he was grinding wheat

Peter D. Hall, a carpenter, was laying the upper floor in a building

Isaac Gilliland, a tailor by trade, was in the immigrant house sewing a new suit for Dr. Whitman

#### DAY’S ACTIVITIES AT WAILLATPU PROGRESS

Catherine Sager continued: **“Upon the return from the funeral, the doctor remarked that none but the relatives were at the burying, although large numbers were assembled near by; but it might be owing to the beef being killed, as it was their custom to gather at such times. His wife requested him to go upstairs and see Miss [Lorinda] Bewley, who was quite sick. He complied, returning shortly with a troubled look on his countenance. He crossed the room to a sash door that fronted the mill and stood for some moments drumming upon the glass with his fingers. Turning around he said: ‘Poor Lorinda is in trouble and does not know the cause. I found her weeping and she said there was a presentiment of evil on her mind that she could not overcome. I will get her some medicine, and wife, you take it up to her, and try to comfort her a little, for I have failed in the attempt.’**

**“As he said this he walked to the medicine case and was making a selection. His wife had gone to the pantry for milk for one of the children; the kitchen was full of Indians and their boisterous manner alarmed her. She fled to the sitting room, bolting the door in the face of the savages who tried to pass in. She had not taken her hand from the lock when the Indians rapped and asked for the doctor.”<sup>216</sup>**

#### MASSACRE BEGINS AT WAILLATPU MISSION

Dr. Whitman was sitting at his desk writing --1:00 P.M. Monday, November 29, 1847

when he was called to the kitchen doorway by two Cayuse Indians

Tamahas engaged him in conversation

Tamsucky came up behind him and a tomahawk crashed into the doctor’s skull

Tiloukaikt chopped the doctor’s face so badly that his features could not be recognized

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<sup>215</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 530.

<sup>216</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 531.

According to Peter Skene Ogden "... [Dr. Whitman] **did not for an instant lose his composure, but calmly returning into the house, drew a chair toward the fire and sat down, his hands clasped together in prayer, resigned to whatever fate might await him.**"<sup>217</sup>

Seventeen-year-old John Sager, who was winding twine in the kitchen at the time,  
ran toward a pistol on the wall -- he was killed by a rifle shot

**"She [Narcissa Whitman] had scarcely sat down when we were all startled by an explosion. Listening for a moment she seemed to be reassured, crossed the room and took up the youngest child [Henrietta Sager]. She sat down with this child in her arms. Just then Mrs. [Marguerite] Osborne came in from an adjoining room and sat down. This was the first time this lady had been out of her room for weeks, having been very ill.**

**"She [Mrs. Whitman] had scarcely sat down when we were all startled by [another] explosion that seemed to shake the house. The two women sprang to their feet and stood with white faces and distended eyes. The children rushed out doors, some of them without clothes, as we were taking a bath. Placing the child on the bed, Mrs. Whitman called us back and started for the kitchen, but changing her mind, she fastened the door and told Mrs. Osborne to go to her room and lock the door, at the same time telling us to put on our clothes. All this happened much quicker than I can write it.**

**"Mrs. Whitman then began to walk the floor, wringing her hands, saying 'Oh, the Indians! the Indians! they have killed my husband, and I am a widow!' She repeated this many times. At this moment Mary Ann [Bridger], who was in the kitchen, rushed around the house and came in at a door that was not locked; her face was deathly white; we gathered around her and inquired if father was dead. She replied, 'Yes'."<sup>218</sup>**

Three or four men were busy dressing a beef in the mission yard

Jacob Hoffman was killed by attackers while defending himself with an axe

Andrew Rodgers, holding his injured wrist, ran from the garden toward the mission house

Nathan Kimball, who had his arm broken by a bullet, accompanied Rodgers

#### DEATH AT WAILATPU MISSION IS CONFIRMED

Catherine Sager continues: **"Just then a man from the beef [Nathan Kimball] came in at the same door, with his arm broken. He said, 'Mrs. Whitman, the Indians are killing us all.' This roused her to action. The wounded man was lying upon the floor calling for water. She brought him a pitcher full from another room, locked all the doors, then unlocking that door, she went into the kitchen. As she did so several emigrant women with their small children rushed in. Mrs. Whitman was trying to**

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<sup>217</sup> W. Storrs Lee. *Washington State*. P. 225.

<sup>218</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 531.

**drag her husband in [from the kitchen]; one of the women went to her aid, and they brought him in. He was fatally wounded, but conscious. The blood was streaming from a gunshot wound in the throat. Kneeling over him she implored him to speak to her. To all her questions he whispered ‘yes’ or ‘no’ as the case might be. Mrs. Whitman would often step to the sash door and look out through the window to see what was going on out of doors, as the roar of guns showed us that the bloodthirsty fiends were not yet satisfied. At such times she would exclaim: ‘Oh, that Jo Lewis is doing it all!’ Several times this wretch came to the door and tried to get into the room where we were. When Mrs. Whitman would ask, ‘What do you want, Jo?’ he would run away.”<sup>219</sup>**

#### MISSION HOUSE BECOMES A PLACE OF SAFETY

Nathan S. Kimball was wounded, but he had reached the mission house -- November 29, 1847

Andrew Rodgers, Dr. Whitman’s assistant, had been working in the garden

he was wounded by a bullet to the wrist but, he too, safely reached the Whitman’s mission house

Catherine Sager states: **“Looking out we saw Mr. Rogers [sic] running toward the house, hotly pursued by Indians. He sprang against the door breaking out two panes of glass. Mrs. Whitman opened the door and let him in, and closed it in the face of his pursuers, who, with a yell, turned to seek other victims. Mr. Rogers was shot through the wrist and tomahawked on the head; seeing the doctor lying upon the floor, he asked if he was dead, to which the doctor replied, ‘No’.”<sup>220</sup>**

#### CHILDREN ATTEMPT TO HIDE IN THE SCHOOLHOUSE

Group of six children had climbed to a loft above the schoolroom -- November 29, 1847

among them were two of the Sagers: Matilda Jane age 8, and Francis age 15

also David Malin Cortez 10, Eliza Spalding 10, and two metis Manson boys, John and Stephen

Catherine Sager recalled: **“The schoolteacher [L.W. Saunders who was in the mission school], hearing the report of the guns in the kitchen, ran down to see what had happened; finding the door fastened, he stood for a moment when Mrs. Whitman saw him and motioned him to go back [to the schoolhouse]. He did so, and had reached the stairs leading to the schoolroom, when he was seized by a savage who had a large butcher knife [Tamsuky soon after he had killed Isaac Gilliland]. Mr. Sanders struggled and was about to get away when another burly savage came to the aid of the first.”<sup>221</sup>**

#### WAILATPU MISSION HOUSE BECOMES A SCENE OF TERROR

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<sup>219</sup> Samuel Asahel Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon*, P. 531-532.

<sup>220</sup> Samuel Asahel Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon* P. 532.

<sup>221</sup> Samuel Asahel Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon*, P. 532.



Catherine Sager described the scene: **“Standing by Mrs. Whitman’s side, I watched the horrid strife until, sickened, I turned away. Just then a bullet came through the window, piercing Mrs. Whitman’s shoulder. Claspng her hands to the wound, she shrieked with pain and fell to the floor. I ran to her and tried to raise her up. She said, ‘Child, you cannot help me, save yourself.’ We all crowded around her and began to weep. She commenced praying for us, ‘Lord, save these little ones.’ She repeated this over many times. She also prayed for her parents, saying: ‘This will kill my poor mother.’”**<sup>222</sup>

Narcissa, shot in the shoulder by an Indian standing on the schoolroom steps,

regained her feet, and instructed everyone that they must all go upstairs -- November 29, 1847

Catherine Sager explains: **“The women [Mrs. Rebecca Hays and Mrs. Peter D. Hall] now began to go upstairs, and Mr. Rogers pushed us [Catherine 13, Elizabeth 10, and Mary Ann 11] to the stairway [along with the wounded Nathan Kimball]. I was filled with agony at the idea of leaving the sick children and refused to go. Mr. Rogers was too excited to speak, so taking up one of the children [six year old Hannah Louise Sager], he handed her to me, and motioned for me to take her up. I passed her to someone else, turned and took another [Helen Mar Meek 10], and then the third [Henrietta 4] and ran up myself. Mr. Rogers then helped mother to her feet, and brought her upstairs and laid her on the bed. [The three children were laid on the bed beside Mrs. Whitman.] He then knelt in prayer, and while thus engaged, the crashing of doors informed us that the work of death was accomplished out of doors, and our time had come. The wounded man, whose name was Kimball, said that if we had a gun to hold over the banister it might keep them away. There happened to be an old broken gun in the room, and this was placed over the railing. By this time they were smashing the door leading to the stairway. Having accomplished this they retired.”**<sup>223</sup>

Indians filled the lower part of the mission house

they broke down the door leading to the stairway

but they did not ascend as they feared being fired upon

#### CHILDREN FILLED WITH FEAR WAIT IN THE MISSION HOUSE

Catherine Sager observed: **“All was quiet for awhile, then we heard footsteps in the room below, and a voice at the bottom of the stairway called Mr. Rogers. It was an Indian [Tamsuky] who represented that he had just come; he would save them if they would come down. After a good deal of parleying [at Mrs. Whitman’s request] he came up [and talked with Andrew Rodgers]. I told mother that I had seen him killing the teacher [L.W. Saunders], but she thought I was mistaken. He [shook**

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<sup>222</sup> Samuel Asahel Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon*, P. 532.

<sup>223</sup> Samuel Asahel Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon*, P. 532-533.

hands, professed sorrow and] **said that they were going to burn the house, and that we must leave it.**"<sup>224</sup>

Tamsuky offered to conduct the whites to the immigrant house -- November 29, 1847

Mrs. Whitman accepted the offer

it was agreed the women should be taken over to immigrant house first

children next -- followed by the men

all of the adults descended into the living room

except Nathan Kimball who had rolled into a dark corner and did not move

and was overlooked by Tamsuky

Catherine, Elizabeth, and Mary Ann stayed behind to comfort the three sick children:

Helen, Hanna Louis and Henrietta

Catherine Sager wrote that after reaching the living room: **"I wrapped my little sister [Henrietta] up and handed her to him [Andrew Rogers] with the request that he would carry her. He said that they would take Mrs. Whitman away and then come back for us. Then all left save the children and Mr. Kimball."**<sup>225</sup>

Peter Skene Ogden states in his narrative of the scene that, **"Bleeding profusely, [Mrs. Whitman] hastily descended to her husband's room, and embracing him, began to wipe with her handkerchief the blood that was trickling from his wounds. He fondly returned the caresses of her who for the last fifteen years had been the devoted partner of his joys and sorrows in the missionary field, and who in this last dark hour proved herself the same affectionate wife, regardless of her own sufferings...."**<sup>226</sup>

Narcissa helped to place Dr. Whitman on a couch where, at age 45, he died

#### NARCISSA WHITMAN IS KILLED

Catherine Sager continued to describe the events unfolding before her: **"When they reached the room below, mother was laid upon a settee and carried out into the yard by Mr. Rogers and Jo Lewis. Having reached the yard [ten feet from the house], Jo dropped his end of the settee [and stepped back; Andrew Rodgers, lowering his end of the settee, began to talk with the attackers] ...a volley of bullets laid Mr. Rogers, mother, and brother Francis bleeding and dying on the ground."**<sup>227</sup>

**"While the Indians were holding a council to decide how to get Mrs. Whitman and Mr. Rogers into their hands, Jo Lewis had been sent to the schoolroom to get the school children. They had hid**

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<sup>224</sup> Samuel Asahel Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon*, P. 533.

<sup>225</sup> Samuel Asahel Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon*, P. 533.

<sup>226</sup> W. Storrs Lee. *Washington State*, P. 225.

<sup>227</sup> Samuel Asahel Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon*, P. 533.

**in the attic, but [were] ferreted out and brought to the kitchen where they were placed in a row to be shot. But the chief relented and said they should not be hurt; but my brother Francis [was pushed out from among the children by the natives and] was killed soon after. My older brother [John] was shot at the same time the doctor was.”<sup>228</sup>**

Peter Skene Ogden says of Andrew Rodgers, **“The next victim was Dr. Whitman’s assistant [Andrew Rodgers], who, as several eye-witnesses have alleged, not only implored the Indians to spare him, but acknowledged it was too true that the doctor had administered poison to kill them.... After making this admission, the savages promised to spare his life and left him. A few minutes after, however, an Indian who was at some distance when the promise was made, and was not aware of it, came up with him, and in another moment his earthly career was ended.”<sup>229</sup>**

Narcissa, struck at least twice by gunfire, slipped off the settee into the mud

an Indian lifted her by her blond hair and struck her in the face with his riding whip as she died

Mrs. Whitman was the only woman killed in the attack

#### JAMES YOUNG ARRIVED AT WAILLATPU

James Young unknowingly drove a wagon load of lumber from the sawmill to the mission yard

later the same day -- November 29, 1847

He was attacked and killed

#### NIGHT FALLS OVER THE TRADEGY AT WAILLATPU MISSION

Catherine Sager reported that: **“Night had now come, and the chief made a speech in favor of sparing the women and children, which was done, and they all became prisoners. Ten ghastly, bleeding corpses lay in and around the house. Mr. [Josiah] Osborn’s family had secreted themselves under the floor, and escaped during the night, and after great hardships reached Fort Walla Walla. One other man [Peter D. Hall] escaped to this fort, but was never heard of again. Another [William D. Canfield] fled to Mr. Spaulding’s [sic] station; Mr. [Nathan] Kinmball [sic] was killed the next day; Mr. Spaulding remained at Umatilla until Wednesday, and was within a few miles of the doctor’s station when he learned the dreadful news. He fled, and after great suffering, reached his station, which had been saved by the presence of mind and shrewdness of his wife. Mr. Canfield was wounded, but concealing himself until night, he fled to Mr. Spaulding’s station.**

**“The November moon looked down, bright and cold upon the scene, nor heeded the groans of the dying who gave forth their plaints to the chill night air. Mr. Osborne’s family were concealed where they could hear Mr. Rogers’ words as he prayed to that Savior whom he had loved and**

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<sup>228</sup> Samuel Asahel Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon*, P. 533.

<sup>229</sup> W. Storrs Lee. *Washington State: A Literary Chronicle*, P. 225-226.

served for many years. His last words were: 'Come Lord Jesus, come quickly!' The clock tolled the midnight hour ere death came to the relief of these victims of savage brutality.<sup>230</sup>

#### JOSIAH OSBORNE ESCAPES WITH HIS FAMILY

(Josiah Osborne later reported the harrowing tale of his escape with his wife Marguerite

and their three children nine-year-old Nancy, three-year-old John, two-year-old Alexander): "As the guns fired and the yells commenced I leaned my head upon the bed and committed myself and family to my Maker. My wife removed the loose floor. I dropped under the floor with my sick family in their night clothes, taking only two woolen sheets, a piece of bread, and some cold mush, and pulled the floor over us. In five minutes, the room was full of Indians, but they did not discover us. The roar of guns, the yells of the savages, and the crash of clubs and knives and the groans of the dying continued till dark. We distinctly heard the dying groans of Mrs. Whitman, Mr. Rodgers, and Francis [Sager], till they died away one after the other. We heard the last words of Mr. Rogers in a slow voice calling 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.' Soon after this I removed the floor and we went out. We saw the white face of Francis by the door. It was warm as we laid our hand upon it, but he was dead. I carried my two youngest children, who were sick, and my wife held on to my clothes in her great weakness. We had all been sick with measles. Two infants had died. She had not left her bed in six weeks till that day, when she stood up a few minutes. The naked, painted Indians were dancing the scalp dance around a large fire at a little distance. There seemed no hope for us and we knew not which way to go, but bent our steps toward Fort Walla Walla. A dense cold fog shut out every star and the darkness was complete. We could see no trail, and not even the hand before the face. We had to feel out the trail with our feet. My wife almost fainted but staggered along. Mill Creek, which we had to wade, was high with late rains and came up to the waist. My wife in her great weakness came nigh washing down, but held to my clothes. I braced myself with a stick, holding a child in one arm. I had to cross five times for the children. The water was icy cold and the air freezing some. Staggering along about two miles, Mrs. Osborne fainted and could go no farther, and we hid ourselves in the brush of the Walla Walla River, not far below Tamsuky's lodges, who was very active at the commencement of the butchery. We were thoroughly wet, and the cold fog like snow was about us. The cold mud was partially frozen as we crawled, feeling our way, into the dark brush. We could see nothing, the darkness was so extreme. I spread one wet sheet down on the frozen ground; wife and children crouched upon it. I covered the other over them. I thought they must soon perish as they were shaking and their teeth rattling with cold. I kneeled down and commended us to my Maker."<sup>231</sup>

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<sup>230</sup> Samuel Asahel Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon*, P. 533-534.

<sup>231</sup> William Denison Lyman, *The Columbia River*, P. 207-208.

November 29, 1847

## RESULT OF THE MASSACRE AT WAILLATPU MISSION

Catherine Sager expanded the picture: **“The manner of the attack on Dr. Whitman I learned afterward from the Indians. Upon entering the kitchen, he took his usual seat upon a settee which was between the wall and the cook stove; an Indian began to talk to him in reference to a patient the doctor was attending. While thus engaged, an Indian struck him from behind on the head with a tomahawk; at the same moment two guns were discharged, one at the doctor, and the other at brother John who was engaged in winding twine for the purpose of making brooms.**

**“The men at the beef were set upon; Mr. Kinmball [sic] had his arm broken by a bullet, and fled to the doctor’s house. Mr. [Jacob] Hoffman fought bravely with an axe; he split the foot of the savage who first struck the doctor, but was overpowered. Mr. [William D.] Canfield was shot, the bullet entering his side, but he made his escape. The miller [Walter Marsh] fell at his post [in the grist mill where he was grinding wheat]. Mr. [Peter D.] Hall was laying the upper floor in a building; leaping to the ground, he wrestled a gun from an Indian, and fled to the fort. He was never seen of heard of afterwards, and it is surmised that he was murdered there. The tailor [Isaac Gilliland] was sitting upon his table sewing, an Indian stepped in, shot him with a pistol, and then went out; he died at midnight after great suffering. Night came and put an end to the carnival of blood.”<sup>232</sup>**

Eight men, one woman, and a young man

had now been killed during the massacre -- November 29, 1847

Dr. Marcus Whitman, John Sager, Jacob Hoffman, Isaac Gilliland, Walter March,

L.W. Sanders, Andrew Rogers and James Young

Narcissa Whitman was the only woman killed that day

Frank Sager, age 15, had been killed early in the attack

## SEVERAL MEN SURVIVE THE INITIAL ATTACK

Daniel Young, age 21, arrived from the sawmill -- November 29, 1847

he came to the mission from the sawmill in search of his brother James who had been murdered

he was sent back to the sawmill by the Indians

Crockett Bewley and Amos Sales were still ill with measles

they had been carried by the Indians to the same room in the immigrant house

where the survivors of the attack were staying

Indians believed both soon would die of the illness

Peter D. Hall was the carpenter who was building an annex to the mission

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<sup>232</sup> Samuel Asahel Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon*, P. 534.

alone he fled from the mission for Fort Walla Walla in an effort to get help  
William D. Canfield had received only a minor wound  
he ran to the blacksmith shop to retrieve his family  
he then took his five children (Ellen 16, Oscar 9, Clarissa 7, Sylvia 5 and Albert 3)  
to the immigrant house where they all hid into the night

#### CHILDREN PASS A FEARFUL NIGHT IN THE MISSION HOUSE

Catherine Sager also noted: **“The night of November 29, 1847, found me, a girl of thirteen years, sitting in company with two sisters [Elizabeth and Hanna Louise] and two half-breed girls [Helen Mar Meek and Mary Ann Bridger] upon a bed in the chamber of a large adobe house. On the floor lay a white man with his arm broken [Nathan Kimball]. A fearful scene had been enacted during the day; savage fury had swept over Whitman’s station, and we thought that we only, of all who awoke to busy life in the morning, remained alive. When the woman who had supplied the place of mother to us for several years had been induced, by what proved to be false promises, to leave for a place of safety, we expected soon to join her and accompany her to the fort, but the roar of musketry that soon shook the house left us in utter despair. We were convinced of the treachery of the savages, and hope, which a moment before had lifted our hearts to buoyancy, had not fled entirely. The wounded man exclaimed, ‘Treachery! Treachery! Children, prepare for the worst’.**

**“With hearts filled with fright, we awaited the coming of the murderers, and cold chills seized me as I thought of the dreadful knives I had seen them using upon their victims. During the day we were too much palsied with terror to even cry, but stood listening with pale cheeks and distended eyed to every move below. Soon we heard the savages splitting kindling; then one called for fire. We now thought our doom was to die by fire and that our home would be our funeral pile; but, stranger to say, I experienced a feeling of relief at the thought -- anything rather than meet again those fierce savages with their knives.**

**“We listened in vain for the roar of the flames; we heard instead some one addressing the Indians. The speech continued for some time, and then all was still. They had evidently left the premises. Three of the children were very sick; their clothing was wet with blood from lying on the bed with Mrs. Whitman after she was wounded. We had no fire or light, and we did not even think to get warmth by wrapping bedding around us. I tried to soothe the children to sleep, reasoning to myself that if we could lose consciousness in slumber that the roof of the burning house would fall on us and we would not know it. The sick children were suffering for water, and begged for it continually. I remembered taking up a cupful the day previous for a young lady who was lying ill. I directed my sister where to find it, but in searching for it in the dark she knocked it down and spilt it. The disappointment seemed to add to their thirst, and their pleading for a drink were**

heartrending. I begged of the wounded man to let them have some from the pitcher he had brought up with him, but he said it was bloody and not fit to drink. The hours dragged slowly along, and from exhaustion the children fell asleep one after another, until the man and I were the only ones awake. I sat upon the side of the bed, watching hour and hour while the horrors of the day passed and repassed before my mind. I had always been very much afraid of the dark, but now I felt that the darkness was a protection to us and I prayed that it might always remain so. I dreaded the coming of daylight; again I would think with a shudder, of the dead lying in the room below. I heard the cats racing about and squalling, with a feeling that seemed to freeze the blood in my veins. I remember yet how terrible the striking of the clock sounded. Occasionally Mr. [Nathan] Kimball [sic] would ask if I were asleep.

“Hours were passed in this manner, when sleep came and locked my senses in its friendly embrace. About 3 o’clock I awoke with a start. As I move my hand I felt a shaggy head and shrieked with alarm. Kimball spoke and told me not to be alarmed, that it was he. He had become cold and tried lying on the floor, and was sitting up to rest, but had to lean against the bed because he was so faint. We conversed for some time, our voices awakening the children, who renewed their calls for water. Day began to break, and Mr. Kimball told me to take a sheet off the bed and bind up his arm, and he would try to get some. I arose, stiff with cold, and with a dazed, uncertain feeling. He repeated his request. I said, ‘Mother would not like to have the sheets torn up.’ Looking at me, he said: ‘Child, don’t you know your mother is dead and will never have any use for the sheets?’ I seemed to be dreaming, and he had to urge me to comply with his request. I took a sheet from the bed and tore off some strips, which, by his directions, I wound around his arm. He then told me to put a blanket around him, as he might faint on the way and not be able to get up, and would suffer from the cold. Taking a pair of blankets from the bed, I put them around him, tying them around the waist with a strip of the sheets. I then placed his hat on his head and he went downstairs. We waited long for him, but he came not, and we never saw him again alive.”<sup>233</sup>

Nathan Kimball left the Mission House in an effort to retrieve water for the children

he was climbing a fence when he was killed in the effort -- night of November 29, 1847

## TWO ADDITIONAL SURVIVORS ARE ILL AND ALONE

Crockett Bewley age eighteen and Amos Sales in his early twenties

had not been approached by Indians -- night November 29, 1847

Crockett Bewley lay in his sickbed in the downstairs bedroom of the immigrant house

Amos Sales, also ill, was bedridden in the blacksmith shop

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<sup>233</sup> Samuel Asahel Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon*, P. 536-538.

Catherine Sager recorded: **“There were two young men at the station who were sick with a fever at the time of the massacre. These men were not killed at that time. One of them [Crockett Bewley] spent the night of the 29th of November alone in his room, not knowing that any one else was alive aside from himself.”**<sup>234</sup>

#### JOSIAH OSBORN AND HIS FAMILY HAD SURVIVED THE NIGHT

**“The day [Tuesday, November 30] finally dawned and we could see the Indians riding furiously up and down the trail. Sometimes they would come close to the brush and our blood would warm and the shaking would stop from fear for a moment. The day seemed a week. [I] Expected every moment my wife would breathe her last.”**<sup>235</sup>

Josiah Osborn his wife and three children hid from the Indians throughout the day they had traveled only three miles from Wailatpu Mission -- November 30, 1847

#### WILLIAM D. CANFIELD ESCAPES TO GET HELP FROM LAPWAI

William D. Canfield had spent the night in the immigrant house with his family in the morning his wife gave him some food before he set out on foot for help he fled to Mr. Spalding's station following a trail which he discovered but had no idea where it led -- November 30, 1847

#### MORNING COMES TO THOSE IN THE MISSION HOUSE

Catherine Sager recalled: **“It was now fully light [Tuesday November 30], and we heard the Indians arriving. They were calling Mr. Osborne, and we heard utensils jingling, and concluded that Mr. Osborne's family had been spared and were getting breakfast. Soon we heard approaching footsteps and someone ascended the stairs. We huddled together and almost held our breath, not knowing what would happen to us. It was Jo Lewis and several Indians. He told us that we would not be hurt; that he was going to take us to the fort as soon as he could get up a team. Saying this he left. The [other] Indians remained; they were mostly young men; they asked what made the children cry. I replied they were hungry, and want water. One of them went for water and one for food. They soon returned, one bearing a bowl of water and the other a plate of cold victuals. They directed me to gather up our clothes in readiness to go to the fort. Bringing a large basket for me to put them in, they also brought a loaf of bread..., saying we would get hungry. We had none of us yet ventured downstairs. The water was consumed and the children were begging for more. I tried to get some of the natives to go for more, but they seemed to think that they had done enough and refused. I could**

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<sup>234</sup> Samuel Asahel Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon*, P. 539.

<sup>235</sup> Denison Lyman William, *The Columbia River*, P. 208-209.



not bear to hear the piteous calls for water, so taking the bowl I went down. I found my shoes where I had left them the day before; putting them on I went to the river after water. Having obtained it I was returning. Some Indians were sitting upon a fence; one of them pointed his gun at me. I was terribly frightened, but walked on. One sitting near him knocked the gun up and it went off in the air. I went to the children with the water. There were no Indians in the house, and we ventured down to take a look at things. The Indians had spread quilts over the corpses. Mary Ann [Bridger], my sister, lifted the quilt from Dr. Whitman's face, and said: 'Oh, girls come and see father.' We did so, and saw a sight we will never forget. Passing into the kitchen we found the mangled body of brother John. We were crying bitterly when Joe Stanfield stepped out of the pantry and ordered us to hush; that 'the Indians would be mad and kill us if they saw us taking on so'. The savages were now crowding in, and we again retreated upstairs. Joe Stanfield had told us to go over to the other [immigrant] house, as the other women and children were there, but we were afraid to leave our own retreat. As we passed through the sitting room many native women were in it; they wept over us, and loaded us down with clothing which they were collecting. The Indians came up and urged us to leave, so mustering courage I took one child [Helen Mar Meek] and my sister [Elizabeth]. As Mary Ann [Bridger] was not strong enough to carry the other one [Hannah Louise], and would not stay with her, we were under the necessity of leaving her [Helen], promising to return as soon as we could. Upon reaching the room below we found the kitchen to be full of savages, and were afraid to pass through, so we went out through the Indian room. At the outer door we passed the corpse of Francis [Sager]. We were met half way by the girls [from the immigrant house]; for several moments we all wept, and then some of them relieved us of our loads. On reaching the [immigrant] house [and laying Hannah Louise on a bed], I fainted. As soon as consciousness returned I informed them that Helen was still at the house, and I would have to return for her. Several volunteered to go with me. We found her [Helen] screaming with fright and calling for me."<sup>236</sup>

Catherine led Helen Mar Meek from the mission house the immigrant house  
accompanied a woman who had gone with Catherine to rescue Helen  
as they reached immigrant house they saw Matilda Jane there with Eliza Spalding  
they fell into one another's arms as Matilda burst into tears -- November 30, 1847

#### FATE OF THE CHILDREN IN THE MISSION HOUSE IS IN THE HANDS OF THE INDIANS

John and Stephen Manson and David Cortez, each of whom was part Indian,  
were taken by the Indians to Fort Walla Walla -- November 30, 1847

Mary Ann Bridger and

Helen Mar Meek was too ill to have gone anywhere, even if the Indians had suggested it

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<sup>236</sup> Samuel Asahel Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon*, P. 538-539.

Helen and Hannah Louise Sager, both unconscious part of the time, lay in one bed  
Catherine Sager sat beside them giving them water and trying to soothe them  
Hannah Louise moaned constantly for her brother John  
Henrietta Sager was now able to be dressed, so Mrs. Saunders found the courage  
to speak to one of the chiefs about the Sager children's clothing  
all he brought was one ragged blanket apiece a few bits of Mrs. Whitman underclothing  
someone had to lend them clothes  
Helen Mar Meek also remained in the mission house

#### SOME OF THE CHILDREN REMAIN IN HIDING IN THE SCHOOLHOUSE

At the first sound of gunfire Judge Saunders, the teacher, rushed to the schoolroom door  
only to be shot down -- November 30, 1847  
Frank Sager, the oldest boy in the room, decided the children should take refuge in the loft  
they piled books on a chair until he could reach the trapdoor opening  
one by one, he boosted the children through it, then followed them up himself  
Later all but Frank went down to the yard  
where the Indians lined them up against the side of the school  
and discussed whether or not to shoot them  
one of the older men said there had been enough killing  
After a while, Matilda Sager was comforted to see Frank coming toward her  
he took her hand and stood beside her  
Joe Lewis saw Frank, grabbed him by the shirt, and pulled him out of the line  
and shot him through the head  
Women whose children had been in the schoolroom rushed to take them to the immigrant house  
Matilda Sager and Eliza Spalding were left alone -- they were too frightened to move or speak  
all they could do was wait hand-in-hand  
how long they waited they do not know  
Finally, the man who had protested against more killing came back  
he took the two girls by the hand and led them to the immigrant house  
where kind Mrs. Saunders, in spite of her own grief, drew them into her room  
where she warmed them and gave something to eat

#### SURVIVORS AT WAILLATPU MISSION ARE HELD CAPTIVE

Forty people were being held captive -- November 30, 1847  
twelve women and twenty-eight children

Catherine Sager described the plight of the hostages: **“We were now held captives of a horde of savages. The house we were held captive in was a large, square adobe building, containing five rooms, one being a bedroom and the others large living rooms. Each of these rooms had two families living in it. The Indians supplied us with plenty of food. Every morning early they would come from their village, a mile or two away, and stay until late at night. We had to prepare food for them, of which they would make us eat first, for fear that we had put poison in it. The women seldom came around. When night came and the beds were made down, the Indians would take possession of them, and we would frequently have to sit up until midnight before they would leave the house.”**<sup>237</sup>

#### FATHER MODESTE DE MERS IS ELEVATED TO BISHOP OF VANCOUVER ISLAND

Father De Mers, faithful companion of Bishop Francis Blanchet  
had served as Oregon City’s first priest [1844]

Bishop Modeste De Mers was consecrated Bishop of Vancouver Island -- November 30, 1847  
his work took him north (to present day British Columbia)

where his knowledge of French and English, and his affinity for native languages  
allowed him to serve a variety of people

he was responsible for the Queen Charlotte Islands and New Caledonia (Canada)

Bishop De Mers diocese lacked funds and priests and was largely unexposed to Christianity

De Mers worked tirelessly traveling to raise funds and acquire new priests  
while he preferred to work among the Indians

his duties soon focused on the rough and cosmopolitan element found in Victoria

#### JOSIAH OSBORN AND HIS FAMILY CONTINUE THEIR ESCAPE

Hiding with his wife and three children, Josiah Osborn continues his narrative of escape: [The night of November 30 we] **“... felt our way to the trail and staggered along the Sutucksnina [Dog Creek, which we waded as we did the other creek, and kept on about two miles when my wife fainted and could go no farther. Crawled into the brush and frozen mud to shake and suffer on from hunger and cold, and without sleep. The children, too, wet and cold, called incessantly for food, but the shock of groans and yells at first so frightened them that they did not speak loud.”**<sup>238</sup>

#### CARPENTER PETER D. HALL REACHES FORT WALLA WALLA

Peter D. Hall arrived safely at Fort Walla Walla -- early in the morning Wednesday, December 1, 1847  
he reported to Hudson’s Bay Company Factor William McBean

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<sup>237</sup> Samuel Asahel Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon*, P. 539.

<sup>238</sup> William Denison Lyman, *The Columbia River*, P. 209.

only that Dr. Whitman and one other was killed  
Fort Walla Walla Factor McBean, with strange disregard for human feelings, shut him out of the fort  
Peter Hall continued down the Columbia River to Fort Vancouver to seek help  
Factor McBean sent a messenger to Fort Vancouver to appeal for protection -- December 1  
Alanson Hinman, who had taught school at Waiilatpu, accompanied the courier  
they did not even stop at The Dalles to warn those people

#### SURVIVORS OF THE WHITMAN MASSACRE REMAIN HOSTAGE

Catherine Sager described the scene at Waiilatpu Mission: **“The dead bodies lay where they fell from [Monday] night until [Wednesday December 1], when the Christian Indians, among whom the doctor and his wife had labored for eleven years, and from whom the natives had received nothing but kindness, gave consent to have them buried, but not one of them would help in the task. Joe Stanfield was set at the work.”**<sup>239</sup>

#### FATHER BROUILLET REACHES WAILATPU MISSION

Father J.B.A. Brouillet rode from the Catholic mission of St. Anne’s into Tilaukait’s camp  
accompanied by a single Indian interpreter -- evening Wednesday December 1, 1847  
here both men learned of the massacre at Waiilatpu Mission

they hastened to the sight of the massacre that evening to see what they could do  
Father Brouillet found survivor Joseph Stanfield had dug a shallow mass grave  
and was preparing the bodies to be buried  
Stanfield and the priest carried all thirteen bodies to the grave  
Father Brouillet read the burial service over the dead

Catherine Sager noted the event in her journal: **“A grave three feet deep and wide enough to receive the...victims was dug, and the bodies placed in it. Wolves excavated the grave and devoured the remains.”**<sup>240</sup>

Joe Stanfield and the priest carried all thirteen bodies to the grave  
Father Brouillet read the burial service over the dead

#### JOSIAH OSBORN SETS OUT ONCE AGAIN FOR FORT WALLA WALLA

Josiah Osborn’s terrifying narrative continues: **“Wednesday night [December 1] my wife was too weak to stand. I took our second child [John] and started for Walla Walla; had to wade the Touchet [River]; stopped frequently in the brush from weakness; had not recovered from measles. Heard a**

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<sup>239</sup> Samuel Asahel Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon*, P. 534

<sup>240</sup> Samuel Asahel Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon*, P. 535.

**horseman pass and repass as I lay concealed in the willows. Have since learned that it was Mr. [Henry] Spalding.”<sup>241</sup>**

Josiah Osborne decided to conceal his wife and two other children -- December 1 that night he carried his two-year-old son to Fort Walla Walla -- a distance of twenty-five miles

#### FATHER J.B.A. BROUILLET RETURNS TOWARD THE UMATILLA MISSION

With a son of one of the chiefs tagging along to keep an eye on him,  
Father Brouillet started back to St. Anne’s Mission to intercept Rev. Henry Spalding just outside Waiilatpu the priest met the protestant missionary who became wild with anxiety about the fate of his daughter  
Father Brouillet assured him the girl was alive and urged him to flee at once, for the chief’s son had already galloped back to tell the others that Spalding had been found -- night December 1, 1847

According to the account reported by Peter Skene Ogden, **“An ... incident worthy of record... was the almost miraculous escape of the Rev. Mr. Spalding, for which, indeed, he was indebted to the timely aid and advice of the Rev. Mr. Brouillet of the Roman Catholic Mission. The former gentleman was on his return from the Umatilla River... when within a short distance of the mission at Waiilatpu... he was happy enough to meet the Rev. Mr. Brouillet, who had just left the scene of bloodshed.**

**“He had gone there, it appears, to administer baptism to two children... [only] to find the bodies of...his fellow creatures so shockingly mutilated, and lying like dogs in the mud and dirt with scarcely any covering. With the assistance of his interpreter, he dug one grave for all, and having procured shrouds, he had the satisfaction... of rendering them the last kind office that one mortal owes to another. Had the remains been exposed one night longer, they would have become prey to wolves and dogs.**

**“The Rev. Mr. Brouillet was returning from the performance of this duty, being accompanied by his interpreter and an Indian who had evil designs on Mr. Spalding, when they met the latter about six miles from the mission.... It required some presence of mind on the part of Mr. Brouillet to warn Mr. Spalding of his danger without creating any suspicion in the mind of the Indian. ...He ordered the interpreter to stop and light his pipe, and by the same ruse detained the Indian in the rear to strike fire. The two divines proceeding on in company, Mr. Spalding was soon made acquainted with the particulars of the late occurrence and strongly advised to escape, his Catholic friend assisting him from his own small stock of provisions.**

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<sup>241</sup> William Denison Lyman, *The Columbia River*, P. 209.

**“The advice was acted upon in the same haste that it was given.... In an instant he left the trail and proceeded toward the mountains. Mr. Brouillet meanwhile made all dispatch to reach his own mission, and when almost within sight of it, the Indian interpreter overtook him. The former, finding Mr. Spalding no longer in company, cast a savage and threatening look on Mr. Brouillet and immediately retraced his steps in pursuit of his victim. Fortunately a dense fog and presently afterwards the darkness of night coming on, frustrated his evil designs, and thus the life of Mr. Spalding was preserved to his wife & family, whom he rejoined at Clearwater, after wandering for six days and nights among the mountains, losing his horse and provisions, and at last reaching home barefoot.”<sup>242</sup>**

Rev. Spalding, after riding for Lapwai in the darkness, eventually dismounted  
fell into an exhausted sleep without hobbling his horse and the animal ran away  
he walked the remaining ninety miles in six days  
foodless and tortured by his wrenched knee and ill-fitting shoes

#### JOSIAH OSBORN REACHES FORT WALLA WALLA

Josiah Osborn continued to relate his experiences: **“Reached Fort Walla Walla after daylight [Thursday morning, December 2]; begged Mr. [William] McBean for horses to get my family, for food, for blankets, and clothing to take to them, and to take care of my child till I could bring my family in, should I live to find them alive. Mr. McBean told me I could not bring my family to his fort.**

**“Mr. [Peter D.] Hall [had come] in on Tuesday night [actually early in the morning of Wednesday, December 1], but he [Mr. McBean] could not have an American in his fort, and he had put him over the Columbia River; [McBean stated] that he could not let me have horses or anything for my wife and children, and I must go to Umatilla. I insisted on bringing my family to the fort, but he refused; said he would not let us in. I next begged the priests to show pity, as my wife and children would perish and the Indians undoubtedly would kill me, with no success. I then begged to leave my child, who was not safe, in the fort but they refused.**

**“There were many priests in the fort. Mr. McBean gave me breakfast, but I saved most of it for my family. Providentially Mr. Stanley, an artist, came in from Colville, narrowly escaped the Cayuse Indians by telling them he was ‘Alain’ [a friend of] Hudson’s Bay. He let me have his two horses, some food he had left from Rev. Eells’ and Walker’s [Spokane House] mission; also a cap, a pair of socks, a shirt, and handkerchief, and Mr. McBean furnished an Indian who proved most faithful, and Thursday night we started back, taking my child, but with a sad heart that I could not**

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<sup>242</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 228.

**find mercy at the hands of the priests of God. The Indian guided me in the thick darkness to where I supposed I had left my dear wife and children. We could see nothing and dared not call aloud.”**<sup>243</sup>

#### JOSIAH OSBORN PRESENTS HIS VERSION OF THE RESCUE

Josiah Osborn explained his circumstances: **“Daylight came [Friday December 3] and I was exposed to Indians, but we continued to search till I was about to give up in despair when the Indian discovered one of the twigs I had broken as a guide in coming out to the trail. Following these he soon found my wife and children still alive. I distributed what little food and clothing I had, and we started for the Umatilla [Catholic mission] the guide leading the way to the ford.**

**“[Upon reaching Fort Walla Walla] Mr. McBean came and asked who was there. I replied. He said he could not let us in; we must go to Umatilla or he would put us over the [Columbia] River, as he had Mr. Hall. My wife replied she would die at the gate but she would not leave. He finally opened and took us into a secret room and sent an allowance of food for us every day.”**

**“I asked him [Mr. McBean] for blankets for my sick wife to lie on. He had nothing.”** <sup>244</sup>

#### PETER SKENE OGDEN ISSUES A REPORT TO HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY

In his report to Hudson’s Bay Company Peter Skene Ogden gave a significantly different version: **“No time was lost by the gentlemen in charge [William McBean] there [Fort Walla Walla] in sending relief and assistance to the poor woman, but strange to relate, after a search of two days, the husband despaired of finding her and concluded that she was lost... murdered by the Indians. He was on the eve of abandoning his search, but a friendly Indian who had accompanied him from the fort was far from losing all hope.... He renewed the search and succeeded in finding the now almost lifeless woman, lying concealed with her children in the very spot where they had been left, with scarcely any covering and without food or fire to keep them warm, in which deplorable state they had now remained four days and nights. The whole party reached the fort in safety [Friday, December 3] ....”**<sup>245</sup>

#### JOSIAH OSBORN RECEIVES LITTLE HELP

Josiah Osborn concluded his harrowing narrative: **“Next day [Saturday, December 4] I urged again. He [William McBean] had nothing to give, but would sell a blanket out of the store. I told I had lost everything, and had nothing to pay; but if I should live to get to the Willamette I would pay. He consented. But the hipbones of my dear wife wore through the skin on the hard floor. Stickus [sic],**

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<sup>243</sup> William Denison Lyman, *The Columbia River*, P. 209-210.

<sup>244</sup> William Denison Lyman, *The Columbia River*, P. 210.

<sup>245</sup> W. Storrs Lee. *Washington State*, P. 226.

**the chief, came in one day and took the cap from his head and gave it to me, and a handkerchief to my child.”<sup>246</sup>**

#### WILLIAM CANFIELD ARRIVES AT LAPWAI MISSION

According to Peter Skene Ogden on Sunday, December 5, 1847: “... [William Canfield] **escaped by following in his wounded state, a marked [trail] which he struck upon by mere chance, and which led him, by a course of two hundred miles, to the Clearwater Mission [Lapwai], where he had never been before, and which he reached after six days and nights traveling, though without food.**”<sup>247</sup>

William Canfield brought news of the massacre to Mrs. Eliza Spalding

Rev. Spalding had gone to the Umatilla River area

and was, at this time, attempting to make his way to Lapwai

#### DEATH CONTINUES TO TAKE A TOLL AT WAILATPU MISSION

Catherine Sager stated “**On [Sunday] the 5th of December my little sister [Hannah Louise], six years old, died [of measles].**”<sup>248</sup>

Indians saw that the young men, Crockett Bewley and Amos Sales, were recovering from the measles both had criticized the Cayuse for their attack

Catherine Sager stated: “**One evening we were startled by the savages attacking these men as they lay in their bed. We all rushed outside, supposing that we were all to be killed. An Indian told us to come back, that only the two were to be killed.**”<sup>249</sup>

Crockett Bewley and Amos Sales were beaten and stabbed to death by the warriors before the eyes of the women and children who were now hostages at the mission their mangled bodies were left by the door -- December 5, 1847

(for two days, the captives had to step over the dead to get food and water)

#### TWO MORE FAMILIES ARRIVE AT WAILATPU

Catherine Sager recalled: “**Late that evening there was a knock at the door, and a voice in English called the name of one of the young women named Mary Smith [age 15]. It proved to be her father, who with his family and another family [Elam Young’s son Daniel] had arrived from the saw mill, where they were employed. They had been brought down to be murdered, but word had come from**

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<sup>246</sup> William Denison Lyman, *The Columbia River*. P. 210.

<sup>247</sup> W. Storrs Lee. *Washington State*, P. 226.

<sup>248</sup> Samuel Asahel Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon*, P. 539.

<sup>249</sup> Samuel Asahel Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon*, P. 539.



**the fort that no more Americans were to be slaughtered. It came too late to save the two young men, who had been dead several hours. These men were set at running the grist mill.”<sup>250</sup>**

These people were captured raising the total number of captives to forty-seven

#### ACCOUNTS OF THE CAPTIVITY REFLECT THE INTENSE FEAR

There were no killings at Waiilatpu after the sick young men had been murdered

Indian treatment of the captive women is a matter of some controversy

at a minimum, the women were submitted to great annoyance

and were in constant fear of violence

Rev. Henry Spalding later provided a hysterical account in his published lectures

some of his more sensational episodes are not supported by facts

his accusations were denied by the survivors -- native and white alike

Peter Skene Ogden reported in a less hysterical voice, **“After Mr. Rogers had fallen, and the two surviving Americans [escape of Josiah Osborne was unknown to Ogden at this time] had thus baffled pursuit, or escaped unnoticed, there remained but the now desolate women and children, who had been eyewitness of the massacre of their husbands and fathers. The number of these unfortunates exceeded fifty.... Their lives, indeed, were spared them, but three of the young women were reserved for a more cruel fate, over which I must draw a veil.”<sup>251</sup>**

A more detailed account was provided by Catherine Sager: **“One evening an Indian came to the house and seemed to be looking for someone. We learned that it was [twenty-two-year-old] Miss [Lorinda] Bewley. She was sick with argue [chills and shivering] and was lying in bed. He went to the bed and began to fondle over her. She sprang up and sat down behind the stove. He sat down by her and tried to prevail upon her to be his wife. She told him that he had a wife, and that she would not have him. Finding that persuasion nor threats availed, he seized her and dragged her out of the house, and tried to place her upon his horse; he failed in this also. She told him that she would tell the chief of his conduct the next day. He said he would not let her do so. She replied that she would call loud enough for him to hear her and come to see what was the matter. He tried to stop her screams by placing his hand over her mouth. The contest lasted for some time, when, becoming enraged, he threw her with violence upon the ground. After perpetrating his hellish designs upon her, he ordered her to go to the house. The poor, heartbroken girl came in, shaking with agitation. One of the women sent Eliza [Spalding] and I to get some medicine for her. It was in another room; the fiend was in there, and wanted to know what we wanted of the medicine. We told him it was for a sick child. We carried it in, well pleased with our ruse. A few days after this a chief of the**

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<sup>250</sup> Samuel Asahel Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon*, P. 534.

<sup>251</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 226-227.

Umatillas sent for and carried Miss B[ewley] there and held her as his wife. The evening after she left the other [attacker] came with a wagon and a team. He had ropes and men to assist him to carry her to his lodge.

“Previous to this the Indians had held a council to decide what to do with their prisoners. Many speeches were made; the savage mentioned above [attacker] said he could see no use in bothering with them; the easiest and quickest way to get rid of them was to kill them. He sat down and a Nez Perce arose and gave him such a scathing rebuke that he cowered down and had no more to say. They decided to keep us during the winter, and then send us below [to the Willamette Valley] in the spring. We were informed of this, with the assurance that we would all be killed if our countrymen attempted our rescue. A few evenings after this another council was held, at which we were required to be present. The council was for the purpose of setting before the young women the policy of taking chiefs for their husbands to protect them from violence. The poor girls had to submit to the decrees of their captors. The remembrance of these things takes all admiration for the noble red man from those who had the experience.”<sup>252</sup>

#### HOSTAGES FIND SOLACE IN WORK

Indians found the Whitman’s cellar which was well stocked with food  
they brought quantities of food to the mission house to be cooked for them  
Before each meal the Indians insisted on asking a blessing  
using words that the Whitmans had taught them  
after the prayer, some of the women were forced to taste each dish  
in the presence of their captors to assure them nothing had been poisoned  
Next the Indians brought bolts of calico from Narcissa’s supply  
they demanded the women make them shirts  
every woman and girl who could hold a needle worked through the daylight hours  
and often by candlelight to finish the garments

Catherine Sager explains, **“Our captors kept us busy making shirts out of the goods taken at the station -- we knew that the Indians were planning an expedition to The Dalles. It was no unusual thing for one to come and demand a shirt made against a set time, as he was going to The Dalles. We would make the shirt, he would come and get it, bid us good-bye, and leave, but in a day or two be back with another shirt to make. We learned that this was a ruse adopted to have their sewing done first. Sometimes it was done to see if we would sew upon the Sabbath. One Sabbath evening a fellow came and wanted us to make him a shirt that evening. We refused telling him it was the Sabbath.**

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<sup>252</sup> Samuel Asahel Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon*, P. 540-541.

He became very abusive, so we commenced the shirt, and seeing this he left. We then laid it aside, and next day complained to the chief, and he forbid them bringing us work to do upon the Sabbath.

“The Indians generally stayed around until near midnight. After they would leave, some of the vagabonds would come in and harass us and manage to frighten us thoroughly for their own amusement. To prevent this we adopted the plan of hiring some of the influential men to stay with us until 1 or 2 o’clock. The one who oftenest performed this service was Beardy. He had remained in the lodge on the day of the massacre till late in the day, when he came upon the scene and made a touching appeal for the lives of the women and children. He was a professor of religion [believer] and was regarded as a good Indian. The ladies were in the habit of setting him a lunch before he left. One of them had baked some pies made of dried peaches, and which were kept hid from the other natives. These particularly suited old Beardy’s taste, and notwithstanding he had eaten several hearty meals during the day, he partook freely of them. Seeing the fruit thrown from his stomach, he mistook it for blood and concluded that we had poisoned him, and vowed that our lives should pay the forfeit. He was sick three days; on the fourth he came armed with a band of savages to wreak vengeance upon our defenseless heads. During the night an Indian woman had arrived from Fort Hall. Her husband was a white man, and she spoke the English language well. As soon as she heard of the massacre she started for the station, and her arrival was very opportune. She pleaded our cause with Beardy and convinced him that he alone was to blame -- that he had only over eaten himself. He was very much ashamed of the affair, and used to laugh over it. It came near being a serious joke to us.

“It was our custom to gather in some one of the rooms to spend the evening; we felt better when thus together. One evening I was sitting by the fire in a room some distance from the one I occupied, when a stalwart savage came in, seized me by the arm and dragged me shrieking though the house to our room, which was empty at the time, excepting the sleeping children. Placing a chair, he told me to sit down; he then began to court me for his friend. The friend soon came in and I was compelled to listen to their love speeches. A half-breed presently came in and told them not to try to carry me away. They said they did not intend to; they only wanted to amuse themselves. I could not see the fun, but sat shivering with fright and cold. I begged them to let me go to the fire; they refused and wrapped a blanket around me. They made my life a torment to me, and so afraid was I of being carried off by them that I was tempted to end my troubles by jumping in the mill pond. My fellow prisoners sympathized with me, and laid many plans for eluding them. Jo Stanfield proposed that I should go to the straw stack and sleep, but this the women would not allow, as they were suspicious of him. Some proposed that I go to Joe Finlay’s lodge in company with one of Mr. [James] Young’s sons. This was also abandoned. Mr. Young and his wife then laid a plan by which they thought I could elude them. During the day their extra beds were thrown upon the bedstead. In the

evening the old gentleman was in the habit of lying on the front of the bedstead. The girls were to watch their chance, when the Indians would be out of the room and take me in. I was then to get over behind the pile of bedding and lie down. A few evenings afterwards they [the Indians] came and the plan was carried out with complete success. I lay quiet, and although they searched the house, they failed to find me, and left, giving vent to their chagrin in loud whoops. Soon after one of them came again. I went to bed and was asleep as was everyone else. I felt someone pulling me by the arm; starting up, I confronted my enemy; he wanted me to sit by the fire with him; I refused. He tried coaxing and threats, but in my desperation, I lost all fear of him, and fought with teeth and nails. He said if I would sit and talk with him he would go away, but I would not. The contest lasted for some time, then he raised his whip and said he would whip me, but I cared not, and still fought him, calling upon other Indians who were sleeping near to help me. They paid no heed, but the white men, getting tired of the row, jumped up, when he left and never came back. The Indians called me a brave girl that would thus fight a man.

“Knowing how treacherous the nature of the savages was, we lived in constant fear of their murdering us. We watched their coming in the morning and only felt safe when they departed at night. It was my custom to take my sister, who was three years old and was prostrated by a long and severe illness, in my arms and sit down behind the stove with her every morning and thus await their coming, resolved to die with her in my arms should they murder us. Occasionally I would go over to my desolate home [mission house]. What a scene was presented there! Mutilated furniture, feathers, ashes, straw and blood all co-mingled in one indiscriminate mass; desolation reigned where once had been peace and harmony. Amid all the anguish and turmoil of those dark days there would sometimes things occur that were ludicrous enough to make us for a moment forget sorrow and indulge in a hearty laugh. One day an Indian brave came riding to the house with a large map of the world thrown over his horse for a blanket. At another time the voices of the children would be heard singing hymns, accompanied by the natives. Oh, blessed childhood, that can thus throw off sorrow and gloom’!”<sup>253</sup>

#### NEWS OF THE ATTACK REACHES FORT VANCOUVER

According to Peter Skene Ogden, “On the evening of the 6th of December we were seated around our cheerful fireside, ‘holding sweet converse’ on the different topics of news we had lately received from Canada and England by our overland express, when a loud knocking at the door attracted the attention of all present, and a Mr. H[inman] from the Dalles mission made his appearance, accompanied by a servant of the Company from Walla Walla.... They announced to us the

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<sup>253</sup> Samuel Asahel Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon*, P. 541-543.

**melancholy tidings of the murder of Dr. and Mrs. Whitman and twelve Americans, with the entire destruction of Waiilatpu Mission....”<sup>254</sup>**

#### HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY MAKES PLANS TO DEAL WITH THE HOSTILE NATIVES

At Fort Vancouver, Hudson’s Bay Company Chief Factors James Douglas and Peter Skene Ogden immediately assumed responsibility for protecting all settlers -- British and American alike they decided to send a British expedition up the Columbia River at once -- December 7, 1847 it also was decided not to inform the pioneers of the Willamette Valley of the tragic events

#### WILLAMETTE VALLEY SETTLERS ARE STILL UNAWARE OF EVENTS AT WAILLATPU

Seventeen members of the Provisional House of Representatives representing ten counties met at Oregon City for the regular legislative session -- December 7, 1847

they were not yet aware of the events at Waiilatpu

Still feeling neglected by the United States government

James W. Nesmith introduced a resolution in the Provisional House of Representatives protesting against the appointment of Judge Jesse Quinn Thornton

to any office in the territory -- December 7, 1847

this was adopted, then reconsidered and ultimately defeated

with the Speaker of the House casting his vote in opposition to the proposal

#### REV.HENRY SPALDING REACHES LAPWAI MISSION

On the sixth day of his journey from the Waiilatpu massacre -- Tuesday, December 7, 1847

Rev. Spalding crept up to the bluffs overlooking his home

he could see Indians were plundering it

For an agonizing few hours he thought that his family, too, had been massacred,

but finally he reached a friendly Nez Perce Indian

who told him that William D. Canfield’s warning had arrived in time

Eliza and the mission workers had found refuge at the home of William Craig,

a mountain man who had settled nearby with his Nez Perce wife

loyal Nez Perce Indians, many of whom were genuinely fond of Eliza Spalding,

put a strong guard around Craig’s farm

both to protect the missionaries and to strengthen their tribe’s bond with the whites

there Henry Spalding joined them

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<sup>254</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 224.

## HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY TAKES THE LEAD

Peter Skene Ogden, an old and influential Hudson's Bay Company leader, departed from Fort Vancouver with a force of sixteen heavily armed company men in three boats these were mainly French-Canadians or metis -- December 8, 1847 on the way to the scene of the tragedy they traveled to Wascopam Mission at the Dalles to advise the people there of their danger as they passed (their journey to Waiilatpu Mission took twelve days to complete)

## DEATH ONCE AGAIN VISITS WAILLATPU MISSION

Catherine Sager reported that "**Helen [Mar Meek] died**" [of measles]<sup>255</sup> -- December 8, 1847 along with another pioneer immigrant child who died of exposure Three children, Hannah Louise Sager, Helen Mar Meek, and the immigrant child were buried near the great mound not far from little Alice Clarissa Whitman's grave

## NEWS OF THE WHITMAN MASSACRE FINALLY ARRIVES AT OREGON CITY

When there was no possibility of Ogden's men being overtaken by Americans in search of revenge Hudson's Bay Company Chief Factor James Douglas at Fort Vancouver forwarded word of the Waiilatpu disaster to Provisional Governor George Abernathy -- December 8, 1847 In Oregon City Governor Abernathy addressed the assembled provisional legislature settlers immediately reacted as furiously as Hudson's Bay Company leaders had anticipated racial paranoia swept through the Willamette Valley many Oregonians convinced themselves that Indians and blacks would collaborate joining forces to wipe out all the whites in Oregon Country some went so far as to argue that without the Exclusion Law African Americans and Native Americans might intermarry and eventually reduce the white population to a threatened minority

## AMERICAN PIONEERS WERE UNPREPARED

Congress had done nothing to organize the Territory although the international boundary question had been settled the year before armed troops intended to protect the Oregon Trail were supposed to be on the way in fact, they had been diverted to the Mexican War After learning of the attack from the Hudson's Bay Company Governor Abernathy and the legislature met to discuss the situation

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<sup>255</sup> Samuel A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History, Volume II*, P. 539.

at a minimum, the attack at Waiilatpu showed the need for protection and law  
Provisional Government continued to function as best it could  
there was great fear of additional attacks if the upriver tribes should unite  
and destroy all of the white people in Oregon Country  
but locally little advanced preparation had been made for such an attack by the natives

#### PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT ATTEMPTS TO ASSESS THE CRISIS

Oregon Country Provisional House of Representatives was in session  
they attempted to gather together reports and rumors swirling about Oregon Country  
to determine if the Indians East of the Cascade Mountains had united against the settlers  
everyone knew that help from the United States was at least a year away

#### PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT TAKES ACTION

Many of the white settlers and most of the Americans felt the natives should be punished  
they wanted to provide assurance Oregon would be safe for settlement  
frontier justice demanded vengeance  
War fever swept Oregon Country  
Provisional Legislature instructed Governor Abernethy to raise a body of militia  
to quell the uprising and to seek out the Cayuse enemy -- in particular the Waiilatpu murderers  
these actions advanced the Cayuse War -- 1847- [1850]

At the same time, the legislature resolved to write yet another Memorial to Congress  
this one **“for the purpose of soliciting the Immediate influence and protection of the U.S.  
Government in our internal affairs”**

#### EFFORT TO RAISE A MILITIA IN OREGON COUNTRY BEGINS

With about as much efficiency as could be expected  
from an amateur government with no military experience  
Provisional Legislators took steps to raise troops and to seek out the Cayuse enemy  
James W. Nesmith introduced a resolution in the Provisional House of Representatives  
which was unanimously passed

**“authorizing the governor to raise a company of riflemen, not to exceed fifty men, rank  
and file, and to dispatch them forthwith to occupy the [Whitman] Mission”** -- December 8, 1847  
to quell the uprising and seek out the Cayuse enemy -- in particular the Waiilatpu killers  
they were to serve for ten months unless discharged sooner  
Many political leaders were for pushing into the enemy’s country at once with a formidable force

but wiser heads prevailed and nothing was done to prevent the Indians  
from surrendering their white captives to Hudson's Bay Company

#### OREGON COUNTRY LEADERS PREPARE FOR WAR

Provisional Government had little authority, few officials, no funds and no militia  
residents of Willamette Valley decided to send a force of men up the Columbia River immediately  
they began the frustrating task of preparing a force to punish the Indians  
and equipping a militia of five hundred men  
local government could not afford to finance a war  
there was only \$43.72 was in the treasury with debts amounting to \$4,123.46  
money had to be raised to keep the militia in the field  
although the Provisional Government had little authority and even less money  
it began the frustrating task of equipping a military force  
Jesse Applegate, George L. Curry and A.L. Lovejoy constituted a funding commission  
to negotiate a loan of \$100,000 from Hudson's Bay Company  
to pay for the expenses of outfitting the militia secured by the credit of the territory  
unless the debt should be taken on by the U.S.  
many Oregon settlers blamed Congress for the evil they had suffered  
it was generally believed the U. S. government would take the burden of debt  
it was thought to be least the government could do for leaving Oregon defenseless

#### PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT PETITIONS CONGRESS FOR SUPPORT

In an effort to secure federal support Oregon Country leaders prepared a ringing Memorial  
to be delivered to congress -- December 8, 1847

**“Having called upon the government so often in vain, we have almost despaired of receiving its protection; yet we trust that our present situation, when fully laid before you, will at once satisfy your honorable body of the necessity of extending the strong arm of guardianship and protection over this distant, but beautiful portion of the United States' domain. Our relations with the proud and powerful tribes of Indians residing east of the Cascade Mountains, hitherto uniformly amicable and pacific, have recently assumed quite a different character. They have shouted the war whoop, and crimsoned their tomahawks in the blood of our citizens.... Circumstances warrant your memorialists in believing that many of the powerful tribes...have formed an alliance for the purpose of carrying on hostilities against our settlements.... To repel the attacks of so formidable a foe, and protect our families and property from violence and rapine, will require more strength than we possess...we have a right to expect your aid, and you are in justice**



**bound to extend it.... If it be at all the intention of our honored parent to spread her guardian wings over her sons and daughters on Oregon, she surely will not refuse to do it now, when they are struggling with all the ills of a weak and temporary government, and when perils are daily thickening around them, and preparing to burst upon their heads. When the ensuing summer's sun shall have dispelled the snow from the mountains we shall look with glowing hopes and restless anxiety for the coming of your laws and your arms.”<sup>256</sup>**

#### WAR FEVER SWEEPS ACROSS OREGON COUNTRY

With about as much efficiency as could be expected  
from an amateur government with no military experience  
Provisional Legislature took steps to raise troops and to seek out the Cayuse enemy  
That night at a public meeting the residents of the Willamette Valley decided to send a force of men  
up the Columbia River immediately to The Dalles to establish an outpost  
to dispute any crossing of the Cascade Mountains by hostile Indians  
in case any attempted to carry the war into the Willamette settlements -- December 8, 1847  
James Nesmith, Samuel K. Barlow and Henry A.G. Lee spoke to the gathering  
forty-eight volunteers composed of American settlers, French-Canadians and metis  
were enrolled on the spot

#### PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORIZES A MILITIA -- THE OREGON RIFLES

Provisional House of Representatives authorized Governor George Abernathy  
to raise a regiment of 500 volunteers -- December 9, 1847  
sixteen companies were to be formed to punish the Cayuse Indians  
for their part in the Whitman Massacre  
while many were interested in protecting their homes and families  
these men were not interested in fighting the Indians for nothing  
the prospect of receiving pay was an inspirational motivator  
Provisional Governor Abernathy selected the Oregon Rifles' leaders  
Cornelius Gilliam was selected to serve as colonel  
Gilliam, a fundamentalist preacher and wagon train master, was a leader of men  
robust, impulsive, sympathetic and willful, he was a man of great courage and energy  
although not a professional soldier his previous military experience was acquired  
during the Mid-West Black Hawk War [1832]  
and the Seminole Wars in Florida [1835]

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<sup>256</sup> Joseph Schafer *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, P. 195.

James Waters was selected to serve as lieutenant-colonel,  
Henry A.G. Lee was promoted from captain of the Oregon Rifles to the position of major  
named captains were: Henry A.G. Lee, R. W. Morrison, Richard Woodcock, Elijah Bunton  
and William Shaw who was Colonel Gilliam's brother-in-law  
officers of the Oregon Rifles were elected by the men of the company:

First Lieutenant Joseph Magone  
Second Lieutenant John E. Ross  
Surgeon W.W. Carpenter

## OREGON COUNTRY INHABITANTS VOLUNTEER TO CONFRONT THE HOSTILE INDIANS

Pioneers began to organize and prepare a militia company  
many of the white settlers and most of the Americans felt the natives should be punished  
they wanted to provide assurance Oregon Country would be safe for settlement  
frontier justice demanded vengeance

Forty-eight volunteers between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four  
assembled at Samuel K. Barlow's home in Oregon City  
they were sworn in as members of the Oregon Rifles -- noon, December 9, 1847  
this militia was equipped as well as means would allow  
while many of the men were interested in protecting their homes and families  
the prospect of receiving pay was also an inspirational motivation  
they were not interested in fighting the Indians for nothing

Without delay the volunteer militia began to assemble barges to carry their inadequate supplies  
Major Henry A.G. Lee led an advance party of forty-eight men as they left Oregon City on boats  
and hurried up the Columbia River toward The Dalles -- December 9, 1847  
it was great sacrifice for these men to leave their families and journey upriver in mid-winter  
also, they did not want to leave their own homes unprotected  
this contingent of militiamen was only two days behind Peter Skene Ogden's men

## PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT TALKS WITH HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY FAIL

Three-man funding commission, Jesse Applegate, George L. Curry and A.L. Lovejoy,  
continued discussions with Hudson's Bay Company in an effort to secure a loan for equipment  
However Hudson's Bay Company would not extend credit to the Provisional Government  
Americans discovered that standing orders from London  
instructed the local officers in charge "**not to deal in government securities**"<sup>257</sup>

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<sup>257</sup> Elwood Evans, *History of the Pacific Northwest: Oregon and Washington, Vol. 1, P. 278*

Hudson's Bay Company Chief Factor James Douglas in the most positive terms expressed warm sympathy with the provisional government **“in its efforts to prevent further aggression, and to rescue from the hands of the Indians the women and children who survived the massacre”**<sup>258</sup>

Governor Abernethy and funding committee members Jesse Applegate and A.L. Lovejoy provided their personal pledge to repay a loan used to purchase equipment some Oregon City merchants and militiamen also pledged their individual credit with the expectation the provisional government or new territorial government would repay them in the future voluntary subscriptions had raised \$2,885 loans totaling \$3,600 were secured (Cayuse War 1847-[1850] actually cost \$175,000)

#### PROVISIONAL LEGISLATORS SELECT THEIR OWN MESSENGER TO CONGRESS

Governor Abernathy had appointed his own representative to Congress, Jesse Quinn Thornton who was currently en route by ship to the east coast

Abernathy's opponents saw an opportunity to counter Thornton's influence -- December 9, 1847

Provisional House of Representatives selected their colleague Joseph L. Meek as the messenger to carry the most recent Memorial overland to Washington City Joe Meek, incredibly enough, was related to President James K. Polk's wife and thus would have access to the White House itself

Meek was to be accompanied by several others including his old friend George Ebbert physically, Joe Meek was an obvious choice

he was thirty-seven years old, six feet tall and strong as a buffalo

this fearless mountain man also was familiar with the dangers of the route he must take

Joe appealed to the Oregon Country lawmakers as their representative

he had been a well-known first sheriff of Oregon Country

he was a member of the Provisional House of Representatives

where he had allied himself with the American Party

known for its anti-missionary (anti-Governor Abernathy) attitude

Governor Abernathy wanted Joe Meek and his companions to travel first to Sacramento to ask the governor of U.S. Army-occupied California for supplies

and for whatever troops he could spare and for a warship to patrol the Columbia River

Meek, however, doubted it would be possible to cross the Siskiyou Mountains

between Oregon and California in the dead of winter

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<sup>258</sup> Elwood Evans, *History of the Pacific Northwest: Oregon and Washington, Vol. 1, P. 278*

## GOVERNOR ABERNATHY APPOINTS A PEACE COMMISSION

Provisional Government leaders conducting the Cayuse War were of two minds

legislature supported Colonel Cornelius Gilliam and the militia which was eager for action  
(they sometimes provoked conflicts with hostile and friendly Indians alike)

Governor Abernathy supported the friendly natives who tried to end the conflict

About now it occurred to Governor Abernathy that if the Indians of the interior united against them  
their small militia could be wiped out leaving all of the settlers to an unknown fate

Governor Abernathy named Joel Palmer to serve as Superintendent of Indian Affairs  
and Commissary-General of the Oregon Rifles -- December 10, 1847

he was named the head of the Peace Commission

and possessed the power to act in the event negotiations were possible

Governor Abernathy also appointed Robert "Doc" Newell as a Peace Commissioner

because of his knowledge of Indian traits and his many years working as a Mountain Man

Provisional Governor George Abernathy's instructions to the Peace Commission stated:

- Indians were to be informed Americans desired only the surrender of the Waiilatpu murderers;
- restitution must be offered by the natives for stolen property;
- assurances must be provided that immigrants would not be molested in the future

both Peace Commission members were to accompany the militia into hostile country

they were to visit with the Nez Perce Indians and other interior tribes

and convince them not to join with the Cayuse

Public manifestoes were immediately issued by the governor declaring that this really was not a war  
but rather was an expedition to capture the murderers of the whites slain at Waiilatpu Mission

## PEACE COMMISSION GOALS CLASH WITH THE OREGON RIFLES' GOALS

Provisional Governor George Abernathy's declaration of intent to the peace commissioners  
greatly antagonized illiterate but brave and independent Michael Simmons

who thundered to everyone within hearing distance that they had enlisted to fight

Colonel Cornelius Gilliam also did not approve of the peace commissioners or its mission

their presence embarrassed the aggressive commander

This obvious conflict of purposes resulted in explosive quarrels between

the Oregon Rifle's antagonistic colonel and the two peace commissioners traveling with him

who were assigned to soothe the enemy and to restrain undue wrath on the part of the troops

## OREGON VOLUNTEERS REACH THE CASCADES RAPIDS OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER

The Cascades Rapids was the site of a village that consisted of just a few cabins along the North bank of the Columbia River  
some of these men were detailed to improve the portage route around The Cascades Rapids

#### TWO MORE SETTLERS ACCOMPANY THE OREGON COUNTRY MILITIAMEN

After passing through The Cascades Rapids on their way to The Dalles -- December 13, 1847  
Major Henry A.G. Lee met Dr. Marcus Whitman's nephew Perrin Whitman  
and Alanson Hinman who was traveling with his family  
Hinman, had taught school at Waiilatpu  
he had accompanied a messenger sent by Fort Walla Walla Factor William McBean  
on the journey to Fort Vancouver to appeal for protection  
Hinman's family continued on to The Cascades Rapids  
while the teacher and Perrin Whitman returned to The Dalles with the militia volunteers

#### HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY ARMED FORCES REACH FORT WALLA WALLA

Sixteen heavily armed Hudson's Bay Company men led by Chief Factor Peter Skene Ogden  
pushed up the Columbia River at utmost speed  
they arrived at Fort Walla Walla -- December 19, 1847  
Oregon Volunteers led by Major Henry A.G. Lee accompanied by Perrin Whitman  
and Alanson Hinman were not far behind

#### CAYUSE INDIANS TURN TO CATHOLIC PRIESTS FOR HELP

Cayuse chiefs gathered at St. Anne's Catholic mission at Umatilla -- December 19, 1847  
Bishop A.M.A. Blanchet prepared a petition for the Indians  
to send to Provisional Governor George Abernathy asking for a peace conference  
signed by Tilaukait, Camaspelo, Tawatowe and Achekaia  
Meeting at Umatilla had just adjourned  
when the Indians received news of Peter Skene Ogden's presence at Fort Walla Walla

#### CAYUSE INDIANS FIND THEMSELVES ISOLATED

Cayuse Indians became aware of the possible consequences of their atrocities  
they found themselves isolated after they learned the Nez Perce Indians  
had protected the whites at Lapwai Mission  
Cayuse sent messengers to the natives of Spokane Country to spread (false) rumors  
that sixty Spokanes working in Willamette Valley had been killed to avenge the massacre

Chief of the Spokanes, after a talk with Rev. Cushing Eells, refused to support the Cayuse  
he sent out runners with warnings for his people not to believe the Cayuse  
Cayuse held a council and decided that if the Americans would make a treaty of peace,  
they would deliver their prisoners from Wailatpu Mission -- December 20, 1847

#### CAYUSE CHIEFS TRAVEL TO FORT WALLA WALLA

Cayuse Indians held a council with Peter Skene Ogden -- December 23, 1847

Cayuse hoped to use the hostages to save themselves from vengeance  
Ogden offered to ransom the captives  
he informed the Indians that Hudson's Bay Company was greatly displeased with their conduct  
and he assured the Indians that they would regret it if they provoked the Americans to war

#### OREGON VOLUNTEERS CONTINUE THEIR JOURNEY UP THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Major Henry A.G. Lee and his forty-eight men moved up the Columbia River  
with their inadequate supply barges to carry out the war east of the Cascade Mountains  
The Dalles was reached -- Christmas night  
there a heavily armed band of Indians were encountered attempting to steal cattle from the mission  
Captain Lee with several men approached to warn them off and were fired upon  
during a running fight lasting several hours three Indians were killed and one wounded  
Sergeant William Berry was severely wounded  
Indians successfully made off with 300 head of stock,  
a serious loss to a territory where beef was exceedingly scarce  
and a single chicken egg cost fifty cents  
however, this show of force by the militia volunteers made a strong impression on the Cayuse  
who agreed to meet again with Peter Skene Ogden

#### OREGON RIFLES ADVANCE UNIT ESTABLISH THEIR HEADQUARTERS

Major Henry A.G. Lee and his forty-eight militiamen built a stockade  
around the old Wascopam Mission buildings located on the south bank of the Columbia River  
Northwest Company had located a trading post at the site [1820]  
Wascopam Mission had been constructed by Rev. Daniel Lee  
this mission had been purchased by Dr. Marcus Whitman  
Major Henry A.G. Lee's Oregon Volunteers established a stockade called "Fort Lee"  
in honor of their commander  
(although the small fortification was also called Fort Wascopam for the Indian name

of a nearby spring)

Fort Lee was to be the headquarters of the Oregon Rifles

#### FATE OF THE WAILLATPU CAPTIVES IS STILL IN DOUBT

Catherine Sager noted: **“On the 26th of December word came that three boats had arrived at the fort [Nez Perces]. This news caused great excitement, both to captors and captives, and a messenger was dispatched to learn the particulars. In a few hours he returned with the information that the great chief of the Hudson’s Bay Company had come and wanted the Indians to meet him in council next day. The greatest excitement prevailed among the captors and their captives. While the hope of rescue was feebly entertained, it was overshadowed by the thought of another terrible massacre, in which we would be the victims. Our captors left for their village, but in the course of a few hours returned in their hideous war paint and armed to the teeth. They remained a short time to finish their preparations, and then departed for the fort. It was just nightfall when they left.**

**“Oh, what anxious days those were; how slowly the hours seemed to drag along!**

**“On the evening of the second day [December 28] we were overjoyed at receiving Miss Bewley again. She gave us a graphic account of her life during her absence. We slept but little that night....”<sup>259</sup>**

#### ANOTHER ENCOUNTER TAKES PLACE WITH THE INDIANS

Sixty Indian horses were captured by the advance unit of the Oregon Rifles -- December 27, 1847  
these animals along with about fifty head belonging to the militia  
were driven to pasture on a hill about three miles southeast of Fort Lee  
ten men formed the horse guard

Indians placed two horses on a hill a short distance away to decoy the guards  
who, believing them to be strays, watched the two horses for several hours  
with no Indians being in sight two of the youngest volunteers,  
privates Hugh Pugh and David Jackson, climbed the hill to acquire the horses  
they were fired upon and both fought bravely killing one Indian  
natives escaped carrying off their dead and leaving Pugh and Jackson dead on the field  
they were the first two militiamen killed

#### OFFICE OF ADJUTANT GENERAL IS CREATED BY THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

Provisional House of Representatives elected A.L. Lovejoy Adjutant General  
to oversee administrative and logistical control over the troops -- December 28, 1847

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<sup>259</sup> Samuel Asahel Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon*, P. 543.

## ANOTHER COUNCIL IS HELD AND A BARGAIN IS STRUCK

In another council held with the Cayuse Indians Peter Skene Ogden agreed to pay five hundred dollars' worth of tobacco, clothing, guns and ammunition sixty-two blankets, sixty-three cotton shirts, twelve Company guns, twelve flints, thirty-seven pounds of tobacco and 600 rounds of ammunition for the return of the hostages  
(Hudson's Bay Company was never reimbursed for the expenditure indeed the Company presented no bill to the Provisional Government)  
Cayuse Indians agreed to return the captives who were still alive -- December 28, 1847 they were to be delivered to Fort Walla Walla the next day

## CAYUSE INDIANS RELEASE THE HOSTAGES

Peter Skene Ogden had ransomed fifty-four hostages -- of these, thirty-four were children of the captives taken three, all children, died in captivity:

- Helen Mar Meek (Joe Meek's daughter) died of measles
- Helen Louise Sager died of measles
- a immigrant child died of exposure

Peter Skene Ogden also ransomed the missionaries at Lapwai Mission

runners were dispatched to inform Rev. Henry Spalding's group of the agreement  
One month after the massacre three wagons from Waiilatpu that had not been destroyed headed west twenty-five miles to Fort Walla Walla -- Wednesday Morning December 29, 1847  
each hostage was allowed to take only a small bundle of clothing and one blanket  
two natives, Sticcus who had opposed the massacre,  
and Old Beardy who was perhaps ashamed of his adventure with the peach pies rode their horses as escort beside the last wagon in which the Sager girls sat  
in case any of the wild young men should change their minds

Catherine Sager recorded the scene: **"...as soon as daylight appeared we started for the fort. All of us wept as we drove away from that scene of suffering; wept for joy at our escape and for sorrow for those who had been slain and could not go with us. As we left an Indian woman came from a lodge near by and told us to hasten for our lives, that her people had repented and were coming to kill us. We made all speed we could, and as darkness came on the welcome walls of the fort loomed dimly before us and we were soon inside, but did not feel safe until a week afterwards, when we reached the settlements. Thus ended our captivity among the Indians."**<sup>260</sup>

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<sup>260</sup> Samuel Asahel Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon*, P. 543-544.



Peter Skene Ogden reported: **“The object of these wretches in detaining them [the hostages] was to procure a ransom, and having their victims so completely in their power, they too well succeeded. Late one evening the poor captives reached the Company’s establishment, strongly guarded by not less than forty Indians, each of whom had some claim to make which dire necessity compelled us to satisfy....”**<sup>261</sup>

Thirteen people had died in the attack on the Whitmans’ Waiilatpu Mission  
Hudson’s Bay Company Chief Factor Peter Skene Ogden and his sixteen armed men  
were held up at Fort Walla Walla waiting for Rev. Henry Spalding and a party of captives  
to arrive from Lapwai Mission

#### OREGON RIFLES REACH THE SCENE OF BLOODSHED

Major Henry A.G. Lee and his forty-eight men traveled from The Dalles  
on to Fort Walla Walla -- December 29, 1847

Later that day they reached Waiilatpu Mission where, as Catherine Sager indicated: **“The volunteers who went up to fight the Indians gathered up the bones, placed them in a wagon box, and again buried them, and this is all the burial these martyrs of Americanism in Oregon have ever received.”**<sup>262</sup>

Two men had accompanied the militia volunteers although they were not militia volunteers  
teacher Alanson Hinman, (soon to become a teacher at the Oregon Institute)

Perrin B. Whitman who wrote of his experience a year after the massacre: **“We found everything swept from the site of the Mission, the buildings burned and everything in ruins. The bodies had been buried, but coyotes had dug into the graves considerable. I found what I satisfied myself was the Doctor’s skull. There were two hatchet marks in the back of the head.”**<sup>263</sup>

#### PETER SKENE OGDEN REMAINS AT FORT WALLA WALLA

Armed Hudson’s Bay Company men were held up at Fort Walla Walla  
waiting for the Henry Spalding Party to lead others there from Lapwai Mission  
Spalding and ten people from Lapwai finally arrived at Fort Walla Walla  
escorted by fifty Nez Perce warriors -- January 1, 1848  
this brought the total number of rescued to fifty-seven people

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<sup>261</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State: A Literary Chronicle*, P. 227.

<sup>262</sup> Samuel Asahel Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon*, P. 535.

<sup>263</sup> James A Crutchfield, *It Happened in Washington*, P. 39.

## TWO NEW CATHOLIC PRIESTS ARE ORDAINED IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST<sup>264</sup>

After the tragedy at Waiilatpu, Augustin Magloire Alexandre Blanchet, Bishop of Walla Walla (and the brother of Bishop of Oregon City Francis Norbert Blanchet) decided to elevate Brothers Charles M. Pandosy and Eugene Casimir Chirouse to the priesthood they were both ordained -- January 2, 1848 (they were the first Catholic priests ordained in the future Washington Territory)

## ALL OF THE HOSTAGES SET OUT FOR FORT VANCOUVER

Ten days after the council with the Indians had led to the release of the hostages Peter Skene Ogden's boats departed from Fort Walla Walla to return to Fort Vancouver -- noon January 2, 1848 fifty-seven survivors, most of them still incoherent from the terror of their ordeal, journeyed with the Hudson's Bay Company men down the Columbia River to the Willamette Valley -- there to remake their lives as best they could Two hours after Ogden's departure fifty Cayuse warriors dashed up to Fort Walla Walla to demand the surrender of Rev. Spalding these Indians had just learned the company of Oregon Rifles had arrived at The Dalles to make war on them -- their demand was refused

## CAYUSE INDIANS ARE CLOSELY LINKED WITH DR. MARCUS WHITMAN

Cayuse Indians were fewer in number than any of the other tribes but they were known for their intelligence and great wealth a number of them owned between one thousand and three or four thousand horses each They had been under the care and personal instruction of Dr. Whitman who had taught them the value of property and many of the arts of civilization more than a few of them had small farms and houses to live in and herded a large proportion of their livelihood They had intermarried largely with the Nez Perce and Walla Walla natives offering the hope of inducing these tribes to cooperate with and assist them They were unwilling to surrender the murderers of Dr. Whitman and the others because some of these men were the leading and most influential members of their tribe

## ADDITIONAL COMPANIES OF OREGON RIFLES ARE RAISED

Marion County furnished two companies of militiamen

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<sup>264</sup> Margaret Riddle, Essay 9033, Historylink.org, June 5, 2009.

led by Captain Levin N. English and Captain William Martin  
Clackamas and Marion counties together raised two additional companies  
under Captain William Shaw and Captain J. M. Garrison  
Portland raised yet another company  
Thomas McKay raised a company of French-Canadians on French Prairie  
showing that in the event of a protracted war the metis would fight against the Indians  
Captain McKay was furnished with a flag bearing a lone star and a number of stripes  
handmade by the women of Oregon City before they set out for Fort Vancouver  
Captain McKay presented it to his company saying:

**“This is the flag you are expected to defend, and you must defend it.”**<sup>265</sup>

Actual size of the military organization remains under dispute  
Dr. John McLoughlin’s memoranda fixed the number 475  
historian Hubert Bancroft, however, using reliable authorities  
estimated the Oregon Rifles at about 800

#### SURVIVORS OF THE WHITMAN MASSACRE ARRIVE AT FORT VANCOUVER

Hudson’s Bay Company Chief Factor Peter Skene Ogden arrived at Fort Vancouver  
accompanied by the forty-seven survivors of the Whitman Massacre  
and ten people from Lapwai Mission

They were turned over to Provisional Governor George Abernathy -- January 8, 1848  
ecstatic joy swept through Oregon City and Peter Skene Ogden was proclaimed a great hero

Provisional Government Journal poetically noted: **“The act of rescuing so many defenseless women and children from the bloody and cruel grasp of savages merits, and, we believe, receives, the universal thanks and gratitude of the people of Oregon. Such an act is the legitimate offspring of a noble, generous and manly heart.”**<sup>266</sup>

In addition to feelings of joy, the arrival of the hostages also heightened the settlers’ feelings of rage

#### COLONEL CORELIUS GILLIAM LEADS THE OREGON RIFLES TOWARD THE DALLES

Colonel Gilliam led fifty new recruits to the Oregon Rifles as they marched from Portland  
following the north bank of the Columbia River 300 miles upriver -- January 8, 1848  
their supplies followed them up the river in boats  
and reunited with them at their encampment each evening

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<sup>265</sup> Frances Fuller Victor, *The Early Indian Wars of Oregon*, P. 168.

<sup>266</sup> Elwood Evans, *History of the Pacific Northwest: Oregon and Washington, Vol. 11*, P. 279.

## CONGRESS HEARS A BILL VALIDATING OREGON'S PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

Senator Stephen A. Douglas (Illinois) offered a Bill in the United States Senate -- January 10, 1848  
it provided that Oregon's provisional laws remain valid  
until the territorial legislature should change them

## FORT GILLIAM IS ESTABLISHED AT THE PORTAGE OF THE CASCADES RAPIDS

Colonel Cornelius Gilliam's fifty Oregon Rifles continued up the Columbia River  
Colonel Gilliam awaited the arrival of his supplies at the rapids of the Cascades  
Gilliam's militia established a supply station at the upper end of the portage at the Cascades Rapids  
near the few cabins located on north bank of the Columbia River  
before re-crossing the Columbia River just above Cascade Falls  
and taking up the march to The Dalles  
some of Gilliam's men were detailed to build a road around The Cascades at the portage

## FORT COLVILLE RECEIVES CONCERNED MISSIONARIES

Rev. Cushing Eells and Rev. Elkanah Walker  
who were living at Tshimakain Mission among the Spokane Indians  
Tshimakain missionaries were concerned about the loyalties of the Spokane Indians  
although none of the Spokanes excused the actions of the murderers  
John Lee Lewis (or Lewes) succeeded Archibald McDonald as the Factor at Fort Colville  
Rev. Elkanah Walker and Rev. Cushing Eells and their families turned to him for protection  
which was provided -- 1848  
Rev. Eells sent a messenger to Fort Walla Walla requesting rescue from Fort Colville

## COLONEL CORNELIUS GILLIAM REACHES THE DALLES

Because of the many difficulties encountered during winter travel Gilliam's Oregon Rifles  
did not arrive at Fort Lee, The Dalles until January 13, 1848  
Colonel Gilliam took command of the Oregon Rifles there  
a chain of command was established composed of Lieutenant-Colonel James Waters  
Major Henry A.G. Lee was third in command  
Oregon Rifles remained at Fort Lee as they waited for additional militiamen and supplies  
to arrive from the Willamette Valley  
When their horses arrived by boat Colonel Gilliam conducted drills  
his militiamen were not equipped alike  
most used their own old guns -- some had rifles; some muskets

others who had none were furnished a weapon by order of Governor George Abernathy  
some soldiers had their own horses, but a few did not  
these were provided mounts by the Provisional Government  
some provisions were supplied by the government as best they could,  
but a goodly amount of the provisions necessary was acquired from the local Indians

Colonel Gilliam divided the Oregon Rifles into three companies:

Major Henry A.G. Lee took command of the First Company of the Oregon Rifles

Captain Lawrence Hall led the Second Company

Captain John W. Owen was placed in command of the Third Company

discipline was poor -- ammunition was wasted and the men raided the commissary at will

#### COLONEL CORNELIUS GILLIAM IS CONCERNED ABOUT THIS VULNERABLE POSITION

Colonel Gilliam did not want to march to Waiilatpu Mission and a possible fight

with a hundred or more warriors still behind him at The Dalles -- January 15, 1848

He learned the Indians' village might be located in a deep cut

on the east side of the Deschutes River

#### TWO MORE MILITIAMEN ARE KILLED

Two of the guards who watched the Oregon Rifles' horses through the night

saw in the morning light a horse in the brush a few hundred yards from the herd

they thought the horse belonged to the command and that the attached rope

had become entangled in brush

they went to release the animal and were shot and killed by Indians -- January 15, 1848

#### MAJOR HENRY A.G. LEE IS SENT TO SCOUT OUT THE INDIANS' LOCATION

Gilliam sent Major Henry A.G. Lee with a small detachment the next morning -- January 16, 1848

to ascertain, if possible, the exact location of the Indians

Major Lee returned late in the evening and reported that after traveling several miles

he discovered a small number of warriors in front of him

he tried to approach them in a friendly manner but as he advanced the Indians retreated

he ordered a charge, but had not gone far before he faced a large body of Indians at his front

Major Lee ordered a retreat with the Indians pursuing him

he returned to Fort Lee about eight o'clock p.m.

#### INTEREST IN THE TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROAD DEVELOPS IN CONGRESS

Businessman Asa Whitney had made enough money in the China trade to dedicate himself full time to developing a transcontinental railroad route to tie together the United States and the Orient and eliminate the long and costly water journey around the tip of South America

Whitney flooded Congress with memorials, he lectured to any organization that would listen, and he endlessly placed articles and letters in the newspapers

Whitney made his point -- seventeen state legislatures and innumerable private groups petitioned Congress in support of his idea

Financing options for a cross-country railroad had long been discussed in Congress

one favorite proposal suggested Congress grant to the construction company a strip of land sixty miles wide along the right of way

this incredible land grant would be sold at low rates to settlers lured by easy transportation when completed the railroad would become the property of the government

Whitney also had his detractors

some believed he was only interested in stealing a vast tract of public land to pay for his railroad

others argued the government, not private industry, should build the transportation system

but the greatest argument was over the route to be used across the continent

#### LOCATING POSSIBLE RAILROAD ROUTES CONTINUES TO BE DEBATED IN CONGRESS

Railroad developer Asa Whitney continued his interest in controlling the trade with China

he delivered a Memorial to Congress January 17, 1848

**“praying for a grant of land to enable him to construct a railroad from lake (sic) Michigan to the Pacific ocean (sic)”**

First step in constructing a transcontinental railroad was not to provide financing

but rather to identify a practical route

Promising courses to be investigated included the routes of three expeditions

Zebulon Pike’s effort to find the source of the Arkansas and Red rivers [1806-1807]

referred to as the Southern Route

John C. Fremont’s exploration of the South Pass, Rocky Mountains and land west to the Pacific

in five expeditions [1842], [1843-1844], [1845-1847], [1848-1849] and [1853][

were referred to as the Central Route

Lewis and Clark had explored the Missouri and Columbia river systems [1804-1806]

this was referred to as the Northern Route

Controversy over a transcontinental railroad was dominated by sectional and commercial rivalries

great statesmen were at the center of the controversy over location of the route

Secretary of War Jefferson Davis, a Southerner, preferred linking southern sections of the country  
therefore he preferred a Southern route

United States Senator John C. Calhoun of South Carolina was in agreement with Jeff Davis

United States Senator from Missouri Thomas Hart Benton demanded a central route

he preferred to follow the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel through the state of Missouri to the Pacific

Congress, desperate to resolve the issue, turned to science

## GOLD IS DISCOVERED IN CALIFORNIA

Captain John Sutter was developing his New Helvetia Colony (in Sacramento, California)

Captain Charles Bennett, a carpenter, along with James W. Marshall

were contracted to build a sawmill some fifty miles above Sutter's Fort

Captain Bennett made the famous discovery while digging the tailrace for John Sutter's sawmill

but credit goes to James W. Marshall who gazed into the American River -- January 24, 1848

his eye caught a yellowish glint beneath the water flowing in the ditch

he fished out a golden pebble only half the size of a pea -- then he saw another

Gold had been discovered in the South fork of the American River

despite Sutter's feeble attempts to keep the discovery a secret

news quickly spread leading to the first and greatest stampede for gold in American history

in towns like San Francisco, businesses were suspended

vessels tied at the port were forced to remain as longshoremen and boat crews

rushed to the diggings

## COLONEL CORNELIUS GILLIAM BATTLES WITH THE INDIANS

Colonel Gilliam marched out of Fort Lee (The Dalles) with a party of 130 Oregon Rifles

they advanced up the east side of the Deschutes River -- January 25, 1848

and put to flight a number of Cayuse, John Day and Des Chutes war parties who fired and ran

After an unspectacular campaign, Gilliam's forces returned to Fort Lee

Colonel Cornelius Gilliam and his men remained at Fort Lee awaiting the arrival of reinforcements

## ANOTHER DAY IS SPENT IN PURSUIT

When it was light enough to travel, Colonel Gilliam with a company of the Oregon Rifles

crossed the Deschutes River near its mouth on a forced march -- January 27, 1848

they climbed the steep bluff which ran along the river's whole course

following the Indian trail to where contact had been made the previous day

when the command reached that point, they camped at some mud springs late in the evening

## CONTACT IS MADE WITH THE ENEMY

Next morning Colonel Cornelius Gilliam moved the militia forward a few miles -- January 28, 1848  
only to discover a large group of Indians formed in a line along the bluff above the deep ravine  
As the troops passed down this ravine, the Indians fired on them from the bluff  
taunting the command calling to them to come up and fight  
Colonel Gilliam called a halt and ordered his men to fall into line  
two companies were ordered to dismount, charge up the hill and remove them  
at the summit, a scattering of boulders provided shelter for the Indians  
but the troops quickly dislodged them and killed several  
Antoine, a Spaniard, the only casualty for the militia, was seriously wounded here  
Indians fled on horseback to their village some two miles distant keeping up a running fire  
On foot the militiamen could accomplish nothing more  
Colonel Gilliam ordered a halt and directed the officers to find a route to bring up the horses  
at the mouth of the gulch a trail ascended the hill and the horses were ordered up  
During this time the Indians remained pensively watching nearby -- but out of gunshot range  
as soon as the horses came up, the command mounted and charged  
as the Indians scattered and fled Colonel Gilliam followed to the east  
going about two miles he discovered the Indian village on a small creek

## NATIVE VILLAGE IS REACHED

When the Oregon Rifles reached the village they found the Indians had struck camp and left  
it was deserted except for a few old helpless Indians who could not be taken away by the others  
This Indian village showed signs that it had been deserted in great haste  
horses were packed and ready to move  
not a tent nor teepee had been removed  
large amounts of their furniture and supplies remained in them  
caches were found containing ten bushels of peas and ten more bushels of wheat,  
eight bushels of potatoes, dried berries, tons of dried salmon and sturgeon also had been left  
militiamen found some ladies' shoes, dresses and a clock  
these were recognized as having been stolen from the wagons left in the Cascades [fall 1847]  
Colonel Gilliam's great sympathy for the fallen, weak and helpless Indians was tested



burning the village was proposed, but his reply was: “...I cannot fight the helpless women and children. It is now winter; and if you burn their village they will likely perish. Let us leave it just as we found it; and it may have a good effect.”<sup>267</sup>

#### OREGON RIFLES MAKE CAMP FOR THE NIGHT

Leaving the Indian village intact, Gilliam’s militiamen proceeded a short distance before they camped near the Deschutes River -- January 28, 1848  
tired and hungry and being out of provisions, the colonel sent to The Dalles for supplies, during this time the troops lived on horsemeat -- the first they had eaten  
meanwhile detachments were sent out to find the Indians  
Guards were set out by the Oregon Rifles and the militiamen’s fires were all extinguished about midnight, Alexander McDonald ventured out beyond the lines -- January 28  
to secure a horse he thought was a stray  
a sentry mistakenly believed him to be an Indian  
McDonald was mortally wounded and died about sundown the next day -- January 29  
With hostile natives having disappeared from the vicinity of The Dalles,  
Colonel Gilliam took two days to prepare to march back to Fort Lee

#### SISTERS OF NOTRE DAME DE NAMUR SUFFER A TRADEGY

In a house fire the Sisters of Notre Dame, Sisters Laurence, Alphonse Marie, Renilde, Odelie, Francisca, Aldegonde and Mary Bernard suffered the loss of their kitchen and most of the goods brought Belgium including school supplies, dry goods, many of their dishes  
and nearly all their cooking utensils -- late January 1848

#### OREGON VOLUNTEERS RETURN TO FORT LEE

Supplies from Oregon City arrived from Fort Lee, The Dalles  
Colonel Cornelius Gilliam resumed his march for The Dalles -- January 31, 1848  
Fort Lee was reached two days later -- February 2

#### TREATY OF GUADALUPE HIDALGO ENDS THE WAR WITH MEXICO

With the defeat of its army and the fall of its capital, Mexico City, Mexico entered into negotiations to end the war with the United States  
Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo called for the United States to pay \$15 million to Mexico  
and to pay off the claims of American citizens against Mexico -- up to \$3.25 million

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<sup>267</sup> Elwood Evans *History of the Pacific Northwest: Oregon and Washington... Vol. II*, P. 337.

Rio Grande River became the boundary for Texas and the United States acquired ownership of the large area that later became (New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, Utah and parts of Wyoming and Colorado [California had previously been captured]) Mexicans living in the annexed areas had the choice of relocating within Mexico's new boundaries or receiving American citizenship with full civil rights more than 90% chose to become U.S. citizens

United States Senate ratified the treaty with a 38-14 vote

those voting no were led by the Whigs who opposed the war and rejected Manifest Destiny Treaty at Guadalupe Hidalgo and the golden pebble found on the American River combined to set off an explosive population movement that swiftly transformed the United States into a continental nation in fact as well as in law

#### JESSE APPLGATE ATTEMPTS TO CONTACT THE CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT

Jesse Applegate with twenty-five others carried an appeal for help in pacifying the Indians overland from the Oregon Provisional Government to California Military Governor United States Army Colonel Richard Barnes Mason -- early February

#### TROUBLE ARISES IN THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY

Every year the Klamath Indians made winter camp with their allies the Molalla Indians this winter about seventy-five Klamath Indian men, women and children under Crooked Finger had joined with Red Blanket's Molalla band of about the same size Some members of both tribes dressed in war paint visited the houses of adjacent settlers killing stock, pillaging houses, insulting women by rudely demanding meals be cooked for them and committing similar acts of defiance

White settlers with land claims located along the Molalla Trail felt threatened by the presence of the combined tribes

and by the absence of local men who had gone to fight in the Cayuse War one settler's calf was stolen -- February 1848

his neighbors ordered all Indians to leave Champoeg (Marion) County Crooked Finger urged the Klamaths to stay with him in along Abiqua Creek but Red Blanket led his people to their own camp on Butte Creek near Abiqua Creek

#### UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES INTRODUCES THE ORGANIC ACT OF 1848

United States House of Representatives reintroduced its version of the Organic Act of 1848 to create Oregon Territory -- February 9, 1848

Work progressed slowly and independently of the U.S. Senate version  
that had been introduced by U.S. Senator Stephen Douglas

#### MAIN BODY OF OREGON RIFLES ARRIVES AT FORT LEE (THE DALLES)

Additional militiaman numbering 537 reinforced the Oregon Rifles at The Dalles -- February 9, 1848  
these included companies commanded by captains Levin N. English and Thomas McKay  
McKay delivered a cannon that fired a nine-pound shot  
brought around the portage at The Cascades Rapids in a snow storm  
this was the only artillery piece belonging to the Oregon Provisional Government  
Joe Meek with nine traveling companions including his old friend George Ebbert  
accompanied the Oregon Rifles up the Columbia River to Fort Lee  
as they carried the most recent Memorial to the federal government to Washington City

#### COLONEL GILLIAM IS NOW STRONG ENOUGH TO ADVANCE ON THE INDIANS

Colonel Cornelius Gilliam now had over 600 men  
and a cannon to be used for defensive operations at the front  
Gilliam added additional companies and their leaders:  
Fourth Company led by Captain H.J.G. Maxon  
Fifth Company led by Captain Philip F. Thompson  
Captain Thomas McKay led a group known as McKay's Company  
Captain Levin N. English led the English Company  
Captain William Martin led Martin's Company  
Captain, J.M. Garrison led Garrison's Company

#### PROVISIONAL GOVERNOR ABERNATHY COUNTS ON THE PEACE COMMISSIONERS

Peace Commissioners Superintendent of Indian Affairs Joel Palmer  
and Commissioner Robert "Doc" Newell arrived at Fort Lee -- February 10, 1848  
Governor Abernethy was extremely anxious that the Peace Commission should precede  
ahead of Colonel Gilliam's Oregon Rifles on the march from Fort Lee to Waiilatpu Mission  
[February 14] was the day the commissioners were to set out for the mission  
with the Oregon Rifles to follow the next day  
Peace Commissioners were to meet with the natives at Waiilatpu Mission  
and hold discussions while the militia remained in camp

#### INDIANS CONCLUDE THE WHITES ARE BENT ON WAR

Watching the buildup of the numbers of Oregon Rifle militiamen at Fort Lee, The Dalles convinced the Indians to pay little attention to the peace delegation accompanying the militia. Indians began to conduct raids and carry on guerrilla warfare in Cayuse Country.

#### MORALE AT FORT LEE IS LOW

Conditions were extremely difficult as Cayuse Country was remote from the Willamette Valley. Men were poorly provided with necessary supplies. Militiamen and leaders alike chafed at merely being a potential escort for the Peace Commission. Some officers and men were dissatisfied with remaining at Fort Lee. It appeared they would not be allowed to fight Indians. A few of these returned from Fort Lee to the Willamette Valley.

#### COLONEL CORNELIUS GILLIAM CHANGES GOVERNOR ABERNATHY'S PLANS

Colonel Gilliam received news that several of the Interior tribes had united -- February 13, 1848. This report convinced Gilliam to advance quickly to Waiilatpu Mission. Gilliam informed the peace commissioners his entire command would accompany them to Waiilatpu except for a small garrison of twenty-seven men under Captain Owen who were left at Fort Lee.

#### COLONEL GILLIAM ADVANCES TOWARD WAILLATPU MISSION

Colonel Gilliam with more than five hundred men left Fort Lee ahead of Peace Commissioners Joel Palmer and Robert "Doc" Newell. Gilliam forded the Deschutes River some fifteen miles beyond The Dalles -- February 14, 1848. Soon the commissioners caught the fighting force and moved ahead of Colonel Gilliam's troops. Both commissioners insisted on traveling under a white flag much to the chagrin of the colonel. For several days the Oregon Rifles marched without incident on the old emigrant road as they moved toward the John Day River.

#### JESSE APPLGATE REACHES THE SISKIYOU MOUNTAINS

Two weeks after leaving Oregon City with twenty-five men, Jesse Applegate reached the Siskiyou Mountains. After a laborious effort to cross the mountains in deep snow, they were compelled to abandon the journey and return to Oregon City. Dispatches carried by Applegate to the California military government were forwarded by sea (but no aid came). Provisional government, without any revenue, had no alternative but to wage war on their own.

#### COLONEL GILLIAM CROSSES THE JOHN DAY RIVER

Colonel Gilliam led his large force of Oregon Rifles across the John Day River -- February 18, 1848  
there he discovered signs the Indians had camped there the night before  
Major Henry A.G. Lee was set out in pursuit of the Indians but no contact was made with the natives

#### FORT LEE COMES UNDER ATTACK

Fort Lee, now occupied by John W. Owen and twenty-seven militiamen,  
was visited by a Cayuse raiding party that drove off three hundred head of cattle  
belonging to immigrants at The Dalles -- February 18, 1848  
Although he lacked horses Captain Owen launched an attack from Fort Lee  
several natives were killed during the confrontation

#### MAJOR HENRY A.G. LEE GIVES CHASE TO THE RUSTLING INDIANS

Indians with their camp equipment could be seen moving from Fort Lee toward the Blue Mountains  
driving a large herd of stolen animals ahead of them  
Major Lee was ordered to re-crossed the John Day River with his First Regiment -- February 18, 1848  
Lee returned to Fort Lee at midnight without making contact with the renegade Indians

#### MAJOR LEE AGAIN GIVES CHASE TO THE RENEGADE INDIANS

Major Henry A.G. Lee and his First Regiment of the Oregon Rifles  
set out from Fort Lee after the raiders -- morning February 19, 1848  
once again the Indians were located moving their camp to the Blue Mountains  
in the ensuing skirmish little damage was inflicted on either side  
but the First Regiment of the Oregon Rifles captured sixty horses  
After the clash, Major Lee started back to Fort Lee to make a report  
his First Regiment was ambushed in a ravine -- however, his men succeeded in hiding  
(Major Lee continued to harass the Indians for several more days before returning to Fort Lee  
in this episode he lost three men killed and one mortally wounded  
Indian losses during these clashes were unknown)

#### PEACE COMMISSIONERS UNDERTAKE EFFORTS TO REESTABLISH PEACE

Colonel Cornelius Gilliam's main force of Oregon Rifles continued to probe Cayuse Country  
Peace Commissioners Superintendent of Indian Affairs Joel Palmer and Robert "Doc" Newell  
dispatched a packet of important letters -- February 19, 1848

great faith was placed in sending these letters asserting the desire for continued peace  
and to discourage the natives from entering into any hostile combinations  
one Peace Commission letter was addressed to St. Anne's Catholic mission on the Umatilla River  
commissioners did not know the mission had been abandoned  
as the priests had moved to Fort Walla Walla  
after their departure, Indians destroyed the mission buildings  
second commissioners' letter notified the Nez Perce Indians to assemble and meet with them  
this was reinforced by another letter send independently by Rev. Henry Spalding  
to the Nez Perce giving them assurances that only the Waiilatpu murderers were wanted  
third commission letter was sent to Factor William McBean at Fort Walla Walla  
that asked McBean to arrange a council with the Nez Perce and other friendly Indians  
at Waiilatpu Mission

In a stroke of bad luck the messenger was captured by Cayuse Indians

but the letter to Superintendent McBean was sent on

as Indian respect for Hudson's Bay Company had remained intact

On the trail the peace commissioners met with representatives of the Yakima and Nez Perce tribes  
who expressed their willingness to remain neutral even as the Cayuse remained hostile

#### COLONEL GILLIAM CONTINUES ON THE MARCH TO WAILLATPU MISSION

Gilliam received word of Captain Henry A.G. Lee's skirmish with the raiders -- morning February 23  
Oregon Rifles had now reached the country claimed by hostile Indians  
they expected to be engaged in battle at any time

Before leaving camp the colonel sent his scouts in front along the road

with instructions to go as far as Butter Creek and to report to him about ten o'clock A.M.

soon a man was seen along the road approaching at a rapid pace and was recognized as a scout

he reported a large body of Indians was in front near where the road turned off

As Gilliam was not burdened with the peace commission, who were in fact traveling ahead of him,  
he set out in pursuit of the Cayuse Indians with his command of Oregon Rifles

#### COLONEL CORNELIUS GILLIAM MAKES CONTACT WITH THE HOSTILE INDIANS

Entering a canyon Colonel Gilliam and his Oregon Rifles met a large combined party

of about 400 Cayuse, Walla Wallas and perhaps some other natives in battle array

about one-quarter of the natives were spectators who remained in the hills

Indian tactics consisted only of riding furiously past the marching troops

and making a great disturbance -- February 23, 1848

Colonel Gilliam anticipated an easy victory, but as he looked at his small force of men thoughts of the consequences if they failed in the struggle before them raced through his mind he spoke to his men regarding what was at stake: **“Boys the murderers of Doctor Whitman are before us with their allies; and behind them on the hill are as many more ready to join them in case the battle goes against us. You know the consequences if we fail; not one of us will be left to tell the tale. And that is not the worst. Every tribe of Indians in the whole country will unite to desolate our homes, and to exterminate and drive all the Americans from the country. *But we are not going to fail.* We are going to whip them and teach them a lesson to-day that they will never forget. Don’t shoot until you are ordered. Obey your officers, and quietly wait until you are ordered to begin the battle.”**<sup>268</sup>

#### TWO PEACE COMMISSIONERS REFUSE TO MEET WITH A GROUP OF DES CHUTES INDIANS

At about the same time, Peace Commissioners Joel Palmer and Robert “Doc” Newell were warned to go back to Fort Lee -- February 23, 1848

Thirteen Des Chutes Indians requested the Peace Commission hold a council for their people however, the peace commissioners were anxious to reach the Umatilla River

they refused to stop even to negotiate with the natives who were willing to attend a council

Des Chutes natives were sent back to The Dalles to wait for the return of the commissioners

Instead of returning to Fort Lee the commissioners rejoined Colonel Cornelius Gilliam’s military force

#### OREGON RIFLES ARE ATTACKED IN THE BATTLE OF SAND HOLLOW

Oregon Rifles’ supply train was on the emigrant road near (today’s Sand Hollow, Oregon)

it was protected in the front by Captain Lawrence Hall’s Second Company

captains Philip F. Thompson’s Fifth Company and H.J.G. Maxon Fourth Company

formed the left flank on the north side of the road

Captain Levin N. English’s Company and Captain Thomas McKay’s Company

formed the right flank were on the south side

Indians led by War Chief Five Crows and Gray Eagle made the first attack -- February 24, 1848

there was an especially resolute attempt on McKay’s company at the extreme right

to prevent the Indians from crossing of the Umatilla River

members of the Kalispel, Coeur d’Alene and Flathead tribes observed the militiamen

as the Cayuse Indians hoped they would join their cause

slowly and silently the warriors moved forward until they were almost within gunshot range

at a signal every Indian pony sprang to almost full speed

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<sup>268</sup> Elwood Evans *History of the Pacific Northwest: Oregon and Washington... Vo/. II, P. 338.*

every warrior shouted terrifying battle cries at full voice  
Five Crows' Indians moved around the Oregon Rifles keeping in regular order  
they maintained a space of about four feet between their horses with Grey Eagle at the front  
gradually they moved around Captain Hall's Second Company until they entirely encircled it  
so regular was the order, and so well had they gauged their speed, that as their line drew closer  
they began to form another circle within the outer circle  
Indians now approached gunshot range  
Grey Eagle kept several yards in front of the line of natives on horseback  
Captain Tom McKay recognized Grey Eagle as the enemy's great medicine man  
and requested permission to fire  
Colonel Gilliam granted the request and the chief fell from his horse  
he died instantly of a bullet through the head  
loss of the Indian leader threw the natives into confusion  
several Indians sprang forward and carried him away  
Fighting now became a cacophony of noise mixing the explosions of discharging guns  
and war-whoops of the braves with cries of defiance from the militiamen  
continual firing from the militia caused the Indians to fall back out of gunshot range  
there they remained for about twenty minutes  
before mounting another attack against the militia -- this time charging directly at them  
again the natives were repulsed as they fell back in utter confusion

#### INDIANS CHANGE TACTICS

Remainder of the day was spent in skirmishing -- February 24, 1848  
Indians attempted to draw a portion of the detachment away from the main body and isolate them  
decoys were sent out drawing a few of the troops toward them before they would retreat  
other warriors would quickly race between the detachment and the main command  
Colonel Cornelius Gilliam at once understood the trick  
his force was so small that he was compelled to keep them in striking distance of each other  
to protect his men from Indian attack  
his instructions were to pursue only so far out  
officers in command were to watch closely the enemy posted on each side  
if any attempt was made to isolate them they were to immediately fall back  
sometimes eagerness overcame judgment when militiamen would ignore their instructions  
then there would be a high-stakes race to re-group  
Captain H.J.G. Maxon's Fourth Company followed the enemy so far that it became surrounded



a sharp encounter followed in which a number of Oregon Rifles militiamen were disabled but as the day progressed the Indians failed in their efforts to divide and conquer Indians withdrew about four o'clock in the afternoon -- volunteers destroyed the Indian camp forty horses, four head of cattle and \$300 worth of personal property had been captured all of which later was sold by the quartermaster for \$1,400 two Indians were known to have been killed, but the enemy's loss could not be determined as they removed all of their wounded and dead except the two

#### BATTLE OF SAND HOLLOW IS OVER

Oregon Rifles went into camp on the field at sunset -- February 24, 1848 that night their situation was extremely uncomfortable -- militia had neither wood nor water except for a very small supply in canteens which had to be preserved for the wounded Eleven militiamen were wounded that day -- one was Lieutenant-Colonel James Waters eight of the casualties were from Maxon's Fourth Company comfort and transportation of the wounded was provided those mortally or dangerously wounded could not be carried in the wagons a blanket was lashed to two tent poles forming a stretcher these wounded were carried on the shoulders of the healthy to Fort Walla Walla Some two miles ahead the Indians built large and numerous fires along the bluffs Cayuse became divided:

- some wanted peace and would agree to attend a Council,
- others were more cautious

#### OREGON RIFLES MARCH TOWARD THE UMATILLA RIVER

At sunrise the militia marched without water toward the Umatilla River -- February 25, 1848 Colonel Gilliam planned to go into camp to rest and refresh his troops he would then make a forced night march to the Indian village twenty miles up the river he would surround it and at dawn he would demand an unconditional surrender (in all probability he would have succeeded and would end the war then and there) Oregon Rifles traveled only a short distance when they were met by a delegation of Indians bearing a white flag who asked for a suspension of hostilities and proposed to meet with the officers to arrange terms of peace

#### PEACE COMMISSIONERS FORCE COLONEL GILLIAM TO CHANGE HIS PLANS

Colonel Gilliam opposed the Indian's proposition as he believed it to be a ruse done solely to secure time to convey their families and property to a place of safety. However, the two peace commissioners favored the Indian's proposition; they thought the Indians were acting in good faith and insisted it be accepted. Colonel Gilliam gave in because the governor had intended him to operate with the commissioners; an agreement was made to meet the next day at the crossing of the Umatilla River. Colonel Gilliam's command pushed on to the crossing and camped.

#### UMATILLA RIVER IS REACHED BY COLONEL CORNELIUS GILLIAM'S OREGON RIFLES

Colonel Gilliam continued his march with his militiamen; he successfully crossed to the eastern bank of the Umatilla River -- February 26, 1848. He advanced to within three miles of the Cayuse camp; troops were tired and very hungry, not having had anything to eat since about thirty hours before. Gilliam made camp. Oregon Rifles could see crowds of Indians on the hills above them. Colonel Cornelius Gilliam became thoroughly alarmed.

#### PLANS OF THE PEACE COMMISSIONERS FAIL

Peace Commissioners Superintendent of Indian Affairs Joel Palmer and Robert "Doc" Newell received no response to any of their letters, and their scheme to invoke peace proved useless. However, the commissioners in good faith remained in camp all next day as agreed -- February 26, but no Cayuse Indians came to talk. It was only a strategy on their part to remove their possession to places of safety. Peace commissioners did meet with several Nez Perce Indians who came into camp; they learned the messenger sent to notify the Nez Perce to assemble and meet with them had been intercepted and sent back by hostile Cayuse Indians. A second messenger was therefore sent to the Nez Perce. Governor Abernathy's misguided policy was carried out through his Peace Commissioners. Colonel Gilliam impatient at the Peace Commission's delay and its possible consequences had, even so, provided every opportunity for the peace plan to accomplish its purpose. Perhaps due in part to the good faith effort, the Nez Perce Indians chose to remain passive. Colonel Gilliam was very irritated about the delay; he had watched the murderers of Doctor Whitman escape; seen his whole battle plan defeated.

## OREGON RIFLES CONTINUE THEIR MARCH TO FORT WALLA WALLA

After the delay caused by the peace commissioners

Colonel Cornelius Gilliam broke camp -- morning February 27, 1848

It was noted that all of the Indians had disappeared

to Colonel Cornelius Gilliam it signified no council would be held

but this also was a sure sign they had gone to prepare for a major campaign

this was defiance -- Colonel Gilliam was fully aware the Cayuse War would continue

Gilliam's command pushed immediately forward to the Walla Walla River

before traveling very far the road climbed to the high tablelands of that county

from which the foot of the Blue Mountains could be plainly seen

but all along the route before them was a dense cloud of dusty expanse

extending for miles along the foot of the mountains

Gilliam knew at once that it was the Indians escaping with their animals

and that it was useless to proceed any farther in that direction

Colonel Gilliam sent Major Henry A.G. Lee up the Walla Walla River about twenty miles

where he found the enemy, engaged them, killed one, lost some of his horses

and returned to the command to report the incident

In the meantime, the remainder of the Oregon Rifles marched across country to the Walla Walla River

without further interruption they arrived a couple of miles below Fort Walla Walla

where they made camp

## COLONEL GILLIAM ATTEMPTS TO ACQUIRE SUPPLIES FROM FORT WALLA WALLA

Colonel Gilliam's command was short of ammunition

Gilliam wrote a polite note to Fort Walla Walla Factor William McBean

asking him to furnish specific quantities of powder and lead -- February 27, 1848

Gilliam was aware that there was a large amount stored there

an officer returned and reported that the request had been refused

Gilliam visited the post himself and acquired the necessary supplies

## COLONEL GILLIAM ENCOUNTERS FRIENDLY WALLA WALLA INDIANS

Gilliam's Oregon Rifles marched six miles up the Walla Walla River

camping close to the camp of Walla Walla Indian Chief Peu-Peu-Mox-Mox

where the militiamen found a friendly reception -- night of February 28, 1848

Peu-peu-mox-mox, who professed friendship, supplied the little army with beef

## STICCUS APPROACHES THE PEACE COMMISSIONERS IN SEARCH OF PEACE

Sticcus, a well-known old Cayuse Indian and friend of Dr. Marcus Whitman came to the Walla Walla River camp -- February 29, 1848

Sticcus represented his tribes' desire to discover on what terms peace could be achieved Peace commissioners Joel Palmer and Robert "Doc" Newell held a council with Sticcus which was attended also by Colonel Cornelius Gilliam -- February 29, 1848

Sticcus gave a history of the troubles from beginning to end and the causes that brought it about:

- a large number of his people had been sick with the measles and that many had died  
Joe Lewis, a metis, had convinced them Dr. Whitman had poisoned them and would poison them all if he was not killed or driven out of the country  
Lewis had said Whitman wanted to kill all of the Indians and take possession of the country as proof he pointed to the sick and dead Indians;
- Sticcus placed a large amount of blame on William McBean and others  
Lewis also said Factor William McBean had offered Whitman a large price for his property but that the doctor refused to sell at any price  
thus the only way they could get rid of him was to kill him;
- Sticcus said his people were sorry about the killing of the best friend they had among the Whites they had been lied to and deceived  
Cayuse wanted peace and Sticcus had come to see at what terms were possible

## OREGON RIFLES SPEND A FULL DAY ON THE MARCH

After Sticcus had left the soldiers at the Walla Walla River camp to return to his people Colonel Cornelius Gilliam's Oregon Rifles proceeded toward the burned ruins of Waiilatpu Mission -- March 1, 1848

## OREGON RIFLES REACH WAILLATPU MISSION

Colonel Gilliam arrived at the charred remains of Dr. Whitman's Mission -- March 2, 1848 they encountered nothing but destruction and desolation which was heartrending mission's orchard had been cut down buildings had been burned and everything movable had been thrown into the fire remains of the victims of the massacre had been hastily buried

Peter Skene Ogden's Hudson's Bay Company men had dug a grave about seven feet square sufficiently deep to hold the bodies  
but this had been partially exhumed by wolves and coyotes  
and the remains scattered about the grounds

militiamen gathered up the bones and brought them together

Joe Meek performed this sad duty for the body of his own daughter Helen Mar Meek  
who had attended Narcissa Whitman's school

Whitman Massacre victims were buried in one mass grave  
which was enclosed and covered so it would not be disturbed again

Dr. Whitman's nephew wrote of his experience (a year after the massacre): **"We found everything swept from the site of the Mission, the buildings burned and everything in ruins. The bodies had been buried, but coyotes had dug into the graves considerable. I found what I satisfied myself was the Doctor's skull. There were two hatchet marks in the back of the head."**<sup>269</sup>

Colonel Gilliam was so moved by the vision of destruction at Waiilatpu  
that he told his volunteers he would give battle in one week

#### FORT WATERS IS CONSTRUCTED BY COLONEL GILLIAM AT WAILLATPU

Colonel Cornelius Gilliam arranged his camp to ward off any attack the enemy might attempt  
Oregon Rifles then set about constructing an adobe fort -- March 2, 1848

Dr. Marcus Whitman's adobe house served as a hospital for the sick and wounded  
remains of mission buildings' timbers and fence rails were partially buried on end  
and surrounded by trenches

this post was named Fort Waters in honor of wounded Lieutenant-Colonel James Waters  
it served as the base of operations in the region of the massacre

#### JOE MEEK SETS OUT ON HIS JOURNEY EASTWARD

Joe Meek left the Oregon Riflemen as they camped at Waiilatpu Mission

Meek and nine companions set out from Fort Waters -- March 4, 1848

they traveled beyond Cayuse territory to the Blue Mountains  
escorted by a hundred soldiers

for added protection each envoy wore the respected Scotch cap and red belt  
of the Hudson's Bay Company

Weather, however, and not Indians proved to be their enemy

they crossed the Blue Mountains in deep snow

then proceeded along the Oregon Trail which Meek knew well bound for the East

#### COLONEL CORNELIUS GILLIAM GROWS IMPATIENT

Colonel Gilliam believed himself to be handicapped by the presence of the peace commissioners

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<sup>269</sup> James A. Crutchfield, *It Happened in Washington*, P. 39.

which to him seemed to serve no practical purpose

other than to provide time for the guilty Cayuse to escape  
as he waited he grew increasingly irritated

Peace commissioners in fact did inhibit Colonel Gilliam's efforts  
as he was forced to keep his men at Fort Waters (Waiilatpu)

In the meantime, the main body of Cayuse Indians moved toward the Snake River  
efforts to induce them to give up the men who had committed the murders at Waiilatpu had failed

#### WILLAMETTE VALLEY SETTLERS BECOME ALARMED

Two Cayuse scouts were captured by settlers

near the Klamath Indians' camp on Abiqua Creek (in today's Marion County) -- early March  
suspicious of their motives the settlers demanded the Klamaths leave the valley

Molalla Chief Red Blanket from his Butte Creek camp near Abiqua Creek

insisted the Klamaths were his kinsmen and under his protection -- he asserted their right to stay

#### WILLAMETTE VALLEY INDIANS BECOME AGGRESSIVE

Molalla Chief Red Blanket accused the settlers of killing the two captured Cayuse scouts  
this was denied by the pioneers and the Indians relented

but the settlers were now thoroughly alarmed

Fifty Molalla and Klamath natives surrounded the residence of Richard Miller  
on Abiqua Creek -- afternoon March 4, 1848

this was a strongly fortified log house which served as a place of refuge for the neighborhood

That afternoon a small party of Indians attempted to cut off the escape of a visitor to the region

Mr. Knox, the mail carrier, passed by and witnessed the impending danger as he delivered mail  
he warned the settlers of the incident as he continued on his route

others took heed, mounted and rode warning the settlers -- calling them together for defense

Quickly white settlers organized a militia in Champoeg (Marion County)

sixty old and young men capable of bearing arms responded to the call

#### MASSACRE AT ABIQUA CREEK

Klamath Indian camp on Abiqua Creek was attacked by the Champoeg Militia -- March 6, 1848

Indians retreating along the Klamath Trail were followed down into a steep canyon

natives' rear guard defended the band as they retreated

by shooting volleys of arrows at the pursuing militia

only one arrow caused any injury and that was insignificant

riflemen killed several Indians as the others retreated to a rocky ledge overhanging the creek  
Champoeg Militia, covered by a thicket of brush, continued to pursue the fleeing natives  
several Indians succeeded in climbing the ledge and made their escape  
remainder of the Indians were forced to make a stand  
they fought bravely, arrows against rifles, then scattered and ran away  
seven more Indians were left dead on the field  
one of those killed proved to be a woman, who held in her dying grasp a drawn bow,  
with an arrow ready to be sped at her pursuers  
Effect of the fight may have proved to be useful in the short term  
it did warn the renegades from the interior tribes to leave the valley,  
and not to attempt to incite an Indian outbreak  
at least the Indians in the vicinity of the Willamette settlements remained peaceful  
settlements in the surrounding region felt more secure  
However a great number of Indians, all of them women and children, had been killed  
militiamen had believed they were pursuing Klamath warriors and did not intend the tragedy  
surviving Klamaths were given three days to leave  
they departed on the Klamath Trail bearing their dead with them  
a short time later Fred McCormick shot and killed Crooked Finger in Clackamas County  
“Battle of the Abiqua” was unheralded by the settlers for twenty years  
when finally published the statement noting the killing of Indian women and children  
was persistently denied by the pioneers

#### INDIANS ARRIVE AT WAILATPU MISSION TO TALK

After spending four days at Fort Waters, the militia camp was approached by a large delegation  
of Nez Perce and Walla Walla Indians and a few Cayuse I  
among the leaders of the Nez Perce was Joseph  
their head chief in the absence of Ellis who was on a buffalo hunt  
Peu-peu-mox-mox was the head chief of the Walla Walla tribe  
Cayuse Indians were represented by the war chief Camaspello whose sick child  
had been visited by Doctor Whitman only a short time before the massacre  
and who had not warned the doctor of the conspiracy  
Peace commissioners Superintendent of Indian Affairs Joel Palmer  
and Commissioner Robert “Doc” Newell sent two settlers out to meet with them  
William Craig an American trapper who had married a Nez Perce woman  
and Joseph Gervais a French-Canadian and long-time Oregon resident

Craig spoke with the head of the delegation -- Nez Perce Chief Joseph  
who an English-speaking native was well known to settlers  
Craig and Gervais returned to Fort Waters with 250 Nez Perce Indians  
who had asked to meet directly with the Peace Commissioners -- March 6, 1848

#### PEACE COMMISSIONERS CONDUCT TALKS WITH THE NEZ PERCE

Talks were conducted by Peace Commissioner Robert "Doc" Newell -- March 7, 1848

Colonel Gilliam worried about what the Cayuse were up to  
and how many spies were in his camp

during the talks Nez Perce Chief Joseph spoke for his people and some of the other Indians present  
these talks with Chief Joseph prevented the Nez Perce from joining the Cayuse in war

Nez Perce pledged they would not harbor the murderers  
or permit them to pass through their country

Peace Commissioner Joel Palmer promised that no whites

would be permitted to settle on Indian land without the natives' consent

Commissioner Palmer induced the Nez Perce chiefs to visit the Cayuse camp  
to urge them to surrender the murderers

as the militia planned to follow a day behind the Nez Perce if necessary

Peu-peu-mox-mox, head chief of the Walla Walla, represented his tribe

Peace Commissioner Joel Palmer found Peu-peu-mox-mox very friendly, prudent and sensible  
Nez Perce delegation peacefully returned to their own country -- March 7, 1848

#### OREGON RIFLES ENCOUNTER CAYUSE INDIANS

Colonel Cornelius Gilliam continued preparations for the attack he had promised  
when he first arrived at Waiilatpu Mission

Oregon Rifles broke camp at Fort Waters (Waiilatpu) -- March 8, 1848

they marched into Snake River Country to attack a Cayuse camp three miles away

which immediately professed their friendship although some of the murderers were there

In a meeting with Cayuse Indians, the Peace Commissioners demanded the murders be surrendered

Cayuse leaders refused to comply

old Cayuse Chief Sticcus stated neither Tawatowe nor Tamsucky would be given up

Tawatowe had never been accused

Sticcus had linked the two names to start an argument and buy time

#### STICCUS CONTINUES HIS DELAYING TACTICS



All the next day was spent in negotiations with Sticcus -- March 9, 1848

Colonel Gilliam stated he would accept Joe Lewis in place of all five accused murderers but the peace commissioners found the offer to take Joe Lewis alone unacceptable commissioners, refusing to participate in such an exchange, withdrew from the council

#### NEGOTIATIONS WITH STICCUS CONTINUE

Commissioners told Sticcus they could have peace

by surrendering the murderers of Dr. Whitman -- March 10, 1848

Sticcus told them the Indians would surrender Tamsucky, Tilaukait and Tawatowe but Tom Hill and Joe Lewis would not be given up

Sticcus had linked in the name Tawatowe, who had never been accused, to start an argument and to buy time

Colonel Gilliam proposed that if Joe Lewis was brought in three of the assassins would be released but the peace commissioners objected to this

they told Sticcus that his people must surrender all of the murderers

before they would be permitted to live in peace in their country

but if they would surrender the killers they might all be friends

Sticcus' delaying tactics had continued all day long

Sticcus promised to carry the message to his people

and also to use his influence to induce them to comply with the terms

Colonel Gilliam asked where Sticcus' people were at the time

he replied that they were at the mouth of the Tucaanon on the Snake River, stopping to stay with the Palouse Indians

This ended the first and only conference which the commissioners held with the Cayuse Indians who were now beaten and were fugitives fleeing for their lives

but because of their wealth and influence with other Indian tribes

they still had hope of uniting the other tribes with them

and thus secure their assistance against the Bostons (as the Americans were called)

#### PEACE COMMISSIONERS LEAVE TO RETURN TO OREGON CITY

Superintendent of Indian Affairs and Commissary-General of the Oregon Rifles Joel Palmer felt that the appointment of peace commissioners by the governor was a grave mistake

Joel Palmer was one of Colonel Gilliam's subordinate officers

but he was also a peace commissioner and in some sense Gilliam's superior

Palmer was a man of much more ability than his colleague Robert "Doc" Newell

to his own credit, while in the field Palmer learned of the needs of the little army  
and, as chief quartermaster and commissary-general, he worked with untiring zeal  
and energy to furnish the troops with the needed supplies  
through his untiring personal efforts he succeeded

Provisional Government was indebted to Joel Palmer more than to any other person  
for the successful prosecution and termination of the war

Peace commissioners saw that their work was being impeded by Colonel Cornelius Gilliam  
both Superintendent of Indian Affairs Joel Palmer and Robert "Doc" Newell  
decided to leave for Oregon City  
they departed for Waiilatpu en route to Oregon City -- March 11, 1848

#### DEPARTURE OF THE PEACE COMMISSION IS A RELIEF FOR COLONEL GILLIAM

There was a general feeling of satisfaction throughout the entire command as the commissioners left  
neither officers nor militiamen held anything against the three Peace Commissioner personally  
but it was realized their results had been worse than a failure -- March 11, 1848  
authority for peace or war should have been entirely in the hands of the commanding officer  
if Colonel Gilliam was competent he was certainly better qualified to arrange terms of peace  
than others who knew very little about the military situation

Governor Abernathy, no doubt, thought he was doing his best in appointing the commissioners  
but it was a great mistake -- they were a source of annoyance and confusion  
from the time they reached the command until their departure  
at times they were a source of keen humiliation to the commanding officer

#### PARTY OF CAYUSE INDIANS VISIT FORT WALLA WALLA

Three Cayuse Indians appeared at Fort Walla Walla with a flag of truce -- March 11, 1848  
they returned some horses which had been stolen from Colonel Gilliam's militia  
on the march from Fort Lee (the Dalles) to Waiilatpu  
these Indians reported that Sticcas had captured Joe Lewis and the property of the five murders  
but as Sticcas was bringing Joe Lewis and the possessions to Colonel Gilliam  
sadly, Joe Lewis had been rescued and the property retaken by the Indians  
these reports led Colonel Gilliam to doubt the good faith of Sticcas  
these Indians also pointed out native horses on the nearby hills  
which they said belonged to the natives the Colonel was anxious to kill or capture  
it was stated the horses' owners were on the north side of Snake River and beyond reach

## COLONEL CORNELIUS GILLIAM LEARNS INDIANS ARE AT THE TUCANNON RIVER

On the same day the Peace Commissioners left -- March 11, 1848

Colonel Gilliam received a message from Tamahas  
expressing his desire to desert the hostile Cayuse

Tamahas reported Tamsucky had gone to Palouse Indian Red Wolf's camp on the Snake River  
and that Tiloukaikt, with the rest of the Cayuse, had fled down the Tucannon River  
with the intention of crossing the Snake River into the Palouse Country

With the Peace Commissioners gone, Colonel Gilliam was free to make his own plans  
Gilliam resolved, if possible, to surprise and capture the Indians where they were camped

## COLONEL CORNELIUS GILLIAM MARCHES HIS OREGON RIFLES INTO BATTLE

Colonel Gilliam sent his guide and interpreter Morge ahead of the command  
accompanied by Jacob Rhinearson -- early hours of March 12, 1848

with instructions to examine the canyons and narrow passes along the trail  
if anything occurred they were to report to the colonel without delay

Gilliam broke camp long before daybreak

he proceeded through the dark with all possible speed down the Tucannon River  
he was determined to arrive at the Indian camp before daylight

Colonel Gilliam met an old Indian not far from the mouth of the Tucannon River  
who claimed the camp belonged to friendly Walla Walla Chief Peu-Peu-Mox-Mox

but, the old Indian said, the stock feeding on the surrounding hills belonged to hostile Cayuse

Oregon Rifles approached the Indian camp before dawn -- March 12, 1848

one of the members Major Joseph Magone's First Company,  
unknown to the officers and contrary to orders moved ahead of the command and scouts  
he fired into a thicket of willows supposing it to be an Indian teepee

When Colonel Gilliam heard the gunfire he ordered a halt

he sent out a reconnoitering party -- they soon returned and reported the situation

Gilliam was informed by Morge that they were only a short distance from the Indian camp

Morge believed the Indians had heard the shot

Colonel Gilliam feared the Indians lay in ambush since the river valley was narrow  
and the trail that ran along the steep riverbank was thickly set with brush

Colonel Gilliam ordered the men to dismount and remain in wait until daylight

## COLONEL GILLIAM ATTACKS THE INDIAN CAMP

At dawn the men of the Oregon Rifles were ordered quickly forward

part of Colonel Gilliam's militia traveled down the Tucannon River to its mouth  
then up the Snake River to where the main Indian trail crossed the Snake River  
remainder of the command followed Gilliam along the main trail to the same location  
they covered only a short distance when they saw the Indian camp about half a mile away  
Indians had been alerted to the approaching troops  
reaching the Indian camp they found Tiloukaikt and the murderers had again escaped  
and the Cayuse men were all gone  
only a few painted and armed but friendly Indians who claimed to be Palouse natives remained  
they protested that the Cayuse were not there  
having left, they reported, some weeks before  
fleeing to the hills and across the Snake River going to the Bitter Root Country  
one man's disobedience had defeated Colonel Gilliam's plans

#### OREGON RIFLES CHASE TELAKITE

Colonel Gilliam selected 158 of his best mounted men to pursue Tiloukaikt  
down the Tucannon River to its mouth  
then up the Snake River to the main Indian trail across the river -- March 12, 1848  
Gilliam, himself, began a forced march with the remainder of his command  
Gilliam's Oregon Rifles climbed painfully up the steep side of a canyon  
on reaching the top of the hill where the cattle had been grazing the Snake River was visible  
cattle could be seen swimming the river  
they also saw a large number of Indians on the opposite side of the river  
as they had succeeded in crossing and were beyond the reach of the troops  
Snake River lay between Gilliam and the enemy with no means of crossing  
Gilliam's troops had been delayed long enough in the Indian camp  
for Tiloukaikt and the others to make good their escape  
Nothing remained to do but collect the natives' stray horses and return to Fort Waters  
Colonel Gilliam began rounding up an additional five hundred head of Indian stock  
which had been left behind along the Snake River by Tiloukaikt

#### COLONEL GILLIAM MARCHES BACK TOWARD FORT WATERS (WAILLATPU)

Oregon Rifles rested a short time and then proceeded on their march back to Fort Waters  
militiamen drove the captured Indian horses with them  
After traveling a few miles, Colonel Gillman thought it advisable to camp and rest until morning  
on account of the fatigue and the suffering of the wounded

he ordered a halt -- about 2:00 P.M. March 12, 1848  
there he remained through the night  
militiamen rested and refreshed themselves as best they could on horsemeat

#### FIGHTING CONTINUES ALONG THE TOUCHET RIVER

When the Oregon Rifles broke their tentless camp at daylight  
Indians still surrounded them -- March 14, 1848  
a running fire fight was renewed and continued to within two miles of the Touchet River crossing  
Captured horses belonging to the Indians were ordered turned loose  
Colonel Gilliam preferred to lose the horses rather than some of the militia  
which he saw was inevitable if he attempted to guard the horses  
but that ruse did not tempt the Indians to leave  
It was necessary to move the Oregon Rifles along the crest of the hills to avoid native ambushes  
even at that, Indians attacked sharply and were driven back  
but the spirit of the troops proved to be fine  
Colonel Gilliam's objective was a ford on the Touchet River where trees provided cover  
just before reaching the river the Indians all at once stopped firing and disappeared  
they were seen to proceed rapidly in front of the command  
Morge the guide informed Colonel Gilliam that where the trail crossed the Touchet River  
the stream was shaped like a horseshoe  
Indians no doubt were making for the points at the crossing  
to cut off the troops when they attempted to cross

#### COLONEL CORNILEUS GILLIAM TAKES THE OFFENSIVE

As soon as the Colonel learned the situation, he prepared to fight his first offensive battle  
Captain William Shaw picked twenty men and charged ahead  
as the column neared the Touchet River  
this would cut off the possibility of a direct approach by the Indians  
Indians thought of the same objective at about the same time  
although they were behind, they took a short cut to the river  
and attempted to race past Colonel Gilliam's force to reach the crossing first  
Gilliam ordered the companies on the right and left to proceed with all possible speed  
and take possession of positions on each side of the river crossing  
troops on the left flank reached the point first and drove the Indians back  
but the Indians succeeded in reaching the brush -- they would need to be driven from their cover

before the command could cross the Touchet River  
Colonel Gilliam ordered Major Joseph Magone to take the troops on the right flank  
and charge the brush to dislodge the Indians which he did after killing several  
Fighting was desperate -- Oregon Rifles spent over an hour crossing the river

#### BATTLE AT THE TOUCHET RIVER IS WON BY THE OREGON RIFLES

Oregon Rifles, although badly outnumbered, achieved victory  
Indians ceased fighting and left the battlefield after twenty-four hours of constant engagement  
Indian loss was four killed and fourteen wounded  
After the battle the militiamen rested for a short time before proceeding again to Fort Waters  
Colonel Gilliam now enjoyed relative safety -- March 14, 1848  
one militiaman had been killed, and ten had been wounded -- several seriously  
a number were so badly injured they could not ride on horseback  
but had to be carried on litters on the shoulders of their comrades  
Camp was made for the night -- tired and hungry men killed a horse for food  
troops had now been forty-eight hours without food or sleep  
Indians made no attempt to cross the Touchet River or to follow the militia  
however, they fired incessantly into the Oregon Rifles' camp far into the night  
about two inches of snow fell that night -- none of the men had tents making conditions worse

#### OREGON RIFLES CONTINUE TO FORT WATERS (WAILLATPU)

Exhausted, weak and hungry, the men had had little to eat for three days  
but the march continued -- March 15, 1848  
When troops again broke a tentless camp at daylight -- March 15, 1848  
Colonel Cornelius Gilliam was concerned about the attitude of the surrounding tribes  
it had been shown the Nez Perce, Walla Walla and Yakima  
would not openly and actively join the Cayuses  
although the Yakimas remained allies of the Palouse  
indeed, Palouse warriors were joined by renegade Indians  
from the region surrounding Palouse Country

#### AMERICAN SHIP ANITA ARRIVES AT THE MOUTH OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER

United States transport ship *Anita* entered the Columbia River -- March 16, 1848  
she carried no military assistance much to the disappointment of the settlers  
she did have on board a recruiting officer for the Mexican War effort

although the treaty of peace had been signed more than a month previously

#### OREGON RIFLES REACH WAILLATPU MISSION

Gilliam's militia returned to Fort Waters after an absence of four days -- about noon March 16, 1848 during that time the militiamen had eaten only three meals -- two composed of horsemeat and had had only one night's sleep twenty-four continuous hours had been spent in a forced march to reach the enemy and twenty-four hours immediately following were spent in fighting when the troops reached the fort they had less than a dozen rounds of ammunition left many of their guns were empty

#### COLONEL CORNELIUS GILLIAM MEETS WITH HIS OFFICERS

War council of the Oregon Rifles was held -- March 18, 1848

Colonel Gilliam now saw that to reach the enemy he must cross the Snake River to attempt this and to maintain a base of supplies in enemy country would be very hazardous Gilliam decided, in view of all the facts, to call for two hundred more men from the Willamette Valley to be in the field as soon as possible

Colonel Gilliam also decided to see Governor George Abernathy in person accordingly he accompanied 160 troops that he ordered from Fort Waters to move to Fort Gilliam at The Cascades Rapids on the Columbia River to escort supplies which were waiting there for transport back to Fort Waters in his absence, Fort Waters was left in the command of Lieutenant-Colonel James Waters

#### COLONEL GILLIAM LEADS HIS MEN TOWARD FORT LEE

Captain H.J.G. Maxon's Fourth Company and Captain Thomas McKay's Company set out from Fort Waters (Waiilatpu) -- March 20, 1848 accompanied by Colonel Gilliam who was to continue on to the Willamette Valley and meet with the governor they crossed the Umatilla River and went into camp at Well Springs on the Oregon Trail

#### COLONEL CORNELIUS GILLIAM DEVELOPS A PLAN

Lieutenant-Colonel James Waters had remained on the alert at Fort Waters (Waiilatpu) provisions were badly needed there Colonel Cornelius Gilliam assigned two companies of men to return to Oregon City to get in touch with Governor Abernathy and to escort additional supplies back to the field

Gilliam decided to send half of his force to Fort Lee (The Dalles)  
to bring forward a supply train waiting at that location  
the colonel himself accompanied the militia to Fort Lee

#### COLONEL CORNELIUS GILLIAM IS KILLED AT CAMP LEE

Colonel Gilliam usually attended to his horse himself  
when on the march his rope used in tethering the animal was always removed  
and was put in the rear of one of the wagons  
on this evening he went to get the tether rope as usual,  
but found it mixed together with other items in the wagon  
and the rope was very difficult to remove  
one of the teamsters saw his dilemma and attempted to assist the colonel  
tether rope caught on the trigger of a rifle which was, contrary to orders,  
loaded with its cleaning rod still in the barrel  
this rifle discharged and the rod struck the colonel in the forehead  
penetrating through his skull breaking off about six inches beyond his head  
death was instantaneous and without the twitching of a muscle  
shock threw him full length on his back with his arms thrown out and his eyes closed  
looking as natural as life except for the cleaning rod protruding from his head

This accident took the life of the hero of the Oregon Rifles  
generous to a fault, quick to arrive at conclusions, and as quick to execute them,  
he was a zealous, brave and thorough soldier -- a natural-born leader  
his impetuous nature appreciated humanity  
he could not bear to see man nor beast cruelly treated if it were in his power to prevent it  
he was not schooled in the arts and sciences acquired from college  
but he was well versed in the school of practical knowledge  
he was a generous friend and a good citizen

#### CAPTAIN H.J.G. MAXON TAKES CHARGE OF THE MEN WHO HAD BEEN UNDER GILLIAM

Captain Maxon, being the senior officer, took command and ordered Well Springs camp taken down  
two companies of the Oregon Rifles proceeded without delay toward Fort Lee (The Dalles)  
in order to deliver the body of Colonel Gilliam to his family and to report to the governor

#### JOE MEEK'S EXPEDITION CONTINUES TO BATTLE THE WEATHER

On the Bear River in southeastern Idaho the messengers had to kill one of their horses for food



they used snowshoes woven from willow twigs to break a trail for the other animals  
they could manage only five or six laborious miles a day  
below-zero cold dogged them through Wyoming and out onto the Great Plains  
along the lower Platte River the weather warmed,  
but they had to travel at night for fear of the restless Sioux Indians

#### YAKIMA CHIEF KAMIAKIN VISITS WITH THE MILITIA AT FORT LEE

Oregon Rifles at Fort Lee were visited by the famous Yakima Chief Kamiakin  
who in a native council had learned Colonel Gilliam was on his way to Well Springs  
and was determined to meet the Colonel and hold talks  
Kamiakin expressed great sorrow at the Colonel's death  
he stated to Captain H.J.G. Maxon that he and his people were friends of the Americans  
he said the Cayuse had threatened them with war  
but that neither they nor the Spokanes would unite with the renegades  
further he would not provide aid nor harbor the murderers of Doctor Whitman in any way,  
and they would not be allowed to pass through or remain in his country  
Kamiakin concluded his remarks by asking for a few plows  
he said his people had no means of cultivating the ground  
there were a lot of plows at The Dalles which had not been distributed  
sent out by the board of missions for the Warm Spring and Dalles Indians  
these Captain Maxon gave to Kamiakin -- this seemed to please the chief  
Chief Kamiakin's speech was reported to the governor  
it also was published in Oregon City newspaper -- the *Oregon Spectator*

#### YAKIMA CHIEF KAMIAKIN WAS A REMARKABLE INDIAN

Both physically and intellectually he was a veritable giant  
over six feet in height and solidly built in proportion,  
his appearance indicated that he had the strength of four or five ordinary men  
he also was very intelligent and a natural leader  
had he attempted then (as he did later) to unite the Indians against the Whites  
there would have been a massacre and depopulation of the entire Oregon Country

#### OREGON AMERICAN AND EVANGELICAL UNIONIST NEWSPAPER BEGINS PUBLICATION

Rev. J.S. Griffin was a man of set opinions  
so much so the Congregational Church he began on the Tualatin Plains [1842]

removed him as their minister [1845]

Rev. Griffin took the first printing press to reach the Northwest

Rev. Henry Spalding's Ramage Press

which had been stored at The Dalles [since 1846] to the Hillsboro, Oregon -- March 1848

he printed the *Oregon American and Evangelical Unionist* newspaper there

subscriptions were \$4.00 in provisional currency or \$3.00 in real money

clubs of ten subscribers could pay **"...in merchantable wheat at merchant prices, delivered at any time (giving us notice) at any principal depot for wheat in the several counties."**

a total of eight editions of his newspaper were issued

subscribers, who objected to Rev. Griffin's editorials, stopped the newspaper

by bribing his printer to quit

#### RETURN OF COLONEL CORNELIUS GILLIAM'S BODY TO OREGON CITY

Colonel Cornelius Gilliam's body was escorted from Fort Lee back to his friends in Oregon City

by Captain Henry A.G. Lee and Captain Thomas McKay

Captain H.J.G. Maxon as the senior officer wrote a report

to Provisional Governor George Abernathy and the people of the Willamette Valley

Return of Colonel Cornelius Gilliam's body to Oregon City increased the insecurity of the pioneers

#### CAPTAIN H.J.G. MAXON ISSUES HIS REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR

Conditions east of the Cascade Mountains were distressing

Fort Waters at Waiilatpu Mission was merely an adobe enclosure a few feet high

Oregon Rifles' horses were worn out

many of the recently captured animals had been claimed by friendly Indians

and had been returned to them

one hundred fifty men at Fort Waters were without sufficient food

this garrison was destitute of clothing and other equipment

and their ammunition nearly exhausted

equally distressing, the terms of enlistment of many of the militiamen were about to expire at Fort Lee, The Dalles conditions were only slightly better

only fifty men were stationed there -- but they were without supplies

Captain H.J.G. Maxon earnestly appealed for food, clothing and other necessities for his suffering men

and for these supplies to be shipped forward to The Dalles as quickly as possible

Maxon's report created great excitement throughout the settlement

women organized themselves into societies to labor for the support of the little army

## POLITICAL INTRIGUE SURFACES IN THE WILLAMATTE VALLEY

After the death of Colonel Gilliam copies of his reports, letters, various correspondence and instructions from the governor and Commissary-General Joel Palmer being somewhat bulky and troublesome to carry were carefully sealed and left with the quartermaster at The Dalles who promised to keep them safe and to deliver them to no one without an order when they were later called for, the package was found broken open everything of interest had been taken out by some unknown person or persons the quartermaster could not or would not give any information on the subject

In fact, two factions were aspiring to manage and control the affairs of the Willamette Valley Abernathy's supporters were jealous and afraid of the growing popularity of Colonel Gilliam it was to their advantage to discredit him

Anti-Abernathy settlers desired to get control by using the Colonel's good name many of the disturbed documents provided facts damaging to Abernathy and his supporters some of the letters were rich in provocative and racy material

After the Colonel's death either side might be determined to gain possession of these letters after surmising they had been left at The Dalles one of the parties either stole them or induced the quartermaster to give them up

## GOVERNOR ABERNATHY MAKES PERSONNEL CHANGES

Morale among the troops was on the decline desertions occurred among the enlisted men who enriched themselves by running off Indian horses which they drove over the Barlow Road to sell in the Willamette Valley some officers were resigning because their private interests were suffering

Commissary-General Joel Palmer retired from the position of Superintendent of Indian Affairs Palmer focused his attention on his duties as Militia Commissary-General

After learning of the death of Colonel Cornelius Gilliam, Governor Abernathy, instead of promoting Lieutenant-Colonel James Waters as had been expected, Abernathy commissioned Major Henry A.G. Lee a colonel over the head of Lieutenant-Colonel Waters

he also named Colonel Lee Peace Commissioner to replace Joel Palmer

Colonel Henry A.G. Lee was reluctant to accept the military command -- or the peace commission due to his knowledge there were politicians who would seek to injure his reputation

## NEW WAR POLICY IS DEVELOPED

Governor George Abernathy and Colonel Henry A.G. Lee

now Superintendent of Indian Affairs and peace commissioner agreed: **“Notice should be given to the Indians, that, after the expiration of such time as was named therein, any Indian found armed in the hostile country should be treated as an enemy.”**<sup>270</sup>

It was also decided by the Provisional Legislature to stop the sale of ammunition to all Indians

## PROVISIONAL GOVERNOR ABERNATHY CALLS FOR MORE TROOPS

Governor George Abernathy issued a call for four new companies of troops

three hundred recruits were needed for the duration of the campaign against the Cayuse natives to be equipped and sent out under Colonel Henry A.G. Lee with all possible haste

Governor Abernathy could only hope this number would prove sufficient

until the arrival of military aid which was anticipated from California

Meetings were held throughout the Willamette Valley in response to the governor’s call to arms

many settlers were reluctant to leave their own homes which might need their protection

but a regiment of two hundred and fifty volunteers enlisted

## OREGON ACADEMY IS FOUNDED TO PROTECT ORPHANS

Mrs. Tabitha Moffat Brown was a remarkable woman of great resourcefulness

her father was a doctor who, along with her mother, provided Tabitha an education as a teacher when her minister husband passed away she resorted to teaching to support her three children

“Grandma Brown” was nearly sixty-six years old when she left Missouri for Oregon [April 1846]

with her were her son Orus and his wife Lavina and their eight children

her daughter Pherne Pringle and husband Virgil and their five children also accompanied her

as did her seventy-seven-year-old retired sea captain brother-in-law John Brown

After settling on the Tualatin Plain she opened an orphanage

Tabitha Moffat “Grandma” Brown at age sixty-seven

served as school mother to the fifteen or twenty immigrant orphans she found

these she gathered into a school housed in a log church

she taught reading, writing and arithmetic in addition to basic survival and home skills

she charged minimal fees for students boarded at the school

Grandma Brown joined with missionary and educator Harvey Clark

who operated a school for native children -- March 1848

soon she had thirty borders of both genders ranging in age from four years to twenty-one

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<sup>270</sup> Elwood Evans *History of the Pacific Northwest: Oregon and Washington... Vol. II*, P. 283.

Slightly built with blue-grey eyes, her delicate face was surrounded by gray but never quite white hair  
generous and self-sacrificing Grandma Brown served courageously and resourcefully for ten years  
at her death [May 4, 1858] she was much beloved and deeply mourned  
Tabitha Moffat “Grandma” Brown’s orphanage grew into today’s Pacific University [founded 1854]

#### THE OREGON FREE PRESS BEGINS OPERATION IN OREGON CITY

George Law Curry after leaving the *The Oregon Spectator* newspaper [1846]  
owned by Provisional Governor George Abernathy and his partners  
began a newspaper in opposition to his former employers -- *The Oregon Free Press*  
Curry purchased a rude printing press built chiefly of wood  
he bought eighty pounds of type from Catholic missionaries  
his type was intended for the French language thus no “w” existed in the type  
he whittled a number of “w’s” out of hard wood which gave the paper an odd appearance  
*The Oregon Free Press’s* first issue was dated April 8, 1848  
it lasted only from March to [December 16] 1848  
but during that time it raged with Curry’s anti-Abernathy rhetoric

#### BAD NEWS FROM INDIAN COUNTRY ARRIVES IN OREGON CITY

Before the new recruits were ready to take the field,  
Lieutenant-Colonel James Waters advised the governor by letter  
that Walla Walla Chief Peu-Peu-Mox-Mox had become hostile  
because the legislature prohibited sale of ammunition to Indians  
Walla Walla chief demanded immunity from that law and threatened to join with the hostiles  
sixty lodges, with three hundred warriors of the Walla Walla nation,  
were camped near Fort Walla Walla  
Other Indian news also was unfavorable  
Tamsucky, Joe Lewis and the sons of Tiloukaikt were fleeing to Fort Hall  
Sticcas and Tamahas retired to the mountains and were determined to remain there  
until the war was over  
Cayuse, Palouse and renegade Nez Perce had resolved to make one more stand  
before leaving the country to hunt buffalo

#### NEW RECRUITS PROCEED UP THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Colonel Henry A.G. Lee set out from Oregon City with 300 new recruits -- April 18, 1848  
this force was no better trained or equipped than previous militiamen had been

## PROVISIONAL GOVERNOR GEORGE ABERNATHY ISSUES ORDERS TO THE MILITIA

Preparations already had been completed by Captain H.J.G. Maxon at Fort Lee

Captain Maxon received new instructions by messenger from the governor

Maxon was informed of the call for four companies of new troops

these would be equipped and sent out as quickly as possible

Captain Maxon was ordered to escort supplies from Fort Lee (The Dalles)

to Fort Waters (Waiilatpu) where he and his troops were to report to commanding officer

Lieutenant-Colonel James Waters

## COLONEL HENRY A.G. LEE ACTS AS PEACE COMMISSIONER

Colonel Henry A.G. Lee leading his 300 new recruits arrived at Fort Lee (The Dalles)

where brief preparations were completed for the march to Fort Waters (Waiilatpu)

Henry A.G. Lee, now acting as Superintendent of Indian Affairs, set out ahead of the main column

to hold a council with Nez Perce who asked for a council at the John Day River -- May 3, 1848

there Superintendent of Indian Affairs and Peace Commissioner Lee

met a delegation of Nez Perce Indians

Nez Perce Indians faced a leadership crisis:

- their head chief, Ellis, had died of measles along with sixty other tribal members,
- new head chief, Richard, was named but he was presently assassinated,
- negotiations with the tribe were unsuccessful which motivated Colonel Lee to hurry on

Superintendent Lee next held council with the Walla Walla Indians

and those few Cayuse who had returned to the region

little was accomplished -- however the Indians remained passive

in fact, the refusal of Nez Perce and Spokanes to join in the fray

and the indifference of the Yakimas made the Cayuse Indian cause hopeless

## JESSE QUINN THORNTON REACHES THE EAST COAST

J. Quinn Thornton was Provisional Governor George Abernathy's personal messenger to Congress

Thornton was actually the first Oregon emissary to reach the east coast

when he arrived in Boston by ship -- May 5, 1848

but he was slow to continue on to Washington City and arrived after his rival Joe Meek

## SEVERAL CAYUSE INDIANS RETURN TO THE REGION

Sticcas, Klokomas, and other Cayuse chiefs had returned to the Umatilla River

they professed friendliness, but the presence of great numbers of animals in the vicinity supported the belief, that these Indians were really taking care of the herds of the murderers who had fled the country

#### TIME WAS BECOMING CRITICAL IN THE CAYUSE CAMPAIGN

After Colonel Henry A.G. Lee had departed Fort Lee to conduct peace talks with the Nez Perce Lieutenant-Colonel James Waters without delay departed from Fort Lee to Fort Waters (Waiilatpu) with the main body of Oregon Rifles and a supply train  
Captain Maxon found the men at Fort Waters well prepared for action by Lieutenant-Colonel Waters  
Maxon reported the death of Colonel Gilliam, which they had not heard, to the men of Fort Waters  
Maxon also carried letters of instructions from Provisional Governor Abernathy  
Lieutenant-Colonel James Waters was directed to remain at Fort Waters until the new recruits arrived and new instructions would be delivered  
Drills and preparations were conducted to resume the campaign

#### COLONEL HENRY A.G. LEE IS NOT UNIVERSALLY ACCEPTED BY THE OREGON RIFLES

After his uneventful meetings with the Nez Perce, Spokane, Walla Walla and a few Cayuse Indians Colonel Henry A.G. Lee reached Fort Waters (Waiilatpu) -- May 9, 1848  
upon his arrival Lee found that Lieutenant-Colonel Waters had prepared his troops quite well  
Oregon Rifles at Fort Waters were placed under the command of newly-commissioned Colonel Lee  
old members of the Oregon Rifles, as soon as they learned of the command change, were indignant about the appointment of Lee  
they were loud in their denunciation because of injustices done Lieutenant-Colonel Waters who was a faithful and efficient officer  
Colonel Henry A.G. Lee experienced how fragile his hold was over his command when he disagreed with Captain W.J. Martin over the numbering his company  
Lee numbered it the Tenth Company -- Martin insisted it should be the Ninth Company  
Martin and his two lieutenants along with twelve privates left Fort Waters and returned to Portland

#### COLONEL HENRY A.G. LEE RESIGNS HIS COMMISSION AS COLONEL

Within a few hours of the dispute Colonel Lee saw that it would not do for him to assume command his only way out was to throw the blame of his appointment on the governor and resign his commission as colonel of the Oregon Rifles  
Colonel Lee magnanimously turned over the command to Lieutenant-Colonel James Waters  
Lee sent in his own resignation as colonel

Lee also expressed his confidence in James Waters  
Lieutenant-Colonel Waters immediately called the Oregon Rifles together  
to learn who they desired to command them  
Waters was elected Colonel without a dissenting voice  
Now-Colonel James Waters asked Henry A.G. Lee to serve as Lieutenant-Colonel  
which he cheerfully did -- this action united the troops and improved morale  
Colonel Waters immediately began preparations for an advance on the enemy

#### JOSEPH L. MEEK'S EXPEDITION REACHES CIVILIZATION

Joe Meek carrying the Provisional House of Representative's message to congress  
reached St. Joseph, Missouri with his traveling companions in just sixty-six days -- May 10, 1848  
they had suffered incredible hardships before they reached St. Joseph in record time  
this party carried the first news to the East of the Whitman Massacre  
an atrocity which brought out public indignation throughout the nation  
Joe Meek was trail-worn, dirty, whiskery and ragged  
with an instinctive flair for the dramatic he decided to remain that way  
as he continued on at once to Washington City

#### COLONEL WATERS LEARNS OF THE PLIGHT OF THE MISSIONARIES AT FORT COLVILLE

Colonel James Waters received a messenger from Rev. Cushing Eells and Rev. Elkanah Walker  
who was accompanied by forty-three Spokane Indian warriors  
Eells asked for a militia escort to accompany them from Fort Colville back to Lapawi Mission  
Spokane Indian escorts offered their services to Colonel Waters  
bring in a number of Tiloukaikt's cattle  
Major Joseph Magone and his First Company was detached with 100 men  
to bring in Tiloukaikt's animals and to capture any Indians suspected of acting as hostiles

#### MAJOR JOSEPH MAGONE REACHES THE PALOUSE RIVER

Several Palouse chiefs had been contacted to provide canoes to carry the men and equipment across  
but neither canoes nor Indians appeared at the Palouse River  
Major Joseph Magone and four men crossed the Snake River on a raft  
they searched the banks of the Palouse, found the Indian ferrymen and returned them to camp  
but it was too late in the day to make the crossing

#### COLONEL JAMES WATERS FURTHER DIVIDES HIS COMMAND



Colonel James Waters sent one company of men to Lapwai  
to protect the property of Indian Agent William Craig who felt unsafe  
Colonel Waters sent a second company to Fort Colville  
to escort Rev. Elkanah Walker and Rev. Cushing Eells and their families  
on their return to Tshimakain Mission

#### OREGON RIFLES SET OUT IN PERSUIT OF THE RENEGADE INDIANS

At Fort Waters preparations were completed to invade Nez Perce Country  
where it was believed the Cayuse murders were hiding  
Leaving a small garrison at Fort Waters Colonel James Waters went on the offensive  
he led his command of a 450 Oregon Rifles away from Fort Waters -- May 16, 1848  
retracing Colonel Cornelius Gilliam's previous route to find the hostile Cayuse  
in this effort a considerable amount of native stock was captured

#### BATTLE PLANS ARE PUT INTO OPERATION

Colonel James Waters with the main body of Oregon Rifles  
was to cross at the mouth of the Palouse River to prevent the escape of the renegade Indians  
to the Columbia River -- May 17, 1848  
Lieutenant-Colonel Henry A.G. Lee with Captain Philip F. Thompson and 120 Oregon Rifles  
were ordered to advance to Nez Perce Chief Red Wolf's camp at the Snake River crossing  
for the purpose of cutting off the retreat of the fleeing into the Rocky Mountains  
Colonel Waters and Lieutenant-Colonel Lee were to meet at Red Wolf Crossing on the Snake River

#### JOE MEEK ARRIVES IN ST. LOUIS

Joe Meek and his companions reached St. Louis in record time -- May 17, 1848  
they had suffered incredible hardships  
they carried the first news to the East of the Whitman Massacre  
this atrocity brought out public indignation throughout the nation  
Joseph L. Meek continued on at once to Washington City

#### LIEUTENANT-COLONEL HENRY A.G. LEE ARRIVES AT THE PALOUSE RIVER

When Lieutenant-Colonel Lee reached Red Wolf's camp at the Snake River crossing  
he was informed that Tiloukaikt's band had fled the country two days before  
carrying away everything that they owned  
but that some of their stock remained near Lapwai Mission

Lieutenant-Colonel Lee decided to travel to Lapwai Mission -- May 21, 1848

Lee notified the Nez Perce that his presence in their country was to punish the Cayuse murderers if the Nez Perce were friends to the Americans they would not hide the Cayuse property but would freely surrender it -- this the Nez Perce did

#### COLONEL WATERS LEADS THE OREGON RIFLES TO THE MOUTH OF THE PALOUSE RIVER

Colonel Waters with the main fighting unit proceeded directly to the mouth of the Palouse River there he remained in camp for a few days while the crossing of the Palouse River continued Scouting parties were sent in various directions but they returned and reported that there were no Indians in that part of the country

#### COLONEL WATERS COMPLETES THE CROSSING OF THE PALOUSE RIVER

Colonel James Waters with the main body of the Oregon Rifles completed the crossing of the Palouse River Oregon Rifles proceeded up the Snake River to Red Wolf Crossing where they remained in camp awaiting the arrival of Lieutenant-Colonel Henry A.G. Lee

#### LIEUTENANT-COLONEL HENRY A.G. LEE GATHERS TILOUKAIKT'S HERD

With the help of Nez Perce Indians Lieutenant-Colonel Henry A.G. Lee's Oregon Rifles rounded up 118 horses, a number of colts and forty head of cattle in the vicinity of Lapwai Mission

#### MAJOR JOSEPH MAGONE LEARNS HENRY. A.G. LEE HAS BEATEN HIM TO LAPWAI

Major Joseph Magone learned that a dispatch had been forwarded from Lieutenant-Colonel Henry A.G. Lee at Lapwai to Colonel Waters at Red Wolf Crossing informing the colonel of the successful acquisition of some of Tiloukaikt's herd Major Magone returned Red Wolf Crossing on the Snake River

#### LIEUTENANT-COLONEL HENRY A.G. LEE RETURNS TO RED WOLF CROSSING

Lieutenant-Colonel drove a portion of Tiloukaikt's animals to Red Wolf Crossing on the Snake River accompanying the herd were two Nez Perce Indians who declared that Tiloukaikt had himself fled to the Rocky Mountains but that most of his stock was located near the Snake River

#### END OF THE CAYUSE WAR

Renegade Indians had been pursued with discouraging and indecisive results

it had become evident that nothing justified keeping the Oregon Rifles in Cayuse Country  
When Colonel Waters learned the murderers of Doctor Whitman had escaped and left the country  
he saw that his work was done  
his only logical course was to return to Fort Waters, leave a company of Oregon Rifles there,  
and order the remainder to The Dalles before reporting to the governor and await his orders  
In the meantime it was determined in Oregon City the Cayuse Campaign must close  
militiamen were all volunteers and were needed in the Willamette Valley to plant crops  
Provisional Governor Abernathy ordered the regiment home and disbanded the Oregon Rifles  
Upon receiving his new orders, Lieutenant-Colonel Henry A.G. Lee called for volunteers  
to remain at Fort Waters (Waiilatpu) and Fort Lee (The Dalles) until [September 15]  
more than fifty men stayed at Fort Waters  
but only Catholic missionaries remained at The Dalles (Fort Lee)  
many of the Oregon Rifles started for home to farm during the summer  
This ended a period fraught with difficulties and dangers on every hand  
no more important battles were to be fought during the year  
leaders of the Whitman Massacre remained at large

#### OREGON COUNTRY INDIANS REMAIN PASSIVE

Presence of the Oregon troops at Fort Waters (Waiilatpu)  
deterred any local Indian molestation of immigrant trains from Fort Walla Walla to The Dalles  
Along the southern trail, the Indians also remained quiet  
immigration of 1848 arrived safely adding some seven or eight hundred to Oregon's population

#### RESULTS OF THE WHITMAN MASSACRE

Attack on the Whitman Mission led to abandonment of all Protestant missions east of Cascades  
Asa Smith noted in a letter written shortly before he left Oregon Country: **“The difficulties of instructing the children, in view of the difficulties of the language -- presenting as it does one giant blank of words and ideas which are most important in respect to a right understanding of the gospel.... I must say I felt disheartened and discouraged and know not what to do.”**

#### JOE MEEK MAKES A SPLASH IN WASHINGTON CITY

Joe Meek, the representative of the Provisional legislature arrived in Washington City -- May 28, 1848  
he was ragged and dirty from his overland journey  
and was still wearing greasy buckskins and long hooded blanket coat  
he carried news of the killings at the Whitman Mission and the ensuing Cayuse War

Meek announced himself as “**Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary from the Republic of Oregon to the Court of the United States.**”<sup>271</sup> and headed for the White House

#### PRESIDENT JAMES K. POLK WARMLY RECEIVED JOE MEEK

During a two hour visit with President Polk -- May 28, 1848

Joe Meek gave his dispatches directly to the President:

- he carried the potent Memorial from the Oregon Provisional House of Representatives complaining of continued neglect;
- he set forth the settlers inability to deal with criminals in Oregon Country;
- he described the outrages of the Indian problem including the Whitman Massacre and the loss of his own daughter Helen Mar Meek;
- he argued forcefully for making Oregon Country a federal territory

President Polk agreed with the need for a territorial government in Oregon Country in addition to the obvious Indian situation another root problem for the settlers was their insecurity over land claims

Joe Meek had constant access to the White House

first, because of his mission from Oregon

second, because he was a relative of President Polk’s wife

and, in addition, Meek was a relative of the President’s secretary, Knox Walker

President Polk agreed with the need for a territorial government in Oregon Country in addition to the Indian situation, a root problem for the settlers was their insecurity over land claims

#### PRESIDENT POLK INFORMS CONGRESS OF THE OREGON MEMORIAL

President James K. Polk sent a special message to Congress -- May 29, 1848

he transmitted to Congress the eloquent Memorial and other documents

Joe Meek had brought from the provisional government of Oregon Country

Polk asked Congress for passage of territorial status for Oregon

so federal troops could be sent to Oregon before the end of the summer

Polk instructed Congress to act and act quickly

it seemed the federal government had finally awakened to the needs in Oregon Country

#### CONGRESS DELAYS ACTION

However Congress was in no mood to be stampeded by a president facing reelection

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<sup>271</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 267.

although President Polk had previously recommended territorial status for Oregon Country  
Southern U.S. senators had delayed action thinking they might open Oregon to slavery  
Oregon Treaty with Great Britain and the military victory over Mexico  
had abruptly increased the land area of the United States by fifty per cent  
organizing this vast domain would have been a complicated problem at best  
it was further snarled by the question of the extension of slavery  
All summer the debate raged in Congress

#### WASHINGTON CITY PRESS PURSUES JOE MEEK

Joe Meek's heroic physique and vivid personality created a sensation at the capital city  
he took advantage of his sensational journey and appearance  
to highlight the need for protection of the settlers  
he spoke of the Whitman Massacre and the death of his own daughter  
Taking Meek as he appeared, the newspapers played up his melodramatic journey  
then opened fire on Congress:  
if the lawmakers had not failed in their duty to organize and protect Oregon,  
the massacre might never have happened

#### JOE MEEK ADDRESSES CONGRESS

Congress was reminded by Meek that the Provisional Government rested on a compact  
between the citizens of the American republic  
and subjects and official representatives of the British monarchy  
Meek, as a member of the Anti-Abernathy faction,  
asked that Governor George Abernathy not be appointed Territorial Governor  
but rather an outsider would be better

#### JESSE QUINN THORNTON FINALLY ARRIVES IN WASHINGTON CITY

After a leisurely visit in Boston, Provisional Governor George Abernathy's representative  
arrived in Washington City -- after Joe Meek the Provisional Legislature's representative  
Upon arriving in the nation's capital Jesse Quinn Thornton asserted he had been sent:  
•as a delegate by the Provisional Government;  
•that he was appointed by Governor George Abernathy;  
•that his expenses were borne by the Oregon Methodist missionaries;  
•and that he also had been requested to act by Dr. Marcus Whitman himself  
who at that time anticipated an Indian outbreak in the interior

Jesse Quinn Thornton was invited to sit in the U.S. Senate

where he presented Provisional Governor Abernathy's perspective to Congress

Thornton won the respectful attention of Congress

(After his legislative work was done, Thornton returned to Oregon and practiced law

what Thornton later claimed to have accomplished became familiar to all Oregon settlers

by the full reports of his expedition as related by himself in three volumes:

- Thornton's *Oregon and California in 1848* (Harper and Brothers, [1849],
- Thornton's *Transactions of Oregon Pioneers* [1874]
- Thornton's *History of the Provisional Government of Oregon* [1876]

## GERMAN IMMIGRANTS ARRIVE IN AMERICA IN GREAT NUMBERS

In Europe, another attempt to overthrow the rulers of the German states failed -- 1848

this resulted in many Germans immigrating to America

crop failures and the consolidation of land holdings in the German states

were added inducements

In America, diversity marked German economic pursuits -- they lived in the city and in the country

in the city they followed many occupations

because most Germans had access to money and possessed a good education

many were able to become brewers, millers and business owners

others entered the professions and politics

in the country many Germans became successful farmers employing the latest scientific methods

such as crop rotation and the use of fertilizer

Germans had become familiar with the doctrines of democracy

and sometimes were active in partisan politics on a local level

## CHARLES PREUSS PUBLISHES HIS THIRD MAP OF THE WEST

German cartographer Charles Preuss produced the third important map

of his travels with John C. Fremont: *Map of Oregon and Upper California* -- completed in 1848

this was the most accurate general map of the west at the time

apparently was the first map to apply the name "Golden Gate"

to the entrance to San Francisco Bay

it was widely used for many years as the base map for railroad route planning

and by settlers and gold seekers alike

(Charles Preuss later committed suicide [1854])

## OREGON ORGANIC ACT IS INTRODUCED IN THE SENATE

Process to create Oregon Territory as when Democratic U.S. Senator Stephen A. Douglas (Illinois) introduced the Organic Act of 1848 -- June 5, 1848

Oregon Territory was described as **“All that part of the territory of the United States which lies west of the summit of the Rocky Mountains north of the forty-second degree of north latitude, known as the Territory of Oregon, shall be organized into and constitute a temporary government, by the name of Territory of Oregon.”**

U.S. Senator Thomas Hart Benton (Missouri) appealed to the Senate that the Oregon Organic Act be passed without delay so troops might cross mountains before deep snows

Two and a half months were consumed in talks

some Senators wanted to couple Oregon Territory

with a Bill to create both California and New Mexico territories

others declared the “native-born” territory of Oregon should not be unequally yoked

with **“territories scarcely a month old, and peopled by Mexicans and half-Indian Californians”**<sup>272</sup>

## REGIMENT OF MOUNTED RIFLEMEN) IS REORGANIZED

Regiment of Mounted Riflemen served during the Mexican War [1846-1848]

at the close of the war most of the can Rifle Regiment had been discharged

Secretary of War William L. Marcy ordered new military posts built [dated June 1, 1847]

these were intended to protect the Oregon Trail

and to provide a stopping place for emigrants to rest, repair their wagons and obtain supplies

it was decided to re-form the Regiment of Mounted Riflemen

several new companies were recruited at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas -- 1848

Brevet-Colonel William Wing Loring served as commander of the Regiment of Mounted Riflemen

he was a short, stocky and dark man who had lost his left arm in the Mexican War

he was a former lawyer and Florida politician renowned for his unshakable integrity

Loring and his men were to remain at Fort Leavenworth and await further orders

## AMERICAN RIFLE REGIMENT ESTABLISHES FORT KEARNY

Fort Kearny (Nebraska) was constructed by Lieutenant-Colonel Ludwell E. Powell

who led two companies of the Regiment of Mounted Riflemen

west along the main stem of the Platte River -- June 1848

Fort Kearny was located on the South side of the Platte River

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<sup>272</sup> Joseph Schafer, *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, P. 205

(about eight miles southeast of today's Kearny, Nebraska)

this site was purchased from the Pawnee Indians for \$2,000 in trade goods

Fort Kearny was not the walled fortification that many pioneers expected to visit

it was rather a collection of ramshackle buildings -- most made of sod

construction was so crude that snakes often slithered through the walls

and into the beds of the soldiers stationed there

but enlisted men were not overly refined anyway

Fort Kearny was one of the most important posts along the Oregon Trail:

- it provided protection for emigrants;
- it served as a munitions depot for both Fort Leavenworth and Fort Laramie;
- it served to protect peaceful Indians from hostile renegades and outlaws

Detachment of Regiment of Mounted Riflemen was left to occupy Fort Kearny

while the remaining force proceeded to Fort Laramie (Wyoming)

#### GRAYS HARBOR RECEIVES ITS FIRST SETTLER

William O'Leary, an Irishman who probably deserted from a British ship, was the first homesteader to settle among the Chehalis Indians along the south shore of Grays Harbor -- 1848

he found the native villagers decimated by the "Big Sick" (smallpox)

O'Leary enjoyed the plentiful salmon and other fish he caught in O'Leary Creek, fresh game in the woods and potatoes he grew in the rich soil next to his cabin

#### RANALD MACDONALD, FUTURE INTERNATIONAL TRAVELER, BEGINS AN ADVENTURE

(Ranald MacDonald was born to Archibald McDonald and his first wife [February 3, 1824]

Raven (sometimes Princess Sunday) daughter of Chinook Chief Comcomly

she died shortly after giving birth to Ranald

Ranald MacDonald (as he spelled his name) was raised for his first two years

in an Indian lodge at Fort George by his mother's people

Archibald McDonald was assigned by Hudson's Bay Company to Kamloops

and journeyed there with his new bride

they were joined by Ranald, but he still spent considerable time

with his Chinook Indian relatives until his tenth year

Ranald attended school taught by John Ball at Fort Vancouver [1833-1834]

before being sent to the Red River Settlement (Winnipeg, Manitoba)

Ranald fell in love with a Canadian girl, but his Indian origins were revealed

he was thought to be unacceptable as a marriage partner by the girl's parents



Ranald ran away from his childhood upbringing at Red River Settlement  
he signed on as a sailor aboard the whaling ship *Plymouth* [845]  
Ranald MacDonald arrived off the coast of Japan  
where contact with outsiders was by law forbidden in Japan  
only Chinese and Hollander (Dutch) traders were permitted to land in Japan  
Ranald decided to investigate the forbidden mysteries of the “Hermit Kingdom” of Japan  
he convinced the *Plymouth*'s captain to set him adrift at sea in a small boat  
off the coast of Hokkaido, Japan -- June 27, 1848  
he took provisions and a box of books with him  
he arranged to arrive with his boat in a sinking condition  
Ranald pretended to be shipwrecked  
curiosity about his books by the Japanese led to his being treated relatively well  
although they confined him to a cage  
Ranald MacDonald introduced the English language into Japan  
he achieved international fame as the first English teacher in Japan

#### AN ATTEMPT IS MADE TO AMEND THE OREGON ORGANIC ACT IN THE U.S. SENATE

Southern Democratic Senators continued to obstruct passage of the Oregon Organic Act  
they hoped to permit ownership of slaves legal in Oregon Territory  
U.S. Senator Jesse D. Bright (Indiana) as Chairman of the Committee on Territories introduced  
an amendment to the Oregon Organic Act that extend the Missouri Compromise [1820] line  
through all newly acquired territory to the Pacific Ocean -- June 27, 1848  
(Missouri Compromise allowed Missouri to enter the Union as a slave state  
balanced by Maine which entered at the same time as a free state  
also an imaginary line along 36° 30' divided the Louisiana Purchase  
except for the state of Missouri slavery was to be excluded from the land  
acquired in the Louisiana Purchase -- then known as Missouri Territory [1820])

#### KANAKA (HAWAIIAN) CHAPLAIN KANAKA WILLIAM HAS LITTLE SUCCESS

William R. Kaulehelehe, better known as Kanaka William, spent three years  
building a congregation of Kanaka (Hawaiian) people living in Oregon Country  
his congregation ranged in size from twenty to forty who came to hear his sermon each Sunday  
he still had trouble keeping down the consumption of alcohol among the brethren -- 1848

#### JOE MEEK IS JOINED BY CHRISTOPHER “KIT” CARSON IN WASHINGTON CITY

Joe Meek continued his stay in the nation's capital  
on prancing horses, Meek accompanied by General Winfield Scott  
escorted James K. Polk's presidential carriage in the Independence Day parade -- July 4, 1848  
both heroes helped lay the cornerstone of the Washington Monument  
Christopher "Kit" Carson arrived in Washington City to deliver mail pouches to the War Department  
he socialized with Senator Thomas Hart Benton and his son-in-law General John C. Fremont  
and even his old comrade trapper Joe Meek

#### IMMACULATE CONCEPTION MISSION IS ESTABLISHED ALONG MANASTASH CREEK

Fathers Charles M. Pandosy and Eugene Casimir Chirouse were the first two Catholic priests  
to be ordained in Oregon Country [1848]  
they and Catholic Brother George Blanchet were accompanied by two workmen  
as they traveled to Manastash Creek (near today's Ellensburg) -- July 6, 1848  
there they continued the work on a simple structure begun six months before  
by two Catholic Brothers who answered Yakima Chief Owhi's request for missionaries  
Immaculate Conception Mission was described as little more than a one-man hovel  
Father Pandosy maintained a regular missionary circuit into the Yakima Valley  
and back to Immaculate Conception Mission  
during one trip he fell off of his horse and broke his shoulder  
Father Eugene Casimir Chirouse lived and worked among the Yakamas from 1848-[1856]  
was made Superior of the Oblates (lay [not ordained] workers) in Eastern Washington

#### WORK CONTINUES ON ESTABLISHING THE INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY LINE

Engineers surveyed the land determining the exact location of the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel  
they cleared a swath twenty feet wide along that line and markers were placed along the swath  
to indicated this was the boundary between the United States and Canada

#### OREGON ORGANIC ACT IS AMENDED ONCE AGAIN IN THE U.S. SENATE

U.S. Senate referred the question of the extension of slavery into Oregon Territory and the Southwest  
to a bipartisan committee headed by Senator John M. Clayton (Delaware)  
Clayton Committee's solution excluded slavery from Oregon Territory-- July 12, 1848  
"Clayton Compromise" validated the provisional laws of Oregon Country disallowing slavery  
and prohibited the territorial legislatures of New Mexico and California from acting on slavery  
but provided that appeals of all slavery cases from territorial courts  
could be appealed up to the U.S. Supreme Court

## CLAYTON COMPROMISE IS ADOPTED BY THE U.S. SENATE

“Clayton Compromise” was adopted by the U.S. Senate (33-22) -- July 27, 1848  
this validated the provisional laws of Oregon Country disallowing slavery  
and provided the United States Supreme Court jurisdiction to resolve issues regarding slavery  
in the territories of the United States

## PORTLAND, OREGON BEGINS TO GROW

By now all of the original town founders had left the scene – 1848  
Asa Lovejoy had sold out to Benjamin Stark  
Francis W. Pettygrove sold to Daniel Lowndale, Stephen Coffin and W.W. Chapman  
who formed Townsite Promotion Company  
Pettygrove took a ship load of tanned leather goods to California -- 1848  
and began the Oregon-California trade  
Entrepreneurs established small businesses  
Stephen Coffin established a canoe ferry service  
John Waymire, using an old whipsaw, started Portland’s first sawmill  
Huge fir trees were dug out and wharves went in along the Columbia and Willamette rivers

## U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONSIDERS THE OREGON ORGANIC ACT

Senate version of the Oregon Organic Act came up for consideration in the House -- July 28, 1848  
because the Organic Act now contained the Clayton Compromise it was “tabled”  
as the House refused to consider the Senate Bill any further  
since the proposal forbade the territorial legislatures of New Mexico and California  
from addressing the slavery question at all  
Oregon Organic Act was returned to the Senate with several important amendments demanded  
regarding the complete prohibition of slavery in Oregon  
Oregon Country remained under the authority of Provisional Government  
with no prospect of becoming a territory of the United States on the horizon

## USS *MASSACHUSETTS* IS ASSIGNED TO THE U.S. NAVY’S PACIFIC SQUADRON

*Massachusetts* was a wooden steamer built in Boston, Massachusetts [1845]  
to help develop commercial steamer service between New York City and Liverpool, England  
she was purchased by the War Department [1847] to serve as a U.S. Army troop transport ship  
during the Mexican War *Massachusetts* was transferred to the U.S. Navy at New York

and commissioned with Naval Lieutenant L.R. Knox in command -- August 1, 1848  
assigned to the Pacific Squadron, USS *Massachusetts* was to operate along the west coast

#### U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES PASSES THE OREGON ORGANIC ACT

Storm broke in the House of Representatives regarding the question of slavery

After rejecting the Senate version of the Oregon Organic Act which included the Clayton Compromise  
excluding slavery in Oregon and prohibiting the territorial legislatures of New Mexico  
and California from acting on slavery

House of Representatives members passed its version of the Oregon Organic Act  
by a vote of (129-71) -- August 2, 1848

this provided for organizing Oregon Territory with a prohibition on slavery  
all reference to slavery in New Mexico and California was dropped

this allowed for organizing Oregon Territory with a prohibition on slavery in place

#### NEWS OF CALIFORNIA GOLD REACHED OREGON COUNTRY

Reports of gold strikes in California reached Oregon when the American ship *Honolulu*  
arrived at Fort Vancouver after first visiting Honolulu and Nisqually -- August 1848

Captain Newell, before making the announcement at Fort Vancouver

first bought up all the tools and provisions in the area

this news produced excitement in Oregon Country equal to that in California

and as much jubilation as the end of the Indian war

These reports caused a stampede of Oregonians to the California gold fields

within a few days, a group of men set out southward

when news of California gold arrived at Puget Sound

about twenty-five men immediately set out for the diggings

soon only a very small remnant of the population engaged in making shingles

and cutting lumber for Hudson's Bay Company was left along Puget Sound Country

Rush of settlers from Oregon to California was on -- men went fairly insane with "Gold Fever"

throng, hardly stopping to take their plows from the furrow,

mounted their horses and galloped off up the Willamette River

through the lonely valleys of the Umpqua and the Rogue rivers

over the Siskiyou Mountains and down the Sacramento River

soon a regular tide of travelers on foot, by pack train and wagon crossed the Siskiyou Mountains

#### CALIFORNIA POPULATION EXPLODES WITH MEN FROM OREGON COUNTRY

California immediately drew away one-half to two-thirds of able-bodied men of Oregon Country  
this left Oregon with insufficient labor to cultivate the fields already opened  
during the first two years of the gold rush homes on the Columbia River were almost deserted  
Oregon men who went to California to find gold were seasoned pioneers  
they became a valuable resource in the new and mixed population pouring into California  
they helped bring order out of disorder  
and established an effective government for the new state

#### SOUTHERN SENATORS ATTEMPT TO KILL THE HOUSE OREGON BILL

(Congressional Session was scheduled to end on [Monday August 14, 1848]  
creating Oregon Territory would be dead with the close of Congress)  
U.S. Senator Henry Foote (Mississippi) rose at 10:00 P.M. on Saturday night, August 12, 1848  
in an effort to keep Oregon Territory from being created without slavery  
he declared he would keep the Senate floor (with a filibuster) until noon Monday  
he proceeded to endlessly relate Scriptural history  
he yielded the floor only to motions to adjourn  
Friends of the Organic Act rested off the Senate floor in an adjoining room  
a Senate Page informed them of each motion to adjourn -- they filed in to vote "NO"

#### SENATE ADOPTES THE HOUSE VERSION OF THE OREGON ORGANIC ACT

Early Sunday morning Senator Foote and his Southern friends gave up the filibuster  
he had held the floor until two hours before sunrise -- August 13, 1848  
Senate took up a motion to consider the House version of the Oregon Organic Act  
Senator Clayton's "Clayton Compromise" excluding slavery in Oregon was not in the House Bill  
and the Bill no longer dealt with the question of slavery in California and New Mexico at all  
After a continuous session of twenty-one hours  
U.S. Senate approved the House version of the Oregon Organic Act  
by a vote of 29 Yeas to 25 Nays -- Sunday morning August 13, 1848  
slavery was prohibited in Oregon Territory  
next, the senate rule against presenting Bills for presidential signature on last day of a session  
was suspended

#### PRESIDENT JAMES K. POLK SIGNS THE OREGON ORGANIC ACT

Congress had created Oregon Territory out of the land south of the international boundary  
included all of the current states of Oregon (and later Washington, Idaho

a and parts of Montana and Wyoming)

Organic Act creating Oregon Territory was signed by President James K. Polk -- August 14, 1848

Oregon became a ward of the United States and subject to its laws

## CONFUSION EXISTS REGARDING OREGON COUNTRY'S OLD LAND LAWS

When Oregon Territory was created Congress was at odds with itself

over the basic land policy regarding the huge region just added to the public domain

Originally Congress felt this land was a source of revenue for the federal government

acreage was sold at modest prices to qualified settlers:

- should this practice continue?
- should the revenue be shared with the territorial government?
- should all of the revenue be given to the territory for governing expenses?
- should the federal government encourage settlement by giving away land?

unable to make a decision when Oregon Territory was created

Oregon Organic Act declared all Provisional Government land laws null and void

nothing was substituted in their place

the conspiracy to strip Dr. John McLoughlin of his land claims in Oregon City continued

based on the fact that the former Hudson's Bay Company Chief Factor

was not a United States citizen and therefore, was not eligible to claim land

At the same time, Oregon pioneers wanted the title to their land claims protected

under the jurisdiction of the United States the land laws were not what the pioneers had expected

a much-hoped-for land donations provision to protect land claims was not included

thus the provisional land laws allowing title to 640 acres were declared null and void

with one exception made by congress

title to 640 acres occupied as missionary stations among the Indians

continued to be owned by the societies to which the stations belonged

another change provided that Public Schools were financially supported

land Sections 16 and 36 in each township were set aside as these properties

could be sold or traded and the money used for the maintenance of schools

Congress also recognized Indians' rights to the land

(until these rights were extinguished there could be no regulations

regarding the disposal of Indian land)

Urgently needed troops and munitions of war were not mentioned either

even though the Secretary of War Lewis Cass was believed to have sufficient authority

to provide for the military requirements of the territory

One important special feature of the Oregon Organic Act prohibited slavery in Oregon Territory

#### OREGON ORGANIC ACT DEFINES THE VOTERS

Every white male inhabitant (except military personnel on duty)  
who was twenty-one years of age or over and a resident of Oregon in 1848  
and who was a citizen of the United States or had declared, on oath, an intention to become one  
and had taken on oath to support the Constitution of the US and the Organic Act,  
was qualified to vote in the first election  
thereafter the territorial legislature would be empowered to define the qualifications of voters  
and the qualifications of elected officers

However, the people of Oregon Territory no longer elected their principal officers  
rather territorial officials were appointed by the President and confirmed by the U.S. Senate  
more than three thousand miles from Oregon Territory

#### CONGRESSIONAL APPROPRIATIONS ARE PROVIDED FOR OREGON TERRITORY

Congress approved a total of \$26,500 for public buildings,  
and \$5000 for purchase of a territorial library, lighthouses and contingent expenses  
Oregon Organic Act also specified a grant of \$5000 for a seat of government  
and salaries for the territorial officers including members of the territorial legislature

#### TERRITORY OF OREGON FACES CHANGES

Oregon became a ward of the United States and subject to its laws  
local history ceased to be at part of an international contest  
rather local history became a part of the record of social and economic growth  
of an American commonwealth  
United States took control of Oregon  
Hudson's Bay Company was no longer responsible for maintaining the Indians  
settlers were becoming numerous -- Indians began to fear for their own safety  
U.S. sovereignty over the region was on the way  
but effective control would not occur until government officials arrived from the United States

#### THERE WERE DISADVANTAGES TO TERRITORIAL STATUS

Provisional Government no longer had jurisdiction over Oregon Country  
land claims of 640 acres previously thought to be legal were voided  
land sections 16 and 36 of each Township was set aside for schools

and could not be claimed by anyone -- even if a claim had already been made and developed  
Provisional debts and finances were limited to what Congress would approve -- not the actual cost  
Territorial status meant the loss of local sovereignty

Territorial Executive and Judicial Officers were no longer elected locally  
citizens living in Oregon Territory still could not vote for President or Vice-President  
as these were elected by Electors

(political party officials elected to vote for the Presidential candidate)

Territorial Delegate to Congress was elected locally

but he could only speak in Congress -- he was could not given a vote  
all territorial laws were always subject to Congressional review and approval -- and rejection  
there were frequent delays in paying Territorial Bills submitted to the United States government

#### HOWEVER, THERE ALSO WERE ADVANTAGES TO TERRITORIAL STATUS

Oregon settlers believed that government existed for the protection of persons and private land  
United States Army would provide protection from the Indians and the British  
land claims might eventually be filed with a government -- and thus be protected  
Oregon Territory was to be organized without slavery

United States government brought cash to the area:

- salaries for political officers;
- daily expenses for the legislature and jurors were paid;
- army expenses were paid

U.S. government established ports of entry, customs houses and mail service,  
roads including construction costs and salaries,  
territorial buildings including a legislative hall, penitentiary and insane asylum  
ports of entry and customs houses would be provided,  
mail service would be established by the United States Government

Court system functioned under the United States Constitution

president named the United States District Court justices who decided cases in Oregon Territory  
local court decisions could be appealed to the United States Supreme Court

#### PRESIDENT JAMES K. POLK DECIDES NOT TO SEEK REELECTION

President Polk's health was declining and he had accomplished his political agenda

President Polk was a strong supporter of Oregon Territory

majority of Oregon Territory population were Democrats as was President James K. Polk  
but there were no organized political parties as such in Oregon Territory



his newly-appointed territorial governor needed to be tireless  
President Polk wanted Oregon territory organized before the expiration of his term [March 4, 1849]  
he quickly made his appointments so they could depart for the West before the onset of winter  
and before a new president, perhaps a Whig, could legally cancel the commissions  
of the newly named Oregon Territorial officers  
(in fact Whig candidate Zachary Taylor was elected president)

## PRESIDENT JAMES K. POLK NAMES HIS OREGON TERRITORY APPOINTMENTS

President Polk was a strong supporter of Oregon Territory  
he quickly made his appointments so they could depart for the West before the onset of winter  
and the onset of the term of the new president  
majority of Oregon Territory population were Democrats as was President James K. Polk  
but there were no organized political parties as such in Oregon Territory  
President Polk appointed Territorial Governor General Joseph Lane of Indiana (an outsider)

Presidential appointments were made to the territorial courts:

- Chief Justice -- William P. Bryant (outsider)
- Associate Justice -- William A. Hall (outsider) who declined the appointment
- Associate Justice -- James Tunney (outsider) who declined the appointment
- Associate Justice -- Orville C. Pratt (outsider) replaced Justice James Tunney  
Pratt was already in California serving as a legal representative of the United States
- Associate Justice -- Peter H. Burnett (local, Anti-Abernathy) who declined the appointment  
because of the slow communication at the time Burnett was unaware of his appointment  
(after learning of the discovery of gold in California he led 150 men to the gold fields  
he became Captain John Sutter's General Agent and attorney  
he was elected the first governor of the state of California [November 13, 1849])

other Presidential territorial appointments:

- United States Marshall -- Joe Meek (local Anti-Abernathy resident)  
with his picturesque appearance and backwoods mannerisms,
- United States Attorney -- Amory Holbrook (outsider),
- Secretary of the Oregon Territory -- Kintzing Prichette (outsider),  
(little is known about Prichette today  
he is mentioned very little in the media reports of his day  
no portraits or photographs have been found of him  
even the spelling of his last name is disputed with at least four different spellings  
including "Prichett," "Pritchett" and "Pritchette")

his first name is also spelled “Kentzing”

- Collector of Customs for the district of Oregon General John Adair (outsider)  
stationed at Astoria he was the first collector of customs on the Pacific coast  
his area of jurisdiction included all land West of summit of Rockies  
and North of 42° and the Pacific Ocean  
Adair began his journey to the West starting in New Orleans, walking across Panama,  
and continuing by ship to Port Astoria

#### GENERAL JOSEPH LANE -- OREGON TERRITORIAL GOVERNOR

President James K. Polk appointed Territorial Governor and Superintendent of Indian Affairs

General Joseph Lane -- an “outsider” to Oregon Territory

Joe Lane was born in North Carolina before his parents moved to Kentucky  
where he attended the common schools

Joe Lane moved to Indiana

eloquent of tongue, he had been elected to the Indiana Assembly  
and served in both houses of the state legislature

he became active in local and national Democratic politics

A popular frontiersman, he was wiry, handsome and possessed unbounded physical courage  
when the Mexican War broke out he was one of the first in his state to enlist  
as a private in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Indiana Regiment of Volunteers

before the close of the Mexican War he had been made a General

Joe Lane achieved a dashing reputation as a brigadier general in the Mexican War

he was one of the few who performed distinguished service in the Battle of Buena Vista

Because of his remarkable service record and his loyal Democratic Party affiliation

Joe Lane was offered the Oregon Territorial governorship

territorial governor’s power was limited

he had no veto power over the Territorial Legislature

as laws passed by the territorial legislature were approved by Congress -- or not

Though his detractors scoffed that there was no substance beneath all the glitter,  
even they conceded that he was a shrewd politician and a tireless worker

#### ASSOCIATE JUSTICE ORVILLE C. PRATT IS IN CALIFORNIA

Orville C. Pratt had attended West Point for two years before dropping out to study law

he established a lucrative practice in Galena, Illinois

Pratt entered politics as a friend of James K. Polk [1844] and attracted attention

with his forceful discussions of the annexation of Texas and the Oregon question  
Orville C. Pratt was appointed by the Secretary of War to a committee  
to investigate charges against an army officer stationed at the Arkansas River Fort  
while there he received a message requesting him to proceed to Mexico and California  
to investigate confidential matters there  
Pratt traveled to Santa Fe and then to Los Angeles, Monterey, San Jose and San Francisco

#### POPULAR OREGON PIONEER DROWNS

Lumbering partners Edmund Sylvester and Levi Smith operated the Puget Sound Milling Company  
after settling at the mouth of the Des Chutes River [1846] they were successful and popular  
After Oregon Territory was created by Congress Levi Smith was elected  
to represent his legislative district at the first meeting of the Oregon Territorial Legislature  
however, he died (possibly from an attack of epilepsy) while paddling his canoe  
on his way to Tumwater -- August 1848  
Levi Smith's land claim of Smithfield on Budd Inlet was inherited by Sylvester  
who moved to Smith's waterfront location to operate the Puget Sound Milling Company sawmill

#### OREGON TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT APPOINTEES QUICKLY PREPARE TO TRAVEL WEST

Oregon Territorial Governor Joe Lane was to be accompanied by U.S. Marshall Joe Meek  
they were in a race against time as Joe Lane needed to take office in Oregon  
before President Polk's term expired [on March 4, 1849]  
but a fall crossing might mean snow in the mountains  
Accordingly Joe Meek, with the Bear River snow drifts still in his memory,  
proposed they avoid the snow by a long swing southward  
through the newly conquered provinces of New Mexico

#### OREGON TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT APPOINTEES TRAVEL WEST

Appointees set out from Washington City were on their way overland to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas  
on their journey to Oregon Territory -- August 26, 1848  
within two weeks of passage of the Oregon Organic Act

#### OREGON TERRITORY GOVERNOR JOE LANE MEETS HIS MILITARY ESCORT

Governor's Party met his military escort at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas  
officers, surgeon and about fifty Regiment of Mounted Riflemen (Mounted Riflemen)  
commanded by Lieutenant G. H. Hawkins would join the governor

teamsters and servants driving ten military supply wagons  
accompanied by twenty-five mountain men rounded out the contingent

#### GOLD FEVER OVERTAKES THE EAST

Lack of transportation and communication facilities kept most of the United States in the dark regarding events in California

however, news of the gold strikes crossed the Rocky Mountains

and continued eastward reaching the Atlantic shore -- about September 1848

California's gold was irresistible to people near and far

adventurers left home seeking gold

more affluent immigrants booked passage on ships around the tip of South America

thousands more on the East coast prepared for the voyage to Panama

expecting to cross the Isthmus and take a ship to San Francisco

others waited impatiently on the interior plains for the grass of spring and the overland journey

#### DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN IS FINALLY GRANTED UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP

American naturalization law of the time allowed an alien to become a citizen of the United States

two years after taking the loyalty oath and making his declaration,

if he had lived in the United States for five years

McLoughlin had announced his intention to become a U.S. citizen [1843]

John McLoughlin became a citizen of the United States at Oregon City -- September 5, 1848

A.L. Lovejoy, A.A. Skinner, and Theodore Magruder served as his witnesses

#### OREGON TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT SETS OUT FROM FORT LEAVENWORTH

Governor Territorial Joe Lane left Fort Leavenworth, Kansas -- September 10, 1848

he proceeded west from the post to Oregon Territory accompanied by U.S. Marshall Joe Meek

and a small military escort of members of the Regiment of Mounted Riflemen

Governor Lane's Party, including ten military supply wagons and several drivers

traveled the southern route along the Santa Fe Trail

(through Santa Fe, Tucson and the Gila River and, eventually, to San Pedro, California)

Several other companies of Regiment of Mounted Riflemen awaited orders at Fort Leavenworth

short, stocky and dark-complected Brevet-Colonel William Wing Loring

served as the commander of those troops still at Fort Leavenworth

#### SHEEP ARRIVE IN OREGON OVER THE OREGON TRAIL

Joseph Watt was the first to drive sheep over the Oregon Trail  
had assembled 435 animals in St. Joseph where he joined a “Westing” wagon train  
his whole family helped care for the sheep on the journey  
when they arrived in the Willamette Valley they had lost only 100 sheep -- September 1848  
Watt’s attempts to operate a woolen mill sadly ended in failure

#### FATHER CHARLES M. PANDOSY FACES DIFFICULT TIMES

Father Pandosy’s Immaculate Conception Mission on Manastash Creek was very poor  
it was reported that he walked from Immaculate Conception Mission to Fort Walla Walla barefoot  
When the Oregon Territorial Act of 1848 was passed by Congress  
Father Pandosy filed a claim for the 640 acres surrounding Immaculate Conception Mission  
although Pandosy’s mission had land, at least on paper, he was very low on funds

#### SACRED HEART MISSION IS MOVED ONCE AGAIN

On one of his visits among the Coeur d’Alene Indians Father Pierre-Jean De Smet chose another site  
for the mission located on a grassy knoll above the Coeur d’Alene River  
this new mission was to be relocated east of Lake Coeur d’Alene  
to a near the Coeur d’Alene River (today’s Cataldo, Idaho)  
Father Anthony Ravalli, who had been born in Italy, was stationed at Sacred Heart Mission  
Father Ravalli drew plans in the tradition of the elegant and grand cathedrals of his homeland  
he envisioned a building ninety feet long, forty feet wide and thirty feet high  
constructed on a four-foot-wide foundation with walls nearly a foot thick but hollow inside  
(construction would have to wait [until 1850] when Father Ravalli took charge of the mission)

#### OREGON TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT CONTINUES ON THEIR WAY TO OREGON

Oregon Territorial Governor Joe Lane’s military escort wagons were abandoned at Santa Fe  
as the party switched its baggage to pack mules before setting out south along the Rio Grande  
They continued south to El Paso, Texas then turned west through Tucson to the Colorado River  
which they crossed on rafts made of bulrushes with their horses swimming behind  
After crossing the Colorado River the animals died rapidly  
Oregon Territorial government was forced to walk  
as the surviving animals were needed to carry baggage

#### OREGON TERRITORIAL OFFICIALS REACH CALIFORNIA

In Los Angeles they were caught up by incredible rumors of gold

one by one the military escort deserted drawn by the possibility of quick riches  
finally the Oregon Territorial Governor's Party was reduced to nineteen men

Governor Lane, Joe Meek, Lieutenant G.H. Hawkins, an Army surgeon and sixteen soldiers  
Governor Lane's Party arrived at San Pedro, California  
and found a sailing ship about to depart for San Francisco  
Governor Lane and U.S. Marshall Joe Meek boarded the ship which carried them to San Francisco  
along with the remaining members of the Regiment of Mounted Riflemen

#### ELECTION OF 1848 LACKS ENTHUSIASM AND GENERATES LITTLE INTEREST

Four political parties ran candidates for the office of President of the United States  
both Democrats and Whigs hoped to avoid the divisiveness of the slavery issue  
Democratic President James K. Polk refused to run for a second term  
Democrats ran colorless party loyalist Lewis Cass -- an advocate of popular sovereignty  
each territory would decide for itself the question of allowing slavery  
this neutral stance pleased no one  
his running mate was General (War of 1812) William O. Butler -- also a party loyalist  
Whigs ran slaveholder General Zachary Taylor, hero of the Mexican War Battle of Buena Vista  
whose earlier military blunders were forgotten  
Taylor had no political experience and had never voted in an election  
Millard Fillmore was nominated to be Taylor's Vice President  
he was moderately anti-slavery and was chosen to "balance the ticket"  
Anti-slavery Liberty Party ran Gerrit Smith and Charles C. Foote  
many Liberty Party members left the party and joined the new Free Soil Party  
Free Soil Party opposed further expansion of slavery into the western territories  
Former President Martin Van Buren had sought the Democratic nomination  
but lost to Lewis Cass at the Democratic Convention  
Charles Francis Adams, the son and grandson of two presidents, ran as Vice President  
Free Soil Party did not appear of the ballots of enough states to win the election  
Van Buren, bitter with his convention loss, was content to split the Democratic Party  
and allow the Whigs to win the election  
The campaign was fought without much enthusiasm and practically without an issue  
neither the Democrats nor the Whigs made an effort to rally the people to the defense  
of any important principle including slavery  
Whig candidate Zachary Taylor and Millard Fillmore were elected -- November 7, 1848

## USS MASSACHUSETTS STEAMS TO THE PACIFIC COAST

Assigned to the Pacific Squadron -- the *Massachusetts* was to operate along the west coast she steamed from New York City -- November 1848

*Massachusetts* carried the First Regiment of the First United States Artillery Company "L" and "M"

167 officers and men under command of Brevet-Major John S. Hatheway

were assigned to travel by ship to establish the first military post in the Northwest after depositing the troops, *Massachusetts* was to select sites for light houses and buoys

From New York the *Massachusetts* steamed south stopping first at Rio de Janeiro

before continuing around Cape Horn, then stopping at Valparaiso, Chile

she followed the route of American whaling ships and stopped in Honolulu, Hawaii

then continued on to San Francisco and Benicia Arsenal

before finally arriving at Mare Island Navy Yard California

## SAM BARLOW'S ROAD IS GIVEN TO THE TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT

Barlow Road was never intended as a money-making scheme -- neither was it intend to be a losing one

Sam Barlow found at the end of two years he had about broken even

Barlow's agreement with the Provisional Government expired -- November 29, 1848

after the acceptance of the road by the government, it was leased to other businessmen

for several years it was a paying institution

Improvements were made occasionally

over the years, five toll gates were built to serve Barlow Road traffic

two-way road was blasted out around Laurel Hill and it became a true thoroughfare [1861]

emigrants were gradually displaced by stagecoaches and freight wagons

Barlow Road served the first tourists as they headed up from the Willamette Valley

to vacation at recreation sites on Mount. Hood [1880s]

road's right-of-way was willed to the State of Oregon

and the last gate, near the town of Rhododendron, Oregon was removed [1915]

## EXCITEMENT ABOUT CALIFORNIA GOLD REACHESA FEVER PITCH IN THE EAST

President James K. Polk gave the discovery official verification of the gold find

in his annual message to Congress -- December 5, 1848

he reported: **"The accounts of the abundance of gold in that territory are of such an extraordinary character as would scarcely command belief were they not corroborated by the authentic reports of officers in the public service, who have visited the mineral district...."**

## PROVISIONAL HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES PASSES THE OREGON EXCLUSION LAW

When the Provisional House of Representatives was called to order -- December 5, 1848  
only nine members of the twenty-three elected members met  
as the rest were searching for gold in California  
New members were appointed and eighteen representatives convened the session  
Oregon Exclusion Law of 1848 was passed by the Provisional Legislature  
making it unlawful for any Negro or mulatto (mixed race) to reside in Oregon  
while no organized abolitionist movement existed in Oregon to counter discrimination  
there were many petitions to the legislature submitted through the years  
demanding repeal the exclusion laws and asking for exemptions for their friends  
(these even succeeded once or twice -- but the laws were never out of force for long)  
Provisional House of Representatives adjourned -- December 13, 1848

## SUCCESSFUL GOLD SEEKERS RETURN TO THEIR HOMES IN OREGON TERRITORY

After a few months in California, successful prospectors including some from Puget Sound  
began to return home with golden rocks in their pockets and sacks of gold-dust in their packs  
immediately debts were canceled, homes improved, life made easier and more pleasant  
others returned broken in health and spirit -- sick with disappointment  
some did not come back at all  
Some prospectors who left the diggings were attracted by settled conditions in the Willamette Valley  
while Willamette Valley settlers were friendly to new arrivals,  
they were hostile toward their northern neighbors living along Puget Sound  
who provided them competition for California business  
population growth was slow in the Puget Sound region

## FORT HOPE IS CONSTRUCTED BY HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY

With the international boundary issue resolved [1846]  
Hudson's Bay Company faced the loss of Oregon Country  
Some new supply route had to be found to replace the Columbia River  
Fraser River provided this new route  
Hudson's Bay Company decided to send its furs from Kamloops to the mouth of the Fraser River  
new trail was broken up the Similkameen River and down the Coquihalla River  
to newly-constructed Fort Hope on the Fraser River -- late 1848  
trade goods and supplies arrived by seagoing ships at Fort Langley  
(just upriver from present day Vancouver, British Columbia)



supplies were then shipped from Fort Langley upriver to Fort Hope  
for distribution to inland posts like Fort Kamloops

#### OREGON TERRITORY ASSOCIATE JUSTICE ORVILLE C. PRATT IS IN CALIFORNIA

Orville C. Pratt was in San Francisco at the time that President Polk had appointed him  
Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of Oregon Territory  
Associate Justice Orville C. Pratt arrived at Portland, Oregon -- January 1849  
he issued the official proclamation extending the laws of the United States over Oregon Territory  
Justice Pratt was the only territorial justice in Oregon as no other justices had arrived  
in fact, Justice Pratt was the only territorial official in Oregon Territory  
he also served as the judge of the first Court of Admiralty ruling on maritime issues

#### HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY MOVES ITS HEADQUARTERS FROM FORT VANCOUVER

Fort Vancouver was now located south in the international boundary on American land  
and the Territorial government was traveling overland  
accompanied by the United States Regiment of Mounted Riflemen  
two additional companies of the First Regiment of U.S. Artillery was on their way by ship  
Chief Factor Sir James Douglas was instructed to organize a new colony on Vancouver Island  
Chief Factor Douglas moved from Fort Vancouver to Victoria on Vancouver Island  
he administered the shift of the Hudson's Bay Company capitol  
and was charged with encouraging British settlement in New Caledonia (British Columbia)  
Douglas' efforts were strongly supported by Sir John Pelly  
who was now Governor of Hudson's Bay Company and Governor of the Bank of England  
Fort Victoria was immediately leased to the Hudson's Bay Company for a ten-year period  
this trading post was to oversee the Company's operation west of the Rocky Mountains  
Peter Skene Ogden served as Chief Factor at Fort Victoria  
Hudson's Bay Company relocated its western headquarters from Fort Vancouver to Fort Victoria  
this development prompted the British colonial office to designate the region  
the Crown Colony of Vancouver Island -- January 13, 1849  
Richard Blanshard was named governor of the Crown Colony of Vancouver Island  
after his arrival he quickly discovered Hudson's Bay Company really ran the region  
there was no civil service, no police, no militia  
and virtually every colonist was company employee  
Chief Factor Sir James Douglas held all of the practical authority there

## GOLD CIRCULATES IN OREGON TERRITORY

During the early months of 1849 gold-dust was the common medium  
it seemed cheaper than anything else  
an estimated two million dollars in gold dust flowed into once moneyless Oregon  
so did barrellfuls of Mexican and Peruvian silver dollars, imported to purchase trade goods  
gold dust was used as the circulating medium in Oregon Country  
but the quality of gold dust varied greatly

## OREGON TERRITORIAL OFFICIALS ARRIVE IN SAN FRANCISCO

After great difficulty during their overland trip  
Oregon Territory Governor Joe Lane reached San Francisco  
just in time to witness the insane effects of the California Gold Rush  
included among his traveling companions were Lieutenant G. H. Hawkins  
commanding the escort party of Regiment of Mounted Riflemen and U.S. Marshall Joe Meek  
Scores of men Meek had last seen in Oregon were milling around in San Francisco  
these were his old Oregon acquaintances who recently had left Willamette Valley penniless  
many had already been at the mines  
some were returning home to their families with bags holding thousands of dollars in gold dust  
eager to return to their once poverty-stricken homes  
other men had given it up as a bad venture

## LAST SESSION OF THE PROVISIONAL HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES IS HELD

After the delay in opening the Provisional House of Representatives session due to the gold rush  
a final Provisional Legislative session opened in Oregon City at Rose Farm -- February 5, 1849  
Ralph Wilcox, the first teacher and practicing doctor in Portland, was chosen as speaker  
Samuel Murray Holderness who once challenged sub-Indian Agent Dr. Elijah White to a duel  
was selected Secretary of the Provisional House of Representatives  
During this session the law forbidding the sale of firearms and supplies to the Indians was repealed  
even so, the Indians decided to remain pacified  
although they saw fresh supplies of settlers arriving in the Willamette Valley  
and learned a regiment of riflemen and a regiment of artillerymen from the United States  
might arrive at any moment  
One of the last laws passed by the Provisional Legislature authorized a mint to be established  
to coin five- and ten-dollar gold pieces in Oregon City -- February 15, 1849  
these coins were created as a result of significant amounts of gold dust circulating in the area

in an effort to stabilize the value of money brought in from the California Gold Rush local coinage was illegal in the United States, but this was the answer to a real need gold pieces saved having to weigh out gold dust

#### PROVISIONAL HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCLUDES ITS FINAL MEETING

Final meeting of the Oregon Provisional Legislature closed -- February 16, 1849

record of the Provisional Government was a mixed one

some success had been achieved:

- it had provided a mechanism for the transfer of power  
from the Methodists to American farmers,
- it had kept the peace among competing factions  
it was flexible enough to accommodate or mediate the interests of different groups,
- it had provided a rudimentary record of land titles,

but it was a dismal failure regarding race relations:

- it was unable to resolve the issue of the rights of African Americans,
- it was unable to resolve issues regarding the Indian population

Cayuse War was the last activity undertaken by the Provisional Government

#### OREGON TERRITORIAL GOVERNOR AND U.S. MARSHALL ARRIVE IN PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Territorial Governor Joe Lane was accompanied by U.S. Marshall Joe Meek

because of desertion due to the enticing prospect of becoming very wealthy in California

of the original military escort of fifty Regiment of Mounted Riflemen

only eight members of Mounted Riflemen arrived

two officers and six soldiers remained faithful to their duty

Territorial Governor Joe Lane and his party boarded the small ship *Janet*

which took them from San Francisco to the Columbia River -- late February 1849

*Janet* was crowded with miners, successful or not, returning home

Governor Joe Lane and his party reached the mouth of the Columbia River

there head winds so delayed their ship that they switched to canoes to paddle up the great river

both the new governor and U.S. Marshal took their turns at the paddles

as they toiled a hundred fifteen miles upstream

#### GOLD FEVER IN THE EAST DELIVERS ADVENTURERS TO SAN FRANCISCO

First gold seekers from the East coast rushed to Panama City, Nicaragua

where the *California*, one of the first steamships to travel from Central America

to the Pacific coast of North America was due to arrive  
400 passengers and a crew of thirty-six arrived in San Francisco – February 28, 1849  
nearly all of her crew jumped ship and deserted  
California gold rush is on

#### DISCOVERY OF GOLD IN CALIFORNIA BRINGS CHINESE IMMIGRANTS TO FIND WORK

(First group of Chinese immigrants to come to America were carpenters and artisans  
who landed at Nootka Sound on Vancouver Island with Captain John Meares  
aboard the *Felice Adventurer* [May 25, 1788]  
these Chinese workmen built a primitive temporary fort  
a flimsy two-story house of logs protected by a breastwork and a storehouse  
John Meares named his settlement “Friendly Cove” [present-day Yuquot, British Columbia]  
other Chinese joined the crews of British ships  
involved in the fur trade with Canton [today’s Guangzhou])

Discovery of gold in California brought on a large-scale migration of Chinese -- 1849  
Chinese merchants already in San Francisco sent word of the exciting discovery back to China  
shippers and sea captains traveled to Hong Kong and Canton spreading the news  
and offering low fares for passage to America  
most of the early Chinese immigrants came from southeast China villages  
in the Toishan (mountain) District in that borders the South China Sea  
there agricultural production could only support the population for four months of the year  
peasants struggled to eke out an existence  
heavy floods in the Pearl River Delta made conditions even worse  
consequently, many people became merchants or were active in trade  
because of their travels to Hong Kong and Canton  
they came into contact with Europeans and Americans

Lure of gold and employment opportunities provided a strong incentive for Chinese men  
to travel to America where an increasing demand for cheap labor waited on the western frontier  
most Chinese workers entered the United States through the port city of San Francisco,  
contrary to the impressions of most Americans of that day,  
these were not nameless, impoverished, coolies smuggled into the country  
and forced to work as slaves for the enrichment of their Chinese masters  
each name was recorded and each man was known  
by benevolent fraternal business organizations  
these companies looked after his welfare while he was in America and would pay

either for his return passage home or, if he died, the return of his remains  
to his homeland for burial with his ancestors  
meticulous records of his credits and debts were kept  
in the office of the sponsoring company that had paid his passage to America  
for these guaranteed services, the sponsoring company took a percentage  
of his earnings -- but in no sense was he a slave  
(There were 25,000 Chinese were in California three years after the discovery of gold there [1851]  
sadly, the records being preserved in San Francisco were destroyed by fire  
following the great [1906] earthquake  
no letters or diaries written by Chinese immigrants before that date have survived  
although documents may yet remain in China  
many Chinese immigrants may have left a written record of their experiences in China  
but these, if they exist, have not been made available to American historians)

#### NEWLY APPOINTED OREGON GOVERNOR JOE LANE ARRIVES AT OREGON CITY

Last leg of the canoe journey was up the Willamette River to Oregon City  
Oregon City saw Oregon Territorial Governor General Joe Lane arrive safely -- March 3, 1849  
they had survived the hazardous mid-winter overland trip  
and the coastal sea venture to Oregon Territory  
and evaded the siren's call of California gold  
However, they were barely in time to establish a territorial government  
it was just two days before President James K. Polk's term in office expired  
as did the term of Oregon Territorial Governor and Superintendent of Indian Affairs Joe Lane

#### PROVISIONAL GOVERNOR REFUSES TO MEET WITH THE TERRITORIAL GOVERNOR

Territorial Governor Joe Lane invited Provisional Governor George Abernathy to pay him a visit  
at William Holmes' Rose Farm where Lane was about to take up residence  
Rose had built his Rose Farm just outside of Oregon City  
and this became a celebrated overnight stopping place  
Ever the Whig, Abernathy noted that Democrat Lane had not yet shown his credentials  
and responded that he would be glad to receive Lane should he call to pay his respects  
but he would not visit the Democratic governor when a Whig Zachary Taylor  
was waiting to be sworn into office as president

#### ASTONISHING CHANGES HAD TAKEN PLACE IN THE WEST

During the eighteen months between the Whitman Massacre  
and the arrival of Governor Lane and the American Rifle Regiment:

- war with Mexico had been terminated,
- California had become part of the United States,
- gold was discovered on the American River in California,
- westward migration turned south to California,
- need for protection along the Oregon Trail was no longer as urgent,

Route of ocean traffic changed also

New England shippers who had been seeking markets for their goods in the Pacific Northwest  
now altered their bills of lading to serve San Francisco and Sacramento

#### CELEBRATION OF THE ARRIVAL OF OREGON TERRITORIAL OFFICERS TAKES PLACE

William L. Holmes hosted a Territorial Inaugural Ball at Rose Farm  
to honor Territorial Governor Joe Lane -- March 3, 1849

Territorial Governor Joe Lane stood on the front balcony of William Holmes' Rose Farm house  
where he was joined by Oregon Territory Associate Justice Orville C. Pratt  
the only other official in the territory -- March 3, 1849

(Oregon Territory had been created by an act of Congress [August 14, 1848])

Governor Lane published a proclamation which officially declared Oregon  
to be a territory of the United States -- March 3

This was James K. Polk's last full day in office as President of the United States  
and Governor Joe Lane's last official day in office

Governor Lane knew that he would lose his job if the Whigs gained control in Washington City

#### TERRITORIAL GOVERNOR JOE LANE SETS UP OFFICE

Oregon Territorial government was composed of Governor Joe Lane, U.S. Marshall Joe Meek,  
Associate Justice Orville C. Pratt, U.S. Attorney Amory Holbrook  
and Territorial Secretary Jesse Quinn Thornton -- March 3, 1849

Instead of marking time until the national election results reached him

Oregon Territorial Governor Joe Lane ordered the Provisional Government be dissolved  
whatever his other faults General Joe Lane was an energetic governor, an ardent Democrat  
and a personal friend of President James K. Polk

#### TERRITORIAL GOVERNOR JOE LANE IS AN ABLE ADMINISTRATOR

Issues which Territorial Governor Lane faced were weighty but not numerous

his most pressing concern was the question of land ownership

he also had his hands full of minor Indian troubles

and could only wait for the anticipated additional soldiers to arrive

He lost no time in putting his government machinery into motion:

- he immediately summoned the territorial legislature to deal with the tangled economy,
- one of his first acts was to order U.S. Marshall Joe Meek to take a census of the population,
- he ordered the election of a Territorial Delegate to Congress

to replace J. Quinn Thornton -- Provisional Governor George Abernathy's private appointee

General Joe Lane continued to act as Oregon Territorial Governor until his replacement could arrive

#### GENERAL JOE LANE ALSO ACTS AS SUPERINTENDENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Indians West of the Cascade Mountains in Oregon Territory

were not strong enough to resist the white invasion

Territorial Governor Joe Lane's first plan was to quiet the natives with gifts

until their land could be purchased by the United States government

in the Willamette Valley his plan was to remove all Indians after paying for their land

unfortunately Congress made no provision for payment to the Indians

#### WHIG ZACHARY TAYLOR IS INAUGURATED AS PRESIDENT

Expansionist Democrat President James K. Polk spent his last hours in office -- March 4, 1849

along with Polk's term, territorial governor's official term of office also expired

Territorial Governor Joe Lane had served for only one day

Whig President Zachary Taylor was inaugurated -- March 4

#### REV. GEORGE HENRY ATKINSON -- FATHER OF OREGON SCHOOLS

Congregationalist Minister had arrived in Oregon on the *Cowlitz* [1848]

he took up residence in Oregon City and became the minister of the Oregon City congregation

(a church building was not constructed until [1850])

Rev. George H. Atkinson helped to found the Clackamas Female Seminary -- 1849

with George Abernathy, Dr., Wilson Blair, A.L. Lovejoy, James Taylor, and Hiram Clark

who served as trustees

(however, the institution did not open to students for another two years [1851])

Rev. Atkinson also helped to found the Tualatin Academy in Forest Grove -- 1849

along with Tabitha Moffat "Grandma" Brown and Harvey L. Clark

Rev. Atkinson pushed for laws to create public schools in Oregon

he proposed:

- education should be at no cost to students with financial support coming through taxes,
- a permanent fund to provide financing should be established,
- control of the schools should be at the local level,
- schools should allow religious freedom,
- teachers should be certified to meet professional standards

After public education laws were passed

Rev. George Atkinson became the first superintendent of schools in Clackamas County  
he is called the Father of the Oregon Public School System

## OREGON EXCHANGE COMPANY MINTS “BEAVER COINS”

Oregon Exchange Company, a private company, was formed  
by Provisional Governor George Abernethy and other merchants at Oregon City  
to bring some sort of order to the chaotic money mess

Mint Officers were elected:

- James Taylor -- Director,
- William H. Willson -- melter and coiner,
- George L. Curry -- assayer,
- Truman P. Powers -- Treasurer

Hamilton “Cow” Campbell engraved the dies

these \$5.00 and \$10.00 gold pieces were struck by hand

they had a higher gold content than coins minted in the United States

“Beaver Coins” were so named because they were minted with a replica of a beaver on the face  
placed above the animal were the initials for the last names of the principal partners  
also displayed were the initials O.T. or T.O. (both for Oregon Territory) and the date  
back side of the coin displayed the name Oregon Exchange Company, the issuing authority,  
and the denomination

Oregon Exchange Company minted \$58,500 in \$5 and \$10 gold coins -- March 1849

## EDMUND SYLVESTER GOES TO CALIFORNIA TO FIND GOLD

After the accidental drowning of his partner Levi Smith,

Edmund Sylvester learned of the gold strike in California

Sylvester caught “gold fever”

he left his Puget Sound Milling Company and temporarily abandoned his land claim

at Smithfield on Budd Inlet that formerly belonged to Levi Smith -- April 2, 1849



like many other pioneers he headed down the emigrant wagon road  
bound for the California gold fields

#### GENERAL JOHN ADAIR -- FIRST OREGON CUSTOMS OFFICER ARRIVES ON THE WEST

General John Adair was appointed the first Collector of Customs by President Polk [1848]  
he traveled by boat from New Orleans to Panama, crossed the isthmus  
before continuing on by ship to the port of Astoria where he arrived -- April 3, 1849  
he established the first West coast United States Customs House at Astoria

#### TERRITORIAL CHIEF JUST WILLIAM P. BRYANT ARRIVES IN OREGON TERRITORY

Territorial Chief Justice William P. Bryant, an outsider, arrived in Oregon City -- April 9, 1849  
because of his humble dress and lack of money he was considered to be a poor man  
he joined Associate Justice Orville C. Pratt to form the Oregon Territorial Supreme Court  
because Peter H. Burnett had gone to California  
there was no third justice in Oregon Territory to hear cases  
when two justices sat together they constituted the Territorial Supreme Court  
as two justices constituted a prevailing majority if all three justices made the decision  
Territorial Supreme Court was often unable to function because two of the three justices were required  
very often only one justice was in residence and he was then responsible  
for administering the court system and hearing all cases at the district level

#### U.S. MARSHALL JOE MEEK TAKES A CENSUS OF OREGON TERRITORY

United States Marshall Joe Meek provided Territorial Governor Joe Lane an unofficial report  
total population of Oregon Territory was 9,089  
Joe Meek declared 8,785 American citizens were in Oregon Territory  
304 Americans were living north of Columbia River

#### PATKANIM -- CHIEF OF THE SNOQUALMIES

Country surrounding Whidbey Island was the land of the Snoqualmie Indians led by Chief Patkanim  
this famous chieftain was the hereditary ruler of the Snoqualmie tribe  
he also served as the ruling spirit of the Indians in general on the eastern shore of the Sound  
(throughout all of today's Whatcom, Skagit and Snohomish counties)  
he was known for shrewdness and cunning -- when settlers first arrived he was hostile to them  
but he kept on good terms with the officials of the Hudson's Bay Company  
Patkanim's daughter was married to Wymock, the son of Nisqually Chief Lachalet

together they lived near Fort Nisqually  
whites thought Wymock was big, handsome and full of fun  
Snoqualmie Indians thought he was a wife-beater

#### FAMILY DISPUTE LEADS TO TROUBLE

Indians were in the habit of visiting the Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Nisqually to trade  
as was their custom natives once again were gathered in small numbers outside the post  
Snoqualmie Chief Patkanim came to visit the Wymock household -- about noon May 1, 1849  
to discuss the abuse problem with his son-in-law  
finding the young man not at home,

Patkanim believed Wymock had taken refuge at Fort Nisqually

Chief Patkanim and his large band of Indians beached their canoes on the Nisqually River  
striding across the plain came was almost 100 Snoqualmies painted and carrying weapons  
Chief Patkanim was admitted to the fort to meet with Chief Factor Dr. William Tolmie  
Patkanim said he wanted to settle a domestic difficulty with a Nisqually chief  
but the very large gathering of armed Indians created concern on this day

#### INCIDENT AT FORT NISQUALLY

Outside the fort three settlers and an Indian were on a visit to the fort:

Leander C. Wallace, an early settler on Anderson Island, a Mr. Lewis, and a Mr. Walker  
also Skykomish Medicine Man Charles Wren who had just arrived from an Indian camp

Such a large number of armed Indians caused some alarm inside the post  
call of "All hands in" was given -- May 1, 1849

Leander C. Wallace and his three companions seeing their danger  
retreated toward the gate while continually facing the advancing natives

Confrontation was recorded by Hudson's Bay Company Clerk Walter Ross

Charles Wren reached the gate first and stood with his back against it trying to slip inside  
gate was guarded on the inside by clerk Walter Ross along with two Indians  
they refused to open for the three men

one of the Hudson's Bay Company men accidentally discharged a gun  
gun shot was mistaken by the milling Indians as a signal from Patkanim  
braves made a rush for the main gate but it remained closed  
with the Snoqualmie Chief still inside

in the ensuing fight Leander C. Wallace was killed on the spot

Mr. Lewis and Mr. Walker managed to enter through the gate

but not before they were wounded  
as was a Snoqualmie Indian boy standing in the fort -- he died shortly thereafter  
Bastions of Fort Nisqually were manned  
settlers opened fire on the Indians with a swivel-gun located inside the fort  
one Indian was killed as the braves retreated  
three more Americans were wounded in the fray  
Snoqualimies sprinted across the prairie back to their canoes  
in the confusion Chief Patkanim slipped away  
Hudson's Bay Company officials later restored calm through negotiations with Patkanim  
who remained at large -- two other Snoqualimies were hanged in retaliation  
Because it was an American who was killed outside Fort Nisqually  
settlers loudly demanded protection from their territorial and federal governments  
Nisqually Indian brothers Leschi and Quimuth gave their support to the settlers  
Chief Patkanim never forgot this betrayal

#### USS *MASSACHUSETTS* TRAVELS UP THE COAST OF NORTH AMERICA

USS *Massachusetts* Steamed from Benicia Arsenal, California to the mouth of the Columbia River  
carrying the First Regiment of the First U.S. Artillery Companies L and M  
152 men, eight officers, some wives and children -- all led by Brevet-Major John S. Hathaway  
*Massachusetts* became the first American steamer to reach the Pacific Northwest  
and the first United States troop ship to enter the Columbia River -- May 9, 1849  
*Massachusetts* proceeded upriver to Fort Vancouver

#### REGIMENT OF MOUNTED RIFLEMEN RECEIVES NEW ORDERS

Brevet-Colonel William Wing Loring was in command  
of the Regiment of Mounted Riflemen that remained stationed at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas  
Colonel Loring received new orders  
he was to lead five companies of his men and follow the route  
taken by Oregon Territorial Governor Joe Lane and Lieutenant G. H. Hawkins  
overland 2,500 miles to Fort Vancouver, Oregon Territory  
Loring's men were charged with protecting emigrant wagon trains and gold-seekers en route  
they were to establish several forts and post military garrisons along the Oregon Trail  
and to police the route  
once in Oregon Territory they were to assist Oregon Territory Governor Joe Lane  
with the Indian troubles there and to apprehend the Whitman Mission murderers

## REGIMENT OF MOUNTED RIFLEMEN SETS OUT FOR OREGON TERRITORY

Colonel Loring led a Battalion (five Companies) of Mounted Riflemen from Fort Leavenworth  
600 soldiers led by thirty-one commissioned officers departed Fort Leavenworth -- May 10, 1849  
along with a long supply train of sixty wagons and nearly 1,200 mules driven by 160 teamsters,  
accompanied with guides and train agents, several women and children  
and enough supplies to sustain everyone  
700 horses and a herd of cattle piloted by Joel Palmer completed the caravan

## USS *MASSACHUSETTS* REACHES FORT VANCOUVER

*Massachusetts* delivered the first military unit to reach Oregon Territory:

First Regiment of the First U.S. Artillery, Companies L and M  
under the command of Major John S. Hathaway

*Massachusetts* anchored off Fort Vancouver as the British were evacuating the post  
in anticipation of establishing their new headquarters at Fort Victoria

*Massachusetts* fired a salute in honor of Fort Vancouver -- Sunday, May 13, 1849

Lieutenant Theodore Talbot of the First Artillery reported  
that the bark *Columbia* and Fort Vancouver fired salutes in return

Hudson's Bay Company welcomed their arrival as they hoped the United States military  
would keep American settlers from further encroaching on its property

Major Hathaway and Captain Bennett Hoskins Hill went ashore for dinner at the fort  
while their artillerymen raised an American flag on a fir tree cleared of its branches

*Massachusetts*, after depositing the troops, was to be used to select sites along the Pacific coast  
for lighthouses and buoys

## JUDICIAL DISTRICTS ARE ESTABLISHED IN OREGON TERRITORY

Governor Joe Lane issued a proclamation dividing the territory into judicial districts -- May 13, 1849

First Judicial District consisted of Vancouver and several counties south of the Columbia River

Chief Justice William P. Bryant was assigned to this district

Second Judicial District consisted of the Willamette Valley

Associate Justice Orville C. Pratt was assigned to this district

Third Judicial District consisted of Lewis County

this was everything north of the Columbia west of Vancouver county

Associate Justice Peter H. Burnett had declined the appointment and left Oregon Territory  
thus no judge was available

Territorial justices sat as trial level judges as they rode circuit across the territory  
justices heard trials and rendered a verdict  
appeals were made to the Territorial Supreme Court  
which consisted of two of the three Justices meeting together as a court  
their decision, in turn, could be appealed to United States Supreme Court

#### FORT VANCOUVER IS ABANDONED BY HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY

Rev. Samuel C. Damon had sailed from Honolulu on the *Massachusetts* and he noted:

**“May 14th I visited the Fort, stores, storehouses and offices of the Hudson Bay Company. The extensive mechanical operations which have, in the estimation of former visitors, imparted so much animation to the central depot of the “Company,” are now almost entirely suspended. Scores of the company’s servants are now seeking their fortunes in the mines of California. It is clearly apparent that affairs at the Fort are in a transition state. The old and rigid discipline is relaxing; a new order of things is gradually coming about; and one is inclined to think that the glory of Vancouver’s Fort is departing. The introduction of United States laws into the territory necessarily will have a powerful influence upon the government of the company’s servants.... Mr. Douglass [sic], hitherto at the head of the company’s Island, there to officiate as Governor. Mr. Ogden is to become his successor at the Fort [Victoria]....”**<sup>273</sup>

#### FORT VANCOUVER IS PURCHASED BY AMERICANS

Unfortunately the federal law creating Oregon Territory did not address the issue of Indian land titles

Indian trouble could easily be predicted and it was duly noted: **“What started out as a thin trickle of American settlers into the area [around Fort Vancouver] turned into a surging flood of homesteaders who either settled on acreage which had been cleared and cultivated by the Company, or built on land claimed by native Indians. The inevitable conflicts between settlers and Indians gave rise to fears of a bloody, full-scale Indian uprising, so when the United States Army requested the company’s permission to establish a post adjacent to Fort Vancouver the Company agreed.”**<sup>274</sup>

Some military reservation was needed to provide housing for the United States’ soldiers  
where could a barracks be placed that would assure future disputes, native or white,  
would not displace them?

With Hudson’s Bay Company headquarters now located at Fort Victoria

Hudson’s Bay Company and the Puget Sound Agricultural Company land offered a solution

Chief Factor Peter Skene Ogden granted his permission and part of the now unused acreage

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<sup>273</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 232

<sup>274</sup> Yvonne Mearns Klan, “Kanaka William,” *Beaver Magazine*, P. 42.

on the Columbia River became available for sale -- May 15, 1849  
however, Fort Vancouver itself could not be garrisoned  
as military quarters were not available for the troops

#### MAJOR JOHN S. HATHAWAY HOUSES HIS TROOPS AT THE SITE OF FORT VANCOUVER

First Regiment of the First U.S. Artillery Companies L and M

became the first American troops to take over from Hudson's Bay Company

Hudson's Bay Company Fort Vancouver grounds became a U.S. military post -- May 15, 1849

Major John S. Hathaway troops of the First Regiment of the First U.S. Artillery Company L  
were billeted in tents on the well-cleared space at what was called Vancouver Camp

Vancouver Camp was located a few hundred yards north of Fort Vancouver

on the bluff above the Hudson's Bay Company stockade

seventy-eight enlisted men and eight officers reported for duty

thirty-five other men were reported as absent

First Regiment of the First U.S. Artillery Company M composed of eighty officers and men  
under Captain Bennett Hoskins Hill were billeted in Astoria -- May 15, 1849

#### U.S. ARMY HAS DIFFICULTY SETTLING INTO ITS NEW QUARTERS

U.S. Army rented a few buildings from the British Hudson's Bay Company

company's sawmill was used to cut lumber and Indian laborers were hired

even so, the building of new housing went slowly

At Vancouver Camp Major John S. Hathaway quickly learned that his own men  
would cause him more trouble than the Indians

several men lured by the hysteria of the California gold rush deserted -- May 16, 1849

(for months in 1849 the Army combed the coast attempting to round up deserters)

#### WAR CLOUDS RISE ON PUGET SOUND

Territorial Governor Joe Lane was visiting Cowlitz Farm when he heard of the incident  
involving Snoqualmie Chief Patkanim at Fort Nisqually

Governor Joe Lane rushed north toward Fort Nisqually with his escort -- May 17, 1849

eight Regiment of Mounted Riflemen (Mounted Riflemen) led by Lieutenant G. H. Hawkins  
carried arms and munitions for used by the settlers if necessary

At New Market the governor was intercepted by a messenger

who told of the arrival at Fort Vancouver of the *Massachusetts* and two companies of artillerymen  
Companies L and M of the First Regiment of the First U.S. Artillery

under the command of Major John S. Hathaway  
Territorial Governor Joe Lane started the process to apprehend the murderers  
immediately he set out to travel from New Market to Fort Vancouver

#### FORTY-NINERS INVADE CALIFORNIA

Twenty-five thousand people moved in an almost continuous caravan westward across the continent  
toward the Sacramento Valley -- this was only the beginning  
Fort Kearny, Nebraska provided an important stop on the emigration route  
4,000 wagons and 10,000 oxen, most bound for California, passed through the military post  
in the fifteen days between May 21 [and June 5] 1849  
many pioneers purchased food at the fort  
and nearly everyone took advantage of the fort's reliable mail service  
This excited multitudes pressed on to the "new El Dorado" (Spanish for "the golden one")  
most of the "49ers" who reached the gold fields in 1849]  
looked for golden treasure in rivers and mines  
but hundreds of fortunes were made in more diverse ways  
many took the surer method of carrying supplies to the miners  
or cultivated the soil to produce flour, fruit and other necessities for the miners to consume  
With the push toward California Oregon Trail traffic to Oregon Territory  
dropped to only 400 emigrants – 1849

#### POPULATION GROWTH IS SLOW NORTH OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Under normal circumstances the improving conditions of the Willamette Valley  
would have been attractive to new arrivals  
but California's seductive attraction of gold was irresistible to recent immigrants  
Willamette Valley settlers also were hostile toward their Northern neighbors (in today's Washington)  
as they began to ignore the Oregon market for their goods and focused their business attention  
on California's insatiable miners and town-builders  
population growth along Puget Sound was slow  
in fact, the number of residents north of the Columbia River actually decreased  
After a few months in California some successful Oregon prospectors returned home  
with an abundance of money  
they began making improvements such as buying cattle and constructing gristmills or sawmills

#### ARMY QUARTERMASTER ARRIVES IN OREGON TERRITORY

Colonel Persifer F. Smith stationed in California, Commanding Officer of the Pacific Division ordered the construction of a military headquarters in the Northwest  
Army Quartermaster Captain Rufus Ingalls reached Oregon Territory from San Francisco, California aboard the ship *Anita* -- May 25, 1849  
Captain Ingalls was assigned to establish the Eleventh (Oregon) Department of the Pacific Division he was charged with maintaining all of the supplies, accommodations and animals for the army in Oregon Territory  
Ingalls' task was monumental as a large portion of pioneers were off seeking gold in California and desertions from the military were a constant problem

#### CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON BARRACKS FOR COMPANY L

Major John S. Hathaway quickly became involved with Quartermaster Captain Rufus Ingalls in planning for the army's winter quarters  
Columbia Barracks was to be the new home for First Regiment of the First U.S. Artillery Companies L currently unhappily maintaining residence at Vancouver Camp  
Captain Ingalls supervised construction of the first military structures at Fort Vancouver using the soldiers of Company L on extra duty  
Captain Ingalls constructed several permanent structures to serve as winter quarters (one of the buildings is referred to as "Grant House" so named in honor of Ulysses S. Grant although he never lived there, he was a frequent visitor as the building served as regimental headquarters for several years)

#### CHIEF JUSTICE WILLIAM P. BRYANT BECOMES A BUSINESSMAN

Fifty days after his arrival in Oregon Territory Chief Justice William Bryant purchased all of George Abernathy's interests on Governor Island in the Willamette River -- May 29, 1849  
Bryant gave promissory notes worth \$30,000 as part consideration for the purchase  
Bryant also bought wheat, flour, and staves for about \$2,500 and a quantity of lumber and logs on time from former Provisional Governor George Abernathy

#### DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN BECOMES A UNITED STATES CITIZEN

Under the law creating Oregon Territory passed by Congress, all aliens who had declared, on oath, their intention to become citizens of the United States and had taken an oath to support the U.S. Constitution and the provisions of the act establishing the Territorial Government of Oregon, were entitled to vote in the first election



Dr. McLoughlin took the oath and made his declaration to become a citizen of the United States,  
as required by the naturalization law -- May 30, 1849  
he hoped to end the controversy regarding his land claims in Oregon City  
but the dispute raged on

## OREGON TERRITORY'S FIRST GENERAL ELECTION IS HELD

Congress significantly revised the legislative branch of the Oregon government:

- bicameral (two-house) body was composed of:

- Council (upper house) made up of nine members who served a three-year term

- first Council members were elected, as determined, to terms of one, two or three years

- House of Representatives (lower house) composed of eighteen members with a one-year term

- members were apportioned by the number of voters in each county

- this body could be increased in numbers reflecting population growth

- but, as more counties were added, the House of Representatives could not exceed thirty;

- legislators were elected locally and vacancies were filled by special election

- male Oregonians twenty-one years old or older who were U.S. citizens could vote;

- eligible Oregon Territory voters could elect a Territorial Delegate to Congress

- who could advocate for territorial interests on the national House floor but who could not vote

Territorial Governor Joe Lane called for an election -- early June 1849

to fill the office of Oregon Delegate to Congress

elect members of the Oregon Territorial Council (upper legislative chamber)

elect members of the Oregon Territorial House of Representatives (lower legislative chamber)

Male citizens of Oregon voted in their first Territorial election -- June 4 1849

members of the Territorial Council (upper legislative body) were elected by legislative district

members of the Territorial House of Representatives were elected proportion of the population

Dr. John McLoughlin voted at Oregon City in the first general election

but he did not vote for Samuel Thurston as Delegate to Congress

as Thurston had strongly supported the Methodist missionaries

in the dispute of McLoughlin's land claim

## BOOK ABOUT EXPERIENCES IN OREGON IS PUBLISHED

Written by Emerson Bennett with possible assistance by Sidney Walter Moss of Oregon City

*The Pacific Flower (or Adventures in the Far West)* was published in Cincinnati -- 1849

this soon became one of the most widely read novels in America

## REGIMENT OF MOUNTED RIFLEMEN REACHES FORT JOHN

Major Winslow F. Sanderson leading the fifty-eight men  
of Company E of the Regiment of Mounted Riflemen reached Fort John (Wyoming)  
ahead of Colonel William Wing Loring's battalion  
Sanderson recommended purchase of the trading post for use as a military post  
Remaining four Companies of soldiers of the Regiment of Mounted Riflemen  
traveled overland under the command of Colonel William Wing Loring  
these Mounted Riflemen reached Fort John -- June 16, 1849  
along with their sixty-wagon supply train, 1,200 mules, civilians and a herd of cattle

## FORT JOHN (FORT LARAMIE, WYOMING) IS PURCHASED BY THE U.S. MILITARY

U.S. Army purchased Fort John from the American Fur Company  
arrangements were completed -- June 26, 1849  
Two of Colonel William Wing Loring's Companies of Mounted Riflemen placed under the command  
of Colonel Benjamin Roberts were the first to garrison the newly-named "Fort Laramie"  
they were to protect settlers and migrants from attack by Native Americans  
Colonel Roberts and his men remained at Fort Laramie waiting for reinforcements  
(a company of the 6<sup>th</sup> U.S. Infantry arriving in detachments  
reached Fort Laramie [July and August] 1849  
these men were added to the Regiment of Mounted Riflemen)  
Fort Laramie became an oasis for pioneers traveling the Oregon Trail  
it was used as a base to protect the Oregon Trail  
which had become a major highway for the gold rush to California  
it also became a shakedown point for emigrants  
before they began the long upgrade haul into the Rocky Mountains  
(later the fort was used to control the Indians of the northern Great Plains)

## PEOPLE IN OREGON MINE THE CALIFORNIA MINERS

California mines afforded a wonderful market for Oregon Territory farm products  
region West of the Sierra Mountains was covered with mining camps  
towns such as Stockton and Sacramento became interior supply stations  
Shrewder Oregonians perceived they had better than a gold mine in trade potential  
farmers, merchants, laborers, manufacturers and speculators  
all reaped the harvest from California's filling up immigrants and the new wealth of gold

packers visited farms buying up surplus flour, meat, lard, butter, eggs vegetables, and fruit  
four bushels of Oregon apples brought \$500 in gold dust in San Francisco  
tons of eggs sold for a dollar apiece in the gold fields  
merchants were accused of maintaining a monopoly hold on business  
“old settlers” had the best land, the best town sites and the river front property,  
when territorial government was implemented they were given government contracts  
to construct government buildings and were hired in government positions  
town builders gave new settlers financial credit to buy supplies and start farms  
new arrivals worked as carpenters, loggers and common laborers  
until they could get started as farmers

### BOOMERISM SWEEPS ACROSS THE WEST COAST

Large numbers of boats entered the Columbia River to take on cargoes of provisions  
grain, fruit, eggs, lumber were in such demand that twenty ships at a time  
were often moored by the dense forests of the lower Willamette River waiting for cargoes  
Eastern businessmen employed their money and business skills to build great establishments  
first lumbermen in California were from New England who arrived in San Francisco -- 1849  
Andrew J. Pope, William C. Talbot, Asa Mead Simpson and William Renton  
established lumber yards and sold building materials imported from New England  
San Francisco became the commercial emporium of the Pacific coast  
it developed into the leading sea port and link to the world  
San Francisco’s population boomed from a few hundred [in 1848]  
to 56,000 by [1860]; 150,000 by ([870] and in excess of 250,000 by [1880]  
Machinery was imported for use by farmers, roads opened, steamboats were purchased  
Oregon’s serene, idyllic, pastoral age was replaced by the bustle of commerce  
and the fierce lust for wealth driven by boundless imagination  
the question “why should the location of gold be limited to California?” was frequently asked

### LUMBER INDUSTRY AND TRANSPORTATION LINKS CALIFORNIA WITH OREGON

Using their lumber shipping fleets Eastern lumbermen connected the market of California  
with the forests and excellent sawmill locations of Oregon Territory  
Some Eastern businessmen came to the Columbia River and Puget Sound to develop the harbors  
cargoes of lumber were carried from the established mills  
when these proved insufficient to meet the demand in San Francisco other sawmills were built  
Several large companies dominated the industry

these and other successful lumber firms shared three characteristics:

- they were created and controlled by San Francisco capital,
- they broadened their market base with the passing years,
- they had their own California lumber yards and their own ships

#### COLONEL LORING CONTINUES TOWARD OREGON TERRITORY

Three Companies of Regiment of Mounted Riflemen marched out of Fort Laramie under the command of Brevet-Colonel William Wing Loring two Companies went by way of Fort Bridger (Wyoming) but the third Company mistakenly strayed directly west from South Pass took the difficult Greenwood (Sublette) Cutoff and missed Fort Bridger altogether en route the Companies reunited and continued their march to Oregon Territory

#### CONCERNS ABOUT OREGON LAND CLAIMS REMAIN UNRESOLVED

When Congress created Oregon Territory all existing laws of the Provisional Government were upheld with the notable exception of the provisional land laws which were declared null and void only Congress could grant land from the public domain which Oregon, in fact, now was in Oregon, as elsewhere on the frontier, public domain was not to be disposed of until the Indian title to the land was cleared

Pioneers worried about this as their land claims were in doubt

they could only hope Congress would ratify the promises of politicians who had long argued settlers should be rewarded by free land grants for the dangerous work of extending the frontier fortunately, there was a precedent

a statute [of 1842] gave free homesteads to occupants of the Florida frontier

#### SAMUEL ROYAL THURSTON -- OREGON TERRITORIAL DELEGATE TO CONGRESS

Samuel R. Thurston had arrived in Oregon Country over the Oregon Trail [1847]

he practiced law in Hillsboro, Oregon

he was elected to the Provisional Legislature from Twality District [1848]

he saw the entrenched power of George Abernathy's old Mission Party and became an ally in their dispute with Dr. John McLoughlin's land claims -- July 1849

Thirty-two-year-old Samuel Thurston was the first to represent Oregon Territory in the U. S. Congress

Oregon's Delegate to Congress could speak on the floor of the U. S. House of Representatives

but he could not vote (only states are represented by the federal government)

Samuel Thurston's (and thus George Abernathy's) political agenda was presented to congress:

- Thurston heard and passed along to congress the outbursts  
which followed Henry Spalding's unjustified charges that Hudson's Bay Company  
and the Catholics together were responsible for the Whitman Massacre;
- Thurston worked tirelessly for the passage of the Oregon Donation Land Law  
to remedy the glaring omission concerning property ownership  
in the original Organic Act creating Oregon Territory  
this was the single most significant and mischievous piece of legislation  
aimed at Oregon Territory;
- but Thurston spent almost as much political energy  
in an effort to deprive Dr. John McLoughlin of his land claim in Oregon City  
to the advantage of George Abernathy and the Mission Party leaders

#### OREGON TERRITORIAL LEGISLATURE IS ESTABLISHED

Oregon's Territorial legislature was defined in the law that created the territory:

- Congress required the legislature to locate the territorial capital at its first session
- legislative sessions were limited to sixty days;
- laws which taxed non-residents at a higher rate than residents were prohibited;
- territorial legislature had limited power to incur debt;
- legislature was prohibited from incorporating banks and financial institutions  
and from acquiring debts in the name of the territory

Local laws passed by the Territorial government were subject to Congressional approval:

- laws passed by the legislature were to deal with one subject only to be named in the title  
without both of these conditions laws passed by the territorial legislature were null and void;
- provisional law authorizing the minting of the Beaver Coins was struck down  
as this was in contradiction to the United States Constitution;

#### OREGON TERRITORIAL LEGISLATURE GOES INTO SESSION FOR THE FIRST TIME

First session of the Territorial Legislature was called to order -- July 16, 1849 [to September 29]  
in Oregon City at the Methodist Church

thereafter, regular sessions were held [December, January and February] of each year  
(ten annual sessions were held until Oregon became a state)

some members of the old Provisional Legislature continued into the new government  
including David Hill, Asa Lovejoy, Samuel Parker and Absalom J. Hembree

Local territorial officers were chosen but many of the voters were in California:

Samuel Parker served as President of the Territorial Council elected by the members of the body

Asa Lovejoy was elected Speaker of the House by the eighteen members

Theophilus R. Magruder was elected Territorial Secretary by the Representatives

Territorial legislature renamed Oregon's counties:

- original Twality (or Tualatin) District became Washington County,
  - original Champoege District became Marion County,
- also Vancouver County, north of the Columbia River, became Clarke County  
(with the final "e" later dropped)

Territorial legislators passed a law assuring public support for the public schools  
this also made free education compulsory

Territory's land was to be surveyed into Townships (six miles by six miles in area)

each Township would be composed of thirty-six sections of land

each section of land was 640 acres -- measuring one mile by one mile

every Township was to hold the property rights to land sections 16 and 36

thus 1,280 acres of land was set aside in every township

interest on the money coming from the sale of these lands

was to be used to support public schools

Another law provided for the construction of roads in the territory

#### LOCAL POLITICAL LEADERSHIP FORMS IN OREGON TERRITORY

Matthew Deady represented Yamhill County as a Democrat in the Oregon House of Representatives

he attended the first session of the Oregon Territorial Legislature

there he met James W. Nesmith and Asahel Bush for the first time

these three would become influential leaders of the Oregon Territory Democratic Party

#### CANTONMENT LORING (NEW FORT HALL, IDAHO) IS CONSTRUCTED

Brevet-Colonel William Wing Loring continued to lead his Regiment of Mounted Riflemen  
to Oregon Territory

When he reached Fort Hall (Idaho) Loring constructed a permanent post -- August 5, 1849

it was located about three miles above the Hudson's Bay Company "old" Fort Hall

on the South side of the Snake River

this post was first called Cantonment Loring, but was frequently referred to as Fort Hall

Loring left two companies of Regiment of Mounted Riflemen to spend the (winter)

Lieutenant-Colonel Loring led one Company of Mounted Riflemen as they continued on

escorting a supply train of fifteen wagons and the herd of cattle piloted by Joel Palmer

(When Colonel Persifer F. Smith, Commanding Officer of the Pacific Division

later learned of the location of Cantonment Loring he was of the opinion that the post was improperly located for the purpose of assisting emigrants as the site afforded only limited space for forage -- it was abandoned [in 1850])

#### CATHOLIC IMMACULATE CONCEPTION MISSION IS IN DISARRAY

Father Pandosy's mental health began to decline

Father Eugene Casimir Chirouse stopped in at Immaculate Conception Mission -- August 14, 1849 there he found Father Pandosy wearing tattered clothing with a long beard and close to starving he had been abandoned by the Indians and it was obvious he could not take care of himself Pandosy's relations with the Indians had deteriorated to the point that a Walla Walla Indian had threatened him with a knife during an argument

Father Chirouse nursed Father Pandosy back to health

Chirouse took Pandosy to the Holy Cross Mission in the Yakima Valley [September 1849]

#### DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN'S LAND CLAIM GOES TO COURT

Chief Justice William P. Bryant filed a claim for Dr. John McLoughlin's land while the retired Chief Factor recently had become a U.S. citizen

but he had not been eligible to claim land before citizenship had been granted to him

Territorial Chief Justice William P. Bryant opened court at Oregon City -- August 20, 1849

Bryant heard Dr. McLoughlin's case to protect his land claim

Bryant then ruled in favor of himself -- McLoughlin lost his case and his land

Dr. John McLoughlin appealed his loss of property to the Territorial Supreme Court

but the only Justice in the Oregon Territory at the time was William P. Bryant who heard the appeal -- and again ruled in favor of himself

#### SITE FOR FORT STEILACOOM IS SELECTED

Protection of settlers in the area around Fort Nisqually had become an issue

in addition the United States was anxious to plant the flag on land claimed by Great Britain

Britain had ceded the territory south of the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel [1846],

but claimed this land as a commercial enterprise

operated by the Puget Sound Agricultural Company

Hudson's Bay Company's Dr. William Tolmie, the factor of Fort Nisqually, wrote these lines in his *Journal of Occurrences at Fort Nisqually* -- August 24, 1849:

**"... Rode to Steilacoom this morning in company with Major Hatheway and Capt.**

**[Bennett Hoskins] Hill in order that they might judge for themselves as to whether Steilacoom or**

**Sequalitchew would form the best winter quarters for the troops. Steilacoom received the preference on account of the number of buildings already erected there ...”<sup>275</sup>**

Thus began the first solid American presence on Puget Sound  
there had been other efforts -- missionaries and settlers who came before  
however, they brought little more than their hopes and dreams for better lives

#### ARRANGEMENTS ARE MADE TO CONSTRUCT A NEW MILITARY POST ON PUGET SOUND

Joseph Heath originally rented property from Puget Sound Agricultural Company to raise sheep  
he had cleared thirty acres of land, learned carpentry and constructed a house and farm buildings  
after he died of pneumonia his farm lay abandoned for six months -- August 1849

Puget Sound Agricultural Company reclaimed Heath's land

Territorial Governor Joe Lane reached an agreement with the Puget Sound Agricultural Company  
to lease 640 acres of land and the buildings and acreage of Joseph Heath's English sheep farm  
located only a six-mile ride north of the British trading post at Fort Nisqually for \$50 a month

#### COMPANY M, FIRST REGIMENT OF THE FIRST U.S. ARTILLERY MOVES TO PUGET SOUND

Territorial Governor Lane ordered the First Regiment of the First U.S. Artillery Company M  
composed of eighty officers and men under Captain Bennett Hoskins Hill

to move from Astoria to Nisqually

English vessel *Harpooner* delivered the American troops -- August 28, 1849

Company M found on site a house, a barn, a granary and shop buildings

#### FORT STEILACOOM CONSTRUCTION IS COMPLETED

Captain Bennett Hoskins Hill took over Joseph Heath's big house as his headquarters  
he put the men of the First Regiment of the First U.S. Artillery Company M in the barns  
until barracks were constructed -- September 1849

Fort Steilacoom was established near Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Nisqually  
under direction of 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Grier Tallmadge, acting assistant quartermaster  
eighteen additional log buildings for enlisted barracks, officer's quarters, officer's mess,  
adjutant office, hospital, guard house, bakery and storehouse

were built near Puget Sound at a cost of about \$3,000

on a meadow once claimed by the Puget Sound Agricultural Company

Fort Steilacoom was located (where Western State Hospital is today)

it was named for the Steilacoom River

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<sup>275</sup> Victor J. Farrar, *The Nisqually Journal*, The Washington Historical Quarterly for July, 1915-April, 1916, P. 227.



Fort Steilacoom served as a supply depot and refuge from 1849  
until [April 22, 1868] when the post was closed

#### FORT STEILACOOM IS AN AMERICAN PRESENCE ON PUGET SOUND

As a military installation Fort Steilacoom did not amount to much  
only a scant handful of soldiers were housed on there  
However, Fort Steilacoom brought signs of stability, commerce and structure to the region  
besides marking the first permanent U.S. governmental presence on Puget Sound

Fort Steilacoom protected the American settlers and vice versa

Fort Steilacoom was the first military fort north of the Columbia River -- September 1849  
(although others quickly followed most of these forts were shabby at best  
very few forts had much in the way of fortification

they were constructed of whatever materials were available in their locale

mud huts, caves and tent villages circled around a flagpole

were about all a soldier of the day could expect at many forts)

Fort Steilacoom was one of the better- defended forts

with permanent buildings (albeit log-framed), sheep pens and barns converted to military use  
(Fort Steilacoom and later American forts provided settlers with the civilizing features

such as government, law and cash

as soldiers provided settlers with two much-needed commodities for developing an area

a flow of consumers for their locally produced goods and a steady stream of currency

and the fort doctor provided medical aid to the civilians)

#### BLUE BOOK CONTROVERSY PLACES THE BASIC LAWS OF OREGON TERRITORY IN DOUBT

Printed copy of the Iowa Territorial Laws [1839] was known as the *Little Blue Book*

this had been adopted as the official laws of Oregon by the Provisional Government [May 2, 1843]

*Little Blue Book* listed the usual American civil rights

it had served as the basis of the Organic Laws -- Provisional law in Oregon Country

Territorial Legislature passed an act to adopt certain chapters of the Revised Statute of Iowa [of 1843]

this edited version ironically became known as the *Big Blue Book* -- September 7, 1849

Many Oregon pioneers believed the *Big Blue Book* was in conflict with provisional laws

as it changed some of the statutes written in the *Little Blue Book's* laws

Question of which *Blue Book* was in effect was taken to the Oregon Territorial Supreme Court

Territorial Supreme Court declared the action of the Territorial Legislature -- 1849

was unconstitutional because each law (Act) must embrace only one subject

and that subject should be stated in the title to the Act

*Little Blue Book* continued in effect

*Blue Book* Controversy raged for four more years

#### REGIMENT OF MOUNTED RIFLEMEN REACHES THE DALLES, OREGON TERRITORY

Lieutenant-Colonel William Wing Loring's Regiment of Mounted Riflemen

made the difficult overland journey from Fort Leavenworth to Oregon Territory

when they arrived in Oregon Territory they were ragged and exhausted

cholera and desertions quickly thinned their ranks

horses were famished and weak from short rations

Northwest's Regiment of Mounted Riflemen stopped briefly at The Dalles -- September 1849

here Colonel Loring split his forces in anticipation of the difficult journey ahead to Fort Vancouver

#### COLUMBIA BARRACKS IS COMPLETED FOR COMPANY L

Quartermaster Captain Rufus Ingalls reported that a number of structures of "rough material,"

but reasonably comfortable had been completed

(on the grounds of Fort Vancouver near today's Officers Row) -- September 15, 1849

This post was named Columbia Barracks

First Regiment of the First U.S. Artillery Company L

was re-stationed from Vancouver Camp to Columbia Barracks

seventy-eight enlisted men and eight officers reported for duty

thirty-five men were reported as absent

Quarters for Major John Hathaway's soldiers with a carefully laid out offices' row

and parade grounds that overlooked the Columbia River about a mile up a gentle slope

other buildings occupied by the military were leased from the Hudson's Bay company

location of Columbia Barracks was spectacular

spruce and fir were everywhere

Mount Hood was beautiful as it stood in the distance

of course, the Columbia River finished the scene

#### NEW TERRITORIAL OFFICIALS ARE NAMED FOR OREGON TERRITORY

Whig President Zachary Taylor appointed new officials to replace the Democratic appointments

made by now-former President James K. Polk -- September 17, 1849

President Taylor's selected Abraham Lincoln to be Oregon Territory Governor

then a young and little known Illinois Whig Party member of the U.S. House of Representative

but he did not seek reelection

Lincoln refused the position because his wife was ill and he did not want to move west  
President Taylor appointed U.S. Army Major John P. Gaines of Kentucky, Territorial Governor

Gaines had acquired an education in law before entering politics

he had served Kentucky as a Whig member of the House of Representatives [1847-1849]

he lost his bid for reelection to Congress -- he returned to his home in Kentucky

he had supported Zachary Taylor for the presidency

President Taylor appointed Territorial Justice William Strong to replace Peter Hardeman Burnett  
who had declined the position offered by Democratic President James K. Polk

President Taylor appointed Edward D. Hamilton of Ohio as appointed Territorial Secretary

General Hamilton had nominated General Taylor for president at the Whig national convention

Oregon Democrat Joe Lane continued to serve as Oregon Territory Governor

in anticipation of the arrival of his replacement

(new territorial officials will not reach Oregon Territory until [August 14, 1850])

#### BEAVER MONEY REMAINS IN CIRCULATION

Oregon Exchange Company minted about \$58,500 in \$5 and \$10 gold coins by September 1849

historians believe approximately 2,850 of the \$10 coins were made

(dies for the coins can still be seen at the Oregon Historical Society in Portland)

Oregon Territory Governor Joe Lane decided the Provisional authorization to mint coins

was in conflict with Federal statutes and declared the effort unconstitutional -- September 1849

however, Beaver Coins were kept in circulation [until 1854]

when the United States mint opened in San Francisco

life for the Oregon mint was brief because unalloyed gold Beaver Coins

were worth about eight percent more than United States coins as they contained more gold

most of the Oregon Beaver Coins were melted down for profit

#### OREGON'S PROVISIONAL EXCLUSION LAW CONTINUES AS TERRITORIAL LAW

Newest version of this sad law originally passed by the Provisional Legislature

now passed the Territorial legislature and became the law of Oregon Territory

racist legislation was once again seen as a cure for white anxieties

preamble to the exclusion bill was introduced into the territorial legislature -- September 21, 1849

stated in part: **"...situated as the people of Oregon are, in the midst of an Indian**

**population, it would be highly dangerous to allow free negroes and mulattoes to reside in the  
territory or to intermix with the Indians, instilling in their minds feelings of hostility against the**

**white race . . . be it enacted . . . that it shall not be lawful for any negro or mulatto to come in or reside within the limits of this Territory.”**

Exclusion Law permitted black settlers and their children who were already living in Oregon to stay but prohibited additional black people from moving to Oregon Territory

it included provisions to prevent Blacks from coming to Oregon by ship

ship owners were responsible for seeing that all black crew members

left the territory with their ship

a \$500 fine was the penalty for any negligent ship owner

any black person in violation of the law was to be arrested and ordered to leave

Oregon Territory's Exclusion Law also restricted land grants only to white people

immediate justification of the Exclusion Law was the fear of combined black-Indian hostilities,

a paranoia that found frequent expression in the documents of the day

This arrangement was strongly supported by Oregon Delegate to Congress Samuel Thurston

who announced in Congress that racial politics was a question of life and death in Oregon

and of money to the territorial government

he proposed Negroes were better acquainted with the customs, language and manners of whites than were Indians

he feared Blacks would associate with Indians and intermarry resulting mixed race

which would become much more formidable long and bloody wars would be the result

(Oregon's Exclusion Law was later repealed [1854], but a new version was passed in [1857]

and was into the Oregon state Constitution [1859]

Exclusion Laws lasted long after Indian and black hostilities were a remote possibility

an exclusion clause remained on the books until [1926]

despite repeated efforts to have it removed)

#### REGIMENT OF MOUNTED RIFLEMEN TRAVELS FROM THE DALLES

After a brief stop at The Dalles, Lieutenant-Colonel William Wing Loring led

half of the Regiment of Mounted Riflemen to Oregon City -- September 1849

some of the troops made an ill-advised attempt to travel by boat down the Columbia River

in the effort to run a raft load of supplies through the rapids at The Cascades Rapids

six soldiers were drowned and five tons of goods were lost when a raft was wrecked

other half of the command traveled over the Barlow Road around Mount Hood

this effort resulted the loss two-thirds of their horses and heavy damage to the worn wagons

#### CAPTAIN BENNETT HOSKINS HILL PURSUES CHIEF PATKANIM

Captain Bennett H. Hill in command of First Regiment of the First U.S. Artillery Company M  
was ordered to capture Leander C. Wallace's killers -- September 1849  
he sent word from Fort Steilacoom to Snoqualmie Chief Patkanim  
to surrender the killers of Leander C. Wallace or face destruction

J. Quinn Thornton, Provisional Governor George Abernathy's pick to be Territorial Representative,  
showed up at Fort Steilacoom with a warrant commissioning himself to negotiate with the Indians  
Thornton provided Patkanim with eighty blankets as a reward for turning over the killers  
Patkanim earned his bounty by turning over six of his people  
some may have been present when Leander C. Wallace was killed

#### OREGON TERRITORY LEGISLATURE ADJOURNS AS QUESTIONS REMAIN UNRESOLVED

Oregon Territory's first meeting the legislature adjourned -- September 29, 1849  
in addition to passing the Exclusion Laws, Oregon Territorial government  
had surveyed the territory into townships and sections to provide for the orderly sale of land  
when that process was developed by Congress  
Territorial legislators had implemented road construction in the territory

Two important issues were not addressed:

- question of which *Blue Book* of statute of Iowa territorial laws remained in effect unresolved,
- Beaver Coins, although unconstitutional under the United States Constitution, remained in use

#### REGIMENT OF MOUNTED RIFLEMEN REACHES OREGON CITY

From The Dalles, Lieutenant-Colonel William Wing Loring's Regiment of Mounted Riflemen  
arrived in Oregon City in two separate detachments -- September 1849  
they were reduced in numbers and worn out as the arduous march overland  
from Fort Leavenworth to Oregon City was a disaster  
entire loss included: seventy men dead or deserted,  
forty-five freight wagons and one ambulance lost  
as well as 350 or more horses and mules

#### FIRST TEST OF LAWS IN OREGON TERRITORY

Territorial Legislature passed a Special Act attaching Puget Sound to the First Judicial District  
so that six Snoqualmie Indians accused of killing Leander C. Wallace  
could be tried at Fort Steilacoom to impress the natives there with white justice  
Territorial Chief Justice William P. Bryant traveled to the fort for a trial  
this location was inconvenient -- population was scarce along Puget Sound

court officials including former Provisional Government Circuit Judge Alonzo A. Skinner who acted as prosecutor and most of the jury had to be imported most traveled 200 miles by horse and canoe to reach Fort Steilacoom In the absence of a district court judge, Chief Justice William P. Bryant gavelled the proceedings to order -- October 1, 1849 grand jury promptly returned an indictment charging the six Indians with murder Chief Justice Bryant appointed a lawyer to represent the defendants

#### REGIMENT OF MOUNTED RIFLEMEN REACHES FORT VANCOUVER

From Oregon City, Brevet-Colonel Loring's exhausted Regiment of Mounted Riflemen continued on to Fort Vancouver where they arrived -- October 1, 1849 Regiment of Mounted Riflemen were the first United States military expedition to travel the full length of the Oregon Trail from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Vancouver a tremendous accomplishment for the time (in fact, years later it was called "the greatest military feat on record") For Brevet-Colonel William Wing Loring's newly arrived Mounted Riflemen the first challenge was dealing with the housing shortage north of the Columbia River

#### TRIAL CONVENED THE NEXT DAY

Chief Justice William P. Bryant convened Oregon Territory's first criminal trial at Fort Steilacoom six members of the Snoqualmie tribe were accused of the murder of Leander C. Wallace Two men, Kussus (Cussus) and Quallalwot were convicted of murdering Wallace jury of settlers found the other four accused Indians not guilty -- October 2, 1849 one of the acquitted defendants was a slave who was not present (at the May 1 altercation) but had been offered by Patkanim to appease the whites

#### EXECUTION CARRIED OUT

U.S. Marshal Joe Meek invoked the death penalty for the first time in Oregon Territory two prisoners were hanged at Fort Steilacoom -- October 3, 1849 one, Kussus (Cussus), was the brother of Chief Patkanim Swift justice was meant to impress the Indians but what really impressed the settlers was the cost of the trial \$2,379 including \$480 to Hudson's Bay Company for the eighty blankets used as the ransom to assure delivery of the accused However, the local natives had been pacified

thus encouraged, the settlers began developing the South Puget Sound region  
farms took root in timber-free valleys carved by glacial streams  
flowing northwestward from Mount Rainer  
and even on Whidbey Island, a fishhook of prairie of land,  
sprawling across the inland mouth of Juan de Fuca Strait  
however, even with all of the dispersing of the population,  
fewer than five hundred whites lived in the entire region

#### REGIMENT OF MOUNTED RIFLEMEN ESTABLISHES THEIR QUARTERS

Since there were no quarters available at Fort Vancouver to house the troops  
a few of the Regiment of Mounted Riflemen stayed at Vancouver Camp  
which Major John Hathaway's First Regiment of the First U.S. Artillery Company L  
had deserted when they moved into Columbia Barracks

Three hundred Riflemen returned south to the small, sleepy frontier town of Oregon City  
in search of a roof to put over their heads

Brevet-Colonel William Wing Loring rented space in Oregon City where the regiment was housed  
there a portion of Loring's troops spent their first (winter)

and there they made themselves obnoxious with drunkenness and irreverent superiority  
However, in California Colonel Persifer F. Smith, Commanding Officer of the Pacific Division,  
was impressed enough with Loring's accomplishments to promote him to the rank of Colonel  
(thus removing his Brevet status)

and named him Commandant of the 11<sup>th</sup> Military District -- October 3, 1849  
(Colonel Loring was in command of the Oregon Territory military for almost three years  
by his vigilance and firmness he kept the Indians pacified during that time)

#### TRADE WITH CALIFORNIA MULTIPLIES

Instead of an occasional ship entering the Columbia River more than fifty pushed into the river  
with twenty tied up at one time waiting for cargoes  
that could not be supplied fast enough to meet the demand -- October 1849

#### PRESIDENT ZACHARY TAYLOR NAMES JOHN P. GAINES OREGON TERRITORIAL GOVERNOR

With the refusal of Abraham Lincoln to serve as Governor of Oregon Territory

President Taylor appointed General John P. Gaines to replace General Joe Lane -- October 1849

#### SLAVE ROSE JACKSON TRAVELS THE OREGON TRAIL

Not all relationships between slave and master were antagonistic

Rose Jackson willingly traveled the Oregon Trail as a slave to Dr. William Allen's family -- 1849  
Since the Allens knew of the Exclusion Laws in Oregon Territory they planned to leave her behind  
but she begged to accompany the family

with the support of the Allen daughters, Dr. Allen relented

Because it was illegal to bring slaves into Oregon Territory,

Dr. Allen was forced to smuggle Rose across the length of the Oregon Trail  
in a box with air holes drilled in it

this was a sacrifice for the Allens since they would have to leave behind

belongings and supplies that would have been carried in that space

Rose came out only at night to stretch and get a breath of fresh air

Rose was given her freedom from slavery when the family entered Oregon Territory

#### TERRITORIAL CHIEF JUSTICE WILLIAM P. BRYANT LEAVES OREGON RICH

Chief Justice William P. Bryant was in Oregon Territory for only seven months

by his appearance Bryant was a poor man when he arrived in Oregon Territory

thanks to Dr. John McLoughlin's land he left the territory a rich man -- November 1849

he also continued to draw his judicial salary for eighteen more months

#### ASSOCIATE JUSTICE ORVILLE C. PRATT IS THE ONLY JUSTICE IN OREGON TERRITORY

With the departure of Chief Justice William P. Bryant, Associate Justice Orville C. Pratt  
was the only justice remaining in Oregon Territory

Justice Pratt exercised all the powers of the judiciary from April 1849 to [December 1853]

he held his own court and also heard cases which should have been held by the Chief Justice

in the meantime he organized most of the judicial district and circuit courts in the counties

#### TERRITORIAL ASSOCIATE JUSTICE ORVILLE C. PRATT WAS A CONTROVERSIAL FIGURE

Justice Orville C. Pratt in addition to being an associate justice

also was named judge of the Court of Admiralty in the Pacific Northwest

he heard his first case of maritime law in Portland -- winter 1849

Justice Pratt was a controversial figure in Oregon Territory

he was known for traveling outside of the territory for personal gain

filled with ambition he left the territory frequently for personal and political interests

he was known for traveling outside of the territory for his own personal gain

and took every opportunity to advance his personal, business, and political goals



(After leaving the Oregon Territory Supreme Court Orville C. Pratt  
continued on as judge of Admiralty Court in Portland, Oregon until [1856])

#### FIRST WINTER WAS ALWAYS A DIFFICULT TIME FOR NEW ARRIVALS

Dr. William Allen and his family were helped by their former slave Rose -- winter 1849

Mrs. Allen found work as a seamstress and made \$2 a day

Rose worked as a laundress and could bring home as much as \$12 a day

though she was freed when the family entered Oregon, all her earnings that first winter  
went to support the Allen family

(Dr. Allen died the next year and Rose's support was even more crucial

Rose later married John Jackson, a groom for stagecoach horses

in Canemah [[now part of Oregon City]

next the couple moved to Waldo Hills outside Salem

together they raised two children: Rose and Charles)