SEARCHABLE PACIFIC NORTHWEST HISTORY

BOOK THREE

EXPLORATION 1800-1849



BY

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Native American Inspired Art by Watercolor artist

Barb Ruble

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# HOW TO USE THIS MATERIAL

*Searchable Pacific Northwest History* provides a huge variety of topics to be studied.

I have chosen to use a chronological format that includes a series on indentions something like an outline so additional material could be easily added and existing material shifted to a new location. This also allows the reader to “copy and paste” material from this document into a new document of their own making using the “document search navigator” on their computer. This access allows anyone to construct an historic document of their own in “outline” form.

The historic material in Book Three is in chronological order by century, decade, year, month, week and on occasion day. Events listed out of sequence in an effort make a point are placed in parenthesis ( ) and non-sequential dates in brackets [ ]. Quotations are in bold print and footnoted.

To construct an historic document of your own requires a two-step process:

1) Our website: <http://searchablehistory.com> provides a TEMPLATE of the “outline” formatting required for the new document. a. [Download this TEMPLATE](http://searchablehistory.com/ebooks/DocumentTemplate.docx) and Save it onto your computer. b. OPEN the TEMPLATE.

2) [Download the MS Word version of this book](http://searchablehistory.com/ebooks/SEARCHABLE-PNW-HISTORY-Book3-Exploration.docx). Information COPIED from *Searchable Pacific Northwest History* and PASTED onto the TEMPLATE will result in a new document being generated in chronological order and “outline” form.

For instance after generating a formatted TEMPLATE on a computer, a student might search the exploits of **Sacagawea**. Opening *Searchable Pacific Northwest History* and placing Sacagawea into the search engine shows 34 references to the Indian guide. The first instance is in the synopsis 1800-1809 gives the starting point. The paragraph “CHARBONNEAU AND SACAGAWEA ARE HIRED BY LEWIS AND CLARK” on page 30 could be COPIED and PASTED onto the TEMPLATE. The paragraph “LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION SETS OUT FROM FORT MANDAN” on page 30 provides information regarding her child. Further examination of the historic document would result in other relevant information being discovered. Adding this material to the “outline” template would produce a document featuring the accomplishments of Sacajawea in chronological order.

This “outline” provides the foundation for a report. Other information such as personal accounts, pictures, maps, etc. could be found from additional sources and the internet (used with permission when necessary) to enhance the final document.

# WHY DID I UNDERTAKE SEARCHABLE PACIFIC NORTHWEST HISTORY?

Computers have changed the way we can look at history. The study of our past has always been constricted by the space available to present it. The person, topic, or event being studied was confined by the physical limits of books. This constricting of the past is even greater in a history book dedicated to a very broad subject. Each topic must be compressed to fit the space available. These restrictions are no longer necessary with the advent of computers and the internet.

The historic material that I have included has had a direct impact on the inhabitants of the Pacific Northwest. I have tried to focus on topics that people who live here, regardless of decade or century, would discuss with their family and friends. My hope is that because it was a topic of conversation and interest to people residing here at one time it may yet be so today.

History happens chronologically and in context. However, it is not taught that way. Rather, attention is focused on dates, names and selected topics. For instance, the exploration of Captain George Vancouver might be presented without any mention of the discoveries of Spanish explorers although both investigations occurred simultaneously and sometimes mutually. Also, American sea traders were operating in the same waters while Alexander Mackenzie was actively conducting his overland expeditions to find the Pacific Ocean. Events do not occur in isolation.

The topics of missionaries to the Pacific Northwest and Hudson’s Bay Company might be presented without acknowledging both entities were dealing with the same Native Americans at the same time. These interactions had a unique impact on the Indians. Or, similarly Northwest Indian wars and Indian treaties are presented without mentioning the treaties came before the wars. Presenting history one topic at a time, while necessary until now, makes historic context almost impossible.  
  
Presenting history one topic at a time also presents a false image of the time necessary to accomplish a task. When students are introduced to the Oregon Trail, attention is perhaps paid to the preparations essential for the journey and the sacrifices necessary. The route West is depicted passing by a series of prominent land features, hardships for the travelers may be indicated, and Oregon is reached three paragraphs or three pages after setting out depending on the detail of the text. There is no feeling for the nine months the journey on foot took to complete. The neglect of the amount of time necessary to accomplish a goal is so frequent in history books that this could, perhaps, account for the instant gratification so often demanded today.

Those of us who enjoy reading history are intrigued with adding new information to what we have previously discovered. Each addition provides an opportunity to gain new insight. We are aware that previous generations faced challenges and mysteries much like our own. Discovering how these demands were met, successfully or unsuccessfully, in the past can guide us as we seek answers to our own personal and collective dilemmas. Most history instructors strive to teach their students *about* history. My goal is to enable students to learn *from* history. As President Harry Truman noted: “The only thing new in the world is the history you don’t know.”

# SYNOPSIS

[1800-1809](#_1800-1809)

David Thompson was named North West Company chief geographer and made a partner. Thompson, his wife Charlotte and their three children crossed Western Canada several times surveying and trading with the Indians. He carried several fortunes in furs east to the company’s Montreal headquarters.

North West Company developed a transcontinental transportation system. Its Eastern Division linked Grand Portage on Lake Superior with Hudson’s Bay using large canoes manned by Montreal Boatmen. Western division linked Grand Portage with the wilderness using small canoes manned by voyageurs. Supplies traveled west; furs were carried east.

Spain ceded her claim to North America vacating her colony and fort at Nootka Sound and selling her continental claim to France. Spanish attention focused on exploiting the resources of Central America. President Jefferson purchased Louisiana Territory from France.

Colorful Manuel Lisa became an important trader on the Missouri River. Lisa formed the St. Louis Missouri Fur Company to go into Yellowstone Country and construct Fort Raymond at the mouth of the Big Horn River.

Meriwether Lewis and William Clark led the American “Core of Discovery.” They traveled up the Missouri River and made winter camp at two Mandan Indian villages where they were joined by Toussaint Charbonneau, Sacagawea and newborn Jean Baptiste. Thirty-three Corps of Discovery members set out up the Missouri, spring 1805. They reached the Three Forks of the Missouri River, continued across the Rocky Maintains at Lemhi Pass, reached the Bitterroot Valley, journeyed down the Clearwater, Snake and Columbia rivers conquering Celilo Falls, and the Dalles Rapids (named Short Narrows, and Long Narrows by the expedition) and established winter camp at Fort Clatsop. In spring 1806 the expedition returned East. Lewis and Clark frequently separated to better investigation Louisiana. Both parties reunited on the Missouri River. Core of Discovery returned to the Mandan villages.

Simon Fraser opened New Caledonia (north-central British Columbia) for the North West Company. From Fort Chipewyan Fraser proceeded by way of the Parsnip and Pack rivers to the Peace River where Rocky Mountain Fort was established. Other posts he established included Fort McLeod, Fort Nakasleh (later Fort St. James) and Fort Natleh (Fort Fraser) and Fort George (now known as Prince George). Simon Fraser was assigned to explore the Tacouche Tess (Fraser River) to the Pacific coast. He determined this was not the Columbia River as was assumed.

[1810-1819](#_1810-1819)

Manuel Lisa’s St. Louis Missouri Fur Company’s Fort Raymond at the confluence of the Yellowstone and Bighorn rivers was visited by Andrew Henry who traveled with sixty trappers and established Henry’s Fort at the Three Forks of the Missouri River. Henry abandoned Henry’s Fort and built Fort Henry on the Snake River.

North West Company’s Columbia Brigade pushed up the North Saskatchewan River bound for Rocky Mountain House. Piegan Indians harassed the brigade. David Thompson tried a new route West up the Athabasca River. He opened Athabasca Pass and wintered at Boat Encampment before continuing on to survey the Columbia River from source to mouth.

John Jacob Astor created the Pacific Fur Company. He planned two expeditions to the Pacific coast, one overland and the other by sea. Astor’s Land Expedition under Wilson Price Hunt was filled with hardship, suffering and death. Astor’s Sea Party aboard the Tonquin under Captain Jonathan Thorn resulted in Astoria being built at the mouth of the Columbia River before the Tonquin was destroyed in an explosion.

War of 1812 was a terrible blow for the Pacific Fur Company. News of the war was delivered to Astoria by North West Company’s John George McTavish. Astoria was sold to North West Company and renamed Fort George. British Captain William Black arrived aboard the warship Raccoon and captured the (already British) fort.

United States and Great Britain signed the Convention of 1818 which redrew the Canadian boundary East of the Rocky Mountains along the 49th parallel from Lake of the Woods to the Rocky Mountains. Land West of the Rockies would be “Jointly Occupied” for ten years.

[1820-1829](#_1820-1829)

Company wars led to the folding of North West Company into Hudson’s Bay Company. George Simpson was assigned to the Columbia Department. Fort George (Astoria) remained the headquarters for the department. Dr. John McLoughlin was named Chief Factor of Fort George.

Fort Vancouver replaced Fort George as Hudson’s Bay Company headquarters for the Columbia Department Dr. John McLoughlin diversified operations to include lumbering, crop farming, sheep and cattle raising. Coastal trade was carried out by Hudson’s Bay Company’s Maritime Department. Competition came from American ships such as the Owyhee under Captain John Dominis. Sailors on Owyhee carried smallpox which devastated the native population as Indian villages became ghost towns.

General William H. Ashley hit on the idea of supplying trappers in the field who traded goods with the natives for pelts. He established the Rendezvous system that required wagon routes be established from St. Louis to gathering places in the Rocky Mountains.

Hudson’s Bay Company Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin claimed two square miles of land and water power at Willamette Falls. He next selected Champoeg (later French Prairie) in the Willamette Valley as the most desirable location for retired French-Canadian employees to settle.

Life in Hudson’s Bay Company’s Columbia Department and the United States’ Oregon seemingly remained as before as Native Americans continued to live in their established villages. Chiefs provided political and practical leadership with what was best for everyone in mind. Hunting and fishing grounds were visited by Indian men as they always had been. Trade was conducted with friendly villages and battles fought with ancient enemies. Indian women cared for their families and developed their artistic skills. Indian children were educated in the old ways and prepared for life as it had always been. However, native life had forever changed as the invaders traded animal pelts, fish, horses and dogs for tools that made construction easier, household goods that made life simpler, ideas that seemed more powerful, and most significant of all, diseases brought upon an unsuspecting people.

[1830-1839](#_1830-1839)

Annual Rendezvous became the method of supplying trappers in the field who worked the Wyoming and Montana area. Rocky Mountain Fur Company and other freight companies delivered caravans of goods from St. Louis to annual Rendezvous in the Rocky Mountains. Pacific Fur Trading Company carried goods from St. Louis to Santa Fe opening the Southwest.

Catholic priests had followed French-Canadian trappers into the wilderness since the earliest arrival of Europeans to North America. Indian Ignace La Mousse studied the Catholic faith and settled among the Flathead Indians of Montana. They sent four young men to St. Louis seeking “Black Robes.” Spokane Garry studied the Church of England faith in Winnipeg, Canada. Garry opened a makeshift school among his people. Catholic Father Norbert Blanchet and Father Modeste Demers opened a mission in Oregon’s Willamette Valley and Washington’s Cowlitz Valley. The Methodist Church sent Rev. Jason Lee and his nephew Rev. Daniel Lee to serve the natives of the Willamette Valley. American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions churches undertook yet another effort sending Rev. Samuel Parker, Dr. Marcus Whitman, Rev. Henry Spalding and William Gray to today’s Eastern Washington. Six Catholic Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur established a school in the Willamette Valley.

U.S. Navy Lieutenant William Slacum was authorized by President Andrew Jackson to report on affairs in Oregon. He met with Hudson Bay Company Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin and learned American Ewing Young, rather than selling his wheat harvest to the company, was distilling whiskey. Slacum proposed Young drive a herd of cattle north from California. The Willamette Cattle Company was born. Slacum visited the Methodist missionaries and listened to complaints regarding Hudson’s Bay Company. Slacum proposed a petition be written to congress. Rev. David Leslie and young Philip L. Edwards penned the first Oregon Memorial.

Hudson Bay Company controlled the economy of its Columbia Department. Fort Vancouver was home to almost seven hundred residents and was most the important community on the entire Pacific coast. Hudson's Bay Company offered the best prices and variety of goods. Coins drained off into Company strongboxes while the little remaining went to American merchants. Hudson Bay Company became diversified. Retired French-Canadian traders were encouraged to settle on farms at French Prairie. Seven hundred head of cattle grazed on lands adjacent to Fort Vancouver. Sawmills were in operation near Fort Vancouver and on Mill Island. Company’s brig Llama delivered a load of sheep and cattle from California to Fort Nisqually Factor Dr. William Tolmie. Cowlitz Prairie farmland provided enough produce to export the surplus to Columbia Department forts and posts.

[1840-1849](#_1840-1849)

Hudson’s By Company dominated its Columbia Department politically and economically. Canoe brigades carried supplies from, and furs to Lake Superior. Fur brigades penetrated the interior of the Columbia Department. Company sailing ships and the steamer Beaver ranged from Alaska to California and Hawaii; up rivers and throughout the inland waters. Decline in the beaver trade motivated Hudson’s Bay Company to create the Puget Sound Agricultural Company in an effort to diversify. French-Canadian shepherds, dairymen and farmers from Canada’s Red River Settlement were brought to Nisqually and Cowlitz farms. Americans worried that Hudson’s Bay Company would no longer need American wheat. Additional Catholic priests and the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur assisted Father Blanchet in the Columbia Department. Their success in converting natives contrasted with the poor results obtained by protestant missionaries.

Willamette Valley Methodist missionaries greeted the “Great Reinforcement” when they arrived aboard the ship Lausanne. As Americans increased in number anti-British, anti-Hudson’s Bay Company feelings grew. Ewing Young, Oregon’s richest American, died without an heir. Americans seized on the need for a government. The arrival of U.S. Naval Lieutenant Charles Wilkes’ United States Exploring Expedition and the return of missionary Dr. Elijah White, this time as an official of the U.S. government, showed America was interested in Oregon. Residents of Champoeg and Chemeketa held a series of “Wolf Meetings” to address their political concerns which resulted in forming a Provisional (temporary) Government.

The trickle of wagon trains became a torrent as the Oregon Trail brought pioneers and measles, cholera, influenza, fevers, and venereal diseases to indigenous people with no immunity. Germs killed more Indians than raids, battles or wars although these too added greatly to native suffering.

Exuberant expansionist James K. Polk was elected President of the United States. He called for American jurisdiction over Oregon settlers. Oregon Country was plagued with nationalistic and racist feelings. Americans accused Hudson's Bay Company of plotting with foreign-born Catholics and Indians to undermine American settlement. Unfounded rumors of an Indian-Negro alliance alarmed white settlers. The Provisional Legislative Council passed Exclusionary Laws prohibiting the presence of Free Negroes in Oregon Country. When respected negro farmer George Washington Bush reached the Dalles he decided to move north of the Columbia River with friends to escape the Provisional Government.

Whitman’s Waiilatpu Mission was attacked on November 29, 1847. Thirteen people including the Whitmans were killed initially. Hudson’s Bay Company took responsibility for the protection of British and Americans alike. Fifty hostages were ransomed but several others died in captivity. Cayuse War fever swept Oregon Country. Provisional Government formed a militia of “Oregon Rifles” who produced little to show for their efforts.

Organic Act creating Oregon Territory was signed by President Polk August 14, 1848. Joe Lane was named territorial governor. Colonel William Loring led the Regiment of Mounted Riflemen over the Oregon Trail to provide protection to travelers and settlers alike. USS Massachusetts steamed from California to the Columbia River carrying Major John S. Hathaway’s First Regiment of the First U.S. Artillery Companies L and M. Fort Steilacoom was built by Company M.

Word of gold in California increased the flood of immigrants west into a torrent. Residents of Oregon were some of the first to get rich -- or at least try.

SEARCHABLE PACIFIC NORTHWEST HISTORY

BOOK THREE: EXPLORATION 1800-1899

1800-1809

JOHN JACOB ASTOR BECOME A LEADING AMERICAN FUR DEALER

Astor was a leading fur dealer headquartered in New York -- by 1800

he seldom pretended to be other than what he was -- a pirate in the fur markets

he took advantage of every opportunity to make money including the use and abuse of power

John Jacob Astor sent his first ship to China -- 1800

his personal fortune grew to a million dollars

all saturated with the hate of men he cheated along the way

However, Astor received the supportive attention of the federal government

in the person of Senator Thomas Hart Benton

DAVID THOMPSON AND DUNCAN McGILLIVRAY REACH ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE

North West Company traders Thompson and McGillivray traveled the Saskatchewan River

they reached John McDonald ‘s Rocky Mountain House (near Calgary, Alberta) -- 1800

this was the “farthest in” permanent post of the North West Company

Thompson and McGillivray found a convenient headquarters for their work

NORTH WEST COMPANY NAMES DAVID THOMPSON CHIEF GEOGRAPHER

David Thompson began the task the of surveying the Saskatchewan, Athabasca and Peace rivers

(this task will occupy him for the next thirty years)

he was always more interested in discovery and mapping than in profits

Thompson left Rocky Mountain House for the Rocky Mountains -- October 5, 1800

he was accompanied by Duncan McGillivray, thirty French-Canadian and native workers

and as usual, by his wife Charlotte and their children

Thompson attempted to establish friendly relations with the natives as he traveled

Piegan Indians were willing to trade but they continually watched Thompson

NORTH WEST COMPANY TRANSPORTATION ACROSS THE CONTINENT

Two systems of rivers, lakes, and portages

made transportation from Hudson’s Bay to the West possible

One Division operated between Montreal and Grand Portage on Lake Superior

Hudson’s Bay, Nelson River, Lake Winnipeg, Saskatchewan route

was traveled by “Montreal Boatmen”

at the west end of Lake Superior the big canoes were exchanged for smaller ones

(sometimes called “north”) canoes that were used in the interior

these light canoes took one hundred days to make the journey each way

Second division operated between Grand Portage and the frontier

Mississippi-Missouri system was traveled by voyageurs to and from Grand Portage

North West Company employees eventually increased from 500 to 2,000 men

working in the two divisions transporting goods and pelts

EXPRESS SERVICE RUN BY NORTH WEST COMPANY PROVIDES TRANSPORTATION

North West Company maintained a transportation link between Montreal and Rocky Mountain House

trade was well organized with regular routes and schedules

two expresses brigades were sent annually -- one in summer and another in winter

Summer express left the posts ahead of the regular, causal, canoes

voyageurs of the summer brigade carried news of the winter trade, dispatches to officials

and letters from home

Winter express left Rocky Mountain House [in November]

and reached Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada [in March]

canoes were useless at that time of year so they replaced with snowshoes and sledges

Trade with North West Company’s posts in the Rocky Mountains and to the West

was carried on by brigades linking the forts and trading posts along the route with supply depots

they delivered supplies in and furs out by canoe, horseback and back packs

FIRST LAP OF THE NORTH WEST COMPANY VOYAGEURS’ JOURNEY

Journey from Montreal to Grand Portage on Lake Superior

used canoes thirty-five feet long and six feet wide built of thinnest yellow birch bark

these were manned by eight to ten “Montreal boatmen”

each canoe could carry four tons of supplies on the “grand perch”

four poles lengthwise in the bottom with all goods carefully stored

so as to not touch the fragile birch bark

a definite schedule determined the load of every canoe

each canoe took sixty-five packages of goods, 600 pounds of biscuit, 200 of pork,

three bushels of peas, two oilcloths, a sail, an ax, a towing line, a kettle,

a sponge for bailing, gum and bark for repairing the craft

SECOND LAP OF THE NORTH WEST COMPANY VOYAGEURS’ JOURNEY

From Grand Portage on Lake Superior to the west as far as the fur men went

this route used interior canoes of one and one-half tons, about half the size of the birch bark,

manned by four or five voyageurs

speed was essential

this trip was often marked by privations as the voyageurs must depend on Indians for supplies

Voyageurs were proud and hardy

they often spoke in picturesque contempt to the Montreal boatmen

Before arriving at their destination

voyageurs always put on their plumes and made their costumes trim

as they came in, they sang their best selection of boat songs

Guns of the fort were fired at the first sight of the approaching brigade

everyone at the post hastened to greet the arrivals

Voyageurs drove the canoe or bateaux (a flat-bottomed riverboat) at full speed toward the landing

at the last possible moment, they all paddled backward

as bowmen leaped ashore and seized the prow

other voyageurs leaped into the water and carried the gentlemen and passengers to dry ground

SPAIN CEDED POSSESSION OF LOUISIANA TO FRANCE

Spain owned all of the land west of the Mississippi River

Spain ceded Louisiana back to France in the Treaty of Ildefonso -- December 1800

Napoleon Bonaparte envisioned a new French colonial empire in North America this transfer of land will not become known in the United States until [May 1801]

Spanish flag was replaced by the French tricolors

Napoleon had territorial ambitions in both the Old and New Worlds

France was now free to expand into the New World again

THOMAS JEFFERSON IS SWORN IN AS PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

Thomas Jefferson took the oath of office -- March 4, 1801

President Jefferson feared French ambition demonstrated by Napoleon Bonaparte

France had already ventured to the Black Hills perhaps even to Yellowstone River

navigation of the Mississippi River could become a motivation for war

between England and France -- both of which might cross United States’ soil to fight

war would drive America back into the arms of the British

Americans were most especially concerned about French garrison at New Orleans

President Jefferson noted: **“Perhaps nothing since the Revolutionary War has produced more uneasy sensations throughout the body of the nation.”[[1]](#footnote-1)**

President Jefferson sent a secret action plan to Congress to buy New Orleans from France -- 1801

thus American would own both sides of the Mississippi River at the mouth

Jefferson also urged Congress to outfit an expedition **“…to explore the Missouri River and such principal streams of it as, by its course of communication with the waters of the Pacific Ocean, whether the Columbia, Oregon, Colorado, or any other river, may offer the most direct and practical water communication across the continent, for the purpose of commerce.”[[2]](#footnote-2)**

UNITES STATES BECOMES AWARE OF FRANCE ACQUIRING LOUISIANA

International transfer of Louisiana from Spain to France caused great alarm in America

France would replace Spain at the mouth of the Mississippi River

and receive ownership of New Orleans

all shipping linking the Ohio and Mississippi valleys to the United States

was carried on the great river

control of the Mississippi River was imperative to Americans

who lived west of the Allegheny Mountains

Spain was by now too weak to impose any toll or restrictions on the river

France, ranked as the greatest military power in the world,

had become America’s neighbor on the frontier

NORTH WEST COMPANY CONTINUES TO EXPLORE WESTERN CANADA

Nor’Westers David Thompson and Duncan McGillivray found a location in the Rocky Mountains

which showed them the existence of practical trading routes to the Pacific slope -- 1801

Thompson and McGillivray explored one such route ending twenty miles east of (today’s Banff)

they returned east to their base of operations at Rocky Mountain House

on the Saskatchewan River

ALEXANDER MACKENZIE WRITES HIS BOOK

While living in Avoch, Scotland and London Mackenzie published his journal:

*Alexander Mackenzie’s Voyages From Montreal to the Frozen and Pacific Ocean in 1793* -- 1801

David Thompson was thought to have drawn the map for the book

without being given credit

this map showed not only Mackenzie’s explorations but also those of Thompson to [1800]

(Mackenzie’s book was read by President Jefferson and was carried by Lewis and Clark)

why there was such a great length of time between the event and the publication

was explained by Mackenzie: **“The delay actually arose from the very active and busy mode of life in which I was engaged since the voyages have been completed”[[3]](#footnote-3)**

Mackenzie was knighted by England’s King George III for his efforts in exploring

the northern and western portions of North America

thus becoming Sir Alexander Mackenzie -- 1802

SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE ESTABLISHES HIS OWN TRADING COMPANY

Sir Alexander Mackenzie returned to Canada and again became active in the North West Company

established partners in the North West Company split over control of the western trapping region

dissident partners under the rebellious leadership of Sir Alexander Mackenzie

withdrew from the old North West Company to form a new Canadian enterprise

“X.Y. Company” (also known as the North West Company) -- 1802

Mackenzie had access to as much capital as the old North West Company partners had

SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE PLANS FOR A NEW VENTURE

Mackenzie returned to Canada and proposed a transcontinental, trans-Pacific trade venture

to combine whaling with land and sea fur trade, and commerce with China

supplies would be shipped from Montreal

skins and whale oil would be sent to East India Company plants in the Orient

trade circle would be completed when Oriental profits would be used to purchase

trade goods that had been manufactured in England and sent to Montreal

for shipment to the fur fields

Sir Alexander Mackenzie asked the British government

to force East India Company and Hudson’s Bay Company to abandon their exclusive monopolies

or to license a new company to operate in the Orient and Canada

he urged the British government to provide protection to the proposed company

at Nootka Sound and on the Columbia River

this effort was beyond the talents of even Sir Alexander Mackenzie -- British government refused

SIMON McTAVISH CONTINUES TO LEAD THE OLD NORTH WEST COMPANY

Simon McTavish was the ill-tempered leader of the (Old) North West Company

he received a personal grant of 11,550 acres from the company -- 1802

McTavish did everything within his power to compete with both Hudson’s Bay Company

and Alexander Mackenzie’s X.Y. Company

RIVALRIES DEVELOP IN THE CANADIAN FUR TRADE

Three fur companies were competing for control of the Canadian inland fur trade:

•Hudson’s Bay Company;

•Old North West Fur Company;

•X.Y. Company (Sir Alexander Mackenzie’s New North West Company)

Furious competition set in between the two Canadian companies

competition became cut throat -- rum was in widespread use as a bartering tool

employee of both companies frequently murdered each other over furs and territory

employees of both Canadian companies also killed Hudson’s Bay Company men

Indians were also the victims in all of this fighting

North West Company used 2,199 gallons of liquor for Indians in [1803] alone

Mackenzie cut heavily into the business of his former partners

during a two-year period natives were flooded with no less than 195,000 gallons of liquor

Indians became demoralized

Scotsman Simon McTavish, head of the Old North West Company,

began an effort to accept a merger with Alexander Mackenzie’s X.Y. Company

this effort ended in failure and McTavish refused to ever consider a second effort

CENTRAL CANADA BECOMES THE FOCUS TO EXPANDING FUR TRADING EMPIRES

Nor’Wester David Thompson spent the next four years traveling and trading

from the Peace River area the shore of Lake Superior -- 1802 to [1806]

North West Company trader John McDonald was put in charge of Fort Augustus

(located at today’s Edmonton, Alberta)

he was responsible that was equivalent of North West Company’s Saskatchewan District

John McDonald remained there intermittently for six years

PRESIDENT JEFFERSON HAS AN INTEREST IN THE WEST

President Jefferson, based on his conversations with American John Ledyard and others

planned an American expedition across North America to:

•gather information about the land, plants, animals, and natives;

•map a highway route to the Pacific Ocean;

•offer a token challenge to the British and Canadian fur trading companies

President Jefferson hired Meriwether Lewis as his personal secretary -- April 1802

Lewis’ family had been neighbors to Jefferson and the president considered him a friend

Jefferson instructed Robert R. Livingston, U.S. Minister in Paris

to negotiate for a tract of land on the lower Mississippi River for use as a port

(no one could anticipate the much larger purchase that took place)

MANUEL LISA IS A WELL KNOWN TRAPPER AND TRADER IN ST. LOUIS

Manuel Lisa was a colorful Spaniard born in New Orleans, Louisiana [September 8, 1772]

his father, Christopher de Lisa, was a native of Spain

Lisa came to St. Louis from New Orleans sometime about [1790] -- there he entered the fur trade

Lisa was a very clever but unscrupulous Spanish fur trapper and trader in St. Louis

and soon became one of the leaders in the industry

Lisa became such an important trader on the Missouri River that the French government granted him

exclusive rights to trade with the Osage Indians -- June 1802

Of all traders to penetrate the mountains, he was the ablest

and his business code was as ethical as others of his time

However, he made enemies easily

Auguste Chouteau was a French colonist and the first settler of St. Louis

it was his trade monopoly that was given to Manuel Lisa to the disgust of Chauteau’s family

(it will also be discovered that Lisa was Secret Agent of the Spanish Crown)

Manuel Lisa’s enemies were legion

many were created through his own fault and more were created by his success

enemies never ceased to attack him while he lived (and to defame his name after he died)

Lisa won his place in history by initiative, daring and energy

he never had a serious or a personal brush with the Indians

although he traveled many thousands of miles through the wilderness

he became such an important trader on the Missouri River

the U.S. government granted him exclusive trade rights with the Osage Indians -- 1802

In a letter to Territorial Governor General William Clark, Lisa analyzed his strengths

**“But I have had some success as a trader; and this gives rise to many reports. Manuel must cheat the government, and Manuel must cheat the Indians, otherwise Manuel could not bring down every summer so many boats loaded with rich furs.**

**Good, My accounts with the government will show whether I receive anything out of which to cheat it. A poor five hundred dollars, as sub-agent salary, does not buy the tobacco which I annually give to those who call me father.**

**Cheat the Indians! The respect and friendship which they have for me, the security of my possessions in the heart of their country respond to this charge, and declare with voices louder than the tongues of men that it cannot be true.**

**But Manuel gets so much rich fur!**

**Well, I will explain how I get it. First, I put into my operations great activity; I go a great distance, while some are considering whether they will start today or tomorrow. I impose upon myself great privations; then months in a year I am buried in the forest; at a vast distance from my own house. I appear as the benefactor, and not as the pillager, of the Indians. I carried among them the seed of the large pompion (pumpkin), from which I have seen in their possession the fruit weighing 160 pounds. Also the large bean, the potato, the turnip; and these vegetables now make a comfortable part of their subsistence, and this year I have promised to carry the plough. Besides, my blacksmiths work incessantly for them, charging nothing. I lend them traps, only demanding preference in their trade. My establishments are the refuge of the weak and of the old men no longer able to follow their lodges; and by these means I have acquired the confidence and friendship of these nations, and the consequent choice of their trade.”[[4]](#footnote-4)**

SPANISH-AMERICAN RELATIONS DETERIORATE

Spanish officials at New Orleans, (now part of French Territory) -- October 16, 1802

forbid American traders from depositing their cargoes in New Orleans

this move presented a serious economic threat to America as New Orleans is the port

where goods from the interior were transferred to ocean-going ships

President Jefferson asked the Spanish

for permission to send an expedition into the West -- November 1802

PRESIDENT THOMAS JEFFERSON SENDS A SECRET MESSAGE TO CONGRESS

President Jefferson sent a second secret message to Congress -- January 18, 1803

congressional session was closed to present the president’s confidential proposal

Jefferson advocated that $2,500 be appropriated for a two year expedition

to send a small military detachment across Louisiana to the Pacific Ocean

for commercial and literary purposes

this expedition was to trace the Missouri River to its source, cross the high lands

and follow water communications to the Pacific Ocean

Congress approved the expenditure

Jefferson wanted to encourage an American population increase west of the Mississippi River

to protect the national interest at our western border

by stopping the British from gaining territory in the Far West

taking control of the Columbia River at its mouth would block British expansion

SQUABBLE OVER LAND GRANTS IN CANADA

Canadian Presbyterian clergy demanded they be given a land grant by the British government

they pointed out the Catholic and Episcopal clergy were well provided for

Methodists made a similar demand

Landed Canadian proprietors who were holders of immense estates

wanted the government to spend large sums building roads so their estates would be accessible

and lumber could be transported to market

**“For a long time this body of men [Landed Proprietors] …possessed almost all the highest public offices, by means of which, and of its influence in the Executive Council, it welded all the powers of Government….”[[5]](#footnote-5)**

Loyalists to the British king during the American Revolution [1776-1783]

who had settled in Upper Canada (Ontario) as refugees from the United States before

or the children of those Loyalist had collectively received 3,200,000 acres in land grants[[6]](#footnote-6)

Loyalists who settled in Lower Canada (Quebec)[[7]](#footnote-7)

were provided similar land grants totaling 1,457,209 acres

much of this land was sold to speculators for a trifle

two hundred acres could be sold for a gallon of rum or as much a six pounds

AMERICAN TRADING SHIP ARRIVES AT NOOTKA SOUND

American trading ship *Boston* loaded with general cargo was commanded by Captain John Salter

she was the largest, strongest, and best equipped ship on the Pacific coast

when she arrived at Nootka Sound and began trading with the Indians -- March 12, 1803

Natives seemed quite friendly but Captain Salter became indignant at Nootka Chief Maquinna

Salter verbally insulted the Nootka chief in terms some of which the native understood

Maquinna stormed ashore bent on revenge

Chief Maquinna decided the *Boston* should pay for this and other outrages

for instance, all Maquinna’s furs had been stolen when native men were away from the village

also about twenty natives including four sub-chiefs had been murdered

because an Indian stole a chisel from the ship’s carpenter

Maquinna led a gruesome assault on the *Boston*

Indians captured the *Boston* at anchor in Nootka Sound and the ship was set afire and destroyed

all but two of the crew members were massacred:

•twenty-two-year-old blacksmith and armorer John R. Jewitt

whose skills were extremely valuable to the Indians -- Jewitt kept a journal of the events

•sailmaker John Thompson who hid in the hold of the ship until he was discovered

Jewitt told the Indians the old sailor was his father and thus saved his life

Jewitt and Thompson were held as slaves, but they enjoyed some privileges

Jewitt later described his life as a slave as the **“…most valuable species of property. These** (slaves) **are of both sexes being either captives taken by themselves in war, or purchased from the neighboring tribes, and who reside in the same house, forming as it were a part of the family, are usually kindly treated, eat the same food, and live as well as their masters. They are compelled, however, at times to labor severely, as not only all the menial offices are performed by them, such as bringing water, cutting wood, and a variety of others, but they are obligated to make the canoes, to assist in the building and repairing of houses, to supply their masters with fish, and to attend them in war and to fight for them…. The females are employed principally in manufacturing cloths** (weaving by hand)**, in cooking, collecting berries, etc., and with regard to food and living in general have not a much harder lot than their mistresses….”[[8]](#footnote-8)**

Jewitt wrote notes addressed “to any captain nearby”

these notes were carried by befriended natives of other villages

Attack on the *Boston*, when it was discovered, caused alarm among the fur traders

SPAIN OPENS THE PORT OF NEW ORLEANS TO AMERICANS

Spain restored to Americans the right of deposit at the port -- April 19, 1803

at least temporarily American could continue the use of the Mississippi River

however, the French threat to control the port and the Mississippi River loomed even larger

UNITED STATES PURCHASES LOUISIANA FROM FRANCE

Napoleon Bonaparte decided to sell France’s claim to the territory of Louisiana to the United States

he was bent on dominating Europe by conquest of war -- Louisiana helped pay the huge cost

he also believed that as American became increasingly powerful

England’s naval power would be threatened by the young nation

Louisiana Purchase Treaty was signed by Americans Robert Livingston, James Monroe

and French representative Barbe Marbois in Paris -- April 30, 1803

United States had purchased 828,000 square miles for $15 million -- less than 3 cents per acre

an area greater in size than the original thirteen colonies -- America had doubled in size

U.S. thus extended from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains

however, the northern and southern boundaries were not yet determined

MANUEL LISA’S TRADE MONOLOPY COMES TO AN ENDS

Spanish government had granted Manuel Lisa a trade monopoly with the Osage Indians

purchase of Louisiana ended that arrangement as the United States took possession

Vast territory was opened to American trappers

and no privileged corporations limited the possibilities of profits

DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN SETTLES IN QUEBEC, CANADA

John McLoughlin was born at Riviere du Loup, Lower Canada (Quebec)

along the south bank of the St. Lawrence River [October 19, 1784]

to a poor Catholic father and an upper class Protestant mother, Angelique Fraser McLoughlin

he was baptized Jean-Baptiste McLoughlin into the Catholic faith

McLoughlin grew up in the French-Canadian village about 120 miles south of Quebec City

trappers and voyageurs daily passed the McLoughlin farm at Reverie de Loup

throughout his childhood John listened to their songs and stories

his uncle, Simon Fraser, who worked for the North West Company was a frequent visitor

he recounted thrilling tales of adventure for the boy

McLoughlin’s Irish father drowned while John was still a boy

after his father’s death McLoughlin lived with **his maternal granduncle Colonel William Fraser**

he was brought up in the Anglican Church (Church of England)

John McLoughlin began to study medicine in Quebec City at age fourteen [1798]

he crossed the Atlantic to Scotland in order to enter the University of Edinburgh

four and a half years later at age nineteen

he was granted a license to practice medicine and surgery -- April 30, 1803

Dr. John McLoughlin got into a petty scuffle with a British officer

while defending a pretty girl from military rudeness

to escape punishment, he was forced to run away to relatives

working for the North West Company

Dr. John McLoughlin served as an apprentice surgeon to the North West Company’s headquarters

post of Fort Kaministiquia (later Fort William [1807]) (now Thunder Bay, Ontario)

on Lake Superior at a salary of twenty English pounds a years -- 1803

this began a forty-six year career with the company

however there was little doctoring to do except for a few brief weeks during the summer

when Fort Kaministiquia swarmed with transport brigades and rendezvousing partners

besides, the six-foot-four-inch, big-handed youth was not an adept physician

Dr. John McLoughlin soon abandoned medicine as he preferred the fur trade

while serving North West Company as a trader he mastered several Indian languages

he soon showed an astounding capacity for managing Indians, trappers and traders

PRESIDENT JEFFERSON LEARNS OF THE SIGNING OF THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE

President Thomas Jefferson received word of the Louisiana Purchase agreement -- July 1, 1803

Jefferson announced the treaty to the American people -- July 4

Jefferson had been making arrangements for an expedition to cross the continent to the Pacific Ocean

Jefferson’s choice to lead the expedition was former neighbor and secretary Meriwether Lewis

who was a captain in a United States Army rifle company commanded by William Clark

Lewis possessed military discipline and experience that would be necessary

Lewis chose his old commander, William Clark, to assist him leading the “Corps of Discovery”

Lewisrequested of President Jefferson that his old military mate be appointed co-commander

There were four central beliefs that Lewis and Clark held as they prepared for their expedition:

•the Missouri was a mighty river originating in the mountains far to the west;

•it would be possible to navigate by canoe all the way to the source of the Missouri River;

•it would be possible to see the Pacific Ocean or even ships from those mountains;

•it would be possible to locate another great river that flowed to the Pacific from those mountains

Meriwether Lewis left Washington City (D.C.) traveling to St. Louis

where supplies were to be gathered for the expedition

en route he journeyed to Louisville, Kentucky where he was to meet William Clark

Lewis and Clark traveled together from Louisville to Pittsburg and on to St. Louis

NORTH AMERICA REMAINED A MYSTERY YET TO BE EXPLAINED

Although French, British and Spanish explorers, British, Canadian and Russian traders and trappers,

soldiers, Catholic and Protestant missionaries, independent entrepreneurs

and ever-westward moving farmers had all visited the eastern portions of North America

map makers remained ignorant regarding what was actually to the west

To fill in the void in knowledge and on the maps several misconceptions prevailed:

•headwaters of all of the major rivers of the West were near each other;

•headwaters of the Missouri (flowing east) and the headwaters of some great “River of the West”

(flowing to the Pacific Ocean) were near each other;

•western rivers were navigable up to their sources;

•Stony (or Rocky) Mountains were just one or two ridges of low mountains or hills

they did not present much of an obstacle to travel;

•it would be possible to travel up the Missouri River from the east,

cross over to the River of the West in less than a day,

then take that river directly down to the Pacific Ocean

Some people believed during their explorations Lewis and Clark:

•would come to a mountain of rock salt that was 180 miles long and forty-five miles wide

after traveling a thousand miles;

•would see a number of volcanoes along the Missouri River;

•would encounter the woolly mammoth -- long extinct elsewhere in the world

President Jefferson himself believed this to be true

Indians of the West were believed to be different from those already encountered and conquered

some believed the western tribes were descended from pre-Christopher Columbus explorers

such as the Vikings or Welsh or Irish, or that they were remnants of the Lost Tribes of Israel,

some assumed Indian cultures became more advanced the further west they were located,

others believed that some tribes in the West would be white and some would be black

MERIWETHER LEWIS WAS WELL PREPARED TO LEAD THE “CORPS OF DISCOVERY”

Meriwether Lewis was a thirty-year-old native of Charlottesville, Virginia

his parents were prominent in the Colonial and Revolutionary efforts

Meriwether had lost his father at a young age

his childhood training depended on his mother and uncle

he was a fearless hunter at the age of eight

Meriwether successfully managed his mother’s plantation at age eighteen

college educated, intelligent, aware, reserved, respected, moody and meticulous

he lost his temper easily

he commanded well as he developed and maintained an efficient unit of men

he demanded strict obedience to his leadership

Jefferson knew Lewis to be, **“honest, disinterested, of sound understanding, and a fidelity to truth so scrupulous that whatever he should report would be as certain as if seen by ourselves....** [He is] **steady in the maintenance of discipline...careful as a father of those committed to his charge.”[[9]](#footnote-9)**

WILLIAM CLARK SERVES AS CO-COMMANDER OF THE “CORPS OF DISCOVERY”

William Clark was picked by Meriwether Lewis to serve as the “Corps of Discovery”co-commander

thirty-three-year-old was ninth child of John Clark

they had moved to Kentucky when William was fourteen

they settled into a new home which became the center of local sociability

Clark made friends easily

William Clark left home at age nineteen for the Indian wars of the Ohio Valley

he was a respected soldier who developed his leadership skills

Meriwether Lewis served under young officer William Clark

at age twenty-four, he was put in charge of 700 pack horses carrying supplies to Fort Greenville

Indians attacked and Clark lost five men but he delivered the goods intact

twice he was twice sent to negotiate with Spaniards regarding Louisiana

Clark retired from the army abruptly [1796]

he returned home to straighten out the financial affairs of his more famous brother

Revolutionary military leader George Rogers Clark

no more was heard of him until he received a message from Meriwether Lewis

asking him if he were interested in the proposed expedition [June 19, 1803]

William Clark was a man of good judgment, boldness and skill in organizing his work

friendly, a natural leader, easy going, even tempered and patient

he liked people, got along well and was successful in dealing with others

he proved to be successful at negotiating with the Indians

who called him “red-haired chief, our brother”

Clark kept journal of flora and fauna during the expedition to the West

he demonstrated practical knowledge of woodcraft, building and managing canoes

his writings are what are referred to as *The Journal of Lewis and Clark*

Jefferson said of him, **“...brave, prudent, habituated to the woods, & familiar with Indian manners and character. He is not regularly educated, but he possesses a great mass of accurate observation on all subjects of nature which present themselves here, & will therefore readily select those only in his new route which shall be new.”[[10]](#footnote-10)**

ST. LOUIS WAS THE CENTER OF THE AMERICAN FUR TRADE

St. Louis had been founded [1764] by French trader Pierre Laclede Liguest

he was a member of the firm Maxent, Laclede and Company of New Orleans

the town was planned as a haven for French refugees expatriated by Treaty of Paris [1763]

St. Louis desired to become a city which drew tribute from all trade on the Mississippi River

St. Louis became the center of the American fur trade in the West [1800-1840]

this was the cross-roads of America and often of the world

docks and streets were piled high with goods and supplies

it was the most important inland city in North America

St. Louis drew a variety of clientele from all parts of the continent and the world

everyone from savages to crown princes to soft-spoken Creoles

hard-eyed Yankee gamblers and Spaniards from Taos and Santa Fe

fierce Indian chiefs cared nothing for Virginia gentlemen

middle class traders were shunned by godly Protestant missionaries

St. Louis thrived on violence, sudden death, outlawry and cut-throat business methods

NORTH WEST COMPANY CONSTRUCTS A NEW COMPANY HEADQUARTERS

Fort Kaministiquia had first been built [1679] by the French soldier and explorer

Daniel Greysolon, Sieur du Lhut (now spelled Duluth [Minnesota])

This Fort Kaministiquia was replaced by a new structure [1717]

as the first of a projected series of posts leading to the “Western Sea”

undertaken by a French military officer Zacharie Robutel de la Noue

this fort next served as a trading post and base of operations [1727-1743]

for French explorer Pierre Gaultier de la Verendrye

and was again abandoned with the defeat of the French [1760]

during the French and Indian War

Fort Kaministiquia was again rebuilt -- this time by the North West Company -- 1803

replacing the former headquarters at Grand Portage which came under American jurisdiction

with the [1784] Jay Treaty

Fort Kaministiquia name was changed to Fort William [1804]

in honor of North West Company Chief Superintendent William McGillivray

North West Company’s Fort William became the company’s headquarters on Lake Superior

Fort William became a major transshipment point linking the frontier with England

LOUISIANA FORMALLY BECOMES PART OF THE UNITED STATES

Meriwether Lewis traveled to New Orleans where he witnesses the transfer ceremony

French tricolors were lowered and the fifteen-star and stripe American flag was raised

over what was now known as the Louisiana Territory

formal transfer of Louisiana to American ownership took place -- December 20, 1803

LEWIS AND CLARK PREPARE THE “CORPS OF DISCOVERY” TO JOURNEY WEST

Captain Meriwether Lewis was in St. Louis -- winter 1803-1804

where he purchased supplies for their expedition

he gathered information concerning the route as far as the Mandan Villages

from traders familiar with the Missouri River

he also mastered the use of the scientific equipment

William Clark set up Wood River Camp where the Wood River enters the Missouri River

there he received the trade goods such as Jefferson medals, handkerchiefs, needles,

yards of red flannel, whiskey, tobacco and fishhooks

Together Lewis and Clark used the time from December 1803 to [May 1804

to train and weed out misfits -- two boatmen deserted

LEWIS AND CLARK’S CORPS OF DISCOVERY

Both men were given joint command -- both were to serve as co-captains

although Clark’s commission had lower military rank

Clark’s appointment as captain did not arrive until after they left St. Louis

they served as co-captains anyway -- success depended on their leadership

Lewis and Clark’s personalities and training complimented each other

Lewis headed the scientific phase

Clark the led the military phase

both Lewis and Clark were experienced in the Indian Wars of the Ohio Valley

Main purpose of the expedition was to explore the Missouri River and find a way to the Pacific Ocean

President Jefferson sent written complete instruction to Captain Lewis: **“The object of your mission, is to explore the Missouri and such principal streams of it as by its course and communication with the waters of the Pacific Ocean, whether the Columbia, Oregon, Colorado, or any other river that may offer the most direct and practical water communication across the continent, for the purpose of commerce, and you are hereby instructed to keep a journal covering every possible phase of the country you traverse.”[[11]](#footnote-11)**

on the way, the explorers were to:

•obtain accurate and thorough information about the natives; •attempt to appease them as much as possible;

•collect natural history specimens;

•note the sources and courses of rivers for military purposes and the location of lakes;

•observe the routes of Canadian traders;

•chart strategic military points;

•list the visible resources of the country;

•note geographical features such as rapids, waterfalls and islands

President Jefferson provided instructions regarding dealing with the Indians

in order to establish commerce with the Indians the Corps of Discovery was to **“treat them** (the Indians) **in the most friendly and conciliatory manner which their own conduct will admit”[[12]](#footnote-12)**

Jefferson noted: **“We wish to err on the side of your safety, and to bring back your party safe, even if it be with less information”[[13]](#footnote-13)**

Lewis and Clark expedition was well equipped

they were provided scientific instruments for determining longitude and latitude

materials for preserving specimens of plant life were supplied

they carried a copy of Alexander Mackenzie’s *Voyages*

However, no arrangements were made for the expedition to return to the United States by ship

in was unknown when, or even if, the Lewis and Clark Expedition would reach the Pacific coast

it was thought that perhaps the blooming American fur trade would provide a ship for their return

PASSPORTS FOR THE LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION WERE OBTAINED

Passports were secured from France, Spain and Great Britain

American effort to explore the frontier seemed of little consequence to Europe

England and France went to war in Europe -- April 1804

it was assumed the victor would control North America

SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE RETURNS TO CANADA

Mackenzie was elected to the Legislature of Lower Canada --1804-[1808]

(Lower Canada was that part of today’s Quebec Province downriver from the headwaters

of the St. Lawrence River than its contemporary Upper Canada,

present-day southern Ontario)

Mackenzie tried unsuccessfully to united the North West Company and Hudson’s Bay Company

with the intention of combining this new enterprise with the East India Company

expansion of the fur trade to China would then be possible

CAPTAIN WILLIAM CLARK SETS OUT FROM WOOD RIVER CAMP

Captain William Clark ordered the expedition to depart from St. Louis -- 4:00 p.m., May 14, 1804

They fired one gun as a note of farewell to frontier civilization and left Wood River Camp

to journey up the Missouri River in three boats

a keelboat -- twenty-two oars with square sail, breastworks, tow-ropes, push poles

armed with a swivel gun in the prow

and two swivel-mounted blunderbusses -- one on each side

two dugout canoes

red pirogue -- eight oars with a sail

white pirogue -- six oars with a sail

two horses were used by the hunters who walked along shore

Captain Clark and the Corps of Discovery arrived at noon at the village of St. Charles, Missouri about twenty-four miles upriver from St. Louis

there they waited for Captain Meriwether Lewis -- May 21, 1804

CORPS OF DISCOVERY LEAVES CIVILIZATION

Captain Meriwether Lewis joined the Corps of Discovery at St. Charles

Lewis and Clark and the members of their expedition

passed last of the white settlements, La Charrette, Missouri -- May 25, 1804

this was also the home of Daniel Boone

they were greeted by small brigade headed by Regis Loisel -- “boss” of the upriver trade

LEWIS AND CLARK CONTINUE UP THE MISSOURI RIVER

Clark noted trappers returning to St. Louis were on the river --June 5, 1804

**“…raft of two canoes joined together in which two French traders were descending from eighty leagues up the Kansas River, there they had wintered and caught great quantities of beaver.”[[14]](#footnote-14)**

As the Corps of Discovery continued on their way

eight trapping parties traveling down river were passed -- Middle of June

they were going down to St. Louis with their season’s catch of furs

PROGRESS UP MISSOURI RIVER IS SLOW FOR THE CORPS OF DISCOVERY

Missouri headwaters has been visited by Spanish explorers for ten years

British traders had traded with the Mandan Indians for twenty years

French travelers had explored as far as the Black Hills and, perhaps, even the Yellowstone region

Boat traffic on Missouri River was heavy -- several times the party had to move to shore

while trappers returning down river to St. Louis crowded the river

Poor communication hampered coordination for the Corps of Discovery boat parties

considering the distance covered each day, ten to twenty miles, some signal system

Corps of Discovery boats needed to devise a communication system -- but they did not

Indians had used smoke signals from time unknown

Americans had no way to communicate

hunters on land often accidentally lost contact with those in the boats

Lewis and Clark would have to dispatch two or three men to search for the hunters

Hazards along the Missouri River included willow islands and sand bars where the boats grounded

canoes had to be pried and pulled off the obstacles and returned to mid-channel

sluggishly moving river had a powerful current which shifted from side to side with every bend

bluffs narrowed the channel in places -- there the currents had to be fought head on

men often were out with tow-lines working waist-deep in water

and sloshing through mud to their knees

Weather conditions added to the difficulties

rain, hot and humid, was followed by cold and winds

sandstorms and cloudbursts both added to the tribulations of the expedition

Insects such as ticks, gnats, snakes and clouds of mosquitoes increased their misery

rattlesnake bite was the most feared of all hazards

Speed was sacrificed due to specimen collecting

Corps of Discovery stopped or started any time the commanders wanted

as a result the men never knew when their day’s labor was finished

LEWIS AND CLARK CONTINUE ON THE MISSOURI RIVER ALL SUMMER

Members of the Corps of Discovery celebrated the nation’s birthday

by firing the big gun on the keelboat -- July 4, 1804

Private Joseph Field was bitten by a rattlesnake

but was **“quickly doctored with bark by Captain Lewis”**

Lewis and Clark Expedition reached the Platte River -- July 22, 1804

the record notes: **“As we journeyed on, great herds of buffalo so large that we gazed on them in astonishment, came into view. Upon one occasion on our return journey, the herd was so vast, swimming and plowing its way through the stream a mile broad, formed a column so thick that we were compelled to land and wait an hour until it passed, before we could continue our journey.”[[15]](#footnote-15)**

Lewis and Clark had their first serious dispute with the Sioux Indians

who wanted to be paid a tribute for the explorers to travel up the Missouri River -- July 25

Clark’s coolness and Lewis’ diplomacy triumphed

Sioux tried to stop them once more -- July 28

Captain Lewis aimed a small cannon at them

thus he established American sovereignty over the Mississippi Basin

Expedition met Kickapoos, Otoes, Poncas, Yankton, Teton Sioux, Pawnee, Omahas

and learned of Cheyennes and Crows -- summer 1804

explorers found many natives hostile because of their past experience with whites

Sergeant Charles Floyd died with “Biliouse Chorlick” -- probably acute appendicitis -- August 19

he was the only person to die on the trip and was buried (near present Sioux City, Iowa)

An elk and three buffalo were killed -- September 4, 1804

a few days later Lewis estimated there were 3,000 buffalo in one herd

food was plentiful -- every day hunters killed fat antelopes, buffalo, or elk

Lewis and Clark met friendly Arikara Indians -- October 8, 1804

DISCIPLINE WAS SEVERE FOR THE CORPS OF DISCOVERY

Military court-martial was used to discipline the men

John Collins and Hugh Hall were charged with drawing liquor from kegs

they were assigned to guard -- each was given fifty lashes

one man was charged with lying down and sleeping while on sentry duty

he was dishonorably discharged and assigned permanent KP (kitchen patrol) duty

Several times the men either deserted or attempted to

Moses B. Reed attempted to desert

when he was captured he was made to “run the gauntlet” four times

thereafter he was not considered part of the expedition

Joseph Barter was sent on an errand to an Indian camp -- he never came back

John Newman was court-marshaled as a deserter -- October 13, 1804

he was given seventy-five lashes and dismissed from the expedition

La Liberty, a deserter, was caught “but he deceived them and got away” Clark says

one man was “discharged” from the party for attempting to desert

and stealing a “public rifle, shotpouch, powder” Clark reported

Desertions ceased abruptly after the expedition reached the Mandan Villages

perhaps Lewis and Clark realized too many otherwise great expeditions had been wrecked

by commanders who overused the lash rather than reserving it for when it was most needed

(in fact, John Newman who had been sentenced to seventy-five lashes for desertion

was highly recommended by Lewis when the party got back home)

DAVID THOMPSON BECOMES A PARTNER IN THE NORTH WEST COMPANY

North West Company Chief Geographer David Thompson was elevated to partner status

he continued to conduct trade widely across expanses adjacent to Hudson’s Bay Company -- 1804

Though undistinguished at this time, he was a natural explorer

recording his latitude and longitude at every stop to assist him in mapping accurately

he allowed no liquor for trading purposes in the areas he was assigned

LEWIS AND CLARK MAKE WINTER CAMP

Corps of Discovery prepared their first winter camp 1,600 miles up the Missouri River from St. Louis

at two earthen villages of the sedentary Mandan Indians

and their more mobile neighbors the Minnetarees

Mandans were a peaceful but poor Indian people

although they had been the center of Canadian trade activity for at least twenty years

for ten years Spanish traders also had been traveling as far as the Mandan village in North Dakota

Captain William Clark and eight men selected a site for winter camp

about eight miles below the mouth of the Knife River -- October 27, 1804

LEWIS AND CLARK’S FORT MANDAN IS WITHIN EASY CONTACT OF THE INDIANS

Fort Mandan was built of cottonwood, elm and ash

eighteen-foot stockade of tall pointed posts joined at an angle to form a “V”

storage was located at the apex of the “V”

picket fence was placed across the open end of the post thus forming an enclosed area

two rows of huts of four rooms each were constructed

shed roofs sloped upward toward the outer walls

Fort Mandan was guarded day and night

Minnetarees, Hidatsas, Arikaras, Cheyennes, Crees and Blackfoot were camped in the area

North West Company employees and free-lance trappers camped there also

Lewis persuaded the Indians and the Canadian traders

that the American expedition was a friendly exploration expedition not a commercial venture

CORPS OF DISCOVERY SPENDS THE WINTER AT FORT MANDAN

Winter was quiet and time was spent in making acquaintance of the Indians and in various tasks

members of Lewis and Clark’s expedition packed botanical, zoological and geologic specimens

to send to Jefferson [in the spring] along with detailed reports and graphic notes

on the Indians

all of the reports and notes were copied in triplicate

for diversion the expedition’s men danced to the fiddle of one-eyed Peter Cruzat

whose music charmed every Indian tribe the party encountered

between the Mississippi River and the Pacific Ocean

As time dragged on the enlisted men occupied themselves

they built cottonwood dugout canoes for use on the upper river

they operated a blacksmith shop where they made iron implements

that could be traded to the agricultural Mandan Indians for corn

they repaired equipment and made miles of tow line

Temperature dropped to 40º below zero

NORTH WEST COMPANIES MERGE

Sir Alexander Mackenzie’s most bitter enemy was dead

jealous, grasping Simon McTavish, the head of the Old North West Company

this event made the reconciliation of competing former partners possible

as the chief obstacle to a partnership agreement had been removed

Mackenzie’s X.Y. Company employed 520 men, thirty-seven women and thirty-one children

its officers and men joined with the old North West Company employees

Reunion of X.Y. Company with North West Company was completed -- November 5, 1804

positive outcomes were achieved with the merger

there was less violence among the white traders and trappers

and less liquor consumption among the natives

NORTH WEST COMPANY IS REORGNIZED

Sir Alexander Mackenzie remained in Montreal until 1805

he was easily was the most influential partner in the reorganized North West Company

After the merger it was decided to extend the beaver trade west of the Rocky Mountains

David Thompson was placed in charge of the parties going into the wilderness

Alexander Mackenzie added to his considerable fortune he retired in Inverness-shire, Scotland --1805

where he lived a married and settled life until his death fifteen years later

SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE’S (NEW) NORTH WEST COMPANY EXPANDS OPERATIONS

Grand Portage (Minnesota) on the shore of Lake Superior

had served as the North West Company headquarters for shipping and receiving

Mackenzie replaced Grand Portage with Fort Kaministiquia (today’s Thunder Bay, Ontario)

(this post later became known as Fort William)

(New) North West Company carried on trade westward of Lake Superior

wherever North West Company men clashed with Hudson’s Bay Company men

North West Company had the advantage as it was directed

by aggressive Canadian merchants and traders on the spot

one of the most active was young Scotsman explorer Donald Mackenzie

who served the company for eight years

(before becoming a partner of John Jacob Astor)

LEWIS AND CLARK’S MEN ENJOYED GOOD HUNTING AT FORT MANDAN

Members of the Corps of Discovery shot game for winter supplies

Joseph Whitehouse gave the take on one short hunt as: **“34 deer, 10 elk, 5 buffalo”**

in addition to porcupine and antelope

Lewis would say, **“The party are** [sic] **in excellent health, zealously attached to the enterprise, and anxious to proceed. Not a whisper or a murmur of discontent to be heard among them, but all act in unison with the most perfect harmony.”[[16]](#footnote-16)**

CHARBONNEAU AND SACAGAWEA ARE HIRED BY LEWIS AND CLARK

At Fort Mandan Lewis and Clark found two Montreal free trappers

Rene Jessaume and Toussaint Charbonneau who informed the Americans

of the death of (Old) North West Company leader Simon McTavish

both Jessaume and Charbonneau were promptly hired by the Americans as interpreters and guides

(Jessaume would not go all the way to the Pacific Ocean)

Toussaint Charbonneau, although his English was shaky, was hired as an interpreter

Charbonneau had purchased two women from the Hidatsa Indians

Sacagawea (meaning “Bird Woman”) and his second wife “Otter Woman”

both were Shoshone (Snake) Indians who had been captured by the Hidatsa

Charbonneau told Lewis and Clark that his wives’ people lived at the headwaters of the Missouri

and the Shoshones were well-equipped with horses

Lewis and Clark foresaw that Charbonneau and his wives’ interpreting skills

would be instrumental when the expedition reached the Rocky Mountains

Clark found the name Sacagawea impossible to pronounce so he called her “Janey”

Because Charbonneau’s English was shaky and neither Lewis nor Clark spoke French

French boatmen Francois La Biche or Peter Cruzatte or Private George Drouillard

would convey the captains’ questions to Charbonneau in French

Charbonneau then could speak Hidatsa to his Shoshone wives,

especially Sacagawea who spoke both Hidatsa and Shoshone

Sixteen-year-old Sacagawea gave birth to a son -- February 11, 1805

she gave her baby the name Pompey which meant “first born” in Shoshone

Captain Clark promptly nicknamed the baby “or Little Pomp”

among the whites was known as Jean-Baptiste Charbonneau

Sacagawea was held in high regard by the men of the Lewis and Clark Expedition

as a woman she demonstrated the peaceful intent of the expedition

she proved to be more valuable than her husband

Charbonneau was not well likedby the leaders of the Corps of Discovery

one journal entry noted: **“only a tongue to wag in a mouth to fill -- a minus quality in comparison to his wife, Sacagawea, the wonderful Bird Woman who contributes a full man’s share to the success of the expedition, besides taking care of her baby.”[[17]](#footnote-17)**

PREPARATIONS FOR THE JOURNEY WEST BEGIN IN EARNEST

Crews were sent into the timber to cut logs for building dugouts and canoes

specimens that had been collected en route were packed into crates and boxes for shipment

Meriwether Lewis wrote to his mother from Fort Mandan -- March 31, 1805

**“So far we have experienced more difficulties from the navigation of the Missouri than danger from the savages. The difficulties which oppose themselves to the navigation of this immense river arise from the rapidity of its current, its falling banks, sandbars and timber, which remains wholly or partially concealed in its bed, usually called by the navigators of the of the Missouri and the Mississippi ‘sawyer’ or ‘planter.’ Such is the velocity of the current at all seasons of the year, from the entrance of the Missouri to the mouth of the great river Platte, that it is impossible to resist its force by means of oars or poles in the main channel of the river; the eddies which therefore generally exist on one side of the other of the river, are sought by the navigators, but these are almost universally encumbered with the concealed timber, or within reach of the falling banks.”[[18]](#footnote-18)**

PACIFIC COAST MARITIME TRADE SLOWS

American maritime (sea) trade was on a catch-as-catch-can basis

trading ships might appear suddenly at a sheltered anchorage with goods to offer

but the Indians had no way of knowing for certain when to show up with their furs

neither could ship-borne traders be sure that the furs they sought would be available

Only three British vessels traded on the Pacific coast --1805-[1814]

this decline in the sea otter trade can be explained at least in part

by the British East India Company’s iron grip on trade

AMERICAN TRADING BRIG *LYDIA* REACHES THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Captain Samuel Hill sailing the *Lydia* out of Boston wrote this account: **“I sailed in the *Lydia* on the 31st of August 1804, and proceeded round Cape Horn, touched at the Sandwich Islands and arrived in Safety on the North West Coast, at Columbia River, on the 5th of April 1805 where we remained near a month, during which time I eyscended** (ascended) **the main or S. Eastern Branch of the Columbia, to the Great Rapids in my boat, a distance I believe of about 140 miles or perhaps less.”[[19]](#footnote-19)**

*Lydia* was trading in the vicinity of Vancouver Island

when an Indian chief who spoke a little English carried a letter to the visiting ship

this letter was signed John R. Jewitt and John Thompson of the *Boston*

who had remained captives at Nootka Sound since the attack on their ship [1803]

SIMON FRASER EXPLORES THE WILDERNESS FOR THE NORTH WEST COMPANY

Simon Fraser was the son of an American Loyalist who fled the American Revolution

Simon had become a North West Company apprentice at age twelve

and became a partner at age twenty-one -- it was noted he was

**“without much education or special mental endowments”[[20]](#footnote-20)**

North West Company assigned Fraser to replace Sir Alexander Mackenzie at Fort Chipewyan -- 1805

at age twenty-nine he was ordered to continue Mackenzie’s explorations

Simon Fraser joined a combined trading and exploring expedition to strengthen the company’s claim

he was seen to be **“One of the most daring trappers of his day”**[[21]](#footnote-21)

NORTH WEST COMPANY LEARNS OF THE LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION

Early news of the American Lewis and Clark Expedition had a major effect on the Canadian fur trade it was the final incentive for the (new) North West Company

to establish a permanent trading posts in the Pacific Northwest

LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION SETS OUT FROM FORT MANDAN

Ice melted on the Missouri River and two groups left Fort Mandan -- 4:00 p.m., April 7, 1805

Six soldiers including two who had been discharged and two Frenchmen

started down the Missouri River bound for St. Louis

Corporal Richard Warfington whose term had expired

took command of the keelboat and a small canoe

they carried four boxes and one trunk filled with dispatches to the government,

letters to private friends and a number of articles to the President of the United States

also included were the pelts, horns and skeletons of various animals;

dried plants, soil, minerals, and insect specimens;

Mandan and Hidatsa artifacts and items, and Arikara tobacco

and tobacco seed

they carried three cages of live animals previously unknown to science:

four magpies, a sharp-tailed grouse hen and a prairie dog

Second group of six homemade dugouts and two pirogues set out up the Missouri

Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark led the expedition accompanied by

four Sergeants: Charles Floyd, John Ordway, Nathaniel Pryor and Patrick Gass

nineteen Privates: William Bratton, John Collins, John Colter, Joseph Field, Reuben Field,

Robert Frazier, George Gibson, Silas Goodrich, Hugh Hall, Thomas P. Howard,

Huge McNeal, John Potts, John B. Thompson, Peter Weiser, William Werner,

Joseph Whitehouse, Alexander Willard, Richard Windsor and gunsmith John Shields

three boatmen:

small, wiry one-eyed Pierre Cruzatte, a superb hunter and fiddler

Francois LaBiche who was fluent in both English and French

Jean Baptiste Lapage who had been living among the Hidatsa and Mandan

two hunters:

Private George Drouillard famed interpreter, woodsman and scout (Clark’s “Drewyer”)

Private George Shannon, at age seventeen he was the youngest man on the expedition

this young Irishman who was often sent on dangerous missions

he was constantly getting lost

one time for sixteen days he had hunted ahead of the river party

he kept going faster and faster to catch up with those already far behind him

non-military personnel was composed of:

Toussaint Charbonneau, his wife, Sacagawea

and child Jean-Baptiste Charbonneau who was called “Pompey” by his mother

William Clark’s slave York who was always referred to as “my servant” by Clark

York drew a great deal of attention from the Indians

Lewis’ 160-pound Newfoundland dog Seaman

(this name long had been thought to be Scannon because of Clark’s penmanship)

each of the thirty-three Corps of Discovery members

had been selected for the push to the Pacific Ocean because they possessed special skills

all were woodsmen, most were experienced in Indian wars, several were cooks, two were gunsmiths and blacksmiths, two played the violin, one liked to fish,

one was skilled in making clothes, one was a boat builder

in addition a Mandan man accompanied the explorers as far as the home of the Shoshone people

CORPS OF DISCOVERY CONTINUES UP THE MISSOURI RIVER

Captains Lewis and Clark, their thirty-one traveling companions and baby Pompey passed the mouth of the Yellowstone River -- April 26, 1805

during their journey they saw vast herds of buffalo, deer and antelope

ducks and geese were in great abundance and there were some swans

NEAR TRAGEDYS STRIKE THE CORPS OF DISCOVERY

Camp was made (in Montana’s Central Valley) and huge herds of buffalo, elk, deer, antelope

and wolves were noted nearby

Six of the men attacked a grizzly bear with their rifles

although hit several time the great bear continued to pursue the hunters

it took eight rifle-balls to kill the animal -- May 14, 1805

Later, while Lewis and Clark were both on shore

Charbonneau was steering the white pirogue when it overturned

valuable cargo might have been lost had Sacagawea not saved the day -- May 14, 1805

LEWIS AND CLARK FIRST SIGHT THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Corps of Discovery sighted the snow-capped Rockies -- May 26, 1805

Clark reported in his journal: **“I took one man and walked out this morning, and ascended** **the high countrey [sic] to view the mountains which I thought I saw yesterday.... from this point I beheld the Rocky Mountains for the first time with certainty.... whilst I viewed those mountains I felt a secret pleasure in finding myself so near the head of the heretofore conceived boundless Missouri; but when I reflected on the difficulties which this snowey [sic]barrier would most probably throw in my way to the Pacific Ocean, and the sufferings and hardships of my self and party in them, it in some measure counterballanced [sic] the joy I had felt in the first moments in which I gazed on them.”[[22]](#footnote-22)**

CORPS OF DISCOVERY REACHES A FORK IN THE MISSOURI RIVER

Missouri River was joined by another river of equal size

here the explorers faced their first serious choice of routes -- June 3, 1805

Lewis sent a canoe commanded by Sergeant Nathaniel Pryor with two men up the right fork

another canoe commanded by Sergeant Patrick Gass with two more men took the left fork

in the meantime small parties traveled overland to hunt and determine the lay of the land

other men cached part of their goods to be available for their return trip

both canoes returned by evening and the men concluded the right fork was the proper one

both commanders disagreed with the decision

they overruled the men and, after naming the right fork Maria’s River,

they turned the prows of their canoes up the left-hand stream

Lewis and Clark proved to be correct as this was the Missouri River

MERIWETHER LEWIS EXPLORES AHEAD OF THE MAIN CORPS OF DISCOVERY

Captain Lewis came upon the thundering Great Falls of the Missouri River -- June 14, 1805

this beautiful obstacle almost 100 feet high

and was followed by nearly eighteen miles of smaller falls and rapids

expedition spent nearly a month dragging their boats and goods around a portage

to speed progress, the men loaded five canoes on cottonwood logs cut as wheels

strong winds filled the attached sails

but overland progress remained slow as the carriages were forever breaking down

Lewis and Clark found they had to build new canoes

because the old ones could not be used above the Great Falls given the condition of the river

HAZARDS IN ABUNDANCE FACE LEWIS AND CLARK AS THEY CONTINUE UP RIVER

A cloudburst caught Clark, York, Charbonneau, Sacagawea and her baby in the open in a ravine

when floodwaters hit, Sacagawea and Pompey were nearly drowned

Clark saved them when he lifted them from the ravine but in the process he lost his rifle,

compass and a number of other articles -- June 29, 1805

Hailstones more than seven inches in circumference fell during the storm

men on the portage route were caught in the open, knocked to the ground and badly injured

Corps of Discovery stopped to work on a collapsible boat made of skins imagined by Captain Lewis

several days were lost in the effort before the project was abandoned

as it proved impossible to make the vessel water tight

LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION REACHES THE GATES OF THE MOUNTAINS

Missouri River became increasingly rapid as food was running low -- July 19, 1805

prominent gray cliffs along the Missouri River were named the “Gates of the Mountains”

Lewis noted the incredible surroundings when he wrote that: **“this evening we entered much the most remarkable clifts** [sic] **that we have yet seen. These clifts rise from the waters edge on either side perpendicularly to the hight** [sic] **of 1200 feet... from the singular appearance of this place I called it the gates of the rocky mountains.”[[23]](#footnote-23)**

Food for the members of the expedition was becoming scarce

Sacagawea helped by suggesting the bark of a pine tree could be eaten

AMERICAN TRADING BRIG *LYDIA* SAILS IN SEARCH OF THE TWO INDIAN HOSTAGES

Captain Samuel Hill sailing the trading ship *Lydia* out of Boston decided to investigate the letter

he had received signed by John R. Jewitt and John Thompson of the trading ship *Boston*

which indicated they were being held captive at Nootka Sound

*Lydia* sailed to within sight of the offending Indian village

three cannon shots marked the entrance of a ship into the harbor -- morning of July 19, 1805

Jewitt later explained: **“though my heart bounded with joy, I repressed any feelings and affecting to pay no attention to what was said, told** [John] **Thompson to be on his guard and not betray any joy, our release, and perhaps our lives, depended on our conducting ourselves so as to induce the natives to suppose we were not very anxious to leave them.”[[24]](#footnote-24)**

Maquinna, the native Chief, called a council of his people at his house

some were for death for the white slaves,

some were for removing them from the village fifteen to twenty miles,

some were for releasing them

Maquinna heard all of their opinions and then decided to visit the ship himself

he asked that Jewitt write a letter to the ship’s captain

telling how well the whites were treated and how kind the chief was

**“Sir,**

**The bearer of this letter is the Indian king by the name of Maquinna. He was the instigator of the capture of the ship *Boston*, of Boston in North America, John Salter captain, and of the murder of twenty-five men of her crew, the two only survivors being now on shore -- Wherefore I hope you will take care to confine him according to his merits, putting in your dead-lights and keeping so good a watch over him that he cannot escape from you. By so doing we shall be able to obtain our release in the course of a few hours.**

**John R. Jewitt, *Armorer of the* Boston *for himself and***

**John Thompson*, Sail-maker of said ship”[[25]](#footnote-25)***

When the illiterate Maquinna boarded the *Lydia*

he gave presents of skins and the letter to Captain Hill

After reading the message, the captain asked the chief into his cabin

five or six armed men were sent for and came to the captain’s cabin

Maquinna was told he was a prisoner until the whites were released

Maquinna sent several of his men to bring the slaves on board

Captain Hill rescued the two American sailors

two years and four months after the attack on the *Boston*

*Lydia* proceeded to the Columbia River

LEWIS AND CLARK REACH THE THREE FORKS OF THE MISSOURI RIVER

Corps of Discovery arrived at the Three Forks of the Missouri River (Montana) -- July 27, 1805

Lewis and Clark named the Jefferson River which seemed to flow southwest

they named the Madison River, the middle fork that it seemed to flow south

they named the Gallatin River which seemed to flow southeast

Sacagawea recognized the southwest-flowing river

five years before she had been captured by Minnetaree Indians

she had been taken to the Missouri River area where she met Charbonneau

this time all agreed -- the Jefferson River was the best choice

however, she could not tell the worried leaders where to find a pass over the looming mountains

worse, the expedition had not yet seen any sign of her people

horse-owning Shoshone (Snake) Indians

without horses they could not cross the mountains before snow fell -- and that meant disaster

CAPTAIN MERIWETHER LEWIS AND THREE OTHERS SET OUT AHEAD

Lewis pushed desperately ahead with Privates George Drouillard, John Shields and Hugh McNeal

Behind them Clark, half crippled with a carbuncle on his ankle, and the remainder of expedition

kept the eight dugouts canoes creeping onward among boulders, over gravel bars,

and through the willow-tangled channels of endless beaver swamps

Clark often got the disagreeable tasks

time after time he was left behind to pull boats and build camps

(when half-wild horses were to be brought to camp, the task was Clark’s)

After fifty miles the Jefferson River branched into Big Hole, Ruby and Beaverhead rivers

Lewis again faced a choice of routes -- August 4, 1805

Lewis left a note for Clark then ascended the middle branch -- the Ruby River

Clark failed to see the note as beavers had cut down the pole to which it was attached

Clark went up the northwest fork -- the Big Hole River

but returned when he found it unnavigable

no channel could be found as the river was clogged with beaver dams and swamps

LEWIS IS AWARE THE CANOES WILL NOT BE USEFUL MUCH LONGER

Captain Lewis and Privates George Drouillard, John Shields and Hugh McNeal

climbed the mountains

it becomes increasing obvious the canoes would no longer be useful

finding the Shoshones and their horses was imperative if they were to continue west

when Sacagawea recognized “Beaverhead Rock” great excitement was generated -- August 8

LEWIS MADE CAMP AT HORSE PRAIRIE CREEK (MONTANA)

Shoshone (Snake) Indians ranged the lands near the head waters of the Missouri River Corps of Discovery was in desperate need of horses

Lewis set out once again with his three men -- August 11, 1805

to discover signs of Indians in an effort to get aid from someone, anyone,

who could assist them to find a way to cross the Rocky Mountains

Deep in the mountains Lewis sited a lone Shoshone Indian warrior on an elegant horse

he attempted to draw the rider closer

Lewis lifted his blanket in the mountain Indian sign of peace and called

“Ta-ba-bone, Ta-ba-bone” (White man, white man)

Private John Shields, off to one side, did not notice Lewis’s effort

he blundered too near with his rifle and the Indian raced away

Wearily the four explorers trudged on

CONTINENTAL DIVIDE IS REACHED BY LEWIS’ ADVANCED PARTY

Lewis and Hugh McNeal followed an Indian trail -- August 12, 1805

to the summit of the Continental Divide (what became known as Lemhi Pass)

Meriwether Lewis was the first United States citizen to cross the Continental Divide

For the first time a portion of the Corps of Discovery entered Oregon

this occasion was noted by Lewis: **“The road was still plain, and it led directly toward the mountains, the stream gradually became smaller, till after their advancing two mile further, it had so greatly diminished in width that one of the men in a fit of enthusiasm, with one foot on each side of the rivulet, thanked God that He had lived to bestride the Missouri. As they proceeded, their hope of seeing the waters of the Columbia rose to almost painful anxiety; when at the distance of four miles from the last abrupt turn of the stream, they reached a small gap formed by the high mountains which recede on either side, leaving room for the Indian road. From the foot of one of the lowest of these mountains, which arises with a gentle ascent of about a half a mile, issued the remotest water of the Missouri. They had now reached the hidden source of that river, which had never before been seen by civilized man; and as they quenched their thirst at the chaste and icy fountain, -- as they sat down by the brink of that little rivulet, which yielded its distant and modest tribute to the parent ocean -- they felt themselves rewarded for all their labors and difficulties. They left reluctantly this interesting spot, and pursuing the Indian road through the interval of the hills, arrived at the top of a ridge from which they saw high mountains, partially covered with snow, still to the west of them. The ridge on which they stood formed the dividing line between the waters of the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans. They found the descent much steeper than on the eastern side, and at the distance of three-quarters of a mile, reached a handsome, bold creek of cold, clear water running to the westward. They stopped to taste for the first time the waters of the Columbia [**as their enthusiasm misidentified the stream]**.”[[26]](#footnote-26)**

this was an optimistic observation as he had no way of knowing where the river would lead

LEWIS HAPPENS UPON SHOSHONE INDIANS

In Shoshone Country, Captain Lewis and his three men

suddenly encountered an old Indian woman and two girls -- August 15, 1805

both girls ran away at once as the old woman, too feeble to run,

bowed her head to receive the death stroke

Lewis gave her a few beads, a pewter mirror and a little paint as friendly tokens

she called the girls back

no longer fearful, the women conducted the Americans to their camp

on the way the explorers met a band of warriors who had been alerted to their presence

this meeting was the first direct contact these Shoshones had with whites

although they possessed some European trade goods exchanged from other Indians

MEETING WITH THE SHOSHONE INDIANS

Lewis and his companions entered a Shoshone camp of about sixty warriors under Chief Cameahwait

Lewis explained they would receive guns and ammunition from his government

which would enable them to cope with the dreaded Sioux or the pitiless Blackfoot

Lewis also aroused their curiosity by indicating he had a woman of theirs with him

and also a man who was perfectly black; yet not painted

Lewis made a proposition to Cameahwait, the head Chief, to accompany them

back to the forks of the Missouri River where they had left the main party

with their supplies and boats

Cameahwait gladly agreed

LEWIS AND HIS PARTY ARE ACCOMPANIED BY SHOSHONES

After a journey of two days back along the trail

Lewis’s party found themselves at the fork of the Missouri River -- August 17, 1805

main party under Captain William Clark was not there

Cameahwait believed he had been deceived and had been led to their destruction

Lewis, with great tact and boldness, gave Chief Cameahwait his rifle and ammunition

he explained that if he had lied the chief could kill him -- this reassured the Indians

In desperation Lewis sent George Drouillard and several Indians

to search for Clark and the main party

Indians traveling with Lewis saw the boats making their way slowly up the Missouri River

in the bow of the lead boat sat Sacagawea

CAPTAIN CLARK REACHES THE AGREED UPON RENDEZVOUS POINT

Captain William Clark arrived with the interpreter Charbonneau and Sacagawea -- August 17, 1805

when Sacagawea saw her tribesmen she became very excited and began to dance

several women of the village recognized her

Sacagawea recognized a girl with whom she had been captured who later escaped

Main party of the expedition continued to drag the heavy canoes

up the little creek which was the Missouri River

Corps of Discovery arrived at Horse Creek Prairie -- noon August 17

once again the explorers were all together

and they had the encouraging prospect to obtaining horses to continue their journey

York proved to be the strongest attraction for the Indians

natives had never even heard of a black man before

GREAT COUNCIL IS HELD WITH THE SHOSHONE INDIANS

Corps of Discovery reached the Shoshone camp on Horse Creek Prairie

an old Shoshone man described a trail that led across the Continental Divide

he said this trail was used by “Pierced Nose” (Nez Perce) Indians

who lived on the far side of the mountains

now the expedition had a route to cross the mountains

Lewis continued the bargaining for horses -- August 17, 1805

Shoshone Chief Cameahwait appeared wary and hesitant

Sacagawea was called upon to serve as interpreter -- she recognized voice of the head chief

to the astonishment of the explorers

she suddenly broke into a torrent of tears and joyful smiles

as Chief Cameahwait, her brother, rushed forward to embrace her

With the help of Sacagawea Americans bought twenty-nine horses and a mule from the Shoshones

unfortunately most of the Indians’ horses were at a village back on the west side of the mountains

they would have to be sent for and brought to Horse Creek Prairie

On hearing this, the co-captains decided to split their expedition

Lewis and the main party would stay east of the mountain pass to receive the horses

and prepare for the push across the Rocky Mountains

Clark and eleven men, meanwhile, would go ahead to establish relations with the Nez Perce

and attempt to discover if the river Lewis had heard about from the Shoshones (the Salmon)

was really as navigable

CLARK TAKES A GROUP OF EXPLORERS AHEAD OF THE MAIN BODY

Captain William Clark and his eleven men left the main party -- August 18, 1805

they took a Shoshone guide, Old Toby, with them into the Rocky Mountains

they crossed 8,000-foot Lemhi Pass and dropped into Lemhi Valley

Captain Lewis supervised the unloading of the canoes and the arrangement of baggage

to meet their new mode of travel

supplies not immediately needed such as the canoes and some of the goods were cached

members of the expedition made pack saddles

ceaseless bargaining for the purchase of the crucial horses continued

it was his thirtieth birthday

Clark reached the Lemhi River which led to Salmon River

they explored for fifty miles and sent a message to Lewis to find a more northerly route

Clark and his men became concerned when the water began to freeze at night -- August 25, 1805

UNITED STATES DESIRES TO EXPAND ITS FUR TRADE

North West Company had ninety-five men stationed in territory claimed by the United States

to put a stop to their trade, U.S. government issued a proclamation -- August 25, 1805

**“forbidding traders, canoemen, and others, not citizens of the United States from pursuing their traffic on the Missouri River”[[27]](#footnote-27)**

this order was universally ignored by the Canadian traders and trappers

SIMON FRASER OPENS NEW CALEDONIA, CANADA FOR TRADE

North West Company trapper Simon Fraser along with his clerk and civil engineer John Stuart

were ordered by the New Northwest Company to enter the Rocky Mountains

to establish trading posts

Fraser was hopeful that a grateful British government would grant him a Charter for the land

Nor’westers proceeded by way of the Parsnip and Pack rivers to the Peace River

they established a base at Rocky Mountain Portage on the Peace River

and built “Rocky Mountain Fort” on the Upper Peace River in New Caledonia -- 1805

(origin of the name New Caledonia is generally attributed to Simon Fraser and his companions

to whom the hills and woodlands were reminiscent of the Scottish Highlands)

New Caledonia was comprised of the territory of the northwestern Canadian Interior Plateau

drained by the Peace, Stuart and Bulkley river system (now north central British Columbia)

MOUNTAINS BECOME MORE RUGGED FOR THE CORPS OF DISCOVERY

Lewis and Clark had been able to ascend the Missouri River to its source

by following a valley usually free from obstructions

Western slopes of the Rockies were much more rugged and precipitous

with deep canyons through which unnavigable rivers rushed

until finally emerging from the mountains where the rivers became navigable for boats

although Clark did not know it, they were faced with 340 miles of land transport

200 miles along good road -- 140 miles over mountains

with about sixty miles covered in perpetual snow

LEWIS AND CLARK LINK UP AND ENTER THE BITTERROOT VALLEY

Captain Lewis and main body of the Corps of Discovery rejoined Captain Clark -- August 29, 1805

in the valley of the Salmon River that ran between the Rocky and Bitterroot Mountain Ranges Captain Lewis’ negotiating skills had produced only twenty-nine horses

not enough for carrying the baggage and explorers -- except for the two captains

Valley of the Salmon River had rough ridges choked with fallen timber and masses of rock debris

that showed no satisfactory route could be found

even the advice of Shoshone guides, Old Toby and Toby’s son, could not always be trusted

By this time, Clark’s efforts had convinced him that the canyon of the Salmon River,

provided no passage for canoes with its waters

**“foming & roreing** [sic] **through rocks in every direction,”[[28]](#footnote-28)**

Lewis and Clark’s Expedition traveled almost due north along Lemhi Valley

guided by their Shoshone guides the explorers soon became entangled

in the savage ridges and defiles of the mountainous terrain

following the rough route between the between the Rocky and Bitterroot mountains

through a frighteningly early snowstorm

In Lemhi Valley the explorers met a band of friendly Flathead Indians

(who, in spite of their name, did not follow the costal practice of deforming their skulls)

Lewis and Clark purchased several moreelegant horses from the Flatheads as the captains

learned of trails only five or six days’ march away used by “Pierced nosed Indians”

that lead directly across the Rockies to reach the Great Falls of the Missouri River

and the buffalo hunting grounds

this was very good news as their own circuitous route from the falls to the Bitterroot River

had taken nearly two months -- an impossible handicap for transcontinental transportation

Corps of Discovery rested before beginning the climb toward (Lolo Pass)

Indians informed Lewis and Clark the river they followed was white with foam for many miles

then it disappeared into a chain of snowy mountains

Cameahwait and most of the Shoshone people who had been accompanying the explorers

turned back -- August 30, 1805

Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark turned their expedition southward

Corps of Discovery reached the wild and beautiful stream they referred to with its Indian name: Kooskooskie (Clearwater River)

LEWIS AND CLARK REACH TRAVELER’S REST CREEK (LOLO, MONTANA)

Corps of Discovery proceeded down the Flathead River before setting out overland across a prairie

Lewis reported in his journal: **“…we continued our rout** [sic] **down the W. side of the** [Bitterroot] **river about 5 miles further and encamped on a large creek which falls in on the West. as** [sic] **our guide inform**[ed] **me that we should leave the river at this place and the weather appearing settled and fair I determined to halt the next day rest our horses and take some scelestial** [sic] **observations. we** [sic] **called this Creek Traveler's rest.**”[[29]](#footnote-29)

CORPS OF DISCOVERY PASSESS OVER THE BITTERROOT MOUNTAINS

Their route over the Bitterroot Mountains led the explorers

into the most agonizing part of their entire journey -- beginning September 14, 1805

fallen trees made the trail almost impassable

pushing up steep hills and rocky mountain slopes, struggling through gorges and hollows,

and forging through tangled forests choked with underbrush drained both men and horses

rations ran short and snowstorms added to the desperation of their situation

LEWIS AND CLARK AGAIN SPLIT THE CORPS OF DISCOVERY

Desperately low on food and facing challenging terrain and weather Clark and six men pushed ahead

Clark’s party emerged from the Bitterroot Mountains at Weippe Prairie

there they encountered the “Pierced Nose” (Nez Perce) Indians -- September 20, 1805

LEWIS AND MAIN BODY OF THE CORPS OF DISCOVERY REJOIN CLARK AND HIS MEN

Lewis and the rest of the men caught up to Clark visiting the Nez Perce -- September 22, 1805

Lewis and Clark were at the confluence of the north and south forks of the Clearwater River

where the expedition stopped for a badly needed rest

food was scant -- only inferior fish and camas root was available

Nez Perce Indians were hospitable and appeared to be most honest, intelligent and attractive

eager to help, they were kind to the explorers

although they were shrewd and businesslike in trading

Chief Twisted Hair drew a map of the river on the back of a deerskin

Diet of fish was growing tiresome -- dog meat was substituted

several men, including Clark, become ill after over-eating

LEWIS AND CLARK BUILD CANOE CAMP

Corps of Discovery camped at the junction of middle and north fork of Clearwater River

they could see the Clearwater was a fine navigable stream -- September 26, 1805

New canoes had to be built before they could proceed

five dugout canoes were fashioned and burned from logs in ten days

CORPS OF DISCOVERY IS ONCE AGAIN ON THE WATER

First canoe was launched -- October 5, 1805

water-borne once again the expedition no longer needed horses

what horses they had were rounded up and branded

these were left with Nez Perce chiefs Twisted Hair and Cut Nose

CORPS OF DISCOVERY SETS OUT DOWN THE CLEARWATER RIVER

Main body of the expedition commenced their voyage -- October 7

with five large and well-filled canoes fitted with a good supply of food and other necessities

they were accompanied by Nez Perce chiefs

LEWIS AND CLARK CONTINUE DOWN THE CLEARWATER RIVER

Explorers entered the Clearwater River where the Selway and Lochsa rivers merge -- October 8

this treacherous section of the river caused the canoes to overturn

a great deal of gear and equipment was lost and supplies were soaked

Clearwater River joined the Snake River which the westbound expedition entered -- October 10

(this river was named the Lewis River by Clark -- a name that did not stick)

Clark commented on the condition of the natives they were passing: **“The fish** [salmon] **is, indeed, their chief food, except the roots, and the casual supplies of antelope…. This diet may be the direct or the remote cause of the chief disorder which prevails among them, as well as among the Flatheads, on the Kookooskee and the Lewis’s river. With all these Indians a bad soreness of he eyes is a very common disorder, which is suffered to ripen by neglect, till many are deprived of one of their eyes, and some have totally lost the use of both. This dreadful calamity may reasonably, we think, be imputed to the constant reflection of the sun on the waters where they are constantly fishing in the spring, summer, and fall, and during the rest of the year on the snows which afforded no object to relieve the sight.”[[30]](#footnote-30)**

LEWIS AND CLARK ENTERED (WHAT IS NOW WASHINGTON STATE)

Snake River was traveled into (today’s Washington State) -- October 11, 1805

Clark described an experience on the Snake River -- October 12

**“At five miles we passed a rapid; at eight another rapid, and a small island on the right, and at ten and a half a small island on the right. We halted a mile and a half below for the purpose of examining a much larger and more dangerous rapid than those we had yet passed. It is three miles in length, and very difficult to navigate. We had scarcely set out, when three of the canoes stuck fast in endeavoring to avoid the rocks in the channel, soon after in passing two small islands, one of the canoes struck a rock, but was prevented from upsetting, and fortunately we all arrived safe at the lower end of the rapid.”[[31]](#footnote-31)**

FORT McLEOD IS BUILT BY NOR’WESTERS FRASER AND STUART

Simon Fraser and Clerk John Stuart moved west of the Rockies and continued on to McLeod Lake

where Fort Trout (later Fort McLeod) was begun to conduct trade in New Caledonia -- fall 1805

(Fort McLeod became the chief North West Company post in the New Caledonia District)

Fraser and Stuart thoroughly explored New Caledonia west of the Rocky Mountains

Nor’Westers returned to their headquarters at Rocky Mountain House on the Upper Peace River

where they spent the winter trading and trapping in the Rockies

prospects for trade with the natives were good and relations were peaceful

however, the Nor’Westers found it difficult to induce the Indians to exert themselves

Indians were plied with whiskey to inspire them to bring in the necessary furs

NORTH WEST COMPANY TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM IS LONG AND DIFFICULT

Rainy Lake House, North West Company’s unofficial headquarters and Central Deposit

was located at (today’s International Falls, Minnesota)

this was an advance post for North West Company’s headquarters at Fort Kaministiquia (located at today’s Thunder Bay, Ontario on the shore of Lake Superior)

It was very difficult to carry furs from Fort McLeod to Rainy Lake House

and on to Fort Kaministiquia

In addition, supplies and trade goods had to be carried back to Rocky Mountain House

and Fort McLeod in New Caledonia

EXPEDITION REACHES THE CONFLUENCE OF THE SNAKE AND COLUMBIA RIVERS

One hundred-twenty miles from the Clearwater River -- October 17, 1805

Lewis and Clark’s men measured and found the Snake River to be 575 yards wide at its mouth

and the Columbia River to be 960 yards wide

however, after the rivers merged the combined Columbia

was estimated to be from one to three miles in width

members of the expedition were too tired to celebrate their arrival at the Columbia River

Explorers were met by a procession of over 200 Indians

natives conducted a ceremonial dance as a reception in honor of expedition

Corps of Discovery began their journey down the Columbia River

they met a remarkable Indian -- Walla Walla Chief Yellepit

he was handsome, well proportioned with a bold and dignified bearing

he was helpful to the explorers and always favorably disposed to whites

(today’s Yellepit, Washington is named in honor of the chief)

LEWIS AND CLARK ENTER THE COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE

Corps of Discovery entered a fifty-five miles stretch of the Columbia River

that will prove to be the most difficult and dangerous part of their journey

as the river dashes and crashes through the Cascade Mountains

in a dizzying series of narrow channels littered with huge boulders

that led to impossible rapids and impassable waterfalls

Members of the expedition first encountered “Celilo Falls” at the beginning of the Columbia Gorge

where the river plunged thirty-eight feet in only a few miles -- October 22, 1805

ropes were made of elk hide to lower their heavy dugout canoes through the rapids

it took two days to portage around the cataract

CORE OF DISCOVERY REACHED THE DALLES

After conquering Celilo Falls explorers faced two sets of furious narrow rapids -- October 24, 1805

the short narrows required a portage of about a mile

while the downriver long narrows required a portage of about three miles

these portages were immediately followed by the Dalles Rapids (or Wascopam to the natives)

(together Celilo Falls, the short and long narrows and Cascade rapids became known as the Dalles

where the Columbia River rushed through the Cascade Mountains

the Dalles stretched from the Deschutes River on the east to the Sandy River on the west

at one point the river dropped fifteen feet in a tumult of violent water 1½ miles long

the Dalles was named for the French word for “flagstones” or “slabs”

referring to the huge basalt slabs constricting the channel[[32]](#footnote-32)

this eight mile stretch of violently turbulent water was known to the Indians as Wascopam)

Clark climbed to the top of a rock formation to survey the first of these rapids

this was a quarter-mile stretch called the **“Short Narrows”** **“I deturmined** [sic] **to pass through this place notwithstanding the horrid appearance of this agitated gut swelling, boiling & whorling** [sic] **in every direction.”[[33]](#footnote-33)**

Because of their rush to reach the Pacific Ocean the explorers sometimes took risks

in this instance the non-swimmers and hired Indians with their horses

portaged the most valuable baggage around the Short Narrows

while the others shot the rapids in the canoes and emerged safely

much to the amazement of hundreds of Indians who lined the cliffs to watch

LONG NARARROWS IS NEXT CONQUERED BY THE CORPS OF DISCOVERY[[34]](#footnote-34)

After clearing the Short Narrows of the Dalles the expedition faced the “Long Narrows”

which was surmounted in the same way-- October 25, 1805

Lewis and Clark began to see blankets, axes, brass kettles and other trade articles

CORPS OF DISCOVERY REACHED THE CASCAES OF THE COLUMBIA[[35]](#footnote-35)

Finally, the expedition reached what they called “the Shute” -- the Cascades of the Columbia River

this four mile swift flat stretch of water was the final barrier -- October 31, 1805

Clark said it ran **“with great velocity foming & boiling in a most horriable manner** [sic]**” [[36]](#footnote-36)**

a well-used Indian trail was used along with hired Indians and their horses to clear the rapid

This last set of rapids were cleared with the help of Indians and horses -- November 2

CORPS OF DISCOVERY PASS THROUGH THE CASCADE MOUNTAINS

Lewis and Clark Expedition cleared the Columbia River Gorge

it had taken eleven days of dangerous and backbreaking work and the help of friendly Indians

to accomplish the task -- November 2, 1805

LEWIS AND CLARK SEE EVIDENCE OF TRADE WITH EUROPEANS

Corps of Discovery saw their first natives decked out in European finery -- November 5, 1805

they met the famous Chinook Indian Chief Comcomly

Clark made note of the condition of the natives: **“Among the Sikulks** [Wanapum] **too, and indeed among all the tribes whose chief subsistence is fish, we have observed that bad teeth are very general: some have the teeth, particularly those of the upper jaw, worn down to the gums, and many of both sexes, and even of middle age, have lost them almost entirely. This decay of the teeth is a circumstance very unusual among the Indians, either of the mountains or of the plains, and seems peculiar to the inhabitants of the Columbia.”[[37]](#footnote-37)**

CORPS OF DISCOVERY ARRIVES AT TIDEWATER

As the American explorers continued down the Columbia River they noticed the river’s water rising

they had reached the foot of the Cascade Mountains and tidewater -- November 7, 1805

Camp was made near Pillar Rock(between Brookfield and Dahlia, Washington)

Corps of Discovery saw the Pacific Ocean and Clark wrote: “**Great joy in camp, we are in view of the Ocian** [sic] **...this great Pacific Octean,** [sic] **which we have been so long anxious to See, and the roreing** [sic] **of noise made by the waves brakeing** [sic] **on the rockey** [sic] **shores...may be heard distinctly.”[[38]](#footnote-38)**

actually the Core of Discovery was still many miles up the Columbia River

they did not reach the Pacific Ocean proper for eight more days

EXCITEMENT OF REACHING THEIR DESTINATION SOON FADED

William Clark reported in his journal: **“November 8th. A cloudy morning with some rain. We did not set out until nine o’clock…. We came to at the remains of an old village…. Here we found great numbers of fleas, which we treated with the greatest caution and distance….**

**“The swells or waves were so high that we thought it imprudent to proceed. We landed, unloaded and drew up our canoes. Rain all day at intervals. We were all wet and disagreeable, as we have been for several days past…. We have not level land sufficient for an encampment and for our baggage to lie clear of the tide. …Added to this, the waves are increasing to such a height that we cannot move from the place….**

**“We are not certain as yet if the white people who trade with the Indians… are stationary at the mouth or visit this quarter at stated times for the purpose of traffic…. the seas rolled and tossed the canoes in such a manner this evening that several of our party were seasick….**

**“November 9th. The tide of last night did not rise sufficiently high to come into our camp, but the canoes, which were exposed to the mercy of the waves… all filled; with great attention we saved them until the tide left them dry…. At two o’clock the flood tide came in accompanied by immense waves and heavy winds, floated the trees and drift… and tossed them about in such manner as to endanger the canoes very much. Every exertion and the strictest attention by every individual of the party was scarcely sufficient to save our canoes and from being crushed by those monstrous trees, many of them nearly two hundred feet long and from four to seven feet through. Our camp entirely under water during the height of the tide. Every man as wet as water could make them all the night and today all day, as the rain continued.**

**“At four o’clock P.M. the wind shifted about to the southwest and blew with great violence immediately from the ocean for about two hours. Notwithstanding the disagreeable situation of our party, all wet and cold, and one which they have experienced for several days past, they are cheerful and anxious to see further into the ocean. The water of the river being too salt to use, we are obliged to make use of rain water. Some of the party, not accustomed to salt water, have made too free use of it; on them it acts as a purgative. At this dismal point we must spend another night, as the wind and waves are too high to proceed.**

**“November 10th. Rained very hard the greater part of the last night and continues this morning. The wind has layed** [sic] **and the swells are fallen. We loaded our canoes and proceeded on….**

**“The wind rose from the northwest and the swells became so high, we were compelled to return about two miles to a place where we could unload our canoes, which was in a small bay, on driftwood, on which we had also to make our fires to dry ourselves as well as we could, the shore being either a cliff or perpendicular rocks or steep ascents to the height of 400 or 500 feet…. The logs on which we lie are all afloat every high tide. The rain continued all day. We are all wet, also our bedding and many other articles…. Nothing to eat but pounded fish.**

**“November 11th. A hard rain all the last night. During the last tide the logs on which we lay were all afloat. Sent out Jo Fields to hunt. He soon returned and informed us that the hills were so high and steep with undergrowth and fallen timber that he could not get out any distance. About twelve o’clock five Indians came down in a canoe, the wind very high from the southwest, with most tremendous waves breaking with great violence against the shores, rain falling in torrents. We are all wet as usual, and our situation is truly a disagreeable one. The great quantities of rain… have loosened the stones on the hillsides, and the small stones fall down upon us. Our canoes are at one place, at the mercy of the waves, our baggage in another, and ourselves and party scattered on floating logs and such dry spots as can be found on the hillsides and crevices of the rocks.**

**“We purchased of the Indians thirteen red char, which we found to be excellent fish…. One of those men had on a sailor’s jacket and pantaloons, and made signs that he got those clothes from the white people who lived below the point, etc. Those people left us and crossed the river, which is about five miles wide at this place, through the highest waves I ever saw a small vessel ride. Those Indians are certainly the best canoe navigators I ever saw. Rained all day.**

**“November 12th. A tremendous wind from the southwest about three o’clock this morning with lighting and heard claps of thunder and hail, which continued until six o’clock A.M., when it became light for a short time. Then the heavens became suddenly darkened by a black cloud from the southwest and rained with great violence until twelve o’clock, the waves tremendous breaking with great fury against the rocks and trees on which we are encamped. Our situation is dangerous. we took the advantage of a low tide and moved our camp around a point to a small wet bottom at the mouth of a brook….**

**“It would be distressing to see our situation -- all wet and cold, our bedding also wet, and the robes of the party which compose half the bedding are rotten, and we are not in a situation to supply their places, in a wet bottom scarcely large enough to contain us, our baggage half a mile from us, and canoes at the mercy of the waves, although secured as well as possible, sunk with immense parcels of stone to weight them down to prevent their dashing to pieces against the rocks…. If we have cold weather before we can kill and dress skins for clothing, the bulk of the party will suffer very much.”[[39]](#footnote-39)**

LEWIS AND CLARK MAKE CAMP ALONG THE PACIFIC OCEAN

Camp was located near the mouth of the Columbia River on the north side

(near modern Seaview, Washington) -- November 15, 1805

a continually pounding rain and chill wind caused great distress among the men

diet of dried fish and roots added to their misery

Clark’s Journal reported: **“November 15th. Rained all the last night at intervals of sometimes of two hours. This morning it became cold and fair. The sun shown until one o’clock P.M., which gave an opportunity for us to dry some of our bedding and examine our baggage, the greater part of which I found wet. Some of our pounded fish spoiled. I had all the arms put in order and ammunition examined. The rainy weather continued without a longer intermission than two hours at a time from the fifth in the morning until the 16th -- eleven days rain, and the most disagreeable time I have experienced, confined on a tempest coast, wet, where I can neither get out to hunt, return to a better situation, or proceed on. In this situation have we been for six days past.**

**“Fortunately the wind lay about three o’clock. We loaded in great haste and set out, passed the blustering point, below which is a sand beach … on which is a large village of thirty-six houses, deserted by the Indians and in full possession of the fleas…. The immense swells from the main ocean, immediately in front of us, raised to such a height that I concluded to form a camp on the highest spot I could find in the marshy bottom and proceed no further by water…. The ocean is immediately in front and gives us an extensive view of it from Cape Disappointment to Point Adams…. Evening fair and pleasant. Our men all comfortable in the camps they have made of the boards they found in the town above.”[[40]](#footnote-40)**

**“November 17th. A fair cool morning. Wind from the east…. At half past ten o’clock Captain Lewis returned, having traversed Haley Bay to Cape Disappointment and the seacoast to the north for some distance. Several Chinook Indians followed Captain Lewis and a canoe came up with roots, mats, etc., to sell…. This Chinook nation is about 400 souls; [they] inhabit the country on the small rivers which run into the bay below us and on the ponds to the northwest of us liv** **principally on fish and roots. They are well armed with fusees and sometimes kill elk, deer, and fowl. Our hunters killed today deer, four brant and two ducks, and inform me they saw some elk sign. I directed all the men who wished to see more of the main ocean to prepare themselves to set out with me early on tomorrow morning….”[[41]](#footnote-41)**

**“November 18th. I set out with ten men and my man York to the ocean by land…. At three miles passed a nitch** [sic]**. This rock island is small and at the south of a deep bend in which the natives inform us the ships anchor, and from whence they receive their goods in return for their peltries and elk skins, etc. This appears to be a very good harbor for large ships. Here I found Captain Lewis’ name on a tree. I also engraved my name and ‘BY LAND,’ the day the month and year…. The men appear much satisfied with their trip, beholding with astonishment the high waves dashing against the rocks and this immense ocean.”[[42]](#footnote-42)**

Lewis and Clark moved their expedition to the south side of the Columbia River

to the avoid winds and storms as much as possible -- November 25, 1805

LEWIS AND CLARK ESTABLISH A TEMPORARY CAMP

Camp was set up at Bakers Bay and their goods transferred from the north side of the Columbia

to the south side -- December 3, 1805

Clark scratched on a tree the legend:

**“Wm. Clark, December 3d 1805 By Land from the U. States in 1804 &5.”[[43]](#footnote-43)**

FORT CLATSOP WINTER QUARTERS IS ESTABLISHED BY LEWIS AND CLARK

Members of the Corps of Discovery completed their move

from the north side of the Columbia River -- December 7, 1805

they wanted to be close enough to the ocean and river to sight any arriving ship

Fort Clatsop, named in honor of friendly Clatsop Indians, was built on the Lewis and Clark River

a stockade fifty square feet in size was constructed from fir logs built around several cabins

barracks for the men was constructed

thirty-three members of the Corps of Discovery prepared to spend a wet dreary winter

Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark

Sergeants John Ordway, Nathaniel Pryor and Patrick Gass

Privates William Bratton, John Collins, John Colter, Joseph Fields, Reuben Fields,

Robert Frazier, George Gibson, Silas Goodrich, Hugh Hall, Thomas P. Howard,

Huge McNeal, John Potts, John B. Thompson, Peter Weiser, William Werner,

Joseph Whitehouse, Alexander Willard, Richard Windsor and gunsmith John Shields

boatmen Pierre Cruzatte, Francois LaBiche, Jean Baptiste Lapage

hunters: Privates George Drouillard and George Shannon

non-military personnel Toussaint Charbonneau, his wife, Sacagawea and child Jean-Baptiste

Clark’s slave York and Lewis’ Newfoundland dog

Clatsop Indians stopped frequently at the post

as noted in Clark’s journal -- December 12

**“A numbr** [sic] **of Indians in canoes came along and from them we got some food supplies, consisting mainly of some ‘wassatoo,’ Indian potatoes and a prepared root, called ‘shanataque’. For these we traded blue beads and fish hooks, and we were glad of the opportunity for our food was running low.”[[44]](#footnote-44)**

Explorers celebrated Christmas -- all the men were in their huts and exchanged gifts -- December 25

Clark further noted: **“...we** [Lewis and Clark] **were awakened at daylight by a discharge of fire-arms, which was followed by a song from the men as a compliment to us on the return of Christmas, which we had always been accustomed to observe as a day of rejoicing.”**

Clark also noted on this day: **“The rain confined us to the house, and our only luxuries in honor of the season were some poor elk meat, so much spoiled that we ate it through mere necessity, a few roots and some mouldy** [sic] **pounded fish.”[[45]](#footnote-45)**

Clark made special note of the day in his journal: **“Some rain at different times last night and showers of hail with intervales** [sic] **of fair starr** [sic] **light. This morning at day we were saluted by all our party under our winders, a Shout and a Song, after brackfast** [sic] **we divided our tobacco which amounted to 2 Carrots, one half we gave to the party who used Tobacco those who did not we gave a Handkerchief as a present. The day proved showery all day, the Indians left us this evening, all our party moved into their huts, we dried some of our wet goods. I reved** [sic] **a present of a Fleeshe Hoserey** [fleece hosiery] **vest drawn & socks of Captain Lewis, pair Mockersons** [sic] **of Whitehouse, a small Indian basket of Guterich, & 2 Doz weasels tales** (from Sacagawea)**, & some black roots of the Indians G.D. saw a Snake passing across the parth Our Diner to day consisted of pore Elk boiled, spilt [spoiled] fish & some roots, a bad Christmass** [sic] **diner worm day.”[[46]](#footnote-46)**

CORE OF DISCOVERY LEARNS OF A WHALE WASHED UP ON THE BEACH

Captains Lewis and Clark were informed by some Indians a day or two after Christmas

that a whale had died and washed up on the beach southwest of the fort

(at today’s town of Cannon Beach, Oregon)

Captain Lewis was eager to go and see it, but high wind delayed his trip -- December 27, 1805

CORPS OF DISCOVERY ESTABLISHES A SALT WORKS

Members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition spent a great deal of their time

securing provisions for the trip home

by the time they reached the lower Columbia River region,

the Corps had run out of valuable salt which was necessary to preserve meat

To make salt, a location had to be found with adequate rocks to build a furnace, wood to burn,

ocean water to boil, fresh water to drink and game animals to kill and preserve

fifteen miles southwest of Fort Clatsop a good site was found

in addition, Clatsop and Tillamook Indians lived nearby who could provide their expertise

Five of the Corps of Discovery men traveled to the beach site and built a camp -- December 28, 1805

they set five kettles of saltwater boiling twenty-four hours a day to produce salt

(according to their records they produced about twenty-eight gallons of salt

before returning to Fort Clatsop [February 20, 1806])

CORE OF DISCOVERY REPORTS MEETING A RED-HEADED INDIAN

Lewis and Clark approached a group of Clatsop Indians

near (today’s Nehalem, Oregon) -- December 31, 1805

one of these natives had a light complexion with a freckled face and red hair

when he was child the name “Jack Ramsay” had been tattooed on his left arm

Clark recorded in his journal: **“With the party of Clatsops who visited us last was a man of much lighter Coloured** [sic] **than the natives are generally, he was freckled with long duskey rad** [sic] **hair, about 25 years of age, and must certainly be half white at least, this man appeared to understand more of the English language than the others of his party, but he did not Speak a word of English he possessed all the habits of the Indians.”[[47]](#footnote-47)**

(This man’s origins remain a mystery however a legend had developed regarding him

according to the Clatsops, many years before a ship was wrecked off the Oregon coast

some of the wreckage drifted ashore bearing an unconsciouswhite youth with red hair

Clatsops found him and revived him -- he came to live with them

he married an Indian woman according to native custom

this couple had several children and among them one who was as red-headed as his father

he well could have been the red-headed Indian described by Clark)

NEW YEAR’S DAY AT FORT CLATSOP IS MISERABLE

Lewis and Clark’s Corps of Discovery could only hope their fortunes would improve in 1806

soaked by rain and plagued with fleas, fresh meat in short supply and even less other food

it was difficult to see how things could become more miserable -- **January 1, 1806**

New Years dinner consisted of the usual poor elk and wapato root washed down with water

Members of the expedition spent the winter making salt, hunting elk and deer and fighting fleas

they kept a sharp eye for any trading vessel that might be working along the coast

With little to do but address the necessities of life, Clark’s journal entries varied little

most entries stated **“Nothing of consequence happened today”[[48]](#footnote-48)**

CAPTAIN WILLIAM CLARK INVESTIGATES THE BEACHED WHALE

Captain Clark and twelve men took two canoes up the relatively placid Skipanon River

before crossing overland the saltmaker’s camp and across (today’s Tillamook Head)

when they arrived at the scene the whale’s bones had been picked clean -- January 6, 1806

Indians were boiling the whale in a trough that held about twenty gallons of oil

Clark succeeded in bargaining for about 300 pounds of whale blubber and a few gallons of oil

Judging from the skeleton’s length which was estimated to be 105 feet long

it could have been that of a blue whale -- the largest of all living animals

CORPS OF DISCOVERY MEMBERS WERE ANXIOUS TO RETURN HOME

Remaining trade goods could be wrapped in two handkerchiefs

there was no surplus food or personal luggage to carry as clothes had long sense worn out

and had been replaced by rough garments fashioned from skins

Timing of the return journey, however, was critical

they would be able to cross the Rocky Mountains only after the snow melted

but too late a start would mean the Missouri River would be frozen when they arrived

and another winter on the plains would have to be endured

FIGHTING BOREDOM BECAME THE PRINCIPAL OCCUPATION AT FORT CLATSOP

Corps of Discovery looked for ways to use their time -- some more productively than others

Captain William Clark finished a large map of the overland route -- February 11, 1806

preparations for the return journey began in earnest largely because of the poor diet they endured

letters of credit provided to the expedition by President Jefferson were worthless

since neither ships nor traders had arrived during the winter

CORE OF DISCOVERY COMPELETES THEIR PREPARATIONS FOR THE RETURN TRIP

Captain William Clark counted only six days with sunshine from [January] to March 23, 1806

Fort Clatsop was turned over to the Clatsop chief (natives occupied the post for several years)

Lewis and Clark left the Indians a list of their names, the names of thirty-one people with them

and their accomplishments to date

with instructions to give this list to the first vessel which stopped there

Lewis posted a note on the fort: **“The object of this last** [message] **is that through the medium of some civilized person who may see the same, it may be made known to the world that the party consisting of the persons whose names are hereunto annexed and who were sent out by the Government of the United States to explore the interior of the continent of North America, did penetrate the same by way of the Missouri and Columbia Rivers, to the discharge of the latter into the Pacific Ocean, at which they arrived on the 14th day of November, 1805, and departed on their return to the United States by the same route by which they had come.”[[49]](#footnote-49)**

CORPS OF DISCOVERY BEGIN THEIR RETURN TRIP BACK TO ST. LOUIS

Expedition began back up the Columbia River -- March 23, 1806

Private George Drouillard and a party of hunters were sent out ahead

two pirogues and three canoes began the return voyage

Clark reported: **“Loaded our canoes & at 1 P.M. left Fort Clatsop on our homeward journey, at this place we had wintered and remained from the 7th of Decr. 1805 to this day and we have lived as we had any right to expect, and we can say that we were never one day without three meals of some kind a day either pore elk meat or roots....”[[50]](#footnote-50)**

**LEWIS AND CLARK CONTINUE UP THE COLUMBIA RIVER**

**Returning up the Columbia River Lewis and Clark reached “Quicksand River” (today’s Sandy River)**

**above (today’s Portland, Oregon)**

when traveling down the Columbia River and on their return back up the Columbia

Corps of Discovery members navigated along the north (Washington) shoreline

both times they missed the mouth of the (now) Multnomah River because of islands

they mistakenly thought the Quicksand River drained the (Willamette River Valley)

which they could see from their canoes -- **April 1, 1806**

Sergeant Nathaniel Pryor took a small canoe and two men to explore the Quicksilver River

when they returned that evening they reported the journeyed six miles upriver

before the river took a bend to east (toward Mount Hood)

CAPTAIN CLARK LED A PARTY OF MEN TO EXOLORE THE WILLAMETTE RIVER

Forty miles beyond the confluence of the Columbia and the (Willamette) rivers

Indians told them they had missed the “Multnomah” River

a huge river that ran south to north and emptied into the Columbia River

Clark and six men went back to investigate

they reached the present site of (Portland, Oregon) -- April 3, 1806

they noticed “Image Canoe Island” (today’s Sauvie Island) in the fog

and saw the mouth of a great river the natives called “Multnomah”

Indians referred to the lower river as Multnomah

and the upper river (above Willamette Falls) as something that sounded like the Wil-lamt

both terms also served as the names of the local people

Clark and his men ventured up (Willamette River) only a few miles

they receive a map of the area from Indians showing the tribal habitats

and a report that a well known numerous and powerful Indian people, the Clackamus, controlled the region

AMERICAN BRIG *LYDIA* STOPPED TO TRADE IN THE VICINITY OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER

*Lydia* out of Boston under Captain Samuel Hill had just completed its mission of mercy

rescuing John R. Jewitt and John Thompson from Nootka Sound natives

realizing the trading ship *Boston* had been attacked

caused alarm among the fur traders aboard the *Lydia* and others they met

*Lydia* had suffered considerable damage to her spars during a gale wind

she returned to the region of the Columbia River to procure timbers for her masts

at the mouth of the Columbia River Captain Hill and his rescued guests crossed the bar

they heard from the natives that Lewis and Clark had departed a fortnight before

John Jewitt says: **“We proceeded about ten miles up the river to a small Indian village, where we heard from the inhabitants that Captain Clark and Lewis, from the United States of America, had been there about a fortnight before us, on their journey overland, and had left several medals with them which they showed us.”[[51]](#footnote-51)**

Captain Hill of the *Lydia* carried it to Canton with him in [January 1808]

from there he forwarded the list to Philadelphia

(one of the copies of the names of the explorers, at last, did get back to the United States)

CAPTAIN CLARK AND HIS SIX MEN REJOIN THE CORPS OF DISCOVERY

William Clark and his men returned to the Columbia River and journeyed upriver in search of Clark

Corps of Discovery members continually fought blustery winds and flooding claimed two canoes

During this leg of the journey Chinook Indians were a constant source of harassment

LEWIS AND CLARK REACH THE CASCADES

Continuing upriver the Corps of Discovery arrived at the lowest of series of rapids --April 10, 1806

The Cascades could not be navigated so the men began to drag their vessel upriver with ropes

Sergeant Nathaniel Pryor was placed in charge of drawing the pirogue upriver

but the bow turned sideways in the river and it was lost in the current

CORPS OF DISCOVERY PORTAGE AROUND THE CASCADES

Larger boats were cut up for fuel

five canoes were carried along the portage route around The Cascades in the rain

over a slippery, narrow trail, 2,800 yards long -- April 11, 1806

Clark and a small party of explorers went ahead to trade for horses

Clark took four canoes up the rapids with a great deal of effort

some of the canoes were unavoidably damaged in the process

Clark’s men were very tired after their laborious task

George Drouillardand the brothers Joseph and Reuben Field were sent out to hunt

Chinook Indians scornfully fingered the pathetic trade goods the redheaded captain offered

Clark recorded in his journal the natives **“tanterlized** [sic] **me.”[[52]](#footnote-52)**

Indians crowded Lewis’ camp, watching -- then began to steal items from the Corps

Shields was forced to draw a knife on two Indians

who tried to take a dog he had purchased for food

two other Indians stole Lewis’ Newfoundland dog

Lewis sent three men after them to retrieve his dog -- even if they had to kill the Indians

when the men approached the Indians, they ran off, and Seaman was brought back to camp

CORPS OF DISCOVERY ARRIVES AT THE GREAT FALLS OF THE COLUMBIA

Lewis and Clark’s Expedition reached the Columbia’s Great Falls (Celilo Falls) -- April 20, 1806

they expected to trade their canoes for horses acquired from the Walla Walla Indians

Sergeants Patrick Gass and Nathaniel Pryor went to work making pack saddles

CAPTAIN CLARK AND HIS MEN REACH A WALLA WALLA INDIAN VILLAGE

Yellepit of the Walla Walla Indians had a village below the mouth of the Walla Walla River

Clark was very relieved when he reached these friendly Indians -- April 27, 1806

Yellepit offered the men food and horses

Captain Meriwether Lewis and main Corps of Discovery arrived at the Cayuse village

Chief Yellepit persuaded his villagers to give the Corps any items they needed for their journey

Lewis gave him a peace medal

Yellepit drew a map of the confluence of the Snake and Columbia Rivers

Frequently portaging around the Columbia River’s waterfalls proved to be too great a challenge

additional pack horses were purchased from the Walla Walla Indians

by turning brass buttons from old uniforms into trade goods for the Indians

Yellepit presented an elegant white horse to Captain Clark

Less than a month after leaving Fort Clatsop the expedition abandoned its canoes

they struck out overland for the Rocky Mountains

using horses acquired from the hospitable Walla Walla tribe

LEWIS AND CLARK SEARCH FOR THE FRIENDLY NEZ PERCE INDIANS

Almost out of food, the expedition arrived back in Nez Perce country

on the Clearwater River -- April 29, 1806

searches for the friendly Nez Perce people were earnestly undertaken

Lewis and Clark found a collection of Nez Perce natives -- May 8

at the confluence of the North and South forks of the Clearwater River

Nez Perce Indians greeted the expedition with genuine hospitality

Corps of Discovery arrived at Chief Twisted Hair’s “Camp Chopunnish”

(near Kamiah, Idaho) -- May 14

Lewis and Clark Expedition had to wait in the Nez Perce camp

until the snow melted in the mountains so that they could pass over the Continental Divide

and return to the east -- Indians put up a large tent to house the explorers

at Chief Twisted Hair’s camp, the co-commanders collected the horses

which they had branded and left behind the year before

Nez Perce had kept reasonable care of the horses and goods left in their charge

their horses were in fair shape and the chief was paid for his services

although the Corps of Discovery now had the livestock necessary for pushing on toward home,

deep snow on the upper Lolo Trail held them back for more than a month

Lewis and Clark waited on the Upper Clearwater River with friendly Indians

this was longest the expedition stayed in camp except for (winter) encampments

during the wait with the Nez Perce

Lewis busied himself with studying the natives and nature

Clark was occupied with treating sick members of the tribe

NORTH WEST COMPANY BECOMES AWARE OF THE DISCOVERIES OF LEWIS AND CLARK

Stimulated by knowledge of the Lewis and Clark Expedition North West Company

resolved to plant trading stations West of the Rocky Mountains

in the Far West before the Americans become entrenched

North West Company feared the encroachment of Americans:

•American ships had a virtual monopoly on the Pacific coast;

•United States owned Louisiana Territory;

•Lewis and Clark had opened the West to trappers and traders

DR. JOHN MCLOUGHLIN GOES TO WORK FOR NORTH WEST COMPANY

Dr. McLoughlin’s uncle, Simon Fraser, secured an appointment for him with North West Company

he was assigned to Fort Kaministiquia on Lake Superior as the resident medical doctor -- 1806

but also became one of the most able businessmen connected with the company

Physically Dr. McLoughlin was an impressive man physically:

•he was almost six feet tall and inclined to weight,

•he was prematurely gray with thick, bushy hair,

•his sharp blue eyes could be kind or rapidly change to glowering with his quick temper,

•Indians referred to him as “White-headed Eagle”

Dr. McLoughlin’s leadership style displayed his lofty concept of duty to his fellow men

he was confident in dealing with Indians whom he understood and tyrannical to his subordinates

TWO NEW NORTH WEST COMPANY POSTS ARE OPENED IN NEW CALEDONIA

Break-up of ice on the Peace River was late

Nor’Westers Simon Fraser and his clerk John Stuart could not start upriver until May 20, 1806

when they left their base camp at Rocky Mountain House on the Upper Peace River they stopped at Fort McLeod on McLeod Lake (which had been opened the previous fall)

Fraser and Stuart encountered many difficulties

most of the rivers and creeks they followed were swelling from melted snow run-off

swift currents impeded their progress

good bark for canoe-building was lacking at the portage, and the old and makeshift canoe

that had been set out the year before had to be replaced at Trout Lake

their ten crewmen were unskilled and unsatisfactory

most of them suffered from illness or injuries along the way

CORPS OF DISCOVERY LEAVES THE NEZ PERCE INDIAN CAMP

Lewis and Clark’s Expedition departed from Chief Twisted Hair and the Nez Perce -- June 10, 1806

each member of the expedition had his own horse to ride and was leading another

reaching the Bitterroot Mountains proved to be far easier than the crossing that lay ahead

CORPS OF DISCOVERY SETS OUT FOR THE BITTERROOT MOUNTAINS

Climbing into the mountains was made difficult by fallen timber and slippery roads

this march was slow and hard on the horses.

It had been spring on the plains, but the Bitterroots still had winter-like conditions

soon the explorers were traveling in ten feet of snow that was packed so hard

that it supported the weight of the horses and their burdens

members of the Corps of Discovery became lost in the deep snow

they were forced to return to nearby Nez Perce for help

Following two Nez Perce Indian guides they headed back up into the mountains -- June 15, 1806

again they climbed the western slope of Bitterroot Mountains toward Lolo Pass

finally, with the help of the Nez Perce guides, Lolo Pass was crossed -- June 22

Once again the Corps of Discovery camped in the Bitterroot Valley (at Montana’s western boundary)

CAPTAIN LEWIS DECIDED TO SEPARATE FROM CAPTAIN CLARK

After successfully making their way over the Bitterroot Mountains thanks to the Nez Perce

Corps of Discovery reached Traveler’s Rest -- June 30, 1806

there Lewis decided to split the Core of Discovery to investigate two separate routes

Lewis and nine men would explore the Missouri River to the north

to see if a direct route between the Bitterroot River and the Great Falls of the Missouri River

could be discovered

Meanwhile, Clark and the others would take the expedition’s forty-nine horses and one colt

to investigate the Yellowstone River southward to its junction with the Missouri River

where the Corps would be reunited with Captain Lewis at Pompey’s Pillar

SERGEANT PRYOR AND THREE MEN ARE DISPATACHED TO DEVELOP TRADE

Sergeant Nathaniel Pryor with Privates Hugh Hall, Richard Windsor and hunter George Shannon

were given the unenviable task of delivering twenty-five horses and one colt

by land to the Mandan Villages -- July 1, 1806

in addition Pryor and his men were to continue on to the British posts on the Assiniboine

to deliver a letter to trader Hugh Heney, a trader and agent with the North West Company, Heney was to convince several Sioux chiefs to accompany Lewis and Clark

on their return trip to Washington City to meet President Thomas Jefferson

this letter also asked Heaney to influence the tribe against British and Canadian traders

to trade solely with the Americans

LEWIS AND CLARK TRAVEL INDEPENDENTLY

Meriwether Lewis and his group of nine men and five Indians broke camp -- July 3, 1806

Sergeant Patrick Gass, Privates Joseph Field, Reuben Field, Robert Frazier, Silas Goodrich,

Huge McNeal, John B. Thompson, William Werner and hunter Private George Drouillard

set out down the Bitterroot River on a raft

however, the five Indians soon abandoned the trip as they were afraid of Hidatsa war parties

William Clark, with the remainder of the Corps and their remaining twenty-four horses

followed the Bitterroot River

(along today’s highway Route 93 to a location near Hamilton, Montana)

Clark described the animal life of the region

Clark’s eighteen member party consisted of:

•Sergeants John Ordway

•Privates: William Bratton, John Collins, John Colter, George Gibson, Thomas P. Howard,

John Potts, Peter Weiser, Joseph Whitehouse, Alexander Willard

and gunsmith John Shields;

•three boatmen: Pierre Cruzatte, Francois LaBiche and Jean Baptiste Lapage;

•non-military personnel Toussaint Charbonneau, his wife, Sacagawea and child Jean-Baptiste

and Clark’s slave York

CAPTAIN CLARK REACHES THE BEAVERHEAD RIVER

William Clark and his twenty-one members of the Corps of Discovery

crossed overland with their twenty-four horses to the Beaverhead River

which they reached (near present-day Dillon, Montana) -- July 8, 1806

there they uncovered the cache and canoes that had been left behind on the westward journey

CAPTAIN MERIWETHER LEWIS CONTINUES HIS INVESTIGATION TO THE NORTH

Lewis and his nine men followed Lolo Creek to the Blackfoot River

there Lewis discovered and named Lewis and Clark Pass (which Clark never saw)

Crossing the Continental Divide Lewis and his explorers descended from the Rocky Mountains

and continued on toward the Great Falls of the Missouri River

CAPTAIN MERIWETHER LEWIS REACHES THE MISSOURI’S GREAT FALLS

Lewis’ party of nine men arrived at the White Bear Islands

near Great Falls (Montana) -- July 11, 1806

his men killed eleven buffalo and begin building small boats that consisted of a buffalo skin

stretched over a willow frame (there were called bullboats)

CAPTAIN MERIWETHER LEWIS’ PARTY OPENS THE CACHE THEY HAD LEFT

While in camp White Bear Islands, Sergeant Patrick Gass supervised the unearthing

of the cache of baggage they had left behind on their westward journey -- July 13, 1806

they found the bearskins and plant specimens had been ruined by moisture

WILLIAM CLARK REACHES THE THREE FORKS OF THE MISSOURI RIVER

William Clark and his twenty-one members of the Corps of Discovery drove their twenty-four horses

as they traveled beside the Beaverhead River until it joined the Jefferson River

They followed the Jefferson to the Three Forks of the Missouri River where they made camp

on the east bank of the Jefferson River (one mile east of Logan, Montana) -- July 13, 1806

Sacagawea had remembered the country through which they were passing and guided them well

she recommended a gap in the mountains to the south as their best route

(this gap was Bozeman Pass) -- the last major land obstacle the expedition would face

Clark sent Sergeant John Ordway and nine men to travel in canoes -- July 13, 1806

rapidly down the Missouri River to the Great Falls to begin the arduous portage around the falls

traveling with Sergeant Ordway were Privates John Collins, John Colter, Thomas P. Howard,

John Potts, Peter Weiser, Joseph Whitehouse and Alexander Willard

and boatmen Pierre Cruzatte and Jean Baptiste Lapage

WILLIAM CLARK AND HIS PARTY REACH THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER

From the Three Forks William Clark and his eleven remaining members of the Corps of Discovery

continued with their twenty-four horses until they reached the Yellowstone River -- July 15, 1806

just south of (modern-day Livingston, Montana)

CAPTAIN MERIWETHER LEWIS AGAIN SPLITS HIS PARTY

Lewis, camped on the Missouri River at the mouth of Marias River

he decided to leave six men at the mouth of Marias River -- July 15,1806

Sergeant Patrick Gass, Robert Frazier, Silas Goodrich, Huge McNeal, John B. Thompson

and William Werner

Lewis planned to explore the upper reaches of the Marias River

with Privates Joseph Field, Reuben Field and hunter Private George Drouillard

After Lewis had departed up Marias River

Huge McNeal was attacked by a grizzly bear at the lower portage around the Great Falls

he broke his musket over the bear’s head and climbed a tree to get away

WILLIAM CLARK AND HIS PORTION OF THE CORPS OF DISCOVERY MAKE CAMP

Captain Clark with Privates William Bratton, George Gibson, John Shields

boatmen Pierre Cruzatte, Francois LaBiche, Jean Baptiste Lapage

Toussaint Charbonneau, Sacagawea, the infant Jean-Baptiste and Clark’s slave York

drove their horses beside the Yellowstone River down to Buffalo Mirage Access

where camp was made -- July 16, 1806

where they cut, hollowed and burned two dugout canoes to continue down the Yellowstone

At Buffalo Mirage Access the remaining members of the Corps of Discovery

cut, hollowed and burned two dugout canoes to continue down the Yellowstone

CAPTAIN CLARK HAS HIS HORSES STOLEN

William Clark with his party of ten including York, Charbonneau, Sacagawea and Pompey

entered the territory belonging to the Crow Indians

Clark made camp in the vicinity of (today’s Park City, Montana)

they awoke to find their horses were gone yet they had never seen an Indian -- July 20, 1806

Clark sorely felt his loss as the horses had added greatly to the success of the expedition

Clark could remember the previous winter when snow came early

and trapped them in the Bitterroot Mountains

short of food and with no game to hunt, they had to kill one of the colts to keep from starving

indeed, like Sacagawea, horses made it possible for Lewis and Clark to survive

and succeed at their difficult and all-important mission

WILLIAM CLARK STOPS TO MAKE DUGOUT CANOES

After the loss of their horses Clark had little choice but to stop long enough to hew out

two twenty-eight-foot Cottonwood canoes and hollow them with fire

in the vicinity (of today’s Columbus, Montana)

SERGEANT PRYOR HAS THE HORSES HE IS DRIVING STOLEN

Sergeant Nathaniel Pryor made camp for the night in a thunder and lightning storm -- July 21, 1806

Crow Indians took the party’s twenty-four horses that night

as the storm covered the sound of the herd leaving while the men slept

Crows did not consider this stealing as many horse herds roamed the region and were available

to the Indians claiming horses was like possessing herds of elk or deer

When first light came Sergeant Pryor discovered the horse herd was gone

he and his three men began looking for the horses

walking in an ever-widening concentric circle around the camp

it was possible, he thought, that they had merely wandered off grazing

however, after a mile they discovered tracks that revealed the horses were driven off

discouraged, Pryor, Hugh Hall, Richard Windsor and hunter George Shannon

began walking for Pompey’s Pillar, where they hoped to encounter Clark and his party

SERGEANT NATHANIEL PRYOR COMES UP WITH A PLAN

It was a long walk to Pompey’s Pillar so the men killed two buffalo -- July 22, 1806

hides were stretched over a willow framework to make made two bullboats

these were used to carry the four men down the Missouri to the Yellowstone River

and Pompey’s Pillar

CAPTAIN MERIWEATHER LEWIS EXPLORES MARIAS RIVER

Lewis and his six men knew Marias River was Blackfoot Indian territory

and therefore dangerous but they explored up the river to determine

whether the headwaters of Maria’s River intersected with the Saskatchewan River

if so, this would provide a canoe route for diverting Canadian furs to the Missouri River

he determined the two rivers did not meet

Disappointed, Lewis and his men turned back toward the Missouri River

WILLIAM CLARK AND HIS PARTY IS AGAIN WATERBORNE

After completing fabrication work on two cottonwood dugout canoes -- July 24, 1806

Clark with his nine adults and a baby resumed water travel to meet Lewis at Pompey’s Pillar

they lashed the dugouts together for strength and safety

Clark retraced their former route -- this time traveling downriver to mouth of the Yellowstone River

WILLIAM CLARK AND HIS PARTY REACH POMPEY’S PILLAR

Traveling down the Yellowstone River Clark and party of ten

including York, Charbonneau, Sacagawea and Pompey

reached the rendezvous point at Pompey’s Pillar -- July 25, 1806

Camp was made on the north side of the Yellowstone River

(south of Sheep Mountain and three miles below Shields River)

LEWIS COMES UNDER ATTACK BY BLACKFEET INDIANS

Captain Lewis and his three men continued their descent of Marias River

they were spotted by a hunting party of eight Blackfoot Indians

Blackfeet seemed friendly and the two groups decided to camp together -- July 26, 1806

Lewis gave the Blackfeet a Jefferson Medal, a flag and a handkerchief

As the explorers slept Blackfoot warriors took the muskets from Captain Lewis, George Drouillard,

and the Field brothers Joseph and Reuben -- early morning hours of July 27

Joseph Field woke up, struggled with one of the Blackfoot warriors, and stabbed him to death

Lewis shot and wounded a second warrior who shot back and barely missed Lewis’ head

it was believed this warrior later died of his wound

Lewis and his men recovered their rifles and the Blackfeet fled

this was the only serious violence the Corps of Discovery encountered during the expedition

however, it resulted in providing inadvertent assistance to the North West Company effort

to establish trade among the natives

although the Americans never became aware of the results of their actions

Fearing the surviving Indians would bring reinforcements,

Lewis and his men paddled sixty-three miles, ate, then traveled seventeen miles more

they ate again and continued twenty more miles by moonlight

Lewis was anxious to warn the unsuspecting members of his party at the mouth of Marias River

of the potential danger of a Blackfoot attack

Lewis and his three men finally camped (west of modern Fort Benton, Montana)

NOR’WESTERS SIMON FRASER AND JOHN STUART REACH STUART LAKE

Simon Fraser and his clerk John Stuart moved on to Stuart Lake which they reached -- July 26, 1806

work was begun on Fort Nakasleh (later Fort St. James) on the southeast shore of Stuart Lake

but few trade goods were available with which to barter for furs

salmon run was late and the Indians were near starvation

Fraser and his men were soon in a similar condition

Simon Fraser learned from the Indians that a major river called Tacouche Tess could be reached

by descending Stuart River which drained Stuart Lake then crossing overland

to the Nechako River and descending that river to its confluence with the Tacouche Tess

Fraser had intended to go to the Tacouche Tess and trace at least part of its course before (winter)

but lack of goods and provisions forced him to postpone this major part of his assignment

instead, he sent John Stuart to visit Fraser Lake which the Indians had described

(Later in the year Fraser will join Stuart and they will build Fort Natleh [later renamed Fort Fraser])

Fraser will have added Fort Nakasleh (later Fort St. James) and Fort Natleh [Fort Fraser]

to Fort McLeod [1805] and Rocky Mountain House [1799] to develop New Caledonia)

Because supplies and trade goods would not be brought to New Caledonia until fall of the next year

Fraser and Stuart returned to Fort Kaministiquia on the shore of Lake Superior

where preparations were begun to lead an expedition to the Tacouche Tess

(John Stuart every summer will deliver the annual catch of beavers, otters, lynxes, skunks, fishers,

martens, muskrats, foxes, wolves and bison taken in New Caledonia to Rocky Mountain House)

SERGEANT ORDWAY REACHES THE GREAT FALLS

Sergeant John Ordway arrived at the Great Falls with his nine men

Privates John Collins, John Colter, Thomas P. Howard, John Potts, Peter Weiser, Joseph

Whitehouse, Alexander Willard, and boatmen Pierre Cruzatte and Jean Baptiste Lapage

they joined the five men Lewis had left under Sergeant Patrick Glass -- July 28, 1806

Robert Frazier, Silas Goodrich, Huge McNeal, John B. Thompson and William Werner

portage around the Great Falls was begun by the thirteen members of the Corps of Discovery

LEWIS ARRIVES AT THE MISSOURI RIVER

Having completed his investigation of Marias River Captain Lewis and his three men

were united with the nine men under Sergeant Patrick Gass and the nine man expedition

Captain Clark had dispatched under Sergeant John Ordway

This brought Lewis’ expedition to twenty-one men under his command -- August 3, 1806

CAPTAIN LEWIS AND HIS TWENTY-ONE MEN SET OUT DOWN THE MISSOURI RIVER

Lewis and the members of his party were anxious to reunited with Captain Clark and his explorers

they traveled down the Missouri River as quickly as conditions would permit -- August 4, 1806

CAPTAIN WILLIAM CLARK LEAVES HIS CAMP AT POMPEY’S PILLAR

Captain Clark and his members of the Corps of Discovery which included

Privates William Bratton, George Gibson, John Shields

boatmen Pierre Cruzatte, Francois LaBiche, Jean Baptiste Lapage

Toussaint Charbonneau, Sacagawea, infant Jean-Baptiste and Clark’s slave York Clark’s York

left their camp at Pompey’s Pillar when Sergeant Nathaniel Pryor

failed to arrive with the herd of horses

Clark and his companions set out down the Missouri River for St. Louis -- August 7, 1806

SERGEANT NATHANIEL PRYOR ARRIVES AT POMPEY’S PILLAR

Sergeant Nathaniel Pryor with Privates Hugh Hall, Richard Windsor and hunter George Shannon

reached Pompey’s Pillar and the Yellowstone River where Clark had camped -- August 8, 1806

They could see the main group had departed the day before

Pryor and his men set about building new bullboats to catch the expedition

CAPTAIN LEWIS IS HIT BY A MUSKET BALL

Meriwether Lewis was proceeding rapidly to meet up with Clark at Pompey’s Pillar

Lewis and his twenty-one men were camped at the mouth of the White Earth River

Lewis and one-eyed Pierre Cruzatte went hunting on shore after sighting an elk herd

they shot one and wounded another

Lewis was preparing to take a second shot when he was struck about an inch below his hip

the rifle-ball missed bone and passed completely through his right thigh -- August 11, 1806

Lewis suspected it was Cruzatte who had shot him

but when he called out there was no answer

fearing an Indian attack Lewis made his way back to the pirogue to warn the men

there Sergeant Gass dressed his wounds

Cruzatte finally arrived at the canoe -- there was no doubt that it was his rifle that did the deed,

because the spent rifle ball was in Lewis’ breeches

(although Lewis will be disabled for a month he was still able to travel)

LEWIS AND CLARK ARE REUNITED ONCE AGAIN

Captain Lewis came upon the camp of two hunters from Illinois, Joseph Dickson and Forest Hancock

they told Lewis that Captain Clark had passed them about noon the day before

Lewis gave them information regarding the upper Missouri River and the location of beaver

Captain Meriwether Lewis caught up with Captain William Clark

six miles south of (Sanish, North Dakota) at “Reunion Point” -- 1:00 p.m. August 12, 1806

LEWIS AND CLARK ARRIVED AT THE MANDAN INDIAN VILLAGES

Corps of Discovery reached the Fort Mandan (North Dakota) -- August 14, 1806

Knife River Indian Villages were reached -- August 15

there a council was held with Hidatsa Indians who did not want to go down the Missouri River

because of hostile Lakota and Arikara war parties.

Private John Colter asked permission to be released to return to trap the Yellowstone River

permission was granted as long as others in the expedition did not make the same request

CORPS OF DISCOVERY SET OUT FOR ST. LOUIS

Captain Lewis’ leg wound healed enough to allow him to continue

Captain Clark paid Toussaint Charbonneau $500.33⅓

his salary as interpreter to the West Coast and back

Lewis and Clark’s Corps of Discovery took their leave of John Colter

who set out for the Yellowstone River with two upriver -- August 17, 1806

Charbonneau and Sacagawea were released -- “Little Pomp” was now over a year and a half old

Captain Clark promised a home for the boy and offered to school him

Members of the expedition still faced the trial of passing through the country of the Teton Sioux

TETON SIOUX INDIANS MAKE AN APPEARANCE ALONG THE MISSOURI RIVER

Nearly a hundred armed and mounted Teton Sioux warriors

lined the banks of the Missouri River -- August 30, 1806

Lewis and Clark’s men kept to the middle of the river

fortunately for explorers this encounter was one of threats and taunts

CORPS OF DISCOVERY ENCOUNTERED TRADERS TRAVELING THE MISSOURI RIVER

Corps of Discovery met outgoing traders traveling up the Missouri River -- September 6, 1806

Lewis and Clark made their first exchanges for supplies since setting out almost 845 days before

Corps of Discovery entered the home stretch as they covered as much as eighty miles a day

traveling down the Missouri River

increasing numbers of traders were encountered

who told the explorers they had been given up for dead

LEWIS AND CLARK AND THE CORPS OF DISCOVERY ARRIVE AT ST. LOUIS

Lewis and Clark’s Expedition left the Missouri River and entered the Mississippi River

on the morning of September 23, 1806

men rowed the rest of the way downriver to St. Louis, Missouri arriving there at noon

from the journal: **“September 23rd, , descended to the Mississippi River and round to St. Louis, at which place we arrived at twelve o’clock, and having fired a salute, went on shore, where we received a most hearty and hospitable welcome from the whole village.”[[53]](#footnote-53)**

two years, four months, and nine days after they had left

and six months after setting out from Fort Clatsop

Meriwether Lewis and William Clark stayed in the home of “river baron” Pierre Chouteau

LEWIS AND CLARK’S ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Corps of Discovery stimulated great interest in the West

•they strengthened the claim of the United States;

•they revealed the vastness of the North American continent;

•they proved not one but two mountain ranges existed between the Missouri and Columbia rivers

Lewis and Clark Expedition provided information on physical characteristics of the West:

•they described plant and animal life;

•they mapped the topography and recorded the climate;

•they discovered and crossed several mountain passes and passed through the Cascade Mountains

These explorers provided information about Indian tribes:

•they established friendly relations and generally left behind good will with the Indians

•they made a special emphasis of the native’s faithfulness, honesty and devotion

the character of the Indians was so well documented by Lewis and Clark’s expedition

it must be concluded subsequent troubles were due largely to abuse by whites;

•they noted diseases that had been contracted by the Indians from sailors:

-smallpox scars from epidemic of [1782-1783] were seen and recorded,

-tuberculosis also noted,

-malaria wiped out 75% - 90% of the natives within a few years of the expedition

Route taken by the members of the Corps of Discovery covered 7,700 miles

Clark’s maps became the standard for “Westing” Americans

Lewis summarized their effort: **“The road by which we went out by way of the Missouri to its head is three thousand ninety-six miles; thence by land by way of Lewis River over to Clark’s River and down that to the entrance of Traveller’s Rest Creek, where all the roads from different routes meet; thence across the rugged part of the Rocky Mountains to the navigable waters of the Columbia, three hundred and ninety-eight miles, thence down the river six hundred and forty miles to the Pacific Ocean, making a total distance of four thousand one hundred and thirty-four miles. On our return in 1806 we reduced the distance from the Mississippi to the Pacific Ocean to three thousand five hundred and fifty-five miles.”[[54]](#footnote-54)**

SEVEN JOURNALS OF THE TRIP WERE KEPT

Lewis and Clark made daily notes and transcribed them after the journey into blank books

no official report was made to the government

Lewis recorded his impressions of the natives and their way of life

their relationship with nature was studied

these records were later lost and remain unpublished

Clark kept a journal of flora and fauna

and recorded his practical knowledge of woodcraft, building and managing canoes

his writings are what is referred to as *The* *Journal of Lewis and Clark*

Besides the official journal of the co-captains, six other men kept private records

Sergeants Charles Floyd (for as far as he traveled before he died) John Ordway, Nathaniel Pryor

and Patrick Gass who published his journal in1806

Privates Robert Frazier Joseph Whitehouse published their journals

two other journals have yet to be found

Nicholas Biddle made a digest of the journals that was published in [1814]

he generally preserved the language of the writers

but sometimes he condensed their passages while at other times he expanded their writings

details for Biddle’s work were furnished by William Clark’s Journal and by Patrick Gass’ Journal

and by the notes taken by Sergeant John Ordway as supplied by Clark

also, Private George Shannon was constantly consulted by Biddle

Reuben Gold Thwaites, superintendent of the Wisconsin Historical Society,

was editor of seven volumes of the centennial edition of the journals [1904]

he had discovered unknown Clark diaries and papers in the possession of Clark’s descendants

Sergeant John Ordway’s journal and Lewis and Clark’s Eastern Journal

were found among the papers of Nicholas Biddle [1915]

Clark’s Field Notes were discovered in an attic roll-top desk in St. Paul, Minnesota [1953]

Private Joseph Whitehouse’s journal in fair condition appeared in a bookstore in Philadelphia [1966]

this extended the narrative by almost five months

JEFFERSON SUMMARIZED THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE CORPS OF DISOVERY

President Thomas Jefferson noted [in 1813]: **“Never did a similar event excite more joy throughout the United States; the humblest of its citizens have taken a lively interest in the issue of this journey and looked with impatience for the information it would furnish. Nothing short of the official journals of this extraordinary and interesting journey will exhibit the importance of the service, the courage, devotion, zeal, and perseverance, under circumstances calculated to discourage, which animated this little band of heroes, throughout the long dangerous, and tedious travel.”[[55]](#footnote-55)**

EXPEDITION LEADERS LATER LIVES WERE PECULIARLY UNSATISFACTORY

After their western trip

Meriwether Lewis was appointed Governor of Louisiana Territory

he met with a sudden violent and mysterious death at age thirty-five [1809]

while traveling on horseback from St. Louis to Washington, D.C.

in a lonely inn sixty miles north of Nashville, Tennessee at Grinder’s Stand

to this day it is not known if it was murder or suicide

William Clark was actively engaged in the fur trade

he provided for an education for Sacagawea ’s two sons

Jean-Baptiste (Little Pomp) was taught by a Protestant

Toussaint was instructed by a Catholic priest

he was commissioned Brigadier General of Louisiana Militia

and Indian Agent for the Territory

he served as governor of Missouri territory until [1820]

in later years William Clark became self-centered

he felt his services and abilities were never appreciated by is fellow citizens

or by the government of the United States

he was appointed Superintendent of Indian Affairs [1822-1838]

and served until his death in St. Louis [September 1, 1838] at age sixty-eight

Details of Sacagawea’s life are disputed

probably she later moved to the reservation (near Fort Washakie, Wyoming)

where she died [April 9, 1884] on Shoshone Reservation (Wyoming)

at about 100 years of age

she was buried in the Shoshone Indian Cemetery

her son Jean-Baptiste (Little Pomp) and, Bazil the son of Sacagawea ’s sister

were both old men living at (Fort Bridger, Wyoming) when they were found

DAVID THOMPSON IS STATIONED AT FORT KAMINISTIQUIA (FORT WILLIAM)

David Thompson, head geographer for North West Company, was at Fort William

the company headquarters located along the west end of Lake Superior

David Thompson was assigned to develop trade west of the Rockies and South of the Peace River

he also was to find a practical passage across the Rocky Mountains for fur-laden packhorses

David Thompson employed Canadian fur trader, scout and explorer Jacques (Jaco) Finlay -- 1806

to blaze a trail through the Rocky Mountains across the Continental Divide

and establish a trading post on the west side

David Thompson returned from North West Company headquarters at Fort Kaministiquia

to Rocky Mountain House on Saskatchewan River --autumn 1806

BLACKFEET INDIANS PLAN TO AVENGE KILLINGS BY AMERICANS

Blackfoot women relatives of the warriors slain by Captain Meriwether Lewis and his party

wailed in their lodges while chiefs passed pipes back and forth around the council fires

war drums throbbed -- winter 1806

FUR TRADER RAMSAY CROOKS ACTIVELY CONDUCTS TRADE IN SIOUX COUNTRY

Ramsay Crooks was born in Greenrock, Scotland [January 2, 1787]

he arrived in Montreal, Canada with his widowed mother [April 25, 1803]

there are conflicting reports regarding his employment after he landed in Canada

eventually he went to work for Robert Dickson and Company in Sioux Country

(in today’s southwest Minnesota) during the winters of [1805-1806 and 1806]-1807

DAVID THOMPSON SENDS THE WINTER IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Geographer David Thompson spent the winter at Rocky Mountain House

on Saskatchewan River making preparations to cross the Rocky Mountains --1806-1807

Piegan band of Blackfoot Indians who frequented the post

opposed establishing trade west of the mountains

because their enemies, the Kootenai and Flathead people, would then acquire guns

Thompson decided to carry out his assignment and his dream to cross the Rocky Mountains

in spite of the native opposition

JACO FINLAY ESTABLISHES A TRADING POST WEST OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Nor’Wester Jaco Finlay had been hired by David Thompson to blaze a trail over the Rockies

he reached the headwaters of the Columbia River -- although he did know this to be case

he established a trading post near the south end of Lake Windemere

near (present-day Invermere, British Columbia) where the Columbia River leaves the lake

and begins its northward route (before making a big bend to the south)

this post was built with exceptional care making it as stout as possible

NOR’WESTER JOHN McDONALD COMPETES WITH HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY TRADERS

John McDonald twice traveled to Rocky Mountain House -- winter 1806-1807

to assist in David Thompson’s preparations to cross the Rockies

competing Hudson’s Bay Company men working the same region

found McDonald to be a violent opponent and a notorious scoundrel

SIMON FRASER AND JOHN STUART ESTALISH FORT GEORGE

Nor’Wester Simon Fraser’s preparations to lead an expedition farther west

to find the Tacouche Tess (Fraser River) could not be carried out [1806]

because of a lack of men and supplies as well as the occurrence of a local famine

Simon Fraser and John Stuart could not attempt the expedition until spring 1807

as they could not be resupplied until [autumn 1807]

Fraser and John Stuart traveled to the confluence of the Nechako and Tacouche Tess -- spring 1807

Fraser believed this was the Columbia River

there “Fort George” was constructed and named in honor of Britain’s King George III

(the location of Fort George is now known at Prince George)

Simon Fraser received word from North West Company headquarters

to explore the Tacouche Tess (later the Fraser River)

in an effort to limit American activity in the Far West

based on conclusions drawn by sea otter traders who operated off the Pacific coast

there was considerable confusion between the Columbia River and Fraser River

Fort George would become the starting point for Fraser’s trip down the Tacouche Tess

LEWIS AND CLARK HAD OPENED THE WEST

The Corps of Discovery had made the world aware of vast new expanses of land and opportunities

only Hudson’s Bay Company fur traders, North West Company fur trappers and traders

and a few hundred independent trappers and traders were even remotely aware

of the immense regions beyond the Great Lakes

Before the Lewis and Clark Expedition there was little knowledge of the Rocky Mountains

and not an inkling they were composed of two connected mountain ranges:

the Rocky Mountains and the Bitterroot Mountains separated by the Bitterroot Valley

a third chain of mountains, the Cascade Range, was completely unknown to anyone but Indians

and a fourth chain, the Olympic Mountains, were unknown even to Lewis and Clark

before the Corps of Discovery sea trading captains and sea explorers

reported mountain ranges to the east of the Pacific Ocean

overland travelers from the United States heard of mountains from Indians

who would suspect they were not the same mountains?

It was discovered by the American Corps of Discovery:

•that the Columbia River did not have its source in the region of the headwaters

of the Missouri-Mississippi river system as was believed;

•arid lands (of today’s Inland Empire of Eastern Washington) came as a geographic shock;

•Plains Indians who were well known by traders and trappers were, in fact,

neighbors to the before unknown Plateau Indians who, in turn,

neighbored the Coastal Indians well known to sea traders

Lewis and Clark proved North America was far more expansive than was ever imagined

American entrepreneurs were quick to tap the rich opportunities made available to them

JOHN JACOB ASTOR OPERATES AN EXTENSIVE LINE OF FUR TRADING POSTS

U.S. Government stores had been established among the natives in Louisiana Territory

businessman John Jacob Astor and U.S. Senator Thomas Hart Benton (Missouri)

fought these government posts persistently and savagely

as an encroachment of budding American capitalism

American John Jacob Astor established himself along the south side of the Great Lakes by 1807

he made a fortune transporting furs to London

he also had a number of vessels trading in China, England and other countries

Astor had no rival on the American continent except the British Hudson’s Bay Company

and Canadian North West Company both operating in Canada

MANUEL LISA LEADS A TRADING EXPEDITION TO THE UPPER MISSIOURI REGION

After the return of the Lewis and Clark Expedition well known Spanish trapper and trader

Manuel Lisa gave up his exclusive rights to trade with the Osage Indians

and prepared to trade further west in Louisiana Territory than anyone had yet attempted

Manuel Lisa formed a partnership known as the “St. Louis Missouri Fur Company” -- April 19, 1807

with two Kaskaskia (east-Central Illinois) merchants -- Pierre Menard and William Morrison

they were determined to go to Yellowstone Country and construct a small post

at the mouth of the Big Horn River

where they planned to monopolize the upper Missouri River fur trade

leaders of the enterprise were: Manuel Lisa, Pierre Menard, General William Clark,

William Morrison, Augusta and Pierre Chouteau (father and son), Sylvester Labadie,

members of the Wilkinson and Lewis families and Andrew Henry

St. Louis served as headquarters and supply depot for the venture

Manuel Lisa gathered a company of between fifty and sixty men

this party included three men just returned with Lewis and Clark, John Potts, Peter Wiser

and George Drouillard, perhaps the most valuable man on the Corps of Discovery

Lisa led his expedition of traders out of St. Louis in two keelboats

bound for the upper Missouri River -- April 19, 1807

AMERICAN TRADERS AND TRAPPERS OPERATE OUT OF ST. LOUIS

Other Americans were outfitted in St. Louis to trap in the Rocky Mountains

more than 100 traders were licensed to work the Missouri Country

there was no way of knowing how many hundreds did not bother with licenses

Several large parties set out up the Missouri River-- spring 1807

licensed or not, all targeted the head waters of the Missouri to acquire their wealth

NOR’WESTER DAVID THOMPSON SETS OUT TO EXPLORE THE WEST

Thompson set out from North West Company Western Headquarters at Rocky Mountain House

on North Saskatchewan River (near today’s Calgary, Alberta) -- May 10, 1807

to follow the trail over the Rocky Mountains blazed by Nor’Wester Jaco Finlay [1806]

Geographer David Thompson traveled with his wife and their three small children

they set out from Rocky Mountain House

accompanied by Thompson’s second-in-command Finan McDonald and eight voyageurs

Finan McDonald was six foot four inches tall with long red hair and bushy whiskers

in addition to English McDonald spoke French and several tribal languages

he quickly won the admiration of Indians by his reckless exploits

DAVID THOMPSON CROSSES THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE

David Thompson and his companions traveled up the North Saskatchewan River

past the Kootenay Plains and over (what would later be known as Howse Pass]) -- June 24, 1807

following the trail blazed by Nor’Wester Jaco Finlay

(Howse Pass is eighty miles northwest Banff, Alberta

this pass was named after Joseph Howse who was later sent [1809]

by the rival Hudson’s Bay Company to spy on David Thompson)

Thompson’s expedition followed a trail that paralleled Blaeberry Creek (British Columbia)

they reached a large north-flowing river -- June 30

taking latitudinal observations Thompson knew this was not the river (today’s Fraser River)

that had been described by Alexander Mackenzie [1793]

because the river flowed north Thompson (incorrectly) determined it was not

the Columbia River that had been discovered by American Captain Robert Gray [1792]

Thompson was aware of the Lewis and Clark Expedition that had entered the Columbia River

using the Snake River [1805]

NOR’WESTER DAVID THOMPSON ARRIVES AT KOOTANAE HOUSE

Jaco Finlay had been employed by North West Company geographer David Thompson

to blaze a trail across the Rocky Mountains and establish a trading post on the west side

Finlay had constructed a trading post along the headwaters of the Columbia River ([806]

although he was unaware the nearby river was actually the Columbia

When he arrived at Jaco Finlay’s post David Thompson named the nearby Kootenai River

after a local Indian tribe -- he did not know this was really the Columbia River

Thompson named Jaco Finlay’s post “Kootenae House”

Thompson and his expedition spent the next week building boats for the next stage of the journey

they ascended the river traveling south until they reached Lake Windemere -- July 18, 1807

MANUEL LISA’S EXPEDITION REACHES THE ARIKARA INDIANS

Manuel Lisa’s party of fifty to sixty traders reached the Arikara Indians

(living in what is now northern South Dakota) -- August 1807

they found these people at war with their neighbors the Mandan Indians

to keep the Mandans from being supplied by the traders

Arikaras ordered the whites to give up the expedition -- Lisa refused to leave the region

Arikaras promptly retaliated by robbing him of a large portion of his trade goods

Lisa ordered his crew to push ahead anyway

DAVID THOMPSON BECOMES AWARE OF AMERICANS IN THE AREA

Thompson, operating out of Kootenae House, noted in his diary on August 13, 1807:

Kootenai Indians told him **“that about three weeks ago Americans to the number of forty-two arrived to settle a military post at the confluence of the two most southern and considerable branches of the Columbia, and that they were preparing to make a small advance post lower down the river. Two of those who were with Captain Lewis were also with them of whom the poor Kootenaies related several dreadful stories. The establishment of the Americans will give a new turn to our so long delayed settling of the country, on which we have entered it seems too late.”[[56]](#footnote-56)**

CROOKS AND McCLELLAN FORM A TRAPPING PARTNERSHIP

Fur trader Ramsay Crooks arrived in St. Louis

there he joined Robert McClellan in a fur trading partnership

Robert McClellan was an army scout who had retired and collected a pension [1801]

he had a well-deserved reputation for his exploits during the Indian wars in Ohio country

although slightly built McClellan was an excellent woodsman and hunter

who was active in the fur trade

together Crooks and McClellan took ownership of a trading station near the Platte River

Crooks and McClellan would attempt to trade in the upper Missouri River area

they started up the river with eighty men -- mid-August 1807

but due to the hostility of the Sioux and Arikaras they found it advisable to leave the area

they moved their trading operation to the Council Bluffs (Iowa) region

NOR’WESTER DAVID THOMPSON RECEIVES AN ODD LETTER

Kootenai Indians delivered a letter from American traders to David Thompson at Kootenae House

it was addressed from: Fort Lewis, Yellowstone River, Columbia and dated [July 10, 1807]

this letter began: **“We the undersigned by the Power delegated to us by General Braithwaite Commander of all the new ceded Territories northward of the Illinois do hereby make known and declare the instructions we have received relating to Foreigners who may at present be carrying on a Traffic with the Indians within our Territories for Peltries, &c. who may in future carry on a traffic with the said Indians.**

following that were listed in detail and authentically phrased language eight regulations for trade

in American territory between Indians and citizens of countries other than the United States

a ninth point read: **“By information received at the Monden** [sic]**Village on the Mississourie** [sic] **we were give to understand that, some of the Subjects of Great Britain are about to carry on a trade and traffic with the western Indians, we have therefore give a Copy of the above Instructions, Rules and Regulations to be observed in the Indian Traffic that, the said Traders may not pretend Ignorance that they are within the Jurisdiction of Congress.**

a final tenth point warned that the writers recognized no special British rights **“to any of the Lands on the Pacific Ocean or to the Commerce of any of the Rivers that flow into the said Ocean, all of which we shall comprehend as within our said Territories until some further Explanation takes place on this head between the united** [sic] **States of America and the Court of St. James.”[[57]](#footnote-57)**

This letter was signed by “James Roseman. Lieutenant”

and “Zachary Perch Captain & Commanding Officer”

David Thompson ignored their claim to the area

but he forwarded the letter to North West Company’s Rocky Mountain House along with a narrative of his travels -- September 23, 1807

The author of this letter remains a mystery

this is no proof of the existence of Lieutenant James Roseman or Captain Zachary Perch

or of a General Braithwaite

there is no doubt an American wrote the letter and that Kootenai Indians delivered it to Thompson

an obvious similarity exists between the names Zachary Perch and Zebulon Pike

but Pike’s expedition was to the southwest far from the Columbia River

he could not have been the author of the letter although he had written a similar letter

to his commanding officer, General James Wilkinson, more than a year before

it is possible that Manuel Lisa or one of his men could have written the letter

perhaps one of the members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition who accompanied Lisa

although John Potts, Peter Wiser and George Drouillard were not literate enough

to leave a journal of their adventures

and Lisa’s Expedition was working along the Missouri River far for the Columbia River

LISA’S EXPEDITION REACHED THE BIG HORN RIVER (MONTANA)

After suffering an attack by Arikara Indians

Manuel Lisa and his men continued up the Missouri River

on their way they met John Colter who had left the Lewis and Clark expedition

to trap and explore Yellowstone Country

Colter abandoned his independent effort and joined Lisa’s party

his knowledge of the eastern Rockies would be invaluable

Lisa’s expedition arrived at the mouth of the Big Horn River -- November 21, 1807

here they built Fort Raymond at the confluence of the Yellowstone and Bighorn Rivers

Lisa named the post after his infant son

during construction Lisa set out traps and opened trade with the Crow Indians

When Fort Raymond was completed Lisa and his men split into various parties

since the best furs were always found “farther in”

in a change of Manuel Lisa’s former policy the men themselves

were also to set and tend traps rather than simply relying on trading with the Indians

JOHN COLTER IS SENT TO OPEN TRADE FURTHER INLAND

After the completion of Fort Raymond Manuel Lisa sent John Colter

on a delicate and important expedition to the Grosventres (Blackfoot) Indians

to persuade them to trade with Lisa -- 1807-1808

(Lewis and Clark on their return from the Pacific killed a Blackfoot Indian [1806]

Colter had been part of the Lewis and Clark Expedition)

John Colter with a thirty-two pound pack, a gun and ammunition

started out by himself toward the southwest -- his exact route remains unknown

Blackfoot Indians were hereditary enemies of the Crow Indians

a fight took place between the Blackfoot and the Crows at Pierre’s Hole

(just west of the Teton Range in today’s Wyoming)

Colter, allied with the Crows and saw the Blackfeet defeated

this did not help his relationship with the Blackfeet -- the tribe he had been sent to pacify

John Colter gave up his assignment, striking off directly toward Lisa’s Fort Raymond

he crossed Yellowstone Country diagonally from the southwest

his enthusiastic report on the beauty and magnificence of Yellowstone’s natural wonders

immediately labeled Colter as a notorious liar

KOOTANAE HOUSE WAS THE FIRST TRADING POST IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

David Thompson’s Kootanae House was built by Jaco Finlay

(near today’s Invermere, British Columbia)

to serve the local Kootenai Indians

(this would become the headquarters for what he called the “Columbia Department”)

Although he was on the Columbia River, Thompson did not know it

this circumstance was not surprising as in addition to running north the Columbia River

has two sources -- lovely large Lake Windemere

and to the south shallow, reedy Columbia Lake

Thompson, his family and traveling companions spent the winter at Kootanae House

this was his first winter on the Columbia River -- 1807-1808

(David Thompson explored the Columbia River’s tributaries for the next ten years

traveling into what is now Idaho, Montana and Washington)

NOR’WESTER DAVID THOMPSON RECEIVES A SECOND LETTER

Thompson took delivery of a second letter from Americans written from Poltito Palton Lake

this one was dated [September 29, 1807]

it was received by Thompson -- December 24, 1807

Thompson’s failure to answer the first letter reflected disrespect for America

this letter concluded **“the British Mercht. Trafficking with the** [Kootenais] **did not properly acknowledge the authority of Congress over these Countries, which are certainly the property of the United States both by discovery and Cession.”**

signed by non-existent **“Jeremy Pinch, Lieut.”[[58]](#footnote-58)**

David Thompson responded in a letter given to the Kootenai Indians

that the British claim predated American claim

EFFECT OF THE AMERICAN LETTERS ON DAVID THOMPSON

Indians had assured David Thompson that **“from this House** [Kootanae House] **to the sea a**[nd] **back again was only the Voyage of a Summer Moon....”[[59]](#footnote-59)**

Threats by rival traders slowed Thompson’s investigations of the Columbia River to its source

he spent more time trading than exploring

he was forced to postponehis journey down the Columbia River for almost four years

NORTH WEST COMPANY ORGANIZES THE FAR WEST

No satisfactory trade link existed between Nor’Wester Simon Fraser’s New Caledonia

and David Thompson’s Columbia Department

each area was approached thorough widely separated mountain passes

North West Company established two separate administrations as this was most practical

Simon Fraser’s New Caledonia (between forth-nine and fifty-eight degrees north)

remained part of the Athabasca Department

this Department expanded to include lands west as far as the Pacific Ocean

bounded on the south by the watershed shared by the Fraser and Columbia rivers

and reached as far north as the Russia area of trade

David Thompson’s domain was the Columbia Department (the area drained by the Columbia River)

Columbia Department also included the Snake River and the northern portion of (today’s Utah)

NORTH WEST COMPANY BRIGADES LINK MONTREAL WITH NEW CALEDONIA

To cover distance from North West Company headquarters at Montreal, Canada

to Rocky Mountain House and Fort McLeod on McLeod Lake

required at least a hundred days of steady and intensive canoe and foot travel

North West Company brigade route began in Montreal

brigades of four large birch bark canoes were employed

each carrying from three and one-half to four tons of cargo

manned by eight or nine skillful French-Canadian voyageurs

who traveled nine-hundred mile up the Ottawa River to Lake Huron

whenever crossing lakes square sails were generally rigged

a good, strong wind could shorten the trip considerably

Second leg of the journey was another nine-hundred mile trip from Lake Huron to Sault Ste. Marie

this trip was made in thirty days

Third leg of the journey, an additional nine hundred miles, from Sault Ste. Marie

brought the brigade to the advance post for North West Company at Fort William

(Fort Kaministiquia renamed for North West Company principal partner William McGillivray

located at today’s Thunder Bay, Ontario on the shore of Lake Superior)

this leg took an additional fifteen days

From Fort William the route varied depending on the destination:

Columbia Department or New Caledonia

smaller canoes replaced the larger ones used in the East

six to eight weeks were employed canoeing and portaging an additional three thousand miles

Total distance from Montreal to Fort McLeod was about 4,800 miles

trade goods making the trip were generally done up in bales

weighing about ninety to one hundred pounds each

with from seventy to eighty bales in each canoe

canoes and goods had to be portaged frequently

in less severe rapids, men walked along shore and pulled the canoes with long ropes

once over the Rocky Mountains pack horses as well as canoes were employed

however, horses were in scarce supply

bales of furs were delivered to North West Company headquarters in Montreal, Canada

following the same route in reverse

DAVID THOMPSON HAD SPENT THE WINTER AT KOOTANE HOUSE

Thompson’s journal named more than three dozen Kootenai men and women

who hunted, guided and translated for the Nor’Westers

these native people also provided Thompson’s crew with fire wood, clothing,

introductions to other tribes and essential advice

Nor’Wester David Thompson left his wife Charlotte and children at Kootanae House -- spring 1808

he and a handful North West Company voyageurs traveled by canoe south across the portage

to the river he named “McGillivray’s River” (known today as the Kootenay River)

in memory of his old traveling companion Duncan McGillivray who died [April 1808]

Thompson planned to explore the (Kootenay River) as far as possible

and find the Flathead Indians to invite them to trade

Thompson and his men floated down the (Kootenay River) from southeastern British Columbia

entering (today’s western Montana)

RUSSIAN-AMERICA COMPANY MOVES ITS HEADQUARTERS

Alexander Andreyevich Baranov moved the headquarters of the Russian-America Company

from Kodiak Island to New Archangel (Sitka) where he built a fortified post -- 1808

Baranov oversaw the development of trade with the natives and the building of ships

JOHN JACOB ASTOR ESTABLISHES THE AMERICAN FUR COMPANY

Astor had built a fortune large enough to organize the American Fur Company

he introduced his plan of operation to New York Governor DeWitt Clinton

and, at least in part, to President Thomas Jefferson -- both leaders approved

Astor secured a Charter for his new company to trade in the Mississippi-Missouri river region

from the state of New York for one million dollars -- April 6, 1808

Astor invested in English goods and brought them to America on his own fleet of ships

he sold these European goods to the Indians at incredibly high prices

a $4.00 blanket sold for $10.00; a rifle costing $11.00 for $30.00

a brass kettle for which he paid 48¢ sold to the Indians for $30.00

one voyage could bring a profit of $70,000 to Astor

ASTOR COMPETES WITH HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY AND NORTH WEST COMPANY

There was nothing original about John Jacob Astor’s scheme to trade with the Indians for their pelts

he borrowed intact from Hudson’s Bay Company, Northwest Company and New England traders

he merely combined and enlarged the procedures

British Hudson’s Bay Company had penetrated the frontier to Cumberland House, Saskatchewan

and conducted successful trade with the Indians of Canada

Canadian Northwest Company stretched across Canada and over the Rocky Mountains

Rocky Mountain House on the Upper Peace River served as headquarters for New Caledonia

David Thompson operated Kootenae House on the (Columbia River) in the Columbia Department

Astor made an overture to the North West Company for a partnership agreement

Canadians showed no interest in any arrangement with him -- including a merger

however, North West Company was willing to act as “cooperating competitor”

if Astor was successful

North West Company would be able to supplement their provisions from Astor’s stock

if Astor was unsuccessful

North West Company would take over his forts, supplies and trade goods

Astor had tipped his hand to his competitors regarding his intentions in the Pacific Northwest

Northwest Company took immediate steps to enhance operations itself in Columbia Department

Astor retaliated by recruiting experienced Northwest Company men

with promises of partnerships and big profits

DAVID THOMPSON BRINGS OUT ANOTHER FORTUNE IN FURS

After spending the (winter) at Kootanae House on the Columbia River in Columbia Department

North West Company trader David Thompson carried out a fortune in furs -- April 17, 1808

he and his party of Nor’Westers descended the Columbia River in a canoe

while he had a herd of horses driven overland through the forest to the portage

he crossed the Rocky Mountains on horseback and traveled to the Saskatchewan River

SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE RETIRES FROM THE NORTH WEST COMPANY

Sir Alexander Mackenzie returned to London, England at age forty-five -- 1808

(three years later married fourteen-year-old heiress Geddes Mackenzie of Avoch, Scotland

two-thirds of the village of Avoch was part of the Mackenzie estate

Alexander Mackenzie maintained two houses: one on the Avoch estate and another in London)

Alexander Mackenzie died at age fifty-five or fifty-six of Bright’s disease [kidney disease, 1820]

and was buried at Avoch on the Black Isle of northern Scotland

he is remembered by the Mackenzie River Canada’s Mackenzie District North-West Territories*,*

Sir Alexander Mackenzie Provincial Park, British Columbia, Mackenzie Valley,

Mount Mackenzie, Mackenzie Pass and the Alexander Mackenzie rose (explorer series)

also there are seven Sir Alexander Mackenzie schools and a soccer field

DAVID THOMPSON INVESTIGATES THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Geographer David Thompson and his voyageurs entered (today’s Montana)

they were forced to fend for themselves after they failed to rendezvous

with familiar Kootenai Indians at the Tobacco Plains (Montana)

and arrived at Kootenai Falls (near present-day Libby, Montana) -- May 6, 1808

as on all his trading expeditions he surveyed his route

Thompson traveled northwest and entered (today’s Idaho) reaching close to (Bonner’s Ferry, Idaho)

he made trading arrangement with the Flathead Indians to explore the Rocky Mountains

in (Northern Idaho, Northwestern Montana and Northeast Washington)

MANUEL LISA ONCE AGAIN SENT JOHN COLTER TO THE BLACKFEET INDIANS

John Colter set out from Manuel Lisa’s Fort Raymond bound for the Blackfoot Indians

this time in the company of former Corps of Discovery member John Potts

Colter and Potts arrived in Blackfoot Country -- spring 1808

for greater safety they slept during the day and tended their traps at night

Because of this practice Potts accused Colter of cowardice and became careless with the routine

Potts paid with his life

Indians, which Potts vowed to Colter were only buffalo, killed him and seized John Colter

Blackfoot method of killing an enemy was to allow the intended victim to race with their warriors

just as a fox races with the hounds -- death was the penalty for slowness

Blackfoot made it sporting by allowing a handicap to poor runners

Colter was stripped and asked if he could run well

realizing the ordeal ahead, Colter said he was a poor runner -- the lie saved his life

Colter was led some distance beyond the assembled warriors -- at a signal the race was on

naked and without a weapon, Colter dashed madly for the Big Hole River six miles away

across a plain filled with prickly pear

he ran until blood spurted from his nostrils

glancing over his shoulder he spied one Indian not twenty yards behind

but the native stumbled while trying to throw his spear

the spear point lodged in the ground and the shaft cracked in the warrior’s hand

Colter ran back grabbed the lance head pinning the warrior to the ground with it

as the rest of the warriors were closing in fast

Colter reached the river a few yards ahead of his nearest pursuer

he plunged in and swam toward a small island

near the island’s shore, he found an old raft partly covered with driftwood and brush

diving under water he discovered a crevice in the raft large enough for his head

with Indians swimming around him all day, Colter waited for night

then silently swam downstream where he landed out of sight of the natives

Colter traveled all night toward Lisa’s Fort Raymond

seven days later he was back at Lisa’s fort having eaten nothing but roots the entire way

in the meantime, the main Party of Lisa’s expedition

continued to trap the Big Hole River region

SIMON FRASER COMPLETES HIS EXPLORATION

Nor’Wester Simon Fraser was assigned to explore the Tacouche Tess River

which had been left unexplored by Alexander Mackenzie

Fort George (today’s Prince George) at mouth of Nechaco River served as his base of operations

Fraser led a group of twenty-four explorers composed of clerks John Stuart, Jules Quesnell,

sixteen voyageurs and two Indian guides

they set out in four canoes down the Tacouche Tess River from Fort George -- May 28, 1808

this was the river that had defeated even the great Sir Alexander Mackenzie [1793]

From the start they were greeted by Indian reports that the river below

was but a series of waterfalls and cascades that were impossible to navigate

with incredible difficulty the explorers descended the rock-walled turbulent river to the West

as the expedition’s four canoes were thrown about by vicious rapids

and pitched through close canyons at breakneck speed

even portages were so extremely difficult that Fraser and his men often were tempted

to run the rapids almost regardless of danger in an effort to avoid the immense labor

required in carrying canoes and cargoes around obstructions

in many places steep, high banks made it impossible to leave the river

and the canoes would have been helpless if they came to rapids or falls without warning

NOR’WESTER DAVID THOMPSON TRAVELS TO KOOTANAE HOUSE

Geographer David Thompson left (Bonner’s Ferry, Idaho) and journeyed north

arriving near the site of (today’s Cranbrook, British Columbia)

As was his practice he made detailed observations of the latitude and geography as he traveled

he returned to Kootanae House his wife Charlotte and their three children -- June 5, 1808

SIMON FRASER IS CONVICED HE MUST ABANDON THE TACOUCHE TESS

Fraser became convinced at last that the Indians were right -- it was insanity to descend the river

at Hell’s Canyon, some distance above the site of (present-day Lillooet, British Columbia),

Fraser’s canoes were stored on a scaffold in a shady spot

goods that could not be carried were cached

Simon Fraser and his men followed an old Indian trail along the river

they were required to carry packs over steep ledges

they used native ladders made of poles hanging end to end with sticks serving as steps

Occasionally it was possible to take to the river again

but that required borrowing, and on at least one occasion stealing, canoes from the Indians

Indians were numerous -- crowds numbering in the hundreds were met several times

and on one occasion Fraser estimated that 1,200 had gathered

Fraser showed great skill in dealing with the Indians

friendly relations had to be established with those encountered along the way

as the return trip would most probably follow the same route

passing from the territory of one tribe to that of another was challenging

whenever possible Fraser used his two Indian guides to warn the next village to be visited

and to assure them that the explorers were friendly

nevertheless Fraser was ever on the alert for trouble

NOR’WESTER DAVID THOMPSON RETURNS TO FORT AUGUSTUS

David Thompson and his voyageurs set out from Kootanae House

to deliver the (winter’s catch) of pelts and hides to Fort Augustus at mouth of White Earth Creek

They reached the Kootenay Plain -- June 18, 1808

where canoes were built and the furs were loaded for the trip down the North Saskatchewan River

to Fort Augustus (near Edmonton, Alberta) where they arrived -- June 24, 1808

SIMON FRASER CANNOT REACH THE MOUTH OF THE TACOUCHE TESS

As grueling as the journey down the Tacouche Tess was

all went reasonably well until Fraser and his twenty men approached the end of their journey

Cowichan Indians were at first suspicious and then openly hostile

Fraser was unable to go as far into the Strait of Georgia, the mouth of the river

After following the river for 850 miles, the expedition finally passed through

(what is now the Fraser Valley and reached the delta where the City of Vancouver was later built)

Fraser’s observations and Vancouver’s journal showed him

he was not near the mouth of the Columbia River -- he was in the wrong latitude

Simon Fraser and his men hurried back up the river as the Cowichans pursued and harassed his party

scores of Indian canoes closed in repeatedly with the intention of upsetting Fraser’s canoes

but each time they were successfully fought off without casualties on either side

eventually the Indians abandoned the chase (in the vicinity of Hope, British Columbia)

but Fraser’s men were left completely exhausted and discouraged

DAVID THOMPSON CARRIES OUT A FORTUNE IN FURS

Thompson with his wife Charlotte and their three children left Kootanae House -- early July 1808

they descended the Columbia to the Blaeberry Creek (British Columbia)

crossed back over the Rocky Mountains at (Howse Pass)

and continued on down the Saskatchewan River to Boggy Hall

(a post located north of Rocky Mountain House)

Thompson left Charlotte, who was expecting their fourth child, and their children

with her brother, Patrick Small, Jr., who was working at Boggy Hall

Thompson prepared to take a fortune in furs to Fort Augustus for transshipment to

North West Company’s Central Deposit at Rainy Lake House on Rainy Lake (Minnesota)

MANUEL LISA AND HIS TRAPPERS RETURN TO ST. LOUIS

Manuel Lisa and his men constructed canoes

Lisa accompanied by George Drouillard left the Big Horn River region bound for St. Louis

they were in a great rush to acquire supplies for the next year’s venture -- summer 1808

Lisa and Drouillard completed the journey down the Missouri River in only thirty days

others members of his crew arrived at St. Louis long after them

NOR’WESTER DAVID THOMPSON ARRIVES AT RAINY LAKE HOUSE

David Thompson carried a fortune in furs from Fort Augustus

to North West Company’s Central Deposit Rainy Lake House on Rainy Lake

located at (today’s International Falls, Minnesota) where he arrived -- August 2, 1808

Two days after delivering his furs from the Columbia Department

Thompson picked up trade goods for the next season and began his return journey -- August 4

SIMON FRASER AND HIS MEN STRIKE OUT OVERLAND

Fraser’s leadership faced a supreme challenge when many of men decided to leave the river

in an effort to reach Fort George on their own

Fort George was reached thirty-seven after starting up the Tacouche Tess -- August 6, 1808

Simon Fraser’s supreme effort and heroism ended in disappointment and a sense of failure

this river could not be used as a route for North West Company brigades

and it was located at about 49° north -- too far north to be the Columbia River

DAVID THOMPSON ARRIVES A LAKE WINNIPEG

On his return journey from Rainy Lake House Thompson reached Lake Winnipeg

(in today’s Manitoba, Canada)

there he met Alexander Henry the younger -- August 18, 1808

they traveled together to Fort Vermilion

at the confluence of the North Saskatchewan and Vermilion rivers

(east of today’s Edmonton, Alberta)

RUSSIAN SHIPWRECK OFF THE COAST OF WASHINGTON

Expeditions by British and American fur traders put pressure on the Russian America Fur Company

to establish a presence on the West Coast

Russian brig Saint Nicolas sailed from New Archangel (Sitka) in Russian-America (Alaska)

with orders to travel south along Vancouver Island to trade for sea otter pelts

and to locate a site for a permanent Russian settlement in Oregon -- September 28, 1808

Russian naval officer Nikolai Bulagin commanded the vessel

he was accompanied by his eighteen-year-old wife, Anna Petrovna Bulagina,

twelve Russian men, four Aleut men and two Aleut women

Bulagin’s plan was to rendezvous at Grays Harbor with another Russian ship, the Kodiak,

that was to follow the *Saint Nicholas*

together they would probe southward toward California

in search of a location for a Russian settlement

DAVID THOMPSON RETURNS TO BOGGY HALL

Traveling from Lake Winnipeg David Thompson reached Boggy Hall

north of Rocky Mountain House -- October 3, 1808

where he rejoined his wife Charlotte, his children

and greeted his six-week-old son, John [born August 25, 1808]

RUSSIAN SHIP *SAINT NICHOLAS* CRASHES ON A ROCKY REEF

Saint Nicolas became becalmed near Destruction Island of the (Washington) coast

with no wind to fill her sails, the ship and its crew were at the mercy of currents and tides

which drove the ship mercilessly toward the rocky shore

Captain Nikolai Bulagin set the anchors but the mooring cables failed

Gale force winds blew out of the southwest, pushing the *Saint Nicholas* onto a rocky reef

just south of the mouth of the Quillayute River -- November 1, 1808

*Saint Nicholas* did not sink immediately and everyone on board reached shore safely

at low tide the crew returned to the vessel to salvage sail canvas, food, arms, ammunition, tents,

and other supplies which were all carried ashore

Captain Bulagin decided they would trek southward to Grays Harbor in search of the Kodiak

which was following the *Saint Nicholas* down the coast from New Archangel (Sitka, Alaska)

for three days the Russians struggled through heavy undergrowth until he reached the Hoh River

RUSSIANS ARE UNABLE TO CROSS THE DEEP HOH RIVER

Unable to ford the Hoh River, the Russians hired natives to take them across -- November 4, 1808

nine Russians were loaded into one large canoe

Captain Nikolai Bulagin’s wife Anna Petrovna Bulagin, an Aleut native

and a Russian boy climbed into a second, smaller canoe

in the middle of the river the Indians pulled a plug from the bottom of the larger canoe

then jumped overboard to swim ashore

Indians on the opposite shore attacked the large canoe with spears and arrows

wounding several of the Russians -- one of whom died of his wounds

the larger canoe drifted back toward the bank from which the party had embarked

the smaller canoe was landed on the far river bank close to an Indian village

where Anna Petrovna Bulagin, the Aleut and the Russian boy were made prisoners

Captain Bulagin was overcome by remorse by the loss of his wife

Russians from the larger canoe fired on the Indians with the weapons that had not gotten wet

killing two natives and wounding several others

After the encounter the Russians withdrew to a small hill to make camp

they feared for their lives -- all the muskets and ammunition were wet

as they faced some 200 Indians

their provisions were exhausted and intense hunger gripped the Russians

men searched for woods fungi, plant roots -- anything else that might serve as food

they even ate pieces of their leather boots

rain fell incessantly adding to their misery

In despair, Captain Bulagin relinquished leadership to supercargo Timofei Tarakanov

who had survived a massacre and capture by Tlingit Indians at New Archangel six years before

NOR’WESTER FINAN McDONALD IS DISPATCHED DOWN THE KOOTENAI RIVER

David Thompson sent his second-in-command, Finan McDonald, with men and canoes

full of trading goods to establish Fort Kootenai at Kootenai Falls

for the winter among the Kootenai Indians -- 1808-1809

Harsh winter conditions forced him to stop short of his destination -- November 1808

he constructed several simple leather lodges as a winter enclosure for protection

(east of today’s Libby, Montana)

there he made contact with local Plateau bands

Finan McDonald was joined by James McMillan at Fort Kootenai

together they established a brisk, profitable trader for beaver pelts with the nearby Indians

DAVID THOMPSON RETURNS TO KOOTANAE HOUSE

Leaving Boggy Hall and his wife and family David Thompson once again

ascended the Saskatchewan River, the Rocky Mountains reaching Howse Pass,

he arrived at Kootanae House to spend the winter -- November 10, 1808

RUSSIAN LEADER TARAKANOV DECIDES TO ATTACK THE INDIAN VILLAGE

Two weeks after the wreck of the *Saint Nicholas* Timofei Tarakanov in desperation

decided to attack the native village and fight the Indians -- November 14, 1808

when they reached the village they discovered the Indians had departed

Russian sailors helped themselves to as much dried salmon as they could carry back to camp

An effort was made to find a route to reach Grays Harbor to the south -- November 15

where the Russian ship Kodiak that was to follow the *Saint Nicholas* from New Archangel

was to meet them

hunters went ahead of the main party to search for food and to search for a route

Indians ambushed the three-man party and two men were wounded by arrows

however, they were able to fight off the attack and return to camp

all hope of meeting the *Kodiak* at Grays Harbor was gone

TIMOFEI TARAKANOV LEADS THE RUSSIAN SAILORS INTO THE OLYMPIC MOUNTAINS

It was decided to make their way into the Olympic Mountains and camp for the winter

progress into the mountains was hampered by the rain and dense forest

but the few Indians they met proved friendly and offered salmon for beads and other goods

After several days of exhausting travel the Russians were overtaken

by a native from the village at the mouth of the Hoh River

he proposed a ransom be paid for Anna Petrovna

Captain Bulagin readily agreed

he offered virtually all the remaining property the party possessed

but the Indians demanded four muskets in addition to the property -- this the Russians refused,

Nikolai Bulagin asked to see his wife

following an emotional meeting, Bulagin begged for her return,

but the Indians demanded the muskets and took Anna Petrovna Bulagin away

Fighting their way up the Hoh River over gravel bars and through dense woods for a few more days

the Russian survivors built a makeshift fortified camp with a log house and sentry boxes

During the winter they foraged for food and constructed a boat

which they hoped would take them down the river and out to the freedom of the Pacific Ocean

SURVIVORS OF THE RUSSIAN SHIP *SAINT NICHOLAS* ATTEMPT TO ESCAPE

Russian shipwreck survivors traveled down the Quillayute River in their new boat

guided by an old Indian

at the mouth of the Quillayute they camped opposite the hostile Indian village

When a large number of Indians gathered around the Russians

two Indian women and a young man were captured by the Russians and held as hostages

to be exchanged for the release of the captain’ wife Anna Petrovna Bulagin,

the Aleut woman and the Russian boy

After a few days more natives appeared, bringing Anna Petrovna Bulagin

however, when the exchange was demanded she refused to leave the Indians

she said she had been well treated and she knew if she rejoined the Russians

she would be forced to wander half-starved through the forest with little hope of rescue

Captain Nikolai Bulagin became so enraged at her refusal to return he threatened to shoot her,

but later he went away dejected and grieving

Russian leader Timofei Tarakanov after hearing Anna Petrovna’s story

and seeing that the other Russian captives had also been well treated

decided to surrender himself to the Indians hoping for rescue by some foreign ship

four of the Russians joined him

the rest attempted to cross to Destruction Island, but their boat was destroyed on the rocks

with all of their provisions lost

they barely escaped with their lives -- only to be captured by the Indians

Tarakanov, who had surrendered to the Indians, was taken by a chief named Utramaka

to his home near Cape Flattery as was Captain Nikolai Bulagin

but Bulagin was later traded to the chief who held his wife Anna Petrovna Bulagin

Tarakanov was well treated by the natives largely because of his resourcefulness, his skill with tools

and his capability to amuse the Indians -- he even constructed and flew a kite

(Anna Petrovna died [August 1809] her Indian master, as was the Indian custom at the time,

threw her body into the forest

Captain Bulagin, hearing of her fate, sickened and wasted away

he died of consumption [February 1810])

NOR’WESTER SIMON FRASER LEAVES NEW CALEDONIA

Explorer, trapper and trader Simon Fraser departed from New Caledonia -- 1809

he attended the annual North West Company rendezvous at Fort William (Thunder Bay, Ontario)

before taking a leave of absence from the company

(he returned to duty [1810] and was assigned again to the Athabasca Department

where he remained until [1814]}

Fraser’s clerk, John Stuart, was placed in charge of New Caledonia District

Stuart kept his headquarters at Fort McLeod on McLeod Lake

NOR’WESTER JOHN McDONALD OF GARTH SERVES IN THE WILDERNESS

John McDonald of Garth had been placed in charge of building

Fort Augustus (Edmonton, Alberta, [1795])

and Rocky Mountain House (Calgary, Alberta, [1799])

Fort Augustus was frequently moved as furs and firewood became scarce

John McDonald of Garth became a North West Company wintering partner [1802]

he took a leave of absence but returned to the wilderness where he fell ill

returning once again to the frontier he was placed charge of the Red River Department -- 1809

he carried supplies to the explorer David Thompson in the Rocky Mountains

ASTOR’S AMERICAN FUR COMPANY ENJOYS GREAT SUCCESS

After its first year of operation John Jacob Astor’s American Fur Company was firmly established

trapping and trading with the Indians along the upper Mississippi River -- 1809

Astor controlled the wilderness deep into Canada and the West beyond the Great Lakes

JOHN JACOB ASTOR’S BUSINESS PLAN WAS TO ELIMINATE COMPETITION

Astor never invaded a territory until others had cleared the way and proved its worth

furs from the Great Lakes region had set America’s national economy on its feet

but still Astor was unable to meet the great demand for furs

Manuel Lisa and other American trappers and traders

had demonstrated the possibility of ascending the Missouri River

Astor attempted to develop an American monopoly in the fur trade

there was nothing original about John Jacob Astor’s scheme as he borrowed intact the practices

of Hudson’s Bay Company, Northwest Company and New England traders

he merely combined and enlarged their procedures

Astor envisioned a chain of trading posts up the Missouri River, over the Rocky Mountains

and down the Columbia River to the river’s mouth

he expected to establish a shipping point where the river met the Pacific Ocean

to carry on trade with Asia, Europe and the east coast of North America

Astor’s efforts embittered his American Fur Company to rival fur dealers

RAMSAY CROOKS AND ROBERT McCLELLAN AGAIN FAIL AT TRADE

Crooks and McClellan made an unsuccessful attempt to follow

the St. Louis Missouri Fur Company brigade to the upper reaches of the Missouri River -- 1809

they were turned back once again by Sioux Indians much as had happened to them

two years before [1807] when they were forced to move their trading operation

to the Council Bluffs region

DAVID THOMPSON CARRIES OUT A FORTUNE IN FURS

After spending the (winter) at Kootanae House on the Columbia River in Columbia Department

North West Company trader David Thompson carried out a fortune in furs

Thompson and his voyageurs left Kootenae House -- April 17, 1809

they crossed (Hawse Pass) over the Rocky Mountains

and arrived at Fort Augustus (near today’s Edmonton, Alberta -- [June 24])

where he saw his fortune in furs safely shipped to North West Company’s

Central Deposit at Rainy Lake House on Rainy Lake (Minnesota)

MANUEL LISA BEGINS CONSTRUCTION FORT MANDAN

Manuel Lisa led a party totaling close to two hundred men of the St. Louis Missouri Fur Company

they set out up the Missouri River -- middle of June 1809

bound for the Mandan Villages (today’s North Dakota)

AMERICAN SHIPS TRADE ALONG THE PACIFIC COAST

Ships out of Boston and New York City took part in the rich haphazard Pacific coast fur trade

one of the most active companies was the Boston-based enterprise of Homer & Winship

Abiel Winship was a partner in the company trading with Europe and the West Indies he had three brothers, Charles, Nathan and Jonathan III, who also were active in the business

Abiel’s keen business sense pointed him toward the Pacific seal and sea otter trade

Captain Charles Winship, the youngest of the Winship borthers, sailed the 111-ton brig *Betsy*

which was owned by Homer & Winship to California

sadly, the twenty-three-year-old brother was arrested for poaching

and died in a Spanish jail [1799]

this family crisis deterred the Winship brothers not at all

Homer & Winship purchased the ship *O’Cain* which carried Jonathan Winship

to trade along the Pacific coast [1803]

Jonathan Winship returned as captain of the *O’Cain* along with his brother Nathan

who served as First Mate [1805] their success led to a larger venture

Abiel turned his attention toward supplying Russian traders in Russian-America (Alaska)

to support this business opportunity it was decided to construct a trading station

at a mid-point on the Northwest coastline to warehouse American trade goods and supplies

they selected a location along the Columbia River

this enterprise was being considered by the Russians, also

WINSHIP BROTHERS PLAN A COLONY ON THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Homer & Winship fitted out the old American vessel *Albatross* out of Boston -- summer 1809

Nathan Winship served as captain

William Gale served as captain’s assistant and kept a journal of the voyage

William Smith served as first mate

They set sail with a crew of twenty-two men and an excellent supply of stores and ammunition

along with an abundance of tools and hardware for building a colony

(Crew wintered in the Sandwich Islands [Hawaii])

FINAN McDONALD ARMS THE KOOTENAI INDIANS

Nor’Westers Finan McDonald and Michel Bordeaux upset the Piegan Indians

by arming their ancient enemies the Kootenai Indians -- summer 1809

Piegan bands of the Blackfoot Indians dedicated themselves to keeping Nor’Wester

east of the Rocky Mountains and away from the Kootenais

NOR’WESTER DAVID THOMPSON RECEIVES NEW ORDERS

While at Fort Augustus geographer Thompson received new orders

he was to trace the Columbia River from source to mouth and to expand trade with the natives

preparations for the return to Kootanae House in the Columbia Department were made

Thompson wrote that Finan McDonald had set out by canoe -- July 14, 1809

with **“its cargo four pieces of Merchandise; weighing 320 lbs. four, nine gallons kegs of greese** [sic] (melted Bison fat) **and five bags of Pemmican, each of ninety pounds, with five men, a less number could not stem the courrant** [sic]**.”[[60]](#footnote-60)**

DAVID THOMPSON LEAVES FORT AUGUSTUS FOR THE RETURN TO KOOTANAE HOUSE

David Thompson following Finan McDonald departed from Fort Augustus -- July 18, 1809

with him were a number of Nor’Westers including Jaco Finlay and his family

They traveled to (Bonne’s Ferry, Idaho) where he had been the year before

Thompson and his companions continued south by horse

DAVID THOMPSON BUILDS KULLEYSPELL HOUSE

Thompson his party traveling on horseback reached Pend Oreille Lake

where they started building “Kullyspell House” among Nez Perce Indians -- September 10, 1809

on the East shore of Lake Pend Oreille (at today’s Hope, Idaho)

this was the first trading post west of the Rocky Mountains (in today’s United States)

and was reported to be **“a strong Log building for the Goods and Furrs** [sic]**, and for trading with the Natives”[[61]](#footnote-61)**

MANUEL LISA’S EXPEDITION CONSTRUCTS FORT MANDAN

Manuel Lisa and the approximately two hundred men of his St. Louis Missouri Fur Company

constructed a second Fort Mandan (not to be confused with Lewis and Clark’s Fort Mandan)

on the south side of the Missouri River ten or twelve miles from the Hidatsa villages

above the mouth of the Knife River -- last of September 1809

this was to be a forward supply base to support St. Louis Missouri Fur Company

trappers and traders on the Yellowstone and the Three Forks of the Missouri (Montana)

most of the trappers were dispatched to investigate and harvest beaver in the surrounding vicinity

Lisa himself went on to his original post among the Crows on the Big Horn River, Fort Raymond,

or he returned to St. Louis (some doubt exists as to which course he took)

DAVID THOMPSON CONDUCTS TRADE WITH THE NEZ PERCE INDIANS

Thompson and his Nor’Westers never passed an opportunity to trade as guns, ammunition

and iron-headed arrows that could pierce the thick-skinned bison and not break off these were dispensed to natives in exchange for furs and hides

iron objects such as awls and needles were demanded by Indian women

who came to trade at Kullyspell House on Lake Pend Oreille

Thompson spent the remainder of the fall and early winter

exploring in the vicinity of Kullyspell House -- fall and early winter

DAVID THOMPSON SPENDS THE WINTER WITH THE FLATHEAD INDIANS

David Thompson ascended the Clark Fork River to a location

(near present-day Thompson Falls, Montana) -- November 1809

there he built Saleesh House where he spent the winter of 1809-1810

he came to love the Flathead Indians and called them **“a fine race of moral Indians”[[62]](#footnote-62)**

Thompson was reasonably content

he was occupied with mapping Rocky Mountain region

and spending winter days trading with the Indians

he supplied rifles to Kootenai Indians who were on the warpath against Piegan Indians

(each summer he was again off to Rainy Lake House with the winter’s bounty of furs)

TRIBAL BLOODSHED LEADS TO HATRED OF THE NOR’WESTERS

Over the Rockies to the west were the mortal enemies of the Piegans -- the Kootenai Indians

Piegans knew if Thompson should penetrate to the western side of the mountains

he would arm their long-time enemy the Kootenai Indians

As soon as the Kootenais were armed by David Thompson, they went on the warpath

triumphantly slaughtering several of their ancient foe

Blaming Nor’Westers for the killings, the Piegans once again crossed the Rocky Mountains

this time seeking revenge

ST. LOUIS MISSOURI FUR COMPANY SENDS TRAPPERS INTO (MONTANA)

Manuel Lisa’s Chief Factor Pierre Menard and second-in-command Andrew Henry

led a party of perhaps sixty trappers including John Colter and George Droulliard

of the Lewis and Clark Expedition

Colter guided the expedition from Fort Raymond up the Missouri River to the Three Forks region

they planned to trap beaver over the entire area of the Missouri River

and its branches above the Great Fall -- November 1809

1810-1819

MANUEL LISA’S ST. LOUIS MISSOURI FUR COMPANY RETURNS TO FORT RAYMOND

Manuel Lisa’s Chief Factor Pierre Menard and Andrew Henry with sixty trappers

set out from Fort Mandan above the Knife River -- January 1810

They traveled up the Missouri River to return to Missouri Fur Company’ Fort Raymond

located at the confluence of the Yellowstone and Bighorn Rivers

(near today’s Three Forks, Montana)

AMERICAN TRADING SHIP *MERCURY* SAILS INTO CLAYOQUOT SOUND

Captain G.W. Ayers sailed the Boston-based ship *Mercury* from Canton, China

to Vancouver Island where he entered Clayoquot Sound -- early 1810

American Captain Ayers negotiated a contract with Wickaninnish and took on board

a dozen or so Tla-o-qui-aht hunters to seek seals and sea otters off the California coast

when they hunt was complete these natives were to be returned to Clayoquot Sound

After the successful hunt was completed Captain Ayers broke his contract with the natives

rather than return them to Clayoquot Sound he marooned them on California’s Farallon Islands

(for the next year the dozen or so Tla-o-qui-aht hunters undertook an epic land and sea journey

most of the men died of starvation or were killed by other Indians along the way

finally a few destitute survivors returned to Clayoquot Sound

where they related their story of misery and death [spring 1811])

BRITISH TRADING COMPANIES OPERATE UNDER A HANDICAP

Hudson’s Bay Company expanded from the regions around Hudson Bay and James Bay westward

they expanded into the interior of Canada where they operated a chain of trading posts

(that later became such cities as Winnipeg, Manitoba, Calgary and Edmonton, Alberta)

most of Hudson’s Bay Company’s supplies and their furs had to be freighted overland

from the area around Hudson’s Bay to Montreal

Hudson’s Bay Company could not ship furs directly to China

as the East India Company maintained an exclusive monopoly on that commerce

North West Company headquartered in Montreal, Quebec was owned by wintering partners

who ran trap lines in the wilderness and established trading posts among the Indians

North West Company also was excluded from the China Trade

by the East India Company’s monopoly

Hudson’s Bay Company and North West Company invaded overlapping regions

they conducted violent and wasteful competition and company war for over forty years

Neither Hudson’s Bay Company not North West Company wanted a long, expensive trade war

with John Jacob Astor’s American Fur Company

JOHN JACOB ASTOR HAS GRAND IDEAS FOR HIS AMERICAN FUR COMPANY

John Jacob Astor had dreamed of expanding his American Fur Company West of the Rockies

when the United States purchased Louisiana it provided him the opportunity

Astor never invaded a territory until others had cleared the way and proved its worth

Manuel Lisa and other American trappers had demonstrated the possibility

of ascending the Missouri River to the Pacific Ocean by way of the Columbia River

Astor envisioned a chain of trading posts up the Missouri River over the Rocky Mountains

and down the Columbia River to the mouth -- establish a shipping point there

he intended to exploit the Pacific Northwest Indian trade

but first it would be necessary to establish a trading depot in neutral water

between the Russians in Alaska and the Spanish in California

Columbia River was seen by enterprising merchant John Jacob Astor

as a vital link in international trade to develop commerce with Northern and Southern Europe,

South America, Asia and Hawaii

Astor had the ships necessary to conduct such a trade

Astor intended to do more than gather beaver hides along the Columbia River

and pay for them with his own trade goods

he meant to go compete with all traders West of the Rocky Mountains

and to use his own ships to supply his Western outposts

and he would use his ships to carry pelts to China

to trade for goods to be sold in the United States and in Europe

John Jacob Astor bought out a competing trading outfit known as The Mackinaw Company

which he combined into his expanded operation

JOHN JACOB ASTOR DEVELOPES PLANS FOR TRADE ON THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Astor’s proposed company was to be active in three areas:

•trap and trade for beaver pelts;

•supply Russian traders in the north;

•establish American beaver trade with China

Astor desired to establish a trading capital at the mouth of the Columbia River

this would be **“…the emporium of an immense commerce, and a colony that would form the germ of a wide civilization, that would, in fact, carry the American population across the Rocky Mountains and spread it along the shores of the Pacific….**

**“Posts would be established in the interior, and on all the tributary streams of the Columbia, to trade with the Indians; these posts would draw their supplies from the main establishment and bring to it the peltries they collected. Coasting craft would be built and fitted out, also at the mouth of the Columbia, to trade at favorable seasons all along the northwest coast and return with the proceeds of their voyages to this place of deposit. Thus all the Indian trade, both of the interior and the coast, would converge on this point and thence derive its sustenance. A ship was to be sent annually from New York to this main establishment with reinforcements and supplies, and with merchandise suited to the trade. It would take on board the furs collected during the preceding year, carry them to Canton, invest the proceeds in the rich merchandise of China, and return thus freighted to New York.”[[63]](#footnote-63)**

JOHN JACOB ASTOR DEVELOPS A BUSINESS ARRANGEMENT

There was nothing original about Astor’s scheme -- he borrowed business plans

from Hudson’s Bay Company, North West Company and New England traders

he merely combined and enlarged their procedures

North West Company stretched across Canada to the Pacific Ocean

Astor proposed a merger with the Canadian company

but he was forced to tip his hand and informed his competitors of his intentions in the Pacific

North West Company took immediate steps to invade the Pacific Northwest

Astor retaliated by abducting North West Company experienced men

with promises of partnerships and big profits

Astor assumed all financial risks for five years

he was able to risk $500,000, but Astor retained full control of the company

ST. LOUIS MISSOURI FUR COMPANY MEN REACH THE THREE FORKS OF THE MISSOURI

Manuel Lisa sent an expedition to trap and trade in the upper Missouri River region

Chief Factor Pierre Menard and Andrew Henry with sixty trappers from Fort Mandan

arrived at Fort Raymond at the confluence of the Yellowstone and Bighorn Rivers

(near today’s Three Forks, Montana) -- February 1810

St. Louis Missouri Fur Company Chief Factor Pierre Menard divided his forces

perhaps thirty-two people and Chief Factor Pierre Menard remained at Fort Raymond

one party of eighteen men led by John Colter went up the Jefferson River

another party led by Andrew Henry traveled down the Missouri River

JOHN JACOB ASTOR CREATES THE PACIFIC FUR COMPANY

To carry out his scheme to develop trade along the Pacific coast Astor drew up a tentative agreement

for a subsidiary of his American Fur Company

to be known as the “Pacific Fur Company” -- March 6, 1810

(Astor built a fortune and an empire that is still in existence today)

His great project was to be a two-pronged movement to the Pacific Northwest:

•one by sea aboard the ship,

•the other an expedition overland

profits, if any, were to be prorated among the share-holding partners

one hundred shares of stock were to be distributed:

•Astor retained fifty shares himself;

•thirty-five shares, in five share blocks, were to be divided among his partners;

•fifteen shares were left undistributed -- these were held aside for future use

Astor assumed all financial risks for five years

he was able to risk $500,000, but Astor retained full control of the company

JOHN JACOB ASTOR ALTERES THE TRADING SYSTEM

Astor owned a fleet of trading ships

unlike the British Hudson’s Bay Company and Canadian North West Company

Astor had free access to the China Market

Astor planned to send a ship from New York City every (autumn)

loaded with trade goods and supplies for all of his trading posts west of the Rocky Mountains

they would arrive in the Pacific Northwest about (February or March) to be loaded with furs

ships from Northwest Coast would load sea otter pelts worth up to $100 each at Canton

they would cruise next to Russian-America (Alaska) as far as New Archangel (Sitka)

to supply the Russians food stuffs and manufactured supplies in exchange for their furs

Russians traded with the Indians from the Alaskan coast, interior and islands

they had very poor facilities both for marketing their product and obtaining supplies

they were happy for the opportunity to make an arrangement with Astor

perhaps Astor’s ships would top off their cargo with valuable sandalwood in (Hawaii)

John Jacob Astor expected to make a three-way profit:

•first by trading American goods supplied to Russians and Indians in Russian-America (Alaska);

•second by selling pelts which he delivered to Chinese merchants in Canton, China

where they would purchase Chinese tea, silk, porcelain and spices for sale in New York City

•third by selling these Chinese goods to Americans in the United States

Astor’s ship would then reload with trinkets, knives, pans, blankets and rum

to be taken around Cape Horn to the Northwest Coast where the trade goods

were then exchanged with the Pacific Northwest Indians for furs

JOHN JACOB ASTOR SELECTS THREE PACIFIC FUR COMPANY PARTNERS

John Jacob Astor selected the three original Pacific Fur Company partners -- March 6, 1810:

•Chief Factor Duncan McDougall received five shares of Pacific Fur Company stock

he also held Astor’s proxy vote for all decision to be made in Astor’s absence

little is known about him before he joined with Astor

although it seems he worked for the North West Company with little success as a trader

McDougall was described by author Washington Irving as **“an active, irritable, fuming, vainglorious little man, and elevated in his own opinion, by being the proxy for Mr. Astor”[[64]](#footnote-64)**

•Donald McKenzie received five shares of Pacific Fur Company stock

McKenzie was appointed as John Jacob Astor’s agent

he was over three hundred pounds and was called “Fats” by those who knew him

he was also known as “Perpetual Motion” because of his tireless energy

he was educated for the ministry but as a relative of Sir Alexander Mackenzie

when he went to work for the North West Company

he had ten years of experience in the north woods

he was able to manage men regardless of color or race

he was a fearless skilled woodsman both hardy and experienced

who demonstrated both dash and decision and he was an excellent marksman

however, he was perpetually discontent with his position in the North West Company

•Alexander McKay received five shares

McKay was a retired North West Company partner and a successful trader

he had accompanied Alexander Mackenzie on both of his remarkable expeditions

from Fort Chipewyan to the Arctic Ocean and back ([789]

and from Fort Chipewyan to the Pacific coast and back [1793]

McKay also had been Astor’s employee in the Wisconsin trade region

he was assigned by Astor to be in charge of trading activities along the Pacific coast

McKay’s thirteen-year-old son Thomas accompanied the partners to the West

MANUEL LISA IN ST. LOUIS ORGANIZES ANOTHER TRAPPING AND TRADING EXPEDITION

Manuel Lisa organized another St. Louis Missouri Fur Company expedition

to go among the Arikara Indians

Lisa began collecting trade goods, supplies and trappers for the adventure

Once again Manuel Lisa set out from St. Louis to travel up the Missouri River

on his way to Fort Mandan located in the Mandan Villages (today’s South Dakota) -- March 1810

MANUEL LISA HIRES PIERRE DORION FOR FUTURE SERVICE

Manuel Lisa arrived at his Fort Mandan in the Mandan Villages on the Missouri River

while there he decided to obtain the services of a Sioux Metis, Pierre Dorion,

for a future fur trapping trip

Lisa took advantage of Pierre Dorion’s weakness for liquor

Pierre, being unsophisticated, proceeded to empty a free jug of whiskey

as the liquor took hold, Pierre invited all those present to join his expedition at his expense

several hours later Lisa informed Pierre he owed a $10 bar bill equal to a month’s pay

when Pierre later informed his wife Marie of their situation she knew he had been “jobbed”

this was not an uncommon practice on the frontier

PIERRE DORION’S WIFE WAS A VERY REMARKABLE WOMAN

Pierre Dorion himself was a Sioux and French-Canadian metis (mixed-blood)

who worked out of St. Louis as a guide and interpreter

Dorion’s wife was an Iowa Indian who was known as Marie Aioe Dorion

(later she was referred to as “Madame Dorion”)

Marie Dorion was born (about 1786 approximately two years before Sacajawea)

she spent her early days with her Iowa tribe in the Red River country of Arkansas

before she married Pierre Dorion [1804]

they had two sons, Baptiste [born in 1806] and Paul [born in 1808]

Marie Dorion was known as an extraordinary understanding, patient and devout woman

eventually the Dorions moved to a Mandan Village (in today’s South Dakota)

where their lives crossed the path of Manuel Lisa

Pierre was a violent, quick-tempered man who during a drunken brawl almost scalped his father

he also was neither a kind nor thoughtful husband

Guides and interpreters were not in steady demand in St. Louis

thus Pierre Dorion was only sporadically employed

ANDREW HENRY BUILDS HENRY’S FORT FOR THE MISSOURI FUR COMPANY

Andrew Henry led a party of St. Louis Missouri Fur Company trappers

down the Missouri River from the company headquarters of Fort Raymond

They began building Henry’s Fort at the Three Forks of the Missouri River

on a tongue of land at the confluence of the Jefferson and Madison rivers -- April 3, 1810

(near-present day Three Forks, Montana)

Henry, however, failed to seek permission from the Blackfoot Indians

who, at any rate, did not permit trapping on their land

JOHN COLTER LEADS EIGHTEEN ST. LOUIS MISSOURI FUR COMPANY TRAPPERS

In a second St. Louis Missouri Fur Company expedition

John Colter led eighteen men from Fort Raymond

they had traveled only ten miles up the Jefferson River when Blackfoot Indians attacked them

when the fighting was over two men had been killed and mutilated

three others were missing

also missing were all of the party’s traps, ammunition and horses -- April 12, 1810

John Colter and his thirteen remaining trappers returned to Fort Raymond

to report to Chief Factor Pierre Menard

once before Colter had promised his maker he would leave the wilds

if he survived his race for life with the Blackfoot Indians [1808]

hurling his hat to the ground he emphatically declared **“now if God will only forgive me this time and let me off I *will* leave the country day after to-morrow -- and be damned if I ever come into it again.”[[65]](#footnote-65)**

JOHN COLTER KEEPS HIS VOW

John Colter lived up to his vow to God never to return to the Rocky Mountains

he had an opportunity to meet with Captain William Clark of Lewis and Clark fame

Colter told Clark all he knew about the Yellowstone River and Bighorn River country

Colter settled into the quiet life of a farmer on the Missouri frontier

he built a cabin, cleared a plot of land, married a woman remembered only as Sally

together they raised a son

Colter passed his few remaining years as a neighbor of Daniel Boone

(John Colter died of jaundice [in 1813] at the age of thirty-nine)

PEIRRE MENARD LEADS HIS MEN OUT OF FORT RAYMOND

When John Colter reported the Blackfoot attack on his trapping party to Chief Factor Pierre Menard

Menard led St. Louis Missouri Fur Company thirty men out of Fort Raymond

to travel to the site of the of the attack

each of the men was provided three traps to use en route with instructions

they were not to separate and half were remain in camp while the other trapped

PEIRRE MENARD’S MEN COME UNDER ATTACK BY THE BLACKFOOT INDIANS

Conditions were discouraging for the members of Manuel Lisa’s St. Louis Missouri Fur Company

Blackfoot Indians who were hostile to their presence were a constant threat and a frequent enemy

St. Louis Missouri Fur Company Chief Factor Pierre Menard’s men were again attacked

by Blackfoot warriors -- April 23, 1810

NOR’WESTER DAVID THOMPSON INVESTIGATES THE COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT

David Thompson had wintered at Saleesh House on the Clark Fork River -- [1809]-1810

trading through the winter had been poor due to severe flooding

David Thompson ordered Jacques “Jaco” Finlay to build a trading post on the Spokane River

that would serve the Spokane and Colville Indians

(Jaco Finlay was a company veteran who had worked as clerk, interpreter and scout

and led the first party of Nor’Westers across the Rocky Mountains)

North West Company geographer Thompson left Saleesh House where he had (wintered)

he journeyed to Kullyspell House on the eastern shore of Lake Pend O’reille -- April 1810

where his chief assistant, Finan McDonald, had spent the winter [1809]-1810

David Thompson and McDonald traveled together on the Pend d’Oreille River as far as Box Canyon

there they separated

Thompson sent Finan McDonald to continue trapping and enhance Indian relations in the area

McDonald made a series of excursions in the vicinity of Kullyspell House

and Saleesh House -- spring of 1810

Thompson journeyed up the Clark Fork River and returned to Saleesh House

to prepare for the annual expedition east to deliver their catch

to North West Company’s depot at Fort Augustus at mouth of White Earth Creek

to be transshipped to Rainy Lake House

(North West Company’s depot near present International Falls, Minnesota)

AMERICAN BRIG *LYDIA* RANSOMS CAPTIVES HELD BY MAKAH INDIANS

Brig *Lydia* returned to the Pacific coast this time under Captain James Brown

she anchored off the coast of the Olympic Peninsula between Cape Flattery and Neah Bay

near a Makah Indian camp -- May 6, 1810

Russian supercargo of the *Saint Nicholas* Timofei Tarakanov and his Indian master

went on board the *Lydia* and Tarakanov explained he and twelve others had been held captive

since their ship had wrecked the mouth of the Quileute River [1808]

Captain Brown set about ransoming all of the European prisoners from the Makah Indians

among these was an Englishman, John Williams, who was ransomed

for five measures of cloth, a locksmith’s saw, two steel knives, a looking glass,

five packages of powder and five bags of shot

Indians accepted the same ransom for each of the Russian captives

except for two Russians for whom a higher ransom was demanded

when Captain Brown refused the Indians took them away

Captain Brown then seized a Makah chief who had come aboard and held him hostage

until the remaining Russian captives were released

both were delivered to the ship within a few days

thirteen captives had been successfully ransomed -- seven other slaves had died in captivity

one Russian named Philip Kotilnikof had been traded away so far that he could not be found

*Lydia* sailed from Neah Bay -- May 10, 1811

and arrived at New Archangel (Sitka), Russian-America (Alaska) [June 8, 1811]

where the Russian sailors were returned

DAVID THOMPSON MAKES HIS ANNUAL TREK DELIVERING FURS TO THE EAST

It was time to send what furs he had secured and those provided by Finan McDonald

to the North West Company’s depot at Fort Augustus at mouth of White Earth Creek

to be transshipped to Rainy Lake House

(North West Company’s central depot near present International Falls, Minnesota)

although any of his men could have carried out the task of traveling to Fort Augustus

Thompson decided to go himself as Fort Augustus was used as a safe haven

for his wife Charlotte and their children

it was an arduous trip thousands of miles long by canoe and horse

over country Thompson knew all too well

meanwhile, despite his new orders, the Columbia River would have to remain unexplored

Thompson left Saleesh House -- May 10, 1810

carrying his and Finan McDonald’s winter’s catch of forty packs of furs

On his journey, Thompson arrived at Columbia Lake

at the portage between Columbia Lake and the Kootenai River

he just missed a band of Piegans Indians who arrived after he had passed through the portage

Piegans were mightily provoked by Thompson’s employees Finan McDonald

and Michel Bordeaux dealing rifles to their enemy the Kootenais

FINAN McDONALD DELIVERS MORE GUNS TO THE INDIANS

Finan McDonald arrived at Saleesh House after David Thompson had departed for Fort Augustus

while at Saleesh House McDonald armed the local Flathead natives

he instructed them in the use of firearms so they could provide protection

to North West Company personnel and property

SPOKANE HOUSE IS BUILT BY NORTH WEST COMPANY

Jacques “Jaco” Finlay left Saleesh House and followed a trail southwest from Lake Pend Oreille

until he arrived at a busy salmon-fishing site on the Spokane River

where the Little Spokane meets the Spokane

he chose the site where a pleasant yellow pine flat

was formed by the “V” where the rivers met

Finlay had several reasons for choosing this site:

•it was the headquarters of the middle branch of the Spokane tribe;

•it was a prime fishing spot for salmon;

•the large flat was suitable for building, farming, and grazing;

•there was a good supply of both timber and game animals nearby;

•most of all, however, the Little Spokane was a great beaver stream

“Lower settlement” (later called Spokane House) was actually a number of buildings

including a store for trading, an office and home for the chief trader, dormitories for other men,

carpenter and blacksmith shops and a well for fresh water

it may be that the post was enclosed by a stockade

Spokane House, as it came to be known, was located nine miles (from the center of today’s Spokane)

its name was derived from an Old Chief: “Illim-Spokanee” or “Son of the Sun”

this was the first trading post in (today’s Washington)

and the fifth North West Company post in the Columbia Department

Spokane House had a garden that provided fresh produce

luxuries imported from eastern Canada included cured beef, salt pork, flour, rice, biscuits, tea,

sugar and rum

this was a very desirable destination for the traders working in the rugged surrounding country[[66]](#footnote-66)

Jaco Finlay was soon joined by fellow Nor’Wester Finan McDonald

PEIRRE MENARD’S ST. LOUIS MISSOURI FUR COMPANY MEN HAD A DIFFICULT TIME

Menard’s party of thirty trappers’ lack of efficiency as they trapped the Jefferson River

eventually forced the party to divide into groups of four

two groups to tend camp and two groups to work the traps

fortunately, during this time they were not harassed by Indians

Gathering more pelts and observing no signs of Indians all of the trappers grew bolder

George Drouillard began to venture out alone -- others protested, but he refused to listen

he met with success on two of his beaver hunts

on the third morning he set out again along the Jefferson River

followed by two friendly Shoshone deer hunters

main party St. Louis Missouri Fur Company trappers later took to the same trail -- May 1810

soon they overtook the two Shoshone hunters, **“Pierced with arrows, lances and bullets and lying near each other.”[[67]](#footnote-67)**

some 150 yards beyond they found Drouillard and his horse

George Drouillard was **“mangled in a horrible manner; his head was cut off, his entrails torn out and his body hacked to pieces.”[[68]](#footnote-68)**

Chief Factor Pierre Menard and his remaining St. Louis Missouri Fur Company trappers

returned to the Fort Raymond company headquarters on the Big Horn River

in Yellowstone Country to wait until the Indians became less aggressive -- summer 1810

AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF FOREIGN MISSIONS BEGINS OPERATIONS

Protestant America experienced a religious revival as expectations regarding return of Jesus

gripped America because of the beginning of a new century

congregations sent ministers out to conduct revival meetings among Christians

these circuit riders came from among the common people

which helped them establish rapport with the frontier families they hoped to convert

the movement became known as the“Second Great Awakening”[1790-1840]

(the First Great Awakening had taken place [1731-1765])

American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions (sometimes the “American Board”)

was organized by the Congregational Church rhat maintained its headquarters in Boston -- 1810

this was an effort to provide religious training to Native Americans

this was the first organized missionary society in the United States

however, lack of organization and money kept the mission field near at hand

CAPTAIN WILLIAM CLARK COMPLETES HIS MAP OF THE WEST

After the death of Meriwether Lewis [October 11, 1809] the task of generating a map of the West

fell to William Clark who began drawing -- 1810

Clark incorporated what he had learned from George Drouillard [in 1808]

and what John Colter had told him [1810] and completed his project that same year

(Clark’s map was published [1814])

WINSHIP BROTHERS SELECT A LOCATION FOR THEIR COLONY

Boston-based Homer & Winship had dispatched the *Albatross* under Captain Nathan Winship

with instructions to build and provision a fort and trading post

after spending the (winter) in the Hawaiian Islands

*Albatross* entered the Columbia River -- May 26, 1810

Captain Winship conducted a careful examination of the southern (Oregon) river bank

he decided on a strip of valley land covered with a beautiful grove of Oak trees for his colony

he named the place thirty miles up the Columbia “Oak Point”

(this name was later transferred to the north bank -- present-day Oak Point, Washington)

Captain Winship tied the *Albatross* to the south bank -- June 4, 1810

Winship paid the Indians for their land and treated them justly

Winship brothers planned to build a substantial blockhouse to be defended by a single cannon

they immediately began construction -- felling trees and raising a large house

they also cleared a spot for a garden and sowed grain

Chinook and Chehalis Indians arrived, fired muskets int6o the settlement

and demanded tevAm3erican leave

Captain Winship saw the wisdom of this suggestion and abandoned America’s first effort at a colony

PACIFIC FUR COMPANY BUSINESS ARRANGEMENTS ARE COMPLETED

Articles of Agreement for John Jacob Astor’s Pacific Fur Company to operate along the Pacific coast

was signed by Astor and his three partners

Duncan McDougall, Alexander McKay and huge Donald “Fats” McKenzie -- June 23, 1810

Astor’s Pacific Fur Company, North West Company and the Hudson’s Bay Company

were all invading the same area

but neither North West Company nor Hudson’s Bay Company had no ships

they were excluded from the China Trade by the monopoly of the East India Company

John Jacob Astor had tipped his hand to his competitors regarding his plans for exploiting the West

he had informed his competitors of his intentions in the Pacific Northwest

North West Company took immediate steps to invade the Columbia Department itself

Astor retaliated by recruiting experienced North West Company men

into his company with promises of partnerships and big profits

JOHN JACOB ASTOR BRINGS IN MORE PARTNERS TO THE PACIFIC FUR COMPANY

Astor’s greatest concern regarding the success of his Pacific Fur Company was the threat

of competition from the rival North West Company also trapping and trading in the Far West

To his three original partners, Duncan McDougall, Alexander McKay and Donald McKenzie,

Astor added three more partners who received five shares each in the Pacific Fur Company:

•American Wilson Price Hunt of Trenton, New Jersey was businessman

who had supplied trading goods to traders working out of St. Louis

where the chief branch of his business was located

Hunt was appointed as Astor’s co-Agent along with Donald McKenzie

although he possessed no practical experience in the fur trade

Hunt brought with him experience, knowledge and honesty in business dealings

he was intelligent, loyal, brave, cheerful, resolute, mild-mannered gentleman and humane

but he was indecisive by nature -- a trait that would prove detrimental and dangerous

his ignorance of wilderness life nearly wrecked the expedition

Hunt traveled to Washington, D.C where he got enthusiastic support for Astor’s company

from President Thomas Jefferson and the president’s Cabinet;

•Canadian Ramsay Crooks was formerly ia partner with Robert McClellan out of St. Louis

together they ran a trading operation above the Arikara villages

but this venture probed to be unsuccessful

Crooks and McClellan ended their venture in the upper Missouri River region

and decided to try their luck in the Council Bluffs region

this was even less successful

twenty-three year old Ramsay Crooks, a man of great energy,

was persuaded to join the Pacific Fur Company by Wilson Price Hunt;

•David Stuart was a former North West Company employee

David Stuart retained three of his shares in the company and released two shares

to his twenty-six year old nephew Robert Stuart

who accompanied the Astorians to the Pacific coast as a partner

he was a spirited and enterprising man and a respected leader

John Jacob Astor also added two additional partners who received two-and-half shares each:

•Robert McClellan (sometimes McLellan) had been Ramsay Crooks former partner

in the Missouri fur trade out of St. Louis;

•Joseph Miller had been an employee of John Jacob Astor in the American Fur Company

he was well educated and well informed

he had been an officer in the United States Army but had resigned in disgust

after being refused a furlough -- he then took to trapping beaver and trading

Miller had an excellent reputation as a trader on the Missouri River

JOHN JACOB ASTOR SENDS TWO PACIFIC FUR COMPANY EXPEDITIONS TO THE PACIFIC

In an effort to maximize his profits and minimize financial risks

John Jacob Astor sent two expeditions to the Columbia River

one expedition was to travel aboard the ship *Tonquin* -- this became known as the Sea Party

this venture was to build and operate a trading post (Fort Astoria)

and supply Russian trappers in Russian-America in exchange for furs

second expedition was to travel across the continent

they were to follow the approximate route of Lewis and Clark to the Pacific Coast

and man (Fort Astoria) while the *Tonquin* returned to Boston with a fortune in furs

this became known as the Overland Expedition

ASTOR’S PARTNERS ARE ASSIGNED TO AN EXPEDITION

Five Pacific Fur Company partners were assigned by John Jacob Astor to the Land Expedition

two of the partners served as co-commanders much like Lewis and Clark had done

Donald McKenzie, Astor’s principal associate, and Wilson Price Hunt

three additional partners would accompany the Overland Expedition

Ramsay Crooks, Robert McClellan and Joseph Miller

these partners were to be accompanied by several Pacific Fur Company employees

Astor’s Sea Party saw four Pacific Fur Company partners participate

Chief Factor Duncan McDougall was placed overall command of the Sea Expedition

and the post that would be constructed on the Columbia River

three other partners accompanied the Sea Party

Alexander McKay was placed in charge of trade along the Pacific coast

he also served as supercargo on board the trading ship

David Stuart and his nephew Robert Stuart were assigned to the Sea Party

DAVID THOMPSON AGAIN CARRIES OUT A FORTUNE IN FURS

After departing from Saleesh House (in today’s Montana [May 1810])

David Thompson continued his annual trek east

he once more crossed over Howse Pass to reach the North West Company’s Fort Augustus depot

at mouth of White Earth Creek (Edmonton, Alberta) -- July 24, 1810

he took time to visit with his wife Charlotte and their children at Boggy Hall

which was located near Fort Augustus

Thompson soon continued his journey to deliver his annual catch of pelts

to North West Company headquarters at Rainy Lake House

JOHN JACOB ASTOR’S OVERLAND EXPEDITION ARRIVES IN MONTREAL, CANADA

Traveling from New York City Astor’s Pacific Fur Company Overland Expedition

led by co-agents Donald McKenzie and businessman Wilson Price Hunt

accompanied by Joseph Miller and Robert McClellan

arrived at Montreal, Canada -- July 1810  
 Donald McKenzie used his expertise to hire a brigade of French-Canadian voyageurs in Montreal

but McKenzie and Hunt argued, often rancorously, about hiring more French-Canadians

McKenzie insisted more voyageurs would be valuable

Hunt found the competition for voyageurs drove their wages very high

North West Company successfully impeded these efforts to recruit river men John Jacob Astor’s co-agent Wilson Price Hunt decided to wait to hire American boatmen

in frontier village of Michilimackinac, Michigan

Wilson Price Hunt when given a choice always made the wrong decision

ST. LOUIS MISSOURI FUR COMPANY HAS LIMITED SUCCESS

Blackfoot Indians had made business along the upper Missouri River impossible

St. Louis Missouri Fur Company Chief Factor Pierre Menard

had suffered the loss of eight of Manuel Lisa’s men killed and their traps and pelts stolen

Pierre Menard left Fort Raymond and the Jefferson River -- midsummer 1810

he took his men and the furs that had been accumulated and returned to St. Louis

Andrew Henry stayed at Henry’s Fort at the Three Forks of the Missouri River (Montana)

where he continued to lead a party of St. Louis Missouri Fur Company of trappers

ANDREW HENRY LEADS HIS PARTY OF TRAPPERS OVER THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

After a yet another fierce battle with the Blackfoot Indians,

Andrew Henry abandoned Henry’s Fort at the Three Forks of the Missouri River (Montana)

he and his men journeyed up the Madison River -- July1810

Henry’s party ran into difficulty when Crow Indians stole thirty of their horses

this was a reminder of the dangers they faced in the wilderness

After trekking across the Upper Missouri River Andrew Henry crossed the Rocky Mountains

over a low pass (today’s Reynolds’ Pass)

They reached Henry’s Fork of the Snake River

this river was traced to its source -- a broad lake they named Henry’s Lake

here Andrew Henry and his men threw up a log hut as a base camp

they named the post Fort Henry[[69]](#footnote-69) on the Snake River -- July1810

(located about five miles south today’s St. Anthony, Idaho)

this was the first American post west of the Continental Divide of the Rockies

Fort Henry on Henry’s Fork of the Snake River was so named

after the first Henry’s Fort at the Three Forks of the Missouri River had been abandoned

Kentuckians Edward Robinson, John Hoback and Jacob Reznor

helped with the construction of the St. Louis Missouri Fur Company post

Robinson was a sixty-six year old veteran who was scalped in the Kentucky wars [1782]

he wore a kerchief around his head to conceal his disfigurement

Andrew Henry’s party of St. Louis Missouri Fur Company trappers

used Fort Henry on the Snake River (Idaho) as their base of operation west of the Rockies

PROBLEMS OF THE BEAVER TRADE WEST OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Pacific Northwest and the central plains of Canada differed in terrain from the Great Lakes region

travel in Great Lakes region and on the central plains was relatively easy

using a network of comparatively flat rivers and lakes and level terrain

Pacific Northwest was mountainous and rivers tumbled through numerous waterfalls and rapids

there were tremendously deep coulees and canyons which impeded travel

Natural environment west of the Rocky Mountains produced fewer beaver

and those were of lesser quality than those in the mid-West

Indians’ relationship to the traders also differed in the West

in the harsh environment of the mid-West the Indians became willing partners in the fur trade

natives were eager to acquire European goods which made life easier

Pacific Northwest Indians were living in a far more generous environment

thus they were not dependent on European trade goods for survival

this independence placed the Indians in a strategic position to deal with the beaver traders

they did not need to trap animals for the whites but whites needed the Indians’ assistance

whites needed the Indians to provide them horses

in areas without bison, the horse was a food supply

where water transportation was difficult the horse was required to replace the canoe

DAVID THOMPSON COMPLETES HIS JOURNEY TO THE EAST

After leaving his wife Charlotte and their children at Boggy Hall near Fort Augustus

David Thompson reached North West Company depot at Rainy Lake House -- July 22, 1810

Thompson learned of American John Jacob Astor's intention to dispatch two expeditions

to the mouth of the Columbia River which included defecting Nor’Westers Duncan McDougall,

Alexander McKay, David Stuart and DonaldMcKenzie

who was busy recruiting voyageurs to cross over land along Lewis and Clark’s trail

To contend with this American effort David Thompson was ordered by North West Company

to build a chain of trading posts to conduct interior trade

and to protect the British claim to the Columbia Department

Thompson also was to trace the Columbia River from source to mouth

and investigate the feasibility of using the river as a highway

to transport goods, supplies and pelts to and from the Pacific coast

NOR’WESTER DAVID THOMPSON RETURNS TO THE WILDERNESS

Trapper, explorer and geographer David Thompson was placed in charge of the largest contingent

twenty-six men, an unknown number of women and twenty-four horses

each loaded with between 180 and 240 pounds of trade goods, provisions

and personal baggage

also with the annual supply brigade were ten dogs to pull sleds and, in an emergency, for food

Columbia Brigade set out from North West Company headquarters at Rainy Lake House

(located at today’s International Falls, Minnesota) -- summer 1810

to transport the annual supply of trade goods and provisions into the wilderness

FINAN McDONALD FIGHTS WITH THE FLATHEAD INDIANS AGAINST THE BLACKFEET

Nor’Wester Finan McDonald, David Thompson’s chief assistant, accompanied the Flathead Indians

on a buffalo hunting expedition to the East as far as the plains of the Missouri River

While on the plains, Nor’Westers encountered a group of Blackfoot Indians -- -- summer 1810

during the ensuing skirmish, the Nor’Westers fought alongside the Flathead Indians

this support from the trappers infuriated the Blackfoot Indians

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY LEADER WANTS A COLONY ALONG THE RED RIVER

Hudson’s Bay Company held a charter giving ownership of all of the lands

drained by the waters of that flowed into Hudson Bay

major Hudson’s Bay Company stockholder Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk,

began to seriously consider securing land in the Canadian interior

Thomas Douglas, 5th Earl of Selkirk sought a legal opinion

regarding the validity of the Hudson’s Bay Company charter

and the legal right of the company to sell portions of their land -- 1810

once the charter and its conditions were declared to be valid by his lawyers

Lord Selkirk set out to gain control of the Hudson’s Bay Company stock

in order to acquire land he desired near the confluence of the Assiniboine and Red rivers

(in today’s Manitoba)

North West Company became alarmed when they learned of the plans

they considered Selkirk’s colonizing effort to be a scheme on the part of Hudson’s Bay Company

to destroy their trade by throwing an agricultural colony across their supply line

that ran from Montreal and Fort William into the interior

in addition to blocking the Nor’Westers’ trade the colony would provide a base for supplies

that could service Hudson’s Bay Company -- especially in the Rocky Mountains

North West Company asserted its own claims that they were the legitimate successors

of the old French traders in the West who originally had been granted the charter

and that Hudson’s Bay Company’s charter was an illegal royal grant that created a monopoly

they also got legal opinions to the effect that Hudson’s Bay Company’s charter

gave no territory or exclusive trade privileges so far away from Hudson Bay

JOHN JACOB ASTOR’S PACIFIC FUR COMPANY’S OVERLAND EXPEDITION TAKES SHAPE

Astor’s Overland Expedition led by Astor’s partners Donald McKenzie and Wilson Price Hunt

traveled from Montreal, Canada bound for the American frontier village

of Michilimackinac (Michigan) located on an island at West end of Lake Huron

here they were joined by another Astor partner, Ramsay Crooks

At Michilimackinac Hunt again experienced difficulty finding employees

as the French-Canadian habit of celebrating each good turn of events

caused these canoemen to gather their friends and kinsmen about them, carouse with them,

and sing and dance as long as seemed appropriate

tomorrow or next week was soon enough to go to work

(Astorian Clerk Alexander Ross who traveled with the sea party later recorded a description

of events in Michilimackinac: **“Hunt and M’Kenzie in vain sought recruits, at least such as would suit their purpose; for in the morning they were found drinking, at noon drunk, in the evening dead drunk, and in the night seldom sober. …Every nook and corner, in the whole island swarmed, at all hours of the day and night, with motly** [sic] **groups of uproarious tipplers and whiskey-hunters. …** [Michilimackinac] **resembled a great bedlam, the frantic inmates running to and fro in wild forgetfulness.** **”**)[[70]](#footnote-70)

no sooner was a voyageur engaged by Hunt and a sum paid to him in advance

than some tavern-keeper or tradesman would appear with a bill against him

Hunt must either pay the bill or lose his employee

and the money advanced to hold him to his bargain

Even with these problems Wilson Price Hunt under the guidance of Donald McKenzie successfully recruited sixty men including Americans, Scotsmen and French-Canadians

forty were French-Canadian voyageurs whose duties included

rowing, transporting, cooking, and general drudgery

however, Wilson Price Hunt and Donald McKenzie found few qualified boatmen

among the American hangers-on in Michilimackinac who were capable and willing

to take the proposed journey

Finally, seventy-five trail-hardened recruits were finally gathered together

five company clerks:

Ross Cox, J. Cook Halsey, John Reid (later spelled Reed), Alfred Seton and William Wallace

five hunters:

Jean Baptiste Dubreuil was a French-Canadian boatman who was also called a hunter,

Andre Dufresne, Jean Baptiste Gardipie, Jacque Hartera and freeman hunter,

and Joseph Gervais a hunter who later became a freeman (without company affiliation)

six skilled workers;

carpenter Louis La Bonte, sawyer Francois Martial, interpreter Ovid Montigny,

boatman and blacksmith Francis William Hodgkins (or Hodgens),

blacksmith Andre La Chapelle and guide Joseph St. Amant

forty-three trappers:

George Bell, Charles Boucher, Bazile Brousseau, Pierre Brugiere, Michel Carriere,

Martin H. Cass, Antoine Clappine, Joseph Delaunay, Pierre Delaunay,

Jean Baptiste Delorme, Louis Dinnelle, Francois Duchoquette,

Prisque Felix,Francois Fripagnier, Charles Jacquette, Joseph Jerve, Jean Baptiste La Bonte,

Louis La Bonte, Louis La Liberte, Francois Landrie, Francois Landry, Joseph Landry,

Michel Lanson, Louis La Valle, Francois Michael Laframboise, Francois Le Clerc,

Alexis Le Compte, Guillaume Le Roux, Charles Lucier, Etienne Lucier, Francois Martial,

William Matthews,Jean Baptiste Ouvre, Antoine Papin, Jean Baptiste Pillon, Antoine Plante,

Jean Baptiste Prevost (or Proveau), Francois Robert, Edward Robinson, Joseph Samant,

Louis St. Michel and Jean Baptiste Turcotte

To complete their crew, Hunt and Donald McKenzie hired eight American boatmen

William Cannon (or Canning), Alexander Carson, George Cone, Joseph Cote (sometimes Cotte),

Benjamin Jones, Joseph Landry, Michel Lanson and Andrew Valle

TROUBLE BEGINS QUICKLY FOR ASTOR’S OVERLAND EXPEDITION

Astor’s partners co-commander Donald McKenzie and Astor’s Agent Wilson Price Hunt

were ready for the journey from Michilimackinac (Michigan) across Lake Michigan,

across Wisconsin and down the Mississippi River to St. Louis

Wilson Price Hunt’s American recruits were a constant source of trouble

beginning in Michilimackinac and continuing en route to St. Louis

some Americans deserted as soon as they received an advance on their wages

other Americans tried to stir up trouble among themselves and with the French-Canadians

who were already angry because American employees received sugar

and were better fed than the French-Canadians

ASTOR’S PACIFIC FUR COMPANY OVERLAND LAND EXPEDITION ARRIVES IN ST. LOUIS

Astor’s expedition for cross the North American continent arrived in St. Louis

from Michilimackinac, Michigan -- September 3, 1810

John Jacob Astor had sent orders that Wilson Price Hunt was to serve as his sole agent

Astor had been concerned about the loyalty of former North West Company employees

who had joined the Pacific Fur Company

this was an effort to assure that an American would be in command of the enterprise

Donald “Fats” McKenzie was demoted from co-captain as Hunt was given complete authority

experienced, energetic and ambitious Donald McKenzie had been attracted

by John Jacob Astor’s promises of wealth and advancement

he had expected to be at least a co-leader of the Pacific Fur Company’s Overland Expedition

this was a bitter moment for the former Nor’Wester

who possessed knowledge of the wilderness and of the fur trade

in addition to possessing remarkable leadership qualities

Donald McKenzie did not forget the insult

Wilson Price Hunt was instructed by Astor to follow the Lewis and Clark Trail

ASTORIANS ARE NOT POPULAR IN ST. LOUIS

In St. Louis Wilson Price Hunt together with Astor’s other partners

Donald McKenzie, Ramsay Crooks, Robert McClellan and Joseph Miller proceeded to attempt to engage hunters and additional river boatmen

Missouri Fur Company’s Manuel Lisa occupied himself putting obstacles in Hunt’s path

as he developed a hatred of John Jacob Astor

American trappers in St. Louis also were not happy with John Jacob Astor

if he merged his Mississippi and mountain holdings into one huge company

this combine would threaten all other fur companies and drive out independent trappers

JOHN JACOB ASTOR HAS THE SHIP *TONQUIN* PREPARED TO SAIL TO THE PACIFIC COAST

In conducting preparations for the Sea Party, John Jacob Astor again chose the wrong leader

as he had done with Wilson Price Hunt and the Land Expedition

Astor selected the former the Nor’Wester Duncan McDougall to command the endeavor

this angry, bad-tempered, arrogant little man was ill-suited to the task

Astor’s partner Alexander McKay proved to be a more fortunate choice for leadership

he served as supercargo (in charge of *Tonquin’s* cargo) and chief trader on the Pacific coast

McKay was a tall, muscular man with a thin face, black hair, whiskers,

and restless black eyes set beneath projecting eyebrows

despite the fact he walked with a limp he displayed great energy and daring

he was known as one of the best shots in the country

and he was cool and resolute when dealing with the Indians

*Tonquin* carried and a compliment of twenty-two men:

•seventeen crewmen: Captain Jonathan Thorn, First Mate Ebenezer Fox,

Second Mate John Mumford, Boatswain John Anderson, carpenter John Weeks,

armorer Stephen Weeks, sailmaker John Coles, sailor-cook John Martin;

sailors Edward Aymens, Adam Ficher, Robert Hill, Joseph Johnson, Charles Robert,

Peter Vershel, John White and cabin boy Guilleaume Perrault

. •five skilled workers: rigger and calker Job Aikin (Aitken), ship’s carpenter Johann Koasfer,

boatbuilder John Little and coopers (barrel makes) George Bell and William Wilson

*Tonquin* carried thirty-three passengers:

•four of the partners -- all former North West Company employees

Chief Factor Duncan McDougall, supercargo Alexander McKay, David Stuart

and his nephew Robert Stuart

•eleven clerks three of whom were Americans: Russell Farnham, James Lewis

and William W. Matthews

remaining eight clerks were French-Canadians:

Gabriel Franchere who kept a journal of events, Donald McGillis, Donald McClennan,

Thomas McKay (thirteen-year old son of partner Alexander McKay), Ovide Montigny,

Francis Benjamin Pillette, Alexander Ross and William Wallace

Alexander Ross, a twenty-one year old Scottish schoolteacher, had migrated to Canada,

he was articulate and possessed culture, wit and wisdom

•thirteen voyageurs: Antioine Belleau, Jean Baptise Belleau, Louis Brule, Paul D. Jeremie,

Michel Lafamboise, Jacques Lafantaisie, Michel La Ferte,Basil Lapensee, Ignace Lapensee,

Oliver Lapensee, Joseph La Pierre, Giles Le Clerc, Joseph Nadeau and Benjamine Rousselle

•five craftsmen were also carried on board: blacksmiths Augustin Rousselle and Michel Sanson,

tailors Egbert Vanderhuff and Richard Milligan and bookbinder Moses Flanagan

ASTOR’S SEA EXPEDITION WITH THE *TONQUIN* SAILS FROM NEW YORK

John Jacob Astor ordered his ship *Tonquin* to be outfitted to convey trade goods and equipment

for founding and defending the proposed capital of an empire for his Pacific Fur Company

Astor’s ship was of 290-tons with a crew of twenty-three

she carried ten cannons although there were portholes for twenty

to make a formidable appearance “sham” guns were mounted in the extra portholes

this ploy work on at least one occasion

*Tonquin* sailed from New York City -- September 8, 1810

John Jacob Astor’s partners felt they owned the ship

they did not accept the concept of the captain’s word being law on the high seas

U.S. Navy Departmentassigned the USS *Constitution* to protect the *Tonquin*

as it cleared the Atlantic coast least her sailors be impressed (kidnapped) into the British Navy

this suggestedthat while the American government did not take any part in Astor’s venture

its attitude was sympathetic to the venture

CAPTAIN JONATHAN THORN MASTER OF THE *TONQUIN*

Thorn was an autocratic veteran officer of United States naval operations against the Barbary pirates

when President Thomas Jefferson reused to pay high tribute

to the Barbary States of Tripoli, Algiers and Tunis to protect American shipping [1801-1805]

he was an able seaman placed on leave from the U.S. Navy to John Jacob Astor

he expected to exercise the same tight discipline and control as on a military a man-of-war

time after time he put his chief assistants in irons for opposing his judgment

Unfortunately, Captain Thorn possessed an unstable and explosive temperament

he was touchy, tactless, domineering, overbearing, obstinate and cruel

an unpredictable man, he was ill-tempered and possessed a persecution complex

explosive, he flew into rages at the slightest provocation threatening death to anyone

stern and irascible, meanness and brutality permeated his character

he was a believer in iron discipline and was easily moved to wrath

by the smallest infringement of the hide-bound rules and proprieties of his personal code

faithful, loyal, but without the least understanding of human nature

he was too lacking in imagination to have any sympathy or good feelings

toward persons who were different from himself

CONFLICT ERRUPTS IMMEDIATELY BETWEEN CAPTAIN THORN AND ASTOR’S PARTNERS

Astor’s Partners felt they owned the *Tonquin* in concert with John Jacob Astor

they did not accept the concept of the captain’s word being law on the high seas

Captain Jonathan Thorn took one look at the Astorians and their French-Canadian voyageurs

and despised them on sight as a shabby, boisterous, swaggering set of braggarts

Many, partners and ship’s officers alike held exaggerated opinions of their own authority

together they were completely incapable of achieving even the minutest level of cooperation

there was turmoil every day -- continuous feuds ignited or were rekindled

DAVID THOMPSON AND THE COLUMBIA BRIGADE REACHES FORT AUGUSTUS

North West Company’s Columbia Brigade’s twenty-six employees and a pack train

arrived at Fort Augustus at mouth of White Earth Creek -- mid-September 1810

(near present-day Edmonton, Alberta)

at Fort Augustus the trade goods and supplies were transferred into four canoes

Four heavily laden supply canoes of the North West Company’s Columbia Brigade

set out from Fort Augustus and pushed up the North Saskatchewan River

bound for Rocky Mountain House with the annual supply of trade goods

while the canoes went ahead David Thompson paused to visit his family at Boggy Hall

NOR’WESTER DAVID THOMPSON STAYS AT BOGGY HALL

While the North West Company’s Columbia Brigade traveled up the North Saskatchewan River

David Thompson traveled with the brigade as far as Upper White Mud House

(located at the mouth of the Pembina River between Edmonton and Rocky Mountain House)

Thompson turned back to Boggy Hall near Fort Augustus

to remain for a time with his wife Charlotte and their children

he planned to later travel by horseback along a shortcut to Rocky Mountain House

where he would rejoin the Columbia Brigade

David Thompson had traveled the route from this North West Company post

across the Rockies through Hawse Pass several times and knew the trail well

NORTH WEST COMPANY’S COLUMBIA BRIGADE IS STOPPED BY INDIANS

Columbia Brigade pressed up the North Saskatchewan River toward Rocky Mountain House

North West Company’s supply brigade had returned again to the land of the Piegan Indians

who had dedicated themselves to stopping the recently established trans-mountain trade

and the flow of guns to their ancient enemy the Kootenai Indians

Piegan Indians harassed the Columbia Brigade all the way to Rocky Mountain House

COLUMBIA BRIGADE REACHES ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE EAST OF THE ROCKIES

Rocky Mountain House (near today’s Calgary, Alberta) stood at the eastern foot of the mountains

this post was managed by Nor’Wester Alexander Henry the Younger

who was the nephew of pioneering Nor’Wester Alexander Henry the Elder

there were seven white men and ten guns inside the post

COLUMBIA BRIGADE CONTINUES ON FROM ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE

Piegan Indians had become increasingly opposed to Nor’Westers crossing over the Rockies

no longer pretending friendship, they were openly warlike

North West Company’s Columbia Brigade left Rocky Mountain House -- late September 1810

members of the Columbia Brigade learned that Piegans Indians blocked their route west

Columbia Brigade had divided into three groups:

•some men camp on the Kootenay Plains and remained with the horses

as they waited for David Thompson at the headwaters of the North Saskatchewan River;

•some men remained with the canoes as they waited for Thompson to arrive

when these men learned about the plans of the Piegan Indians

they had turned back to Rocky Mountain House;

•David Thompson had remained at Boggy Hall sixty miles downstream

MANUEL LISA TAKES HIS TRAPPERS BACK TO ST. LOUIS

Manuel Lisa had remained at Fort Raymond on the Yellowstone River

with his St. Louis Missouri Fur Company trappers

he left and returned to St. Louis with most of his men -- fall 1810

however, one trapping party under the control of his partner Andrew Henry

remained at Fort Henry on the Snake River (Idaho)

COLUMBIA BRIGADE CANOES RETURN TO ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE

Much to the surprise of Rocky Mountain House factor Alexander Henry the Younger

Columbia Brigade canoes returned to Rocky Mountain House -- October 5, 1810

they reported their route was blocked by Piegan Indians

intent on not allowing the Nor’Westers to cross the Rocky Mountains

equally distressing to Alexander Henry they reported they had last seen David Thompson

at Upper White Mud House (on September 15)

Alexander Henry the Younger was fearful the Piegan Indians would attack Rocky Mountain House

food was in short supply and there was no source of water inside the post

ANDREW HENRY’S ST. LOUIS MISSOURI FUR COMPANY MEN CONTINUE THEIR HUNT

Trappers at Fort Henry on the Snake River (Idaho)

including Kentuckians Edward Robinson, John Hoback and Jacob Reznor

conducted a fall hunt that gathered a substantial store of beaver skins -- autumn 1810

trappers ranged widely in search of promising beaver streams

they trapped the Snake River and crossed to Jackson Hole (Wyoming)

and probed the Teton Mountains

John Hoback gave his name to a river which had carved a deep canyon

before emptying into the Snake River -- Hoback River was rich in beaver

ALEXANDER HENRY THE YOUNGER CONFIRMS THE PIEGAN INDIANS’ PLAN

Suddenly a band of forty Piegan warriors led by Piegan Chief Black Bear

arrived at Rocky Mountain House -- about sunset October 7, 1810

they settled down outside the post and prepared for a siege

Henry determined they were part of the Indians

who were waiting up the North Saskatchewan River

Alexander Henry the Younger learned this chief was the person responsible

for stopping the Columbia Brigade canoes

he also learned that about 300 more Piegans were waiting farther upriver

in case any more canoes tried to slip past

he was shocked it see these Indians has one of David Thompson’s horses

as well as a pair of blue leggings that belonged to his cousin William Henry

Henry believed David Thompson must be somewhere up the river

During the night the Nor’Westers lowered two kettles on cords down into the river

and pulled them up when full -- now they could afford to wait at least for a little while

COLUMBIA BRIGADE MANAGES TO ESCAPE FROM ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE

Alexander Henry the Younger opened a keg of wine and sent it to the Indians -- October 11, 1810

when they had become intoxicated he sent the Columbia canoes upriver under cover of darkness

to rendezvous with David Thompson

ALEXANDER HENRY THE YOUNGER LEARNS HE HAS BEEN IN ERROR

Henry’s cousin William Henry arrived at Rocky Mountain House -- October 12, 1810

he said he had come from down the North Saskatchewan River and had left David Thompson

waiting for the Columbia Brigade at Upper White Mud House (near today’s Pembina River)

he said Thompson had traveled from Boggy Hall by horseback through thick forest

following the old route along the north side of the North Saskatchewan River

David Thompson and William Henry traveled together up the river

when they neared the ridge of mountains they came across horses

belonging to the Piegans waiting to intercept the Columbia Brigade

Thompson ordered Williams to go the members of the brigade waiting on the Kootenay Plain

and lead them back downriver to Boggy Hall where Thompson would be waiting

Alexander Henry the Younger realized he had to stop the canoes he sent upriver earlier

that night he dispatched a man to intercept the brigade and have them wait for further orders

ALEXANDER HENRY THE YOUNGER GOES IN SEARCH OF DAVID THOMPSON

As indicated to Alexander Henry the Younger by his cousin William Henry

David Thompson was found hungry and distressed on a high hill

waiting for his brigade to come to him -- October 13, 1810

David Thompson, a very courageous man, seemingly lost his nerve

he delayed reacting to the situation

it was only with the help of Alexander Henry the Younger

that the Columbia Brigade was pieced together again

Alexander Henry the Younger rushed back to Rocky Mountain House

ALEXANDER HENRY THE YOUNGER RETURNS TO ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE

Alexander Henry set about to correct his error in sending the Columbia Brigade

up the North Saskatchewan River in search of David Thompson who was, in fact, downriver

he sent his cousin William Henry to bring back the brigade

without alerting the Piegans -- October 15, 1810

North West Company’s Columbia Brigade reached Rocky Mountain House about midnight

Alexander Henry sent them downriver to David Thompson -- October 16

With all of the canoes gone Alexander Henry now focused on the welfare of Rocky Mountain House

ASTORIANS COMPLETE THEIR PREPARATIONS IN ST. LOUIS

By the time Wilson Price Hunt had manned and outfitted his expedition in St. Louis

it was too late in the season to set out to cross North America

as the upper waters of the Missouri River would be under ice

before the boats could traverse more than five hundred miles of the river

Not willing to leave his sixty men within reach of the temptations of civilization,

Hunt and Astor’s other partners Donald McKenzie, Ramsay Crooks, Joseph Miller

and Robert McClellan left St. Louis in three boats and pushed his crew

up the Missouri River -- October 21, 1810

two days later the first blast of winter closed the river above them overnight

still they continued up the Missouri River

A PLAN IS DEVELOPED TO DECEIVE THE PIEGAN INDIANS

Alexander Henry the Younger with the help of David Thompson’s longtime Indian friend

Kootanae Apee developed a ruse -- October 27, 1810

while visiting Rocky Mountain House the Kootenai war chief

saw a white raven skin and a red peace pipe in the Nor’Wester’s room

Kootanae Apee asked to be given these things and a pound of tobacco

(these he later put to good use)

KOOTANAE APEE DECEIVES THE PIEGAN INDIANS

Kootanae Appe rode to the main camp of the Piegan Indians south of Rocky Mountain House

he gathered a council of Piegans together the next morning -- October 28, 1810

Kootanae Appe told the council he had had a dream in which he saw the spirit of a white man

put the skin of a white raven across the road with a red peace pipe and tobacco

by a stream about three miles away

Kootanae Appe said to let two old men go and see if the dream was true

and bring the white raven, red pipe and tobacco to the council

To the astonishment of the council the objects were found exactly where it had been foretold

Kootanae Appe said that before the white men came the Indians were weak

now they had guns, powder and shot and their arrowheads were made of iron instead of stone

Kootanae Appe said he had always been a friend of the white men and they had been kind to him

what use to the Indians were the skins of beavers, wolves and foxes

but now the Indians could get guns, axes and useful tools and ornaments for them

he told the Piegans to return to their own lands

DAVID THOMPSON AND THE COLUMBIA BRIGADE TRY A NEW ROUTE

David Thompson and the men of the Columbia Brigade sat down to discuss their plight

Thompson was unaware to the ruse played on the Piegan Indians

Howse Pass completely blocked off by Piegan Indians

weather grew increasingly formidable-- hunters came back with little or no game

David Thompson had had enough of the North Saskatchewan River

he decided to head to the Pembina River near Boggy Hall

and strike westward through heavily timbered country

perhaps he could reach an unguarded mountain pass to the Columbia River

that Nipissing (Ojibway) and Iroquois Indian trappers had recently discovered

(As later reported the journal of Rocky Mountain House’s Alexander Henry the Younger

David Thompson planned to open a new road from the North Saskatchewan River

past Buffalo Dung [Chip] Lake to the Athabasca River [Alberta]

then follow the Athabasca River into the Rocky Mountains

where plains-bred Indians, like the Piegans, rarely ventured)

David Thompson led the twenty-six members of the Columbia Brigade and their horses

up the Pembina River along the bank -- October 29, 1810

travel became increasingly difficult as they journeyed west and entered the Rocky Mountains

for a month the Columbia Brigade wearily trudged through old burns, windfalls and tangled scrub

they arrived at 52º 25’ north latitude (in Jasper National Park)

FINAN McDONALD ARMS THE ENEMIES OF THE BLACKFEET INDIANS

Finan McDonald provided weapons to the Spokanes, Coeur d’Alenes, Palouses, Pend Oreilles,

Kootenais and Flatheads in defiance of the Blackfoot -- fall 1810

Fear of retribution by the Blackfoot prompted Finan McDonald to move from Kootanae House

west to Spokane country where Jaco Finlay and a crew of voyageurs were constructing

a new trading post at the junction of the Spokane and Little Spokane rivers

ASTORIAN WILSON PRICE HUNT ESTABLISHES WINTER HEADQUARTERS

It was so late in the season that Wilson Price Hunt was forced to make winter camp, Nodaway Camp,

on the Missouri River at the mouth of the Nodaway River three hundred miles from St. Louis

(near present-day St. Joseph, Missouri) -- November 13, 1810

here new recruit John Day joined the Overland Expedition

as the leader of the twelve American hunters and trappers

John Day had previously worked for Astor’s partner Ramsay Crooks

Preparations continued for the Pacific Fur Company’s Overland Expedition

JOHN JACOB ASTOR’S SHIP *TONQUIN* REACHES FALKLAND ISLANDS

John Jacob Astor’s Sea Party reached the Falkland Islands near the tip of South America

this was a logical stop for fresh water

Captain Jonathan Thorn sent a landing party went ashore

including Astor’s partners Chief Factor Duncan McDougall (who held Astor’s proxy) a

and David Stuart who were accompanied by Astorians Gabriel Franchere and Alexander Ross

and five members of the crew of the *Tonquin*

several members of the shore party stumbled upon two old graves

whose headboards were in need of repair -- nine men set about the work

Water casks were filled and returned to the ship by crew members sent by Captain Thorn

as soon as the water casks were on board Captain Thorn fired a gun to bring the others to the ship

half an hour was lost as the other members of the shore party made repairs to the cemetery

As the shore party did not return at once, Thorn hoisted the canvas and sailed away

leaving nine men behind on the island

they knew Thorn probably would not turn back and pick them up

It was growing dark when the shore party started after the ship

men pulled mightily at their oars for three and a half hours

hoping to overtake the ship as they, in fact, steadily lost distance

they gave up and were debating going back to the island

Suddenly the *Tonquin* hauled about, sailed back and picked them up

but only because Astor’s partner Robert Stuart had seized a pistol

pointed it at Thorn’s head and statedif he refused to go back

he was **“a dead man this instant”[[71]](#footnote-71)**

eight men return to ship as one sailor had drowned in the effort to overtake the ship

Thorn’s deliberate and vicious cruelty increased the hatred of the men toward him

Astorians and crewmen alike

DAVID THOMPSON AND THE COLUMBIA BRIGADE REACH THE ATHABASCA RIVER

David Thompson led the twenty-six members of the Columbia Brigade up the frozen Pembina River

(to near present day Jasper, Alberta)

after traveling south fifty miles from the source of the Pembina River

they reached the Athabasca River -- November 29, 1810

Thompson and his companions struggled up the Athabasca River for four exhausting days

supplies were low, morale was lower and the men were surly

their failure to cross the mountains sharpened the men’s perception of impending catastrophe

When snow eventually fell, the Columbia Brigade’s efforts became ever increasingly difficult

dogs wallowed through the snow on the frozen Athabasca riverbed

while hunters scoured the barren land ahead for absent game

Columbia Brigade switched from horses to dogsleds -- December 3, 1810

NOR’WESTER DAVID THOMPSON MADE CAMP ON THE ATHABASCA RIVER

David Thompson and his twenty-six men built two log huts on the east side of the Rocky Mountains

probably at the south end of Brule Lake (Alberta) to provide protection from the cold weather

for themselves and for their provisions -- December 5, 1810

each man was daily eating eight pounds of pemmican

composed of dried buffalo meat mixed with fat and berries

Thompson settled down (in Alberta) for what seemed to be a leisurely month

deep snows and want of food took their toll on men and beasts

returning from reconnoitering one day, David Thompson found the voyageurs

trying to learn the depth of the snow by probing with a twenty-foot pole

sarcastically he asked them what good the knowledge would do them

he said they would be better off resting

Some of David Thompson’s Columbia Brigade voyageurs, it appears, deserted him and turned back

this left him with an insufficient number of crew members to move his full stock of goods

across the Rocky Mountains to Kootanae House on the Columbia River as he had intended

Thompson, Alexander Henry the Younger and the Nor’Westers sat down to discuss their plight

hunters came back with little or no game -- weather grew increasingly formidable

Thompson decided to leave the horses to try to find a new pass through the Rocky Mountains

Thompson and the men of the Columbia Brigade spent nineteen days in search of a route to the west,

preparing the dogs, building snowshoes and constructing a few small sleds

to carry supplies and trade goods

DAVID THOMPSON REMAINED IN COMMUNICATION WITH HIS WIFE

Thompson always wrote to his wife when he was away from home

in a chatty letter dated 11th December 1810 he wrote: “**My dear Charlotte, In a few days I will be sending six or seven of my men to Rocky Mountain House to get pemmican and other supplies and they will carry this and my other letters with them. I am hoping they will return with a letter from you, for I am anxious to know how you are faring. I hope you and the children are well. ....we have a log hut to shelter our goods, provisions and ourselves. We are making sleds and snowshoes for the rest of the journey over the mountains, as well as obtaining dogs to replace the horses....**

**“Mr. William Henry will be staying here with the horses and a large store of provisions for our future use. It is very cold, the temperature being minus 32 degrees which is 64 degrees below the freezing point. …I wonder if this will reach you by Christmas? I wish you and the children every blessing; I long for news of you. As ever, David”**

DAVID THOMPSON CONTINUES PREPARATIONS FOR A PUSH OVER THE ROCKIES

Although the men of the Columbia Brigade were starving

David Thompson was obliged to divide his forces

six men were sent with Nor’Wester William Henry to Rocky Mountain House

to acquire supplies;

David Thompson hand-picked ten men to make a dash over the mountains at daybreak

guided by an Iroquois Indian named Thomas in an attempt to find a way of skirting

Piegan territory though a yet to be discovered mountain pass in the dead of winter

with no trail, limited supplies and the threat of being caught by hostile Indians

fortified by what seems foolhardy confidence they would try to locate a pass to the west

Thompson would leave ten men at the camp to care for the horses and baggage

DAVID THOMPSON AND HIS MEN SET OUT TO CROSS THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

With ten men on snowshoes and eight dogsleds David Thompson set out

following the Whirlpool River toward its source -- December 23, 1810

David Thompson passed below (what is now Mount Edith Cavell)

firewood, including the noted twenty-foot-pole was piled on the sleds and carried with them,

but this proved to be insufficient as the ten Nor’Westers shivered forlornly

under a brilliant, unclouded sky

Six days of brutal toil following the Whirlpool River through rugged mountain terrain

brought the small party to the timber line -- ahead lay the Continental Divide

pinched between a green-tinted glacier and an ice-encrusted peak

and the ever-present, desolate, glittering snow

DAVID THOMPSON REACHES THE SUMMIT OF ATHABASCA PASS

As the summit of Athabasca Pass was approached the ten Nor’Westers of the Columbia Brigade

insisted with dismay that they could not possibly cross in a single day

ignoring the pleadings of the men, Thompson ordered them to pile firewood on the sleds

David Thompson and his companionsmade a head-long dash over the Canadian Rockies

at daybreak -- December 29, 1810

not until the arrival of early winter dusk did they stop for the night

deep snows blotted out the trappers’ trail from unfriendly Piegan eyes

but want of food took its toll on men and beasts

DAVID THOMPSON AND HIS MEN CROSS ATHABASCA PASS

Athabasca Pass was opened at least scientifically and geographically[[72]](#footnote-72)

David Thompson had found what Alexander Mackenzie and others had failed to find

a safe, navigable route across the Rocky Mountains

(Athabasca Pass proved to be even better than Howse Pass as it would carry

the bulk of the continent’s fur trade until the opening of the Trans-Canada railroad)

David Thompson later wrote of the pass: **“**[It] **was to me a most exhilarating sight, but …the scene of desolation before us was dreadful, and I knew it. A heavy gale of wind, much more a mountain storm, would have buried us beneath it…. My men were not at their ease, yet when night came they admired the brilliancy of the stars, and as one of them said, he thought he could almost touch them with his hand.”[[73]](#footnote-73)**

ANDREW HENRY AND HIS TRAPPERS SPEND A HARSH WINTER ON THE SNAKE RIVER

Andrew Henry and his St. Louis Missouri Fur Company men spent an uncommonly severe winter

at Fort Henry on the Snake River (Idaho) -- winter 1810-1811

Several rude log huts served as shelters and the men ventured out only to get meat

as it was far too cold to tend to the traps

DAVID THOMPSON AND HIS MEN REACH THE WEST SIDE OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Thompson and his men reached the Wood River on the west side of the Rocky Mountains

which they followed downstream

after a great deal of hunger and hardship they reached the mouth of the Wood River

where its waters joined the Columbia River -- January 18, 1811

David Thompson had only five men with him which was an insufficient number of men

to transport goods to Saleesh House as he had intended

instead he detoured toward the established posts of Spokane House and Kullyspell House

on the Columbia’s tributaries to recruit more men

Thompson’s five remaining men refused to go on and this brief attempt was abandoned

Nor’Westers returned to where the Wood and Canoe rivers join the Columbia River

by the hairpin turn the Columbia makes around the head of the (Selkirk) Mountains

(north of today’s city of Revelstoke, British Columbia)

(this site today is beneath the waters of Kinbasket Lake Reservoir)

there Thompson was forced to wait out the winter

DAVID THOMPSON CONSTRUCTS A WINTER CAMP

David Thompson and his five remaining voyageurs constructed a twelve-foot hut of cedar shakes

he was determined to make another attempt to reach his established posts

in the Columbia River’s tributaries to find additional recruits to accompany him

they spent two weeks searching for suitable birch bark to build a large canoe -- and failed

unable to build a canoe out of birch bark Thompson and his men spent five weeks

splitting cedar laths for building a twenty-five foot long boat made of overlapped lath

sewn together with strips of pine root

this task was made more difficult because none of the men were skilled in this work

which required a great deal of trial-and-error

Thompson named the site “Boat Encampment” after this experience in boat-building

(Boat Encampment later became a rendezvous point for travel over Athabasca Pass)

David Thompson was obliged to go up the Canoe River looking for game

he was fortunate to meet a party of Sanpoil Indians on a hunting expedition

he added two of these men to his party of Nor’Westers

WILSON PRICE HUNT RETURNS TO ST. LOUIS FOR MORE RECRUITS

Wilson Price Hunt at his Nodaway Camp received instructions from John Jacob Astor

that he was to follow the route of Lewis and Clark in the cross-country quest

to reach the Columbia River -- January 1811

Hunt returned three hundred miles down the Missouri River to St. Louis

as he was anxious to hire additional expert hunters

who also were also capable of protecting the company from hostile natives

and he must find an interpreter familiar with the language of the Sioux

because he may well expect serious trouble from those people

to make matters even worse for Hunt, five of his own hunters suddenly appeared in St. Louis

they had left Nodaway Camp after an argument with the partners in charge

Hunt could persuade only two of them to return

Hunt was greatly assisted in the effort to recruit by Astor’s partner Joseph Miller

BOTH HUNT AND LISA WERE RUSHING PREPARATIONS FOR THEIR EXPEDITIONS

Hunt’s task was made more difficult as Manuel Lisa was also equipping an expedition

Wilson Price Hunt knew Manuel Lisa was preparing to find Andrew Henry at Henry’s Fort

along the Three Forks of the Missouri River (Montana) where Lisa’s Missouri Fur Company

enjoyed vigorous trade along the upper Missouri River

Competition between Hunt and Lisa for experienced crew members became intense in St. Louis

this was made especially so since both parties would have to travel over much of the same route

Manuel Lisa took the initiative -- he did not want Hunt to get into Arikara Country first but since Hunt could not be stopped entirely, Lisa set out to delay him for as long as possible

PIERRE DORION TRAVELS TO ST. LOUIS WITH HIS FAMILY

Pierre Dorion’s Iowa Indian wife, Marie Dorion, learned that Wilson Price Hunt

needed experienced men who spoke Sioux Indian for an expedition to the Northwest coast

After traveling to St. Louis, she prodded her husband to seek employment with the Astorians

Dorion was more than a little reluctant because he had once been employed by Manuel Lisa

he had had a falling out with the St. Louis Missouri Fur Company owner over a whiskey bill

Pierre considered it an unforgivable wrong that Lisa had charged him $10 a quart for whiskey

but Lisa had need of Pierre Dorion as his expedition also must pass through Sioux country

WILSON PRICE HUNT AGREES TO HIRE PIERRE DORION

Pierre Dorion was offered a substantial raise in salary above the price offered by Manuel Lisa

Hunt felt fortunate to have the services of Dorion who had the proper qualifications

Dorion was a Sioux Metis whose father had served Lewis and Clark as a Sioux interpreter

Pierre knew the Sioux language and was a good interpreter,

also, he was proficient as a prairie hunter and guide

Hunt, shrewd businessman that he was, realized the danger of having Manuel Lisa as an enemy

thus although Pierre Dorion was hired at once,

Hunt waited several weeks before signing the appropriate papers with him

Pierre Dorion proved to be a fateful choice as he was still indebted to Manuel Lisa

MANUEL LISA ATTEMPTS TO DETAIN PIERRE DORION

Manuel Lisa, hearing Pierre Dorion had been hired away by the Astorians,

served notice on both Wilson Price Hunt and Pierre Dorion

that the interpreter was still in Lisa’s service -- accusations and harsh words followed

Dorion reminded Lisa of the devious manner used to obtain his service

Lisa tactlessly invited Pierre to have a drink and talk about the situation

Pierre, after clearly stating his position, broke off relations with Lisa

and proceeded to tell Hunt he was, indeed, available for duty

*TONQUIN* ARRIVES AT THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

John Jacob Astor’s Pacific Fur Company ship *Tonquin* anchored in Karakakooa Bay

on the big island of Hawaii (this was the same bay visited by British Captain James Cook [1778])

Captain Jonathan often displayed sudden outbursts of temper

he had beaten a late-returning sailor almost senseless and then had thrown the man overboard

Astor’s partners distributed firearms to the crewmen while the ship was in the Hawaiian Islands

so that no possible act of treachery by the natives should catch them unprotected

as Captain Jonathan Thorn always suspected the natives of plotting to seize his ship

*TONQUIN* SAILS TO THE ISLAND OF OAHU

Captain Jonathan Thorn sailed on to the island of Owhyee (Oahu Hawaii) -- February 12, 1811

while sailing into (Pearl Harbor) cabin boy, Guilleaume Perrault, climbed the rigging

to get a better view of the beautiful harbor -- but lost his hold

he fell overboard and would have drowned **“but for a wide pair of canvas overalls full of tar and grease, which operated like a life preserver”[[74]](#footnote-74)**

Captain Thorn seemed annoyed the boy’s life had been spared

During the two week stopover at Owhyee half of the crew of the *Tonquin* deserted

rather than serve any longer under such a captain as Jonathan Thorn

Twenty-four Hawaiians were recruited as laborers

(Hawaiians were known as “Kanakas” or “Sandwich Islanders”)

(Hawaiian) King Kamehameha (I) appointed Chief Naukane to join the group

to look after the interests of Kanaka laborers

because of his resemblance to one of Astor’s clerks, Naukane was dubbed “John Coxe”

(he retained this name, and complicated identification,

throughout his colorful career as Hawaii’s first “soldier of fortune”)

*TONQUIN* SAILS OUT OF OWYHEE IN THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

*Tonquin* set sail with twenty-four Kanaka (Hawaiian) recruits

one shipboard observer wrote: **“…for the services of the Establishment** [i.e. the fort] **we engaged twelve Islanders, the terms of their contract being three years, during which time we undertook to feed and clothe them and at the expiration of their contract, to give them goods to the value of one hundred piastres** [Middle Eastern currency]**. The Captain took on twelve others for the work of the ship. These people make reasonably good sailors, seemed eager to enter our service and we could have engaged more of them.”[[75]](#footnote-75)**

*TONQUIN* CROSSES THE PACIFIC OCEAN

As the ship sailed from Hawaii toward the Columbia River

fresh quarrels arose between Captain Jonathan Thorn and John Jacob Astor’s partners

over who had ultimate control of the trade supplies

Thorn whom Astor had placed in charge of bartering along the Pacific coast

or Chief Factor Duncan McDougall whom Astor placed in charge of land operations

ASTORIAN RECRUITS JOURNEY TO NODAWAY CAMP

Wilson Price Hunt with his additional recruits set out in their keelboats on their journey

three hundred miles up the Missouri River from St. Louis to Nodaway Camp -- March 12, 1811

At the moment of departure from St. Louis

Pierre Dorion gave Wilson Price Hunt an unwelcome surprise

he arrived on the river bank with his Iowa Indian wife Marie Dorion

along with their two small sons: Baptiste then age four and Paul about two years old

Pierre refused to embark without them

Wilson Price Hunt reluctantly agreed to take them along

Marie Dorion became the second woman (after Sacajawea) to cross the plains to Oregon

Also traveling with Hunt to Nodaway Camp were:

two British scientists, John Bradbury and Thomas Nuttall, were recruited for the journey

they were the first two professional naturalists to explore any part of the Louisiana Purchase

Bradbury was an elderly British botanist and mineralogist who had been sent out

by the Linnean Society of Liverpool to make a collection of American plants and animals

he was the first plant hunter to bring back specimens from the central plains to propagate

because he never published a book about what he had undertaken

his work remained primarily unknown by his contemporaries

Nuttall, a younger man, was a mild sportsman after the manner of English country gentlemen

but he was much more interested in his microscope and trowel

he concentrated on gathering and classifying the plants of the central plains

and gave them scientific names

unlike Bradbury he also took credit for his discoveries

he published the results of his work and became far better known

MANUEL LISA PLOTS TO SLOW DOWN WILSON PRICE HUNT’S ASTORIANS

Missouri For Company owner Manuel Lisa, mad at Wilson Price Hunt for hiring away Pierre Dorion,

quietly had an official court order drawn up against the interpreter

this order would require the interpreter to return to St. Louis

for prosecution over the whiskey debt

this was to be served when Dorion passed through the village of St. Charles, Missouri

on his way up the Missouri River to Nodaway Camp

Pierre Dorion was warned by the scientists John Bradbury and Thomas Nuttall

who somehow learned that Manuel Lisa was taking steps to have him detained

Pierre designed a scheme of his own

PIERRE DORION’S SCHEME IS FOILED BY MARIE

Pierre Dorion planned to avoid being served the legal papers in St. Charles, Missouri by jumping ship

he promised Wilson Price Hunt he would meet the keelboats a short distance above St. Charles

but Dorion, in reality, planned to double cross both Hunt and Manuel Lisa

Pierre told his wife, Marie, that they would return to St. Louis

after Manuel Lisa and the Astorians both had gone

Pierre would find another job after he had spent the two hundred dollars

he had received from Hunt in advance paid (two-thirds of a year’s salary)

Marie would not hear of this treachery and insisted Pierre would join Hunt as agreed

during the ensuing quarrel, the drunk Pierre struck Marie -- as he frequently did

she retaliated with a well-aimed blow to his head with a club

she then walked out into the night with her two children and a bundle of belongings

Marie Dorion and her children remained hidden along the Missouri River that night and the next

as she waited for the Astorians to finish preparations in St. Louis

Pierre was beside himself with grief over the loss of his wife, children and his possessions

After Marie spent two nights in hiding the Astorians passed where she was hiding in their keelboats

Marie called out to the Astorians and Hunt sent a canoe across the river to retrieve her

Marie, the children and her possessions were all reunited with the greatly relieved Pierre

*TONQUIN* ARRIVES AT THE MOUTH OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER

When John Jacob Astor’s Pacific Fur Company ship *Tonquin* arrive off the coast -- March 21, 1811

the weather was stormy and the sea was running high as the winds blew in heavy rain squalls

surf pounded and roared and leaped on the hidden sand bars

stretching almost all of the way across the entrance to the river

Astor’s partners were demanding -- Captain Jonathan Thorn was unbearable

nerves of the crew members became more and more chafed as they grew increasingly sullen

CAPTAIN THORN ATTEMPTS TO ENTER THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Crossing the Columbia River sandbar required expert seamanship and respect for the obvious dangers

most captains waited for favorable conditions to make an attempt

although Astor’s partners protested that the raging storm made the crossing impossible

Captain Jonathan Thorn was unwilling to wait any longer

Captain Thorn ordered First Mate Ebenezer Fox to take the whaleboat into the frothing sea

to sound the channel over the Columbia River sandbar -- March 22, 1811

Thorn assigned one sailor, John Martin, and three voyagers

to accompany Fox in the suicide mission

voyageurs were skilled in their work as canoemen

but they had no knowledge of the dangers they now faced

out-flowing ebb tide and fearful breaking seas made the assignment scarcely short of murder

Ebenezer Fox begged for sailors to man the whaleboat with him

but Thorn insisted they could not be spared from their tasks on the ship

in desperation Fox appealed to Astor’s partners who, in turn, argued with Thorn

that the dangers were apparent -- the whaleboat was a small ramshackle vessel

not fit to dare such a sea as then raced over the bar

Thorn simply stiffened his resolve because Astor’s partners were the men

who had held him up while they repaired cemetery headstones in the Falkland Islands,

they had constantly baited him in their Gaelic (Irish and Scottish) language

and had mocked his dignity with far too much singing

Ebenezer Fox bid farewell to his crew mates: **“My uncle was drowned here not many years ago, and now I am going to lay my bones with his.”[[76]](#footnote-76)**

Fox and his crew left the *Tonquin* in the whaleboat -- 1:00 p.m.

those on deck watched until the whaleboat was hidden by cataracts of surf

clerk Gabriel Franchere recorded the scene in his journal:**“The wind was blowing in heavy squalls, and the sea ran very high; in spite of that, the captain caused a boat to be lowered, and Ebenezer Fox, sailor John Martin, voyageurs Basile Lapensee, Ignace Lapensee, Joseph Nadeau, got into her, taking some provisions and firearms, with orders to sound the channel and report themselves on board as soon as possible. The boat was not even supplied with a good sail, or a mast, but one of the partners gave Mr. Fox a pair of bed sheets to serve for the former....**

*“***The boat’s crew pulled away from the ship; alas! we were never to see her again; and we already had a foreboding of her fate.”[[77]](#footnote-77)**

All afternoon the *Tonquin’s* crewmen and the Astorians waited for the whaleboat’s return

*Tonquin* pulled out to sea as night came on and they continued to wait

neither the whaleboat nor its crew were seen again

*TONQUIN* MAKES OTHER ATTEMPTS TO ENTER THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Morning dawned clear as the *Tonquin* lay anchored in a calm area

north of Cape Disappointment -- March 23, 1811

Astor’s partners Alexander McKay and David Stuart and a number of clerks

volunteered to try to reach shore and search for First Mate Ebenezer Fox and his crew

Second Mate William Mumford set forth in the ship’s pinnace accompanied by the Astorians

they encountered a line of breakers that overpowered the whaleboat

with a fearful suction that drew in the pinnace

Indians observing from Cape Disappointment motioned for the pinnace to row around the Cape

rather than trying to reach shore directly

but seeing the waves breaking on the reef Mumford decided to return to the ship

he ordered all hands to pull for their lives

terrified oarsmen struggled for twelve minutes

before they managed to clear the breakers and reach the *Tonquin*

It was not long before a breeze sprung up and Captain Thorn decided to again attempt an entry

according to his charts the deepest and most reliable channel lay close in to Cape Disappointment

along the north edge of the perilous shifting sandbars

this channel was narrow, intricate and constantly changing

after weighing anchor Captain Thorn became so alarmed he stopped the effort

he order Second Mate Mumford to again take the pinnace and sound for the channel

Mumford succeeded in locating five fathoms of water

but with the surf breaking all around he retreated to the ship

Thorn was angry with Mumford’s attempt so he instructed rigger and calker Job Aitken,

to take the jolly boat (smallest boat available) and sound for the channel close to the north shore

if he found more than three fathoms of water he was to hoist a flag as a signal

Aitkin was accompanied by sailmaker John Coles, armorer Stephen Weeks

and two Kanakas known as Harry and Peter

as the jollyboat moved ahead the flag was hoisted

Thorn again weighed anchor and sailed into the channel

but soon the *Tonquin* began a rapid drift toward the southern shore and the sandbar

Aitken’s jolly boat returned toward the ship in calm water about half a mile beyond the breakers

but Captain Thorn and the Tonquin passed them by

according to clerk Alexander Ross: **“Everyone now called out, ‘The boat, the boat!’ The partners, in astonishment, entreated the captain to take the boat on board, but he coolly replied, ‘I can give them no assistance’.”[[78]](#footnote-78)**

those on board the *Tonquin* could hear the cries for help that rose

as the waves suddenly swirled the jollyboat about and capsized her

the jollyboat was last seen drifting rapidly downstream before it was lost from view

(Job Aitkin and John Coles were swept away

but Stephen Weeks and the Kanakas Harry and Peter managed to right the jollyboat)

Thorn had left them to their fate despite loud protests by Astor’s partners

in defense of Captain Thorn the situation facing the *Tonquin* was dire

PLIGHT OF THE *TONQUIN* REMAINS IN DOUBT

Suddenly the wind died and the *Tonquin* was at the mercy of the surf

she was in danger of being dashed against the rocks at the foot of Cape Disappointment

Thorn threw out two anchors to counter the pull of the tide

but as night deepened the terror of their predicament heightened

When the tide eventually turned -- just before midnight

*Tonquin* was still intact and an ocean breeze sprang up

Captain Thorn used a rising wind to attempt another entry on the rising flood tide that night

*Tonquin* was near the rocks when the crewmen weighted the anchors

she frequently struck bottom in the narrow channel as the crew fought to save the ship

at the critical moment the wind failed

*Tonquin* struck the sand with a violent blow and breakers washed over her

*Tonquin’s* pilot boat was lowered with three men aboard to sound a passage across the bar

and a line was run back to the *Tonquin* as the ship scraped across the bar

then the pilot boat was lost in the crossing

in a terrifying swirl of currents, wind and tides the *Tonquin* was actually lifted

and thrust just across the bar -- just after midnight March 25-26, 1811

leaving deserted the men in the pilot boat to fight against wind, tide and terror

by a stroke of good fortune none were lost

For several hours the *Tonquin* lay just inside the bar

everything depended on the anchors holding during the out-flowing ebb tide

when the tide changed to flood, Baker’s Bay was gained

Morning light showed the arrival of Indians who made known their desire to trade for furs

Captain Jonathan Thorn set a course toward the north (Washington) shore

THORN BEGINS A SEARCH FOR THE MISSING CREW MEMBERS

Kanaka Peter had died in the water during the night

but Stephen Weeks and Kanaka Harry managed to struggle ashore in the morning

Stephen Weeks discovered an Indian trail the next day -- March 26, 1811

but Harry died of exhaustion in the woods

Stephen Weeks was found wandering on the shore stark naked suffering intensely from the cold

after following the trail several hours he had come in sight of the *Tonquin*

*Tonquin’s* search party found the exhausted armorer -- they revived and rescued him

Weeks later reported how the Kanakas Harry and Peter had saved his life: **“I kept tossing about at the mercy of the waves. While in this state I saw the two Sandwich Islanders struggling through the surf to get hold of the boat, and being expert swimmers they succeeded. After long struggles they got her turned upon her keel, bailed out some of the water, and recovered one of the oars. I made several attempts to get near them, but the weight of my clothes and the rough sea had almost exhausted me. I could scarcely keep myself above water…. when the two islanders saw me, now supporting myself by a floating oar, and made for me. The poor fellows tried to haul me into the boat, but their strength failed them. At last, taking hold of my clothes in their teeth, they fortunately succeeded. We then stood out to sea as night set in, and a darker one I never saw. The Owyhees,** [Hawaiians] **overcome with wet and cold, began to lose hope, and their fortitude forsook them.”[[79]](#footnote-79)**

**“The dead** [Hawaiian] **man was buried by six Kanaka according to their tribal customs. Each before leaving the ship had taken an offering of biscuit, pork, or tobacco. They put the biscuit under the arm of the deceased, the pork under the chin and the tobacco under the testicles or genital organs. Then they put the body in the grave and after covering it with sand and gravel they formed a double line, with their faces turned eastwards. One officiating as a priest went to fetch water in his hat and having sprinkled the two rows of Islanders, began a prayer to which the others responded. Then they rose and departed and made their way towards the ship without looking back.”[[80]](#footnote-80)**

Nine men had been lost crossing the bar of the Columbia River

*TONQUIN* DELIVERS THE ASTORIANS TO SHORE

Captain Thorn was for rigging a shelter on the north (Washington) side of the Columbia River

there he could deposit the stores and goods for the trading post at once

and then be off up the coast searching for sea otter pelts to be acquired

Astorians discovered the north shore was exposed to storms

and possible attack by ship or canoe from the Pacific Ocean

Astor’s Chief Factor gloomy arrogant Duncan McDougall was in command of “Astoria”

he and the other partners objected to the location selected by Captain Thorn

they noted the location of Astor’s trading post on the Columbia River

was critical to the success of the operation

they insisted on seeking a site further up the river

where the location would offer some natural defense

although he strenuously objected Captain Jonathan Thorn landed a portion of the Astorians

on the south (Oregon) side further up the Columbia River

Captain Thorn moved the *Tonquin* to the north bank of the Columbia and tied her off

Thorn now considered his responsibility to his passengers finished

McDougall organized a search for a good site for John Jacob Astor’s trading post on the Columbia

several of Astor’s partners searched the south bank to find a good location for a building site

SITE FOR THE POST ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE COLUMBIA IS SELECTED

Chief Factor Duncan McDougall chose a place on the south shore

about twelve miles upriver from mouth of the Columbia River

(Lieutenant William Broughton with the George Vancouver expedition

had named the location Point George [1792])

Astorians named to location Tongue Point)

here was a sheltered harbor where small vessels could anchor within fifty yards of the beach

Location the post resulted in a series of squabbles between Thorn and the partners

Captain Thorn refused to move the *Tonquin* to the south shore or to ferry supplies across the river

three small boats were lost ferrying goods across the Columbia River

Chinook Indians saved several partners and clerks from drowning in the process

Captain Thorn finally relented and ferried supplies to the southern shore with the *Tonquin*

CLEARING A SITE FOR THE PACIFIC FUR COMPANY POST TOOK TWO MONTHS

John Jacob Astor as the financier of the Pacific Fur Company was intent on profits

*Tonquin* expedition was equipped only to trap and trade

thirty-three factors, clerks, voyageurs and skilled workers had been sent by ship

oddly, Astor brought out one carpenter, John Weeks, and no woodsmen

although these were essential to any large building program

Astor also failed to provide for the safety of his Pacific Fur Company employees

no physician or medical man was provided for the expedition

Clearing an acre of land of huge trees took two months

Pacific Fur Company clerk Alexander Ross wrote in his Journal: **“The place selected for the emporium of the West was studded with gigantic trees of almost incredible size, many measured fifty feet in girth.….**

**“After viewing the height and breadth of the tree to be cut down, the party, with some labor, would erect a scaffold round it; this done, four men -- for that was the number appointed to each of those huge trees -- would then mount the scaffold, and commence cutting…. Sometimes it required two days or more to fall one tree.**

**“There is an art in falling a tree but unfortunately none of us had learned the art, and hours together would be spent in conjectures and discussions; one calling out that it would fall here, another, there … and at last , when all hands were assembled to witness the fall, how often were we disappointed! The tree would still stand erect, bidding defiance to our efforts, while every now and then some of the most impatient or foolhardy would venture to jump on the scaffold and give a blow or two more. Much time was spent in this manner before the mighty tree gave way, but it seldom came to the ground. So thick was the forest, and so close the trees together, that in its fall it would often rest its ponderous top on some other friendly tree: and when we finally did succeed in falling a tree both stump and tree had to be blown to pieces by gunpowder before either could be removed.**

**“Nearly two months of this laborious and incessant toil passed, and we had scarcely yet an acre of ground cleared. In the meantime two of our men were wounded by the falling of trees, and one had his hand blown off by gunpowder and three were killed by natives.”[[81]](#footnote-81)**

*TONQUIN* REMAINS TIED TO THE NORTH BANK OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER

*Tonquin* rode at anchor across the Columbia River from Tongue Point as the Captain Thorn fumed

days and weeks flitted by while the partners directed the clearing of the land

and building of the post with its living quarters, storehouse and powder magazine

or they knocked off work to hold council with inquisitive swarms of Indians

led by their old, one-eyed Chinook Indian Chief Comcomly

During this time Captain Jonathan Thorn remained aboard his ship

while Chief Factor Duncan McDougall resided on shore

thus assuring they could no longer exchange epithets and invectives

rather they made themselves content with caustic written attacks

ferried back and forth across the breadth of the Columbia River

WILSON PRICE HUNT CONTINUES UP THE MISSOURI RIVER TO NODAWAY CAMP

Early in the morning, the Pacific Fur Company’s Overland Expedition saw a small bark canoe

with a single occupant skimming down the Missouri River returning to civilization

John Colter had completed one of his lonely trapping forays in the Yellowstone River region

Colter provided a great deal of information to Wilson Price Hunt regarding the Blackfoot Indians

although he was strongly tempted to join their great adventure,

life with his bride who awaited him somewhere down the river

held an even greater appeal than the lure of the wilderness

Wilson Price Hunt also encountered Daniel Boone on the way to Nodaway Camp

Boone demonstrated a strong interest in joining the expedition

but due to his age (he was then eighty-five) he was forced to curb his enthusiasm

WILSON PRICE HUNT’S ASTORIANS REACH THE COUNTRY OF THE OSAGE INDIANS

Passing thought the territory of the Osages on their way up the Missouri River to Nodaway Camp

Hunt’s Astorians learned there was a war raging throughout the greater part of Indian country

Sioux Indians had been out on raids during the preceding (summer)

and could be expected to take to the warpath in full force

as soon as (spring) had cleared the prairies of snow

Hunt heard, too, that Sioux natives were determined to stop white traders

from selling arms to other tribes with whom they were at war

While they were halted at Fort Osage Hunt saw proof of the rumors of Indian unrest

when a war party of Osage Indians returned from an attack on an Iowa village

Osages held a high ceremony to celebrate the taking of seven scalps

this celebration so excited Pierre Dorion’s Indian wife, Marie,

that when it was time to continue up the Missouri River she declined to go on

she preferred to remain forever where such pleasant things were happening

Pierre, as was his too usual custom, used a birch stick

to convince her of the inappropriateness of her decision

CONSTRUCTION OF PACIFIC FUR COMPANY POST BEGINS

After nearly two months of cutting and blasting trees and stumps

Astorians had cleared scarcely an acre of ground

(located at the corner of 15th and Exchange in today’s downtown Astoria)

Pacific Fur Company clerk Alexander Ross wrote: **“In the meantime three of our men were killed by the natives, two more wounded by the falling of trees, and one had his hand blown off by gunpowder…. The people suffered greatly from the humidity of the climate. The Sandwich Islanders, used to a dry, pure atmosphere, sank under its influence; damp fogs, and sleet were frequent…and all this time we were without tents or shelter. Add to this the bad quality of our food…so that one-half of the party, on the average, were constantly on the sick list.”[[82]](#footnote-82)**

After the long project of clearing an acre of land had been opened

twelve miles upriver from mouth of Columbia River -- April 12, 1811

construction was begun on a warehouse that measured sixty by twenty feet

to find sufficient small logs for constructing the building the men went deep into the forest

then harnessed themselves in teams of eight and like oxen and dragged the timbers to the site

WILSON PRICE HUNT AND HIS PARTY REACH NODAWAY CAMP

Hunt’s new recruits joined their traveling companions at Nodaway Camp

at the mouth of the Nodaway River three hundred miles above St. Louis -- middle of April 1811

Final preparations were completed

Pacific Fur Company Land Expedition waited only for the weather

DAVID THOMPSON LEAVES BOAT ENCAMPMENT

Spring brought its own hardships as Thompson set out south up the Columbia River -- April 17, 1811

accompanied by five voyageurs, two Iroquois and two Sanpoil interpreters; only one dog was left

for fifteen days they toiled through three feet of wet snow that remained on the ground

one of the men was afflicted with snow blindness and heavy rains soaked them

spring runoff dangerously swelled the rivers

sometimes they were forced to wade beside their boat in nearly freezing water

and sometimes wearing snowshoes they towed the canoe from the bank

ice threatened to break as they dragged their heavy boat and gear across thinly frozen lakes

they were always hungry and generally they camped on snow

Thompson reached the site of his first post, Kootanae House at the source of the Columbia River

which had been abandoned when he had traveled east the year before ([810]

he did not have enough men or trade goods to re-establish the trading post

or to pacify any hostile Indians they might encounter

Indians with whom Thompson had worked earlier remained friendly

they greeted Thompson warmly as he passed through their respective lands

While exploring, he learned from the Indians the river flowing from Lake Windemere

turned south before flowing to the Pacific Ocean

they informed him the journey to the ocean was the “voyage of a summer moon”

he believed this must be the Columbia River

Nor’Wester David Thompson and his nine traveling companions left Kootanae House

they traveled by canoe down the Kootenai River toward Saleesh House

DAVID THOMPSON AND HIS COMPANIONS FOLLOW THE KOOTENAI RIVER

Kootenai River was traveled downstream about 240 miles (to a point near present Libby, Montana)

their battered canoe was abandoned (near Libby, Montana)

in favor of horses acquired from the local Indians

Now on horseback they followed the familiar trail to Saleesh House

the North West Company post built by David Thompson on the Clark Fork River [1809]

horses presented their own difficulties

as men and animals floundered through swamps and fresh-water springs

along the way Thompson added two more Indians to his party

ANDREW HENRY AND HIS TRAPPERS LEAVE FORT HENRY ON THE SNAKE RIVER

After a cold, miserable winter in the furthest American outpost in the West

and with the prospect of receiving fresh supplies from St. Louis fading

Andrew Henry and his trappers abandoned Fort Henry (Idaho) -- spring 1811

Andrew Henry divided his St. Louis Missouri Fur Company trappers into three groups:

•some would stay in the mountains to trap and trade with the natives,

•Edward Robinson, John Hoback, and Jacob Reznor decided to go home to Kentucky,

•Henry and a third contingent took forty packs of beaver pelts to the Yellowstone River

(and eventually boated to a meeting with company owner Manuel Lisa)

MANUEL LISA ORGANIZEDS A NEW FUR COMPANY

Not having heard from Major Andrew Henry whom he had left on the upper Missouri River

Manuel Lisa decided to go to his aide -- spring 1811

Lisa planned a expedition among the Arikara Indiansto build another fort

in what is now (northern South Dakota)

St. Louis Missouri Fur Company was reorganized into a new firm

known simply as the “Missouri Fur Company” with Manuel Lisa was the proprietor

Lisa began collecting trade goods and personnel in St. Louis for the new venture

he hired Charbonneau and Sacajawea to serve as guides for his expedition

Lisa also anticipated the services of Pierre and Marie Dorion as had been arranged previously

although Pierre was currently employed by Wilson Price Hunt

Lisa had no way of knowing that Andrew Henry and his men had abandoned their post

along the Snake River (in Idaho)

WILSON PRICE HUNT’S EXPEDITION PREPARES TO DEPART FOR THE WEST

In the party which Hunt was to lead were four experienced frontiersmen and Astor partners:

•Donald McKenzie, one-time Nor’Wester, was a “winterer” in the wilderness

who had joined Astor with the understanding that he was to share command with Hunt

but at the last minute Astor had reduced him to a subordinate position;

•Ramsay Crooks, a Scot, had traded and trapped on the plains;

•Robert McClellan, an old border fighter famed for his exploits and his marksmanship,

had been a trapping partner with Ramsay Crooks;

•Joseph Miller had fought as a lieutenant in the Revolution under “Mad” Anthony Wayne

and had been an employee of John Jacob Astor’s American Fur Company

Any one of these men would have served the expedition more ably

than did Astor’s choice of Wilson Price Hunt

Also recruited for the Pacific Fur Company Overland Expedition were:

experienced trappers William Cannon (or Canning), Alexander Carson and hunter John Day

Various recruits and desertions placed the members of Hunt’s expedition at about sixty-seven

WILSON PRICE HUNT’S LAND EXPEDITION LEAVES NODAWAY CAMP

After a delay of several days due to the weather Wilson Price Hunt’s Overland Expedition

including Pierre Dorion, Marie Dorion their two children

made their start on their long journey toward the Columbia River -- April 22, 1811

but first they would stop at the Arikara Indian villages (in today’s northern South Dakota)

As proposed by John Jacob Astor, Wilson Price Hunt led his Astorians up the Missouri River

this route had been previously been explored by Lewis and Clark

WILSON PRICE HUNT’S OVERLAND EXPEDITION SEES SIGNS OF INDIAN TROUBLE

Hunt’s expedition camped along the Missouri River at the mouth of the Platte River -- April 28, 1811

here they saw signs of the Indian war they had heard about from the Osage Indians

on the bank lay the frame of a bull boat

it had been used not long before to convey a raiding party across the river

rolling smoke on the horizon during the day and a red glare in the sky at night told of grass fires lighted by a fleeing band to cut off their pursuers

Concerned about hostile Indians Hunt posted guards each night

a few nights later as the party slept eleven Sioux warriors rushed the camp

yelling and brandishing tomahawks

when the attackers were seized and overpowered by the guards

the natives protested that their visit was friendly

Pierre Dorion, who was familiar with Sioux customs, said that since the Indians were naked

it showed they were members of a band defeated in war

who had cast off their clothes and adornments and vowed to recover their honor by performing an act of blood

Wilson Price Hunt sent them across the Missouri River under the watchful eye of his riflemen

WILSON PRICE HUNT HAS MORE DIFFICULTY WITH HIS EXPEDITION

Apparently Hunt did not know how to resolve grievances or how to enforce his will

two more of his hunters deserted

if his men continued to desert just as the need of them became greater

the situation promised to become even more serious

two British scientists, John Bradbury and Thomas Nuttall, were traveling with the expedition

every time the Land Expedition stopped, regardless of possible Indian danger,

both scientists would wander off over the prairie in different directions

each absorbed in his own special pursuit

they would range further and further afield

until they were recaptured by members of the expedition

OREGON ASTORIANS MEET THE GRANDSON OF AN OLD SPANISH SHIPWRECK SURVIVOR

John Jacob Astor’s partners Alexander McKay and Robert Stuart and clerk Gabriel Franchere

set out from the *Tonquin* on an expedition into the Cascade Mountains -- May 1811

Franchere wrote in his journal of meeting an eighty year old Spanish half-breed

who was living near the Cascade Mountain

he called himself Soto and claimed to be the grandson of a Spaniard also named Soto

who had been wrecked at Clatsop beach at the mouth of Columbia River

(he could, in fact, have been the legendary Konapee of Clatsop fame

who survived a shipwreck [1693 or 1705])

according to Soto part of crew made it ashore but all but four were killed by Clatsops

these four survivors all married Indian women -- one of whom was Soto’s mother

while he was a child, Soto’s father and the other three Spaniards left the Clatsop village

to find Spanish settlements along the southern coast

none of the four were ever heard from again

(Franchere later published his reminiscences first in French then translated it was into English

under the title *Narrative of a Voyage to the Northwest Coast of America* [1854])

MANUEL LISA LEAVES ST. LOUIS FOR THE UPPER MISSOURI RIVER REGION

Manuel Lisa hurried up the Missouri River with fresh supplies

bound for Henry’s Fort at the Three Forks of the Missouri River (Montana) -- May 13, 1811

he had in his employ twenty-five men

including Charbonneau and Sacajawea who served as guides

Lisa was three weeks and two hundred forty miles of turbulent river behind Wilson Price Hunt

Lisa became irate when he learned his court writ could not be served at St. Charles

because Pierre Dorion had gone up the Missouri River with his wife and children

now the chase was on -- it would continue for over a thousand miles

Lisa was very intent on catching Wilson Price Hunt and overtaking him at the Arikara Villages

his party of twenty-four employees plus the leader and a young sightseer, Henry Brackenridge had one large pirogue propelled by twenty paddlers with a mounted swivel gun on the bow

Manuel Lisa knew he was far behind in the race to the Arikara Villages

but he was so angered by the thought of falling farther behind Wilson Price Hunt’s Astorians

that he redoubled his efforts to catch his rival

MANUEL LISA REACHES THE OMAHA VILLAGES

Lisa eventually reached the region of the Omaha villages -- May 19, 1811

he believed himself beaten in the race with Wilson Price Hunt

he sent a message up the Missouri River to Hunt asking Hunt to wait for him

so their combined parties could offer mutual protection through hostile Indian country

SCIENTISTS WITH WILSON PRICE HUNT ALMOST COME TO GRIEF

Thomas Nuttall armed only with his trowel was quite often seen happily venturing over the prairie

to dig for roots that were not for the cooking pot

this activity drew the amused contempt of the voyageurs who called him “the fool”

On one occasion the as boats approached a bend in the Missouri River -- May 20, 1811

old John Bradbury decided to walk across a stretch of prairie which lay in front of them

in his endless quest for biological specimens

Astorians were passing through the country of the fierce Teton Sioux

Hunt had just learned Indians were gathering in force to block the Astorians’ progress

and to steal their trade goods and weapons

Bradbury set off carrying under his arm the huge portfolio he used to press flowers

bearing his camp kettle on his back and his rifle slung over his shoulder

on this occasion, after emptying his rifle completely but ineffectively at some prairie dogs, he stood near the river’s bank around a bend ahead of the Astorians

he was bent peering at a mineral specimen through his microscope

when he felt ungentle hands on his shoulders for several moments

three or four hostile Indians threatened him with a leveled crossbow and tried to drag him away to their main camp

Bradbury showed them the charms of his pocket compass

which kept the savages amused for a short time

next he produced his microscope with the same result

these natives remained fascinated until the boats came around the bend and they fled

THREE KENTUCKIANS TRAVEL TOWARD HOME

Wilson Price Hunt the leader of John Jacob Astor’s Land Expedition

was deploring the loss of two more deserters -- morning May 26, 1811

when two dugout canoes bearing white men came in sight

and nosed into the Missouri shore at the mouth of the Niobrara River

these canoes contained trappers Edward Robinson, John Hoback and Jacob Reznor

who had been with Manuel Lisa’s partner Andrew Henry

at the St. Louis Missouri Fur Company’s Fort Henry on the Snake River (Idaho)

they were making their way back home to Kentucky

these three Kentuckians were of the character of the great frontiersmen

who opened the American frontier

Robinson, Hoback, and Reznor took breakfast with the Astorians

Astor’s Land Expedition leader Wilson Price Hunt convinced the three frontiersmen

to join the Overland Expedition with an offer of a full trapping outfit and ammunition

in return for half of their take in beaver pelts

they were designated guides to lead the expedition to Andrew Henry’s abandoned post

on Henry’s Fork on the Snake River (Idaho)

Three Kentuckians turned their canoes adrift on the Missouri River

and threw in their lot with the Astorians

WILSON PRICE HUNT RECEIVES A NOTE FROM MANUEL LISA

While Wilson Price Hunt was in camp at the mouth of the Niobrara River (northern Nebraska)

Indians entered the camp with a white man bearing a note from Manuel Lisa

asking Hunt to wait for him so the combined parties could safely travel together

through hostile Sioux country

Hunt did not consider this offer favorably

he sent Manuel Lisa an ambiguous, though friendly, response and hurried on from the Niobrara

leaving Lisa to do the best he could for himself through hostile country

WILSON PRICE HUNT MAKES A DRASTIC CHANGE OF PLANS

John Jacob Astor’s orders had been clear

Hunt’s expedition was to follow the route of Lewis and Clark to the Columbia River

But stories of hostile Blackfoot Indians told by Edward Robinson, John Hoback and Jacob Reznor

led Wilson Price Hunt to make a change of plans

Hunt decided not to journey on as a water expedition up the Missouri and Yellowstone rivers\

to the Columbia River as Lewis and Clark had done

rather he would travel to the Arikara villages (in today’s North and South Dakota) instead

and there trade with the Arikara for horses for an overland expedition

this course according to the three Kentuckians offered several advantages:

•it avoided the Blackfoot menace,

•this route was shorter,

•it avoided a difficult mountain crossing,

•it lay through a country of plentiful game

HUNT’S NEW ROUTE CHANGED THE NATURE OF THE OVERLAND EXPEDITION

Wilson Price Hunt’s new route had been traced from the Snake River country

by Edward Robinson, John Hoback, and Jacob Reznor when they traveled east

from Fort Henry on the Snake River (Idaho)

Hired as guides the three Kentuckians suggested the Overland Expedition

travel from the Arikara villages to the south and west through the country of the Crow Indians

and cross the Rocky Mountains over the Big Horn Mountains Range

this, Edward Robinson, John Hoback, and Jacob Reznor assured Wilson Price Hunt,

would allow them to avoid the Blackfoot Indians

Astor’s Land Expedition would journey to Henry’s Fort on the Snake River (Idaho)

However, this new route required the Astorians shift earlier than had been anticipated

from a water expedition to a land expedition

If Wilson Price Hunt had had any knowledge of the wilds or of Indians, he would surely have realized

sixty armed men in canoes would have a good chance of fending off an attack by the Blackfoot

but that seventy men with their mounts and pack horses would be courting disaster also, that riding into the unknown where lack of game and water and fodder for their horses was an even greater danger than Blackfoot Indians

indeed, they might even lose their horses

as the Crows were well-known for successfully stealing horses

ASTORIANS TRAVELING WITH WILSON PRICE HUNT ENCOUNTER SIOUX INDIANS

A few days after leaving the Niobrara River the Overland Expedition encountered a Sioux war party

about six hundred strong gathered on the Missouri River’s bank

Astorians hastily loaded swivel guns and small arms and made ready to fight their way through

Sioux seeing there preparations spread their buffalo robes on the ground and invited Hunt to a council

Wilson Price Hunt, accompanied by Astor’s other partners and the interpreter, stepped ashore

they were followed by the elderly scientist Joseph Bradbury

who was always eager to collect information about the aborigines

once seated on the ground the pipe was passed around the circle

presents of tobacco and dried corn were brought from the keelboats

demeanor of the white men was friendly

and the gifts stacked beside Hunt waiting to be distributed were appealing

warriors could see the hunters with their rifles remaining on board the boats

while the swivel guns pointed shoreward in a menacing manner

Sioux chiefs declared that they had meant to interfere with the white man’s boats

only because they believed they were carrying ammunition to the Arikaras, Minnetarees

and Mandans with whom the Sioux were currently at war

since the white men were merely on their way to join their friends beyond the mountains

the Sioux had nothing but kind feelings toward them

WILSON PRICE HUNT’S EXPEDITION HAS A SECOND INDIAN ENCOUNTER

Two days had barely passed after their first meeting with Sioux Indians

when another large Indian band was sighted coming down to the river

they appeared to be preparing to seize the keelboats in the channel ahead

which was narrowed by a sand bar

Astor’s partner Joseph Miller felt a tug on his arm

British scientist Thomas Nuttall had risen to his feet and was peering at the threatening warriors

**“Sir,”** Miller heard the scientist ask with much animation, **“don’t you think these Indians much fatter and more robust than those of yesterday?”[[83]](#footnote-83)**

these fatter Indians proved to be Arikaras and their allies seeking a skirmish with the Sioux

they jumped into the water and held out their hands in a white man’s greeting

after the friendly greeting was exchanged, the natives hastened away to their village upriver

to prepare their people for a visit from the white traders with the hope of acquiring a supply of arms and ammunition

HUNT’S ASTORIANS LEARN THE MISSOURI FUR COMPANY IS CLOSE BY

About two miles below the Arikara village two Indians came up in haste to inform Wilson Price Hunt

that another large trading boat was ascending the river

this was Manuel Lisa straining to overtake Hunt

Approximately sixty-eight Astorians were traveling in four boats

Hunt thought it best to stop and wait for the Spaniard

much of the time during this rest was spent calming the fiery Robert McClellan

who envisioned the coming of a great opportunity to shoot Lisa on sight

(McClellan had lost several lawsuits to Lisa regarding failure to deliver merchandise)

Pierre Dorion also sank into a sullen rage at the prospect of Lisa’s arrival

*TONQUIN* ATTEMPTS TO SAIL NORTH TO TRADE Captain Jonathan Thorn was anxious to get away from Astoria as quickly as possible

he rushed ashore an insufficient supply of goods to stock the post

Thorn sailed away from Astoria to trade around Vancouver Island -- June 1, 1811

he took Astor’s partner Alexander McKay with him as supercargo

However, a strong wind kept the *Tonquin* within the Baker’s Bay for four days

ASTORIANS AND MISSOURI FUR COMPANY TRAVELED TOGETHER

Manuel Lisa overtook Wilson Price and his Astorians at the edge of Sioux country -- June 2, 1811

among the occupants of Lisa’s boat was a woman and her child

Sacajawea, the “Bird Woman” of Lewis and Clark fame,

and the boy, now six years old, who had entered the world on that expedition

Sacajawea and Marie Dorion were thus traveling companions for a brief time

Lisa planned to continue on the Missouri River until he reached Henry’s Fort (Montana)

on the Missouri River at Three Forks

Wilson Price Hunt, perhaps in a ploy of trickery, agreed to join forces with Manuel Lisa

he suggested their collective strength would be valuable in the face of potential Indian problems

whether Hunt lied or changed his mind later is uncertain

Astor’s partners Robert McClellan and Ramsay Crooks helped convince Hunt

that Lisa would deliver them to the hostile Indians by trickery

no evidence of this exists, but such were the tactics of fur traders

For two days the rival traders traveled together in apparent good will

Manuel Lisa, indeed, was so smooth-tongued and gracious

that Pierre Dorion forgot the wrongs earlier done to him

OLD HOSTILE FEELINGS REKINDLE

Wilson Price Hunt and Manuel Lisa’s competing parties traveled together

on the way to the Arikara Villages (just above today’s Mobridge, South Dakota)

Lisa still needed a Sioux interpreter

Pierre Dorion accepted an invitation to visit the Spaniard’s boat -- June 4, 1811

Lisa plied the weak-willed man generously with whiskey and sought to win him from Hunt

but Dorion had his own sense of honor

not for bribes, nor even for liquor that he too dearly loved,

would he consent to break his agreement with Wilson Price Hunt

Lisa threatened to retain Dorion forcibly if necessary

to work out his old whiskey debt of ten dollars a quart

Dorion flew into a rage, left the boat, and went to Hunt at once with his story

BOTH HUNT AND LISA EXPEDITIONS FACE NEAR DISASTER

Manuel Lisa followed Pierre Dorion to Wilson Price Hunt’s camp

but not in time to prevent a recital of events by Pierre Dorion -- if that was his intent

There was a violent scene as Dorion hit Lisa

noise of the brawl attracted lovers of excitement to the spot

Lisa had a knife, but Dorion seized a pair of pistols and kept his foe at a distance

Robert McClellan arrived with a rifle with the intention of carrying out his threat to kill Lisa

indeed, Wilson Price Hunt had great difficulty in preventing him from doing so

meanwhile the scientific John Bradbury and the literary Thomas Nuttall

were doing their best to aid Hunt in soothing the combatants

Lisa, next hurled an insult at Wilson Price Hunt

Hunt, himself enraged, challenged Lisa to a pistol duel

Both expeditions could have ended that night

but Bradbury and Nuttall succeeded in preventing the duel from taking place

it was Lisa who yielded -- perhaps realizing that if he bested Hunt

he would then face the prospect of fighting, in some sequence, McClellan and Dorion

While violence was narrowly avoided hatred flourished unabated

both expeditions continued to share company during the following days

but there was no further exchange of courtesies

CONSTRUCTION OF PACIFIC FUR COMPANY POST IS COMPLETED

John Jacob Astor’s trading post was enclosed in a stockade of logs built of bark-covered logs mounted guns were put in place after the model of northern fur-trading forts

this main trading post or factory was located on the south (Oregon) side of the Columbia River

First permanent American settlement in Pacific Northwest was named “Astoria”

in honor of John Jacob Astor President of the Pacific Fur Company -- June 4, 1811

Astor’s partner Chief Factor Duncan McDougall was in command of Astoria

McDougall’s authority as the representative of John Jacob Astor was unquestioned

but he quickly showed himself to be an angry irritable little man of second-rate ability

*TONQUIN* SAILS FROM THE MOUTH OF THE COLUMBIA RIVERCaptain Jonathan Thorn was anxious to get away from Baker’s Bay

when the wind changed to favorable Captain Thorn crossed the bar of the Columbia River

he sailed north to supply Russians-American Company

in New Archangel (Sitka) Russian-America (Alaska) -- June 5, 1811

(Astor had previously sent an agent to St. Petersburg, Russia

who had made arrangements to supply Russian trading posts)

*Tonquin* carried most of the trade goods supplied by John Jacob Astor

leaving Astoria with a short supply of trading stock and supplies

Captain Thorn had with him twenty-three men aboard the *Tonquin*

Alexander McKay, one of Astor’s partners, went on board acting as supercargo and chief trader

he also represented the interests of Astor’s partners

clerk James Lewis also accompanied the ship to record trading activities

*Tonquin* stopped along the Pacific coast to pick up a Chehalis Indian translator

known by various spellings of his name: Lamazee (author Washington Irving);

(Lamaza as identified by clerk Alexander Ross or Lamanse by historian Hubert Bancroft)

Next the *Tonquin* stopped to trade at Clayoquot Soundon Vancouver Island

DAVID THOMPSON REACHES SALEESH HOUSE

Traveling by horseback from Kootanae House David Thompson accompanied by nine companions

arrived at Saleesh House on the Clark Fork River -- June 5, 1811

There Thompson anticipated finding supplies, equipment and his clerk Finan McDonald

to his dismay he found Saleesh House abandoned

because of the Piegan threat Finan McDonald had joined Jacques Finlay at Spokane House

Thompson left notes warning Astor’s land expedition this was North West Company property

in case the Americans passed by the post

DAVID THOMPSON ENTERS THE KOOTENAI RIVER

Thompson and his nine traveling companions set out down the Kootenai River by canoe

they crossed to Lake Pend O’reille and on to the Pend O’reille River which they paddled down

(to a point near the present town of Cusick, Washington)

next the party portaged south across country about fifteen miles to the Little Spokane River

and down that stream to its confluence with the Spokane River

David Thompson met Finan McDonald and Jacques Finlay at Spokane House

(about nine miles northwest of present Spokane -- this site later became

one of the major fur trading locations for both British and American fur traders)

Thompson approved the post’s location where multitudes of Indians came to catch and dry fish

Thompson stated in his notes while at Spokane House that the purpose of his voyage was: **“to explore this river in order to open a passage for the interior trade with the Pacific ocean** [sic]**”[[84]](#footnote-84)**

ASTORIA IS VISITED BY TWO KOOTENAI INDIANS FROM THE UPPER COLUMBIA RIVER

Astorians at the post were greeted by two Indians purported to be husband and wife

they were dressed in long robes of deerskin with leggings and moccasins -- June 8, 1811

they looked more like Rocky Mountain natives than locals

they could not understand any speech until a French-Canadian addressed them in Cree language

with which they seemed partially familiar

In fact, they were two female Kootenai Indians who carried a letter

sent by North West Company clerk Finan McDonald at a fort

that he head just constructed on the Spokane River

this letter was addressed to Nor’Wester John Stuart stationed somewhere in the interior

These messengers said they had descended the (Spokane River)

when the couple reached the Columbia River they heard of white men at the river’s mouth

thus the messengers journeyed downriver instead of upriver and arrived at Astoria

they indicated that the North West Company was ready to contest the Pacific Fur Company

for possession of the Columbia River drainage area

Astorians decided to send an expedition into the interior to investigate

David Stuart began to make preparations for the journey into the interior

ASTORIANS EXPLORE TO THE SOUTH OF THEIR TRADING POST

Clerks William Henry and Alfred Seton journeyed from Fort Astoria by bateau

some one hundred miles up the Columbia River

they entered the Willamette River and continued upriver as far as the waterfall on the Willamette

where they portaged around the east side

they continued to a place where the banks flattened out on both sides of the river

Calapooya Indians (a group of Native American tribes who shared a common language)

had long made this area their home hunting and fishing in the plentiful valley

this region later became known as Champoeg (pronounced: sham-POO-ee)

the name Champoeg is something of a puzzle

some early settlers claimed Calapooya Indians used the name

which meant “Prairie of the Blue Flowers”

others said it was a corruption of the French “Campment du Sable” (“sand camp”)

still others indicated the name was a double corruption

a combination of the French word “champ” (field)

and the Calapooyan word “pooitch” (an edible root)

(today Champoeg survives only as a name for a few specific places:

a park, an historic district and a cemetery in the northern tip of Marion County)

CALAPOOYA INDIANS CALLED CHAMPOEG IN THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY HOME

Calapooya Indians were the earliest known inhabitants of these prairies

Champoeg, a prehistoric lake bed located along the south and east bank of the Willamette River,

was composed of an open, sandy peninsula on the south side of the Willamette River

located a few miles above the falls on the Willamette River

its soil is deep and rich and free of rocks

there were few places to cross the Willamette River but one crossing existed

where the river was narrow during the summertime

there a wide gravel bench stretched across

Indian village of Champooick was located south of the waterfall

on the east bank of the Willamette River (near today’s Salem, Oregon)

For centuries Calapooya Indians kept Champoeg as open range

by annually burning off the tall prairie grass

there they fished at Willamette Falls, hunted game on the prairies,

gathered abundant Camas bulbs and picked berries in the nearby mountains

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY ESABLISHES A HUGE LAND GRAND

Competition between the British Hudson’s Bay Company and Canadian North West Company

increased when Hudson’s Bay Company tightened their grip on their Canadian holdings

Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk acquired enough shares

of the British Hudson’s Bay Company to control the enterprise

Hudson’s Bay Company granted Lord Selkirk 116,000 square miles

or seventy-four   
million acres on the Red River -- June 12, 1811

(this territory comprised large portions of present-day Manitoba, Saskatchewan,

Northern Minnesota and North Dakota)

Lord Selkirk’s land claim was also a problem for the North West Company

as the settlement lay directly across the main North West Company supply route

North West Company voyageurs were cut off from their Montreal headquarters and supplies

Selkirk’s claim also occupied the heart of the buffalo range which the Nor’Westers depended on

for vital supplies of pemmican

ASTORIANS AND MISSOURI FUR COMPANY ARRIVE AT THE ARIKARA VILLAGES

Wilson Price Hunt’s Astorians and Manuel Lisa’s Missouri Fur Company

arrived at the Arikara village (in central South Dakota near northern boundary) -- June 12, 1811

they pitched their camps near the mouth of the Grand River on opposite shores

Manuel Lisa sent young sightseer Henry Brackenridge to Wilson Price Hunt’s tent

with the suggestion that to assure their mutual safety they should enter the Indian village together

with the outward appearance of friendliness

Hunt was aware that these Indians who were new to him were old acquaintances of Lisa’s

this arrangement would at least allow Hunt to water the Indians when they met

During the council with the Arikara Lisa removed much of the suspicion Hunt had felt toward him

Lisa’s speech assured the Indians that although his party and the Astorians had separate interests

Lisa would resent any wrong done to his rivals as if they had been done to him

Lisa also provided Hunt every assistance in acquiring horses since the Astorians had decided

to leave the Missouri River at this point and pursue their way overland across the plains

in fact, Lisa knew that leaving the route of Lewis and Clark to blaze their own way

was a foolhardy move

Manuel Lisa well might smile while he was giving assistance to Wilson Price Hunt

WILSON PRICE HUNT AND MANUEL LISA REMAIN IN THE ARIKARA VILLAGES

Horses proved to be difficult to acquire from the Arikara Indians -- June 15, 1811

both Wilson Price Hunt and his party of seventy Pacific Fur Company employees

and Manuel Lisa with his twenty-five Missouri Fur Company men

spent in excess of a month among the Arikara villagers

AT THE ARIKARA VILLAGE EDWARD ROSE JOINED THE OVER LAND EXPEDITION

Edward Rose was a very unpleasant, insolent renegade ex-Lisa man

with a vicious appearance and sullen disposition who was a friend of the Crow Indians

he was a big, powerful man with a violent temper -- but he also possessed great ability

he had a sinister reputation and no one trusted him

he seemed to be motivated only by his own interests

he was well known to the guides, Kentuckian Edward Robinson, John Hoback and Jacob Reznor

(Edward Rose had first come up the Missouri River with Manuel Lisa [1807]

and had passed the winter of John Colter’s adventure in a Crow village

after a dispute with Lisa he had returned to the Crows where he lived for a number of years)

Since his expedition would pass through Crow country

Wilson Price Hunt believed Rose would be a valuable asset and added him to the expedition

as an interpreter and guide

*TONQUIN* VISITS VANCOUVER ISLAND

*Tonquin* sailed up the Pacific coast to Vancouver Island and into Clayoquot Sound -- June 15, 1811

Captain Jonathan Thorn did not know these natives were waiting for a chance to take revenge

in retribution for Captain G.W. Ayres of the *Mercury* carrying off a dozen of their people

and leaving them on California’s barren Farallon Islands in Drake’s Bay [1810]

Chief Wickaninnish invited Chief Trader Alexander McKay to land and stay with him

McKay went ashore to a large Tla-o-qui-aht Indian village to visit with Wickaninnish

McKay was received in a most cordial manner

at the same time, six Indians were held on the *Tonquin* as hostages to ensure the safety of McKay

Captain Thorn did not wait for the return of Alexander McKay to begin trading

packets of goods were laid out: cloth, blankets, knives, ribbons, buttons, hatchets, beads,

fishhooks and clothes were put on display to entice trade

Chief Nookimus, who was aboard the *Tonquin,* was anxious to begin the trading

trade did not go well as the Indians were very familiar with trading with “Bostons”(Americans)

in reaction to the high prices set by natives Captain Thorn thrust his hands into his pockets

he paced up and down the deck of his ship in sullen silence

shrewd old Chief Nookimus followed him to and fro holding out sea otter skins

pestering the captain to trade

Captain Thorn became increasingly enraged at the prices set by the natives

Thorn spit at Chief Nookimus’ feet to show his disgust with the Indian

Nookimus thrust a sea otter pelt in Captain Thorn’s face

Thorn suddenly turned and snatched the otter skin from the chief’s hand

and rubbed the old man’s face with it

Thorn then lifted the old Chief up and threw him overboard

Indians quickly cleared the deck and silently paddled back to their village

where they spent the night

CHIEF TRADER ALEXANDER MCKAY RETURNS TO THE *TONQUIN* After an overnight stay in the Tla-o-qui-aht Indian village

McKay was unaware of the events that had unfolded aboard the *Tonquin*

he left the Indian village and returned to the ship-- June 16, 1811

Native interpreter Lamazee related what had happened to Alexander McKay

and begged McKay to prevail on the captain to depart from Clayoquot Sound

Astor’s partner and Chief Trader Alexander McKay ordered the *Tonquin* to sail

Captain Jonathan Thorn made ignored this demand

Thorn pointed out the cannon and firearms provided adequate protection

Thorn believed the Indians would return to trade -- and at his price

McKay and Thorn retired to the Captain’s cabin where a hot argument ensued

but the *Tonquin* remained anchored in place

DAVID THOMPSON CONTINUES HIS “VOYAGE OF A SUMMER MOON”

After spending overnight with his clerks Finan McDonald and Jacques Finlay

Thompson prepared to leave Spokane House traveling on borrowed horses after complaining

that strayed horses had delayed his departure until the late hour of 8:45 a.m. -- June 17, 1811

Thompson and his small party of Iroquois, Sanpoil Indians and French-Canadian voyageurs

headed northwest along an Indian trail linking fishing places until this trail left the river

and continued north toward Chamokane Creek where they camped

after butchering an old horse for dinner the men retired for the night

and a constant fight with mosquitoes which were very troublesome[[85]](#footnote-85)

INDIANS ARRIVE AT THE *TONQUIN* TO TRADE

While Captain Jonathan Thorn and Chief Trader Alexander McKay were asleep

twenty unarmed Indians in a large canoe commanded by Chief Shrewish

paddled out to the *Tonquin* -- morning June 17, 1811

they held up sea otter skins and made signs that they wanted to trade

Indians paddled closer and came alongside the *Tonquin* to trade

as everyone was eager to trade the officer of the watch,

who was in charge of the ship in the absence of the captain,

ignored standard procedures and permitted the natives to mount the deck

Soon a second large canoe arrived -- these Indians also proceeded to board the ship

more canoes came along side and more Indians clambered onto the vessel

it was noticed the canoes were paddled by women

as more and more Indians came on board the *Tonquin*

Thorn and McKay both reached the deck of the *Tonquin* to watch over the trading

Indians climbed up the rope ladders on one side of the ship

every native had a packet of furs held over his head as a sign they wanted to trade

Indians moved slowly across the deck making their selections from piles of trade goods

that had been laid out for their inspection

trade did not advance well even with Chief Trader McKay urging on the exchanges

Indians always offered fewer furs than was demanded by Thorn

after crossing the ship’s deck to the far rail the Indians climbed down the rope ladders

but instead of boarding their canoes and leaving the natives climbed back aboard the ship

crew members saw themselves surrounded by a multitude of natives

each sailor had several Indians in his immediate vicinity

*TONQUIN* IS OVERRUN WITH INDIAN

One of the sailors aloft in the rigging became alarmed as the Indian numbers rapidly increased

he called a warning to Captain Jonathan Thorn and Chief Trader Alexander McKay

McKay urged Thorn to clear the ship and get under way

Thorn again made light of the advice -- after all, Astor’s partners did not command his ship

he said that with the firearms on board

there was no reason to fear an even a greater number of Indians on board

however, all of the weapons were placed in storage in a cabin below the deck

*Tonquin’s* crew was actually unarmed and scattered about the deck

Captain Thorn, after enough time had passed indicate his independence, issued orders to sail

sailors began to weigh anchor while other crewmen were sent aloft to make ready the sail

Indians now offered to trade with the Captain -- and on the captain’s terms

frantic trade was commenced and the Indians gathered up goods

*Tonquin’s* anchor was nearly up and her sails were loose

when Captain Thorn, in a loud voice, ordered the ship to be cleared

BATTLE ON BOARD THE *TONQUIN* LASTED FIVE MINUTES

One of the Indians gave a yell as a signal

trade bundles were dropped from the Indians’ hands revealing war clubs, tomahawks,

and new hatches and knives that had been acquired in trade

Thorn had armed an enemy aboard his ship while his crew remained defenseless

Natives rushed to attack their victims

first man to fall was clerk James Lewis who was leaning with folded arms over a bale of blankets

as he bartered with an Indian

Lewis received a stab wound in the back and fell down the companionway to the deck below

Chief Trader Alexander McKay who had been seated sprang to his feet

he was instantly knocked down with a war club and thrown backwards overboard

in the water he was killed by women in the canoes who beat him with their paddles

Captain Jonathan Thorn out up a desperate fight against fearful odds

he had come up on deck without a weapon

Chief Shrewish rushed him at the first outbreak -- Thorn barely had time to open a clasp knife

with one blow the young chief fell dead at the captain’s feet

several of Shrewish’s followers set upon the captain who defended himself vigorously

he attempted to fight his way to the cabin where the firearms were located

slain and wounded natives were strewn about the quarterdeck

Thorn was struck from behind with a war club which felled him to the deck

he was dispatched with knives and thrown overboard

for the women to avenge the insult to their chief

Using knives, handspikes and what other weapons they could grasp the sailors defended themselves

but they were soon overpowered by numbers and were mercilessly butchered

Seven crewmen who were aloft to make ready the sail contemplated with horror the carnage below

without weapons they let themselves down in the hope of getting below decks

three were mortally wounded in the effort

remaining four, including one who received a bad knife wound

made good their retreat into the cabin where the arms were kept

there they found Astorian James Lewis still alive

Sailors barricaded the cabin door and the guns were taken up

crewmen broke holes through the companionway and briskly fired the muskets and pistols

until the decks were cleared of attacking Indians

Lamazee, the Indian interpreter, was taken to the village

Survivors of the crew rushed out and discharged some of the deck guns

and drove all of the Indians to shore in their canoes

FOUR CREWMEN AND CLERK JAMES LEWIS REMAIN ALIVE ABOARD THE *TONQUIN*

Four sailors were not enough to sail the ship

James Lewis insisted the sailors take a boat and row out to sea during the night

four men left the *Tonquin* -- clerk James Lewis remained on board alone

unable to clear the entrance to the sound the sailors were obliged

to stop and rest for the night

exhausted by fatigue and watching for approaching Indians ready for the kill

they fell into a sound sleep in the ship’s boat

ONLY ONE MAN REMAINED ABOARD THE *TONQUIN*

After the battle clerk James Lewis was the only known survivor

on board the *Tonquin* -- early morning June 18, 1811

After a time some Indian canoes ventured forth to reconnoiter

they brought out the interpreter, Lamazee, who after the attack had spent the night in the village

Indians paddled around the *Tonquin* keeping a safe distance

only one man was seen on deck and Lamazee recognized him as James Lewis

Lewis made friendly signs and invited the natives on board

About two hundred Indians paddled out to the ship where the complete cargo of trade goods

was available for the taking

those who mounted the deck met no opposition as James Lewis had disappeared

other canoes pressed forward and the decks were soon crowded with Indians intent on plunder

As Indians scrambled about the ship the *Tonquin* became a volcano

ship fragments were blown high into the air as were arms, legs and mutilated bodies

apparently James Lewis had set off barrels of black powder -- 4½ tons were ignited

hundreds of natives were destroyed by the explosion

many more were shockingly mutilated

Indians swam for their lives or struggled with the agonies of coming death

those who escaped the danger remained aghast and stupefied by the results

for miles the beach was strewn with dismembered body parts

and the wreckage of canoes and the ship

for days afterwards limbs and bodies of the slain were thrown on the beach by the tides

*TONQUIN* VANISHED IN THE EXPLOSION

Inhabitants of Clayoquot Sound were overwhelmed with consternation

then one of the *Tonquin’s* boats was seen with four crewmen aboard -- morning June 18, 1811

shouts of fury greeted the sight of the unfortunate sailors who were forced ashore by natives

and brought to the Tla-o-qui-aht Indian village as captives

Lamazee was permitted to converse with the prisoners

he gathered from them some of the particulars already related

James Lewis advised them to slip the cable on a boat as soon as it was dark

and put off quietly in the ship’s boat in an effort to get out to sea

Lewis declared his intention to remain on board until daylight

to decoy as many Indians as possible and then set fire to the powder magazine

he planned to terminate his own life with a remarkable act of vengeance

all four unfortunate sailors perished in a painful and protracted manner

Aboard the *Tonquin* thirteen crewmen and traders and six Kanakas had perished

unknown hundreds of Indians had been killed and maimed

LOSS OF THE *TONQUIN* HAS A DEVASTATING AFFECT ON THE ASTORIANS

Although the Astorians did not yet know it

loss of the *Tonquin* was a grievous blow to the infant establishment of Astoria:

•loss of twenty-three men severely hindered the Astorians’ ability to defend themselves

they were now without one of their most respected trading partners, Alexander McKay;

•loss of the ship ended the possibility of conducting the all-important Russian trade

and they could not ship furs they managed to acquire to China as planned;

•area open for trade was now limited to the country around Astoria;

•loss of irreplaceable trade goods was a bitter blow;

•loss of the psychological advantage of having an armed vessel at their backs

undercut their very sense of security

THOMPSON VISITS WITH FREE TRAPPERS WORKING THE COLVILLE RIVER AREA

Awakening the next morning to thunder and lightning -- June 18, 1811

David Thompson was visited in camp by a free (unaffiliated) hunter who was trapping nearby

Thompson and his nine traveling companions were back on the trail -- 7:30 a.m.

they rode northwest, crossing several creeks that form the headwaters of the Colville River

along the way they paused to purchase a sack of roots from a group of Indians

and, a little farther along, they stopped to visit a small native camp

here they met another independent French-Canadian trapper

After resting their horses they continued north through the Colville Valley

DAVID THOMPSON CONTINUES ACROSS THE COLVILLE VALLEY

Thompson discovered the trail he was following crossed the Colville River[[86]](#footnote-86)

(a few miles north of present-day Arden, Washington)

He sent one of his men to a nearby Indian camp to hire a canoe to ferry their cargo across,

he purchased roots and fish and twenty-two muskrat pelts

David Thompson reached Ilthkoyape Falls (today’s Kettle Falls) on the Columbia River

(now submerged under Franklin Roosevelt Lake behind Grand Coulee Dam)

DAVID THOMPSON RESTS AND BUILDS A CANOE AT KETTLE FALLS

Spring salmon run had just begun at Kettle Falls,

Indian fishermen hung kettle-shaped baskets on the end of poles close to the falls

salmon trying to jump the thundering cataract fell back in incredible numbers

into the primitive traps

Thompson spent two weeks searching for materials suitable for building a large split-cedar canoe

sharp at both ends, the canoe was thirty foot long with a five-and-one-half foot beam

flat cedar timbers were bent to the desired shape by steaming

planks of cedar were bolted to a flat keel

nails were not used -- seams were gummed

David Thompson had heard on his trip back to the North West Company headquarters at Rainy Lake

that an American exploring party (Lewis and Clark) reached the mouth of the Columbia [1805]

he was thus undoubtedly eager to make a better claim to the area for Great Britain

than Lewis and Clark or John Jacob Astor would make for the United States

Thompson had been instructed to follow the complete course of the Columbia River in an effort

to arrive at the river’s mouth before North West Company’s newest rival

the Pacific Fur Company could stake a claim to the “Great river of the West”

however, David Thompson did not act like a man in a hurry

but rather he seemed to be a canny trader building good will for the future

DAVID THOMPSON CONTINUES DOWN THE COLUMBIA RIVER

North West Company employee and his eleven men cast off near Kettle Falls

bound for the mouth of the Columbia River in their large split-cedar canoe -- July 3, 1811

Thompson struck a British flag into the stern of his canoe

as a demonstration to the natives and any Americans he might encounter

Thompson’s canoe was propelled by eight oarsmen

five French voyageursand Thompson himself, an Iroquois bowman and steersman

two additional Sanpoil Indians accompanied him

Thompson was met by friendly Indians along the Columbia River who had never seen white men

whenever he encountered Indians he stopped, sometimes in the face of hostile demonstrations,

he passed out British flags and added eloquent testimonials about the North West Company

consequently, native peoples along the Lower Columbia greeted him warmly

near Crab Creek (about three miles east of today’s Reardan, Washington)

the two Sanpoil Indians were exchanged for a Shoshone chief and his wife

DAVID THOMPSON REACHES THE CONFLUENCE OF THE SNAKE AND COLUMBIA RIVERS

Thompson continued down the Columbia to the mouth of the Snake River

(near today’s Pasco) -- July 9, 1811

Thompson during a rest stop at the mouth of the Snake River set up a pole with a message

formally taking possession of the land for Great Britain’s King George III

he also noted his future intention to build a trading post: **“Know hereby that this country is claimed by Great Britain as part of its territories, and that the N.W. Company of Merchants from Canada, finding the Factory** [trading post] **for this people inconvenient for them, do hereby intend to erect a factory in this place for the convenience of the country around. D. Thompson. Junction of the Shawpatin** [Snake] **River with the Columbia. July 9th, 1811.”[[87]](#footnote-87)**

DAVID THOMPSON CONTINUES DOWN THE COLUMBIA RIVER

David Thompson followed Lewis and Clark’s route of six years earlier

only a short distance down river, Thompson met Chief Yellepit of the Walla Walla Tribe

who displayed an [1801] Jefferson medal and a small American flag

proof of the passage of the American Lewis and Clark Expedition

David Thompson camped opposite the John Day River -- July 10, 1811

he learned from the Indians of the arrival of John Jacob Astor’s ship *Tonquin*

and of Astor’s expedition at the mouth of the Columbia River three months before

When David Thompson reached The Dalles and his first Chinook village

Thompson’s Shakaption chief and his wife turned back up the Columbia River

leaving his with seven traveling companions

DAVID THOMPSON AND HIS MEN PREPARE TO COMPLETE THEIR EXPLORATION

Nor’Wester David Thompson and his traveling companions delayed starting from the Chinook village

until 6:15 a.m. July 15, 1811

they shaved and spruced up their clothes to make a proper appearance for the Astorians

also, they made sure that the British flag was flying from the stern of their canoe

ASTORIANS AT ASTORIA PREPARE TO JOURNEY UP THE COLUMBIA RIVER

David Stuart, one of Astor’s partners, was ordered to construct by Chief Factor Duncan McDougall

to build a second trading post at an appropriate trading area

several hundred miles up the Columbia River

guiding the trading party upstream was the pair of Kootenai Indians

who were purported to be husband and wife

Just as they were about to set out -- July 15, 1811

a canoe came paddling down the Columbia River flying the British flag

NOR’WESTER DAVID THOMPSON STOPS AT ASTORIA

When David Thompson arrived at John Jacob Astor’s post he found that the Astor sea party

had already arrived and the Americans had built four log huts of a permanent shelter

Thompson he had his voyageurs sweep him smartly to the dock -- afternoon of July 15, 1811

Astorians ran to the river’s edge to see the newcomers:

•Scottish clerks with their native brogue still strong;

•French-Canadian voyageurs hailing the Nor’Westers in accents of their own;

•Kanakas imported as workers from the Hawaiian Islands,

•Chinook Indians peering curiously out beneath deformed, sharply sloping foreheads;

•at the front of the unique crowd stood three former Nor’Westers

Duncan McDougall, David Stuart and David’s nephew Robert Stuart

Thompson was informed they called their post Astoria in honor of the American financier

DAVID THOMPSON IS WELL-RECEIVED BY THE ASTORIANS

Astorians would have been delighted to see any white men

many of the Astorians had formerly worked for the North West Company

and were already acquainted with David Thompson

they were doubly excited to meet one of their old friends

Friends and former Nor’Wester partners welcomed Thompson boisterously

they hurried him into their private quarters where he was well received

as they entertained Thompson and his men as hospitably as they could

Before he had left Fort William to lead the Columbia Brigade to the West

David Thompson had been informed by North West Company leaders

that the Nor’Westers and Pacific Fur Company planned to work together

to develop the fur trade in the Pacific Northwest

when he delivered the news of his understanding of the arrangement to the Astorians

they had no reason to disbelieve the Nor’Wester

the fact that the deal had fallen though was unknown to David Thompson

DAVID THOMPSON RECOGNIZES THE KOOTENAI INDIAN COUPLE

Thompson had first met the two Kootenai Indians posing as husband and wife three years before

the woman masquerading as a man had been living with one of hisvoyageurs

Thompson had run off for loose morals and troublemaking

this couple was now busily preparing to guide Astorian David Stuart up the Columbia River

David Thompson discovered one of the Kootenais occupied herself posing as a great prophetess,

she had frightened the Chinook Indians with threats of smallpox

(a disease they had become all to familiar with during virulent epidemics

brought by sea otter traders a few years before Lewis and Clark)

and with tales of two giants who were approaching

overturning the ground burying whole villages

if Thompson had not calmed down one angry delegation of Chinook Indians

they very well may have murdered the pair because of their “bad medicine”

DAVID THOMPSON CONTINUES ON TO THE PACIFIC OCEAN

David Thompson set out by canoe for the mouth of the Columbia River -- July 16, 1811

he reported in his journal: **“The next day in my canoe with my men I went to Cape Disappointment, which terminates the course of this river, and remained until the tide came in. At ebb tide we noticed the current of the river riding in waves over the surface to the sea for about four miles; on all the shores of this ocean the agitation of the sea is constantly breaking against the rocky shore with high surges, and my men now allowed the great volume of water forming these high surges to be far superior to those of any lake.”[[88]](#footnote-88)**

wind-whipped waves on the ever broadening Columbia River interested Thompson

Thompson reached Tongue Point where he reported: **“We continued our journey, amused with the seals playing in the river…we arrived at Tongue Point** [today’s Astoria, Oregon]**, which…brought us to a full view of the Pacific Ocean.”[[89]](#footnote-89)**

After a brief visit to the great sandbar of the Columbia River

David Thompson returned upriver to Astoria

ASTORIANS AND NOR’WESTER EXCHANGE INFORMATION

David Thompson had earned a week’s rest before heading back up the Columbia River

had mapped the Columbia River’s full length and examined its mouth

Thompson believed with the completed navigation of the Columbia River

this task had taken him four years and three months

with the geographic work done he was now ready

to attempt to draft a detailed map of Northwest America

Thompson, to deflect American interest, reported to the Astorians

there was poor trading in the interior -- but the ploy did not work

as the Astorians knew this information was inaccurate

Astorians knew more about the upper country than David Thompson might think

based on the information in the letter Nor’Wester Finan McDonald at Spokane House

had written to Nor’Wester John Stuart stationed somewhere in New Caledonia

this letter had accidentally been delivered to them by the two Kootenai Indians

posing as husband and wife

Finan McDonald’s report of the upper river was considerably different from Thompson’s

in truth, desertions, Indian difficulties and lack of supplies prevented the North West Company

from providing much competition for Astor’s Pacific Fur Company

however, the Nor’Westers who had joined the Astorians, too, had reasons to be discouraged

things had not gone well since they had joined Astor’s American Fur Company

WILSON PRICE HUNT’S PACIFIC FUR COMPANY OVERLAND EXPEDITION SETS OUT

Hunt and his Astorians would not follow the route of Lewis and Clark

up the Missouri and Yellowstone rivers to the Columbia River as ordered by John Jacob Astor

rather they would strike out overland implementing Wilson Price Hunt’s new travel plan

Hunt abandoned the keelboats in preparation for their westward overland journey

Astorians parted company with the two British scientists

John Bradbury and Thomas Nuttall chose this time to return to St. Louis with their specimens

Wilson Price Hunt led his approximately sixty-eight Astorians with eighty-two horses

they departed from the Arikara villages -- July 18, 1811

Hunt had not been able to produce mounts for all his people

seventy-six horses were used as pack animals that carried freight, merchandise and supplies

containing ammunition, goods for trade, traps, equipment, Indian corn, corn meal,

condensed soup, dried meat, trade merchandise and other essentials

only six animals were used for saddle purposes

Astor’s partners Wilson Hunt Donald, McKenzie, Ramsay Crooks, Joseph Miller

and Robert McClellan were mounted

Pierre Dorion and his wife Marie trudged along together she at his heels

leading a horse on which were securely roped little Baptiste and Paul

ages four and two and their bundle of possessions

as was Marie Dorion and her two sons Baptiste and Paul aged four and two

Marie showed obvious signs of being pregnant

Hunt and his Astorians were guided by Edward Robinson, John Hoback and Jacob Reznor

as they took a southwesterly route course across prairies

MANUEL LISA LEAVES THE ARIKARA VILLAGES BEHIND

Manuel Lisa and his Missouri Fur Company trappers had learned Andrew Henry was safe

Lisa was thus relieved of the responsibility of searching for his partner

After Hunt’s departure from the Arikara villages Lisa traded his own horses

which were pastured among the Mandan’s horses

for Wilson Price Hunt’s four excellent keelboats -- July 18, 1811

Lisa returned ventured up the Missouri River leading his twenty-five men on a trapping expedition

into the Rocky Mountains

WILSON PRICE HUNT’S OVERLAND EXPEDITION REACHES THE GRAND RIVER

Hunt’s caravan crossed the Grand River -- July 21, 1811

Hunt charged his course to a little more westerly direction

across prairies knee-deep in grass where the horses could contentedly

WILSON PRICE HUNT’S OVERLAND PARTY ENTERS CHEYENNE INDIAN COUNTRY

Because some of the members of “Pilot Knobs” his expedition were sick

Hunt stopped at a friendly Cheyenne Indian camp to trade for buffalo meat -- July 22, 1811

there Hunt purchased thirty-six more horses

Wilson Price Hunt rested his Astorians

bales of baggage were distributed among the additional horses

and one horse was allowed to every two men so they could alternate riding and walking

In order to bring the party through this country Pierre Dorion had to use his native-like ability

to read signs, find good fords across rivers, locate water holes and hunt game animals for food

he was obviously well worth the trouble he had been to Wilson Price Hunt

DAVID THOMPSON AND DAVID STUART START UP THE COLUMBIA RIVER TOGETHER

Nor’Wester David Thompson and Astorian David Stuart both finished preparations

for their journeys up the Columbia River

David Thompson and Astorian David Stuart set out in associated parties -- July 23, 1811

Thompson accompanied by the Kootenai Indian couple who had caused trouble at Astoria

traveled in the same canoe that had carried him downriver to Astoria

David Stuart traveled in two clumsy, overloaded Chinook Indian canoes

with twenty-one Astorians including clerk Alexander Ross, voyageurs Ovide de Montigny,

Francis Benjamin Pillette and Donald McClennan and three Kanakas (Hawaiians)

including forty year old Naukane who was also known as John Coxe

Stuart noted of two of his men were particularly valuable: **“…one of our Sandwich Islanders, a bold and trustworthy fellow named** [John] **Coxe”…**[who] **was looked upon by Mr. Thompson as a prodigy of wit and humor, so that those respectively acceptable qualities led to the exchange** [of pleasantries]**.” “…**[A]**nd a Canadian, called** [Michael] **Boulard. Boulard had the advantage of being long in the Indian country, and had picked up a few words of the language on his way down** [the Columbia River]**.”[[90]](#footnote-90)**

ASTORIANS REMAINING AT THE POST WORRY ABOUT THEIR SITUATION

David Stuart’s departure upriver with Nor’Wester David Thompson

left fewer than three dozen men to defend Astoria

one third of these were Kanakas from the Sandwich Islands

Astorians were very aware that North West Company was already trading in the area

No word had been heard from Wilson Price Hunt and his land party

anxiety was growing at Astoria concerning the men and the supplies he was to bring

To complicate matters, Comcomly, the crafty, one-eyed chief of the Chinooks,

spread suspicion among upriver natives regarding the intentions of the Astorians

to keep these Indians from selling furs directly to the Pacific Fur Company traders

To make matter worse the Astorians at the post picked up vague rumors from the Indians

that something had happened to the *Tonquin*

THOMPSON AND STUART REACH THE COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE

Nor’Wester David Thompson and Astorian David Stuart stayed close together

as they traveled nearly one hundred fifty miles up the Columbia River

before they reached The Cascades of the Columbia River

Thompson and Stuart had many anxious hours at The Cascades

travelers on the river had to make contact with the Wishram Indians here

and were to pay a tribute to these tribesmen who were notoriously difficult to deal with

DAVID THOMPSON AND DAVID STUART MAKE PLANS TO TRAVEL SEPARATELY

Once at the rapids known as the Dalles

Nor’Wester David Thompson decided to take advantage of his fast canoe

which was also lighter and more easily portaged when they reached Celilo Falls ahead

Thompson and Astorian David Stuart would then travel up the Columbia River independently

Before parting ways there was an exchange of employees

Thompson exchanged Michel Boulard for Kanaka Naukane (also known as John Coxe)

Boulard had worked with Thompson off and on over eleven years

Naukane (John Coxe) was valuable to Thompson for his strength and he was entertaining

Boulard, although weaker with age, was useful to the Astorians

because of his knowledge of the upper Columbia River geography and native affairs

Taking advantage of his fast canoe when he left The Dalles

David Thompson pushed on ahead of David Stuart and the Astorians

LORD SELKIRK’S RED RIVER COLONY MOVES A STEP CLOSER TO REALITY

Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk was a large Hudson’s Bay Company stockholder

he was concerned that tenant farmers in his Scottish homeland were being displaced

by the spread of large-scale sheep raising operations on former croplands

Lord Selkirk believed the only way for Scottish Highlanders to escape the harsh living conditions

was to emigrate to Canada where they could find farmland available -- his farmland

Lord Selkirk undertook the expenses necessary for transport, government, protection his colonists

and to quiet the Indians’ title to the land -- summer 1811

pamphlets were printed to be distributed in Scotland and Ireland

noting that land was to be given away or sold at a very low cost

transportation to Canada would be provided ffree or according to the individual’s means

Royal Canadian Volunteers Captain Miles Macdonell was sent to recruit colonists in Ireland

Lord Selkirk invited him to be the first governor of his colony

Colin Robertson, formerly with the North West Company, was sent to Scotland

Robertson had been fired by the North West Company and dreamed of exacting revenge

Captain Roderick McDonald recruited colonists in the city of Glasgow, Scotland

One hundred twenty-five tenant farmers sailed to Canada to develop Lord Selkirk’s vast land grant

of 116,000 square miles which comprised large portions of

(today’s Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Northern Minnesota and North Dakota)

these settlers became affiliated with Hudson’s Bay Company

WILSON PRICE HUNT’S PARTY CROSSES CHEYENNE INDIAN COUNTRY

Because several members of his Overland Expedition were ill two weeks had been spent

hunting and trading with the Cheyennes

Hunt assigned six hunters to look for buffalo

Wilson Price Hunt led his Overland Expedition out of the Cheyenne camp -- August 6, 1811

his long cavalcade crossed the Cheyenne River and moved off veering south for several days

terrain they crossed became red ground as hard as brick with little grass

however, the hunters killed several buffalo

Travel was easy and forty-two miles were made August 6 and 7

NOR’WESTER DAVID THOMPSON REACHES THE SNAKE RIVER

Thompson arrived at the mouth of the Snake River ahead of David Stuart and the Astorians here Thompson on his way down the Columbia River had left a message

formally taking possession of the land for King George III and Great Britain

he now added a British flag to his notice -- August 7, 1811

Thompson discovered a huge gathering of Nez Perce in the area and found an Indian interpreter

in an effort to protect the north country for the North West Company

he asked the Indian to divert the trailing Astorians up the Snake River

WILSON PRICE HUNT ENTERS THE BLACK HILLS WITH HIS ASTORIANS

Ground over which they traveled became rough and water was scarce

Hunt slowed the pace to his hunters who were behind him could catch up

Pierre Dorion led Wilson Price Hunt’s approximately fifty-nine Astorians

and their heavily laden pack string traveled through the Slim Buttes area (South Dakota)

as they skirted around the northern edge of the Black Hills

HUNT’S OVERLAND EXPEDITON CONTINUES THEIR TREK SOUTHWESTWARD

Having found their way around the Black Hills, Wilson Price Hunt’s overland Astorians

entered briefly into (present day Montana)

turning southwest they followed the Little Missouri River

Astorians traveled without incident -- they frequently camped with friendly natives

they crossed the Little Missouri River (Montana) -- August 11, 1811

DAVID THOMPSON TURNS UP THE SNAKE RIVER

Leaving the Columbia River Nor’Wester Thompson traveled up the Snake River

which he followed as far as the Palouse River

there he secured horses and went cross-country to the Spokane River

where he arrived -- August 13, 1811

David Thompson remained in camp on the Spokane River while he built a cedar canoe

WILSON PRICE HUNT’S OVERLAND EXPEDITION SEES THE BIG HORN MOUNTAINS

(Having touched briefly into Montana the Astorians entered Wyoming)

Travel became very difficult as the terrain was extremely rugged

Hunt retraced his route found his hunters had killed eight buffalo

Wilson Price Hunt and Astor’s partner Donald McKenzie climbed a nearby hill

from the top their view to the west revealed far off mountains -- August 17, 1811

this was the Big Horn Mountain range of the Rocky Mountains

that appeared to block their route

DAVID THOMPSON JOURNEYS DOWN THE SPOKANE RIVER

Nor’Wester David Thompson having built a cedar canoe

was off once again descending Spokane River -- August 17, 1811

Thompson and his seven men reached the Columbia River at Spokane House that day

Kanaka Naukane (also known as John Coxe) traveled with Thompson as far as Spokane House

there he was left with Nor’Wester Jaco Finlay

After spending one night at Spokane House David Thompson and his six voyageurs

continued rapidly on their journey upriver bound for Kettle Falls -- August 18, 1811

DAVID STUART AND HIS ASTORIANS REACH THE SNAKE RIVER

David Stuart with his twenty-one Astorians had trailing behind Nor’Wester David Thompson

since they two parties had parted company at the Columbia River gorge

when the Astorians arrived at the mouth of the Snake River they found the British flag

with a paper notice left by David Thompson that claimed the area for Great Britain

and warned subjects of other nations not to trade north of this point

Nez Perce Indians tried to persuade the Americans to travel up the Snake River

however, David Stuart detected this was a maneuver initiated by Thompson

ignoring David Thompson’s message, the Astorians continued up the Columbia River

with the Kootenai Indian couple serving as guides

TRAVEL BECOME EASIER FOR WILSON PRICE HUNT’S ASTORIANS

Water was available among the hills and wild berries were plentiful -- five buffalo had been killed

however, the weather turned cold and it froze at night

they had reached the location that separates the water flowing east into the Missouri River

from the water flowing west into the Yellowstone River -- August 20, 1811

WILSON PRICE HUNT’S EXPEDITION JOURNEYS TOWARD THE BIG HORN MOUNTAINS

Hunt’s Astorians set their course by the summits of the Big Horn Range far to the west

Wilson Price Hunt continued across the open country (of today’s eastern Wyoming)

water was scarce and the heat stifling

they saw no more buffalo as the ground was bare of grass

corn meal and a wolf provided them with supper one night

after twenty-five miles along a waterless route

a small stream gave cherished relief to the parched throats of Astorians and horses alike

another long stretch of hard travel was necessary before they came to a fork of the Powder River

at last, they had reached a green meadow and water where they camped -- August 25, 1811

WILSON PRICE HUNT’S ASTORIANS LEAVE THE POWDER RIVER BEHIND

Wilson Price Hunt set a slow pace along the banks of the Powder River (Wyoming)

buffalo were plentiful here and the hunters were busily killing and drying meat

Astor’s Overland Expedition made camp (probably near today’s Cloud Peak)

near the southern end of the Big Horn Mountains

they had traveled nearly four hundred miles since leaving the Arikara villages -- August 30, 1811

While camp was being prepared interpreter Edward Rose suddenly appeared

with two scouts from a band of Crow Indians

it was evident the Indians had kept Hunt’s expedition under observation for some days

ASTORIAN DAVID STUART SELECTS A SITE FOR A SECOND PACIFIC FUR COMPANY POST

David Stuart and Alexander Ross along with twenty-one Astorians who had traveled on the *Tonquin*

journeyed up the Columbia River for thirty-nine days before they selected a site

for the second of John Jacob Astor’s Pacific Fur Company posts -- August 31, 1811

on the east bank of the Okanogan River about one-half mile above the confluence

of Okanogan and Columbia rivers -- this became known as Fort Okanogan

MANY MORE CROW INDIANS ARRIVE THE CAMP OF HUNT’S OVERLANDERS

Crow Indians on horseback rode into Wilson Price Hunt’s camp -- not even the children were on foot

interpreter Edward Rose was an ex-Lisa employee which raised Hunt’s suspicions

that he was plotting to betray the expedition to the Crows

Hunt, who was fatefully inexperienced, would never ask the totally reliable Rose for advice

Hunt and some of the Astorians followed the Indians to their village accompanied by Edward Rose

who was pleased to see his old friends the Crows once again

When the Astorians arrived at the village Edward Rose established cordial relations with the Indians

they were warmly received them by the chief

Hunt gave him a piece of red cloth, some powder, bullets and other items

Hunt also gave him presents of tobacco, knives and trade goods to give to his people

Wilson Price Hunt purchased buffalo robes and traded his tired horses for fresh ones

he also purchased enough well-trained horses able to cross the mountains

to bringing the total to 121

However, when Hunt attempted to end the session the Crows turned hostile

Hunt attributed this development to Edward Rose

Wilson Price Hunt was none too certain of keeping the horses he had paid for in goods

if the Crows should take a notion to recover them

OVERLAND ASTORIANS LOSE THEIR WAY

Wilson Price Hunt’s Overland Expedition was again under way -- September 2, 1811

however, their progress through the Bighorn Mountains was blocked

they were forced to return to their camp of [September 1]

Hunt learned that Edward Rose approached some malcontents of the party with a plan

to run off the pack horses with their rich bales of trade goods and join the Crow Indians

Hunt stopped the plan with a bribe:

he offered Rose a year’s pay, a horse, three beaver traps and merchandise

and he could to go back to the Crows after Rose guided the party through Crow country

Edward Rose eagerly accepted and joined the first Crow Indians that were encountered

Kentuckians Edward Robinson, John Hoback and Jacob Reznor serving as guides became confused

this route through the Big Horn Mountains was unknown to them

the maze of ravines they now entered led nowhere

CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON FORT OKANOGAN

Fort Okanogan was located on the east bank of the Okanogan River

one-half mile above its confluence with the Columbia River

this was the first American settlement in (today’s Washington State)

and became the principal interior factory of John Jacob Astor’s Pacific Fur Company

Astorians set to work building Fort Okanogan as clerk Alexander Ross wrote in his journal: **“As soon as we could dismiss the distant tribes, who had come to welcome our arrival, we commenced erecting a small dwelling house, sixteen by twenty feet, chiefly constructed of driftwood, being more handy and easier got than standing timber;…[[91]](#footnote-91)**

ASTOR’S OVERLANDERS RECEIVE ANOTHER VISIT FROM EDWARD ROSE

Edward Rose, who had left with his Crow brethren, came into camp -- September 4, 1811

he delivered a message from a Crow chief who advise the white men they had taken a wrong turn

Rose pointed out a trail through the Bighorn Mountains that was both shorter and better

Since Edward Robinson, John Hoback and Jacob Reznor’s attempts to find a pass over the mountains

had been futile, Wilson Price Hunt followed the new trail -- although with serious misgivings

Soon Crow Indians taking the same route were encountered and led the way

with the way and the Pacific Fur Company Land Expedition following

if the Crows were famed for their horse stealing, they were no less justly famed

for the superior horsemanship -- every man, woman and child rode

their small-hoofed, slight ponies could seemingly cling to the face of a cliff

or race along the rocky ledges with the confidence of mountain goats

there was a child tied to a two-year-old colt with buffalo thongs who held the reins in one hand

he frequently used his whip

Hunt asked about the child’s age and was told that he had seen two winters -- did not yet talk!

Camp was made that night beside a small river in the middle of the Big Horn Mountains

the next day the Overland Expedition rested as they waited for the return of their hunters

when they returned they had killed two buffalo and a gray bear

Crows left Hunt’s expedition far behind but they had shown him the road

though Hunt had suspected their motives it appeared they were sincere with their help

WILSON PRICE HUNT’S PARTY MET A PARTY OF SHOSHONE (SNAKE) INDIANS

Hunt’s Overlanders were fortunate enough to meet three Indians families -- September 6, 1811

some of the eight natives were Flatheads and some were Snakes (Shoshones)

Joining the natives they continued westward across the second ridge of the Big Horn Mountains

they saw some beautiful country: an abundance of springs, green grasslands, forests of pine

and innumerable plants in bloom

They camped near a brook that flowed north and emptied into the Big Horn River

here the ground was covered with two species of gooseberries

one of men brought some strawberries that he had just picked

They killed an elk and several black-tailed deer

buffalo were quite numerous, too, so that the mountainside looked like one continuous barnyard

Hunt’s Astorians and the Indians enjoyed a buffalo hunt

Shoshones directed Hunt toward the Wind River some thirty miles distant

they told the Astorian that it would lead him toward the pass which opened

on the south fork of the Columbia River (Snake River) and the land of the Shoshones

Shoshones then went on their separate way as the Overland Expedition entered the plains

DAVID THOMPSON COMPLETES HIS VOYAGE OF A SUMMER MOON

Traveling by canoe from Kettle Falls Nor’Wester David Thompson and his voyageurs

ascended the Columbia River and navigated the Arrow Lakes (British Columbia)

They continued upriver (to the area north of today’s Revelstoke, British Columbia)

Thompson arrived at Boat Encampment and remained overnight there -- September 7-8, 1811

ASTORIANS TRAVELING OVERLAND WITH WILSON PRICE HUNT REACH THE WIND RIVER

Once again guided by Kentuckians Edward Robinson, John Hoback and Jacob Reznor

Hunt’s Overland Party arrived at the Big Horn River which was here called the Wind River

because the wind blows so continually that the snow never remains on the ground (Wyoming)

Edward Robinson, John Hoback, and Jacob Reznor assured Wilson Price Hunt

that by tracing the Wind River to its source and crossing the ridge of mountains there

they would reach the headwaters of the Snake River

After journeying up the Wind River for about eighty miles over several days

camp was made on the banks of a small river -- September 9, 1811

they could see below the canyon through which the river escaped the mountain meadows

it was a very narrow gorge flanked on both sides by cliffs

Several days were taken as Wilson Price Hunt’s Astorians crossed and re-crossed the Wind River

sagebrush in ample supply provided fuel for their campfires

mountains closed in on the plain and country became very rugged and the footing tortuous

ASTORIANS SEEK OUT INTERIOR INDIANS TO CONDUCT TRADE

David Stuart ordered twelve of his trappers out to establish trap lines and contact local Indians

After supplying the post with trade goods and ammunition Astorian David Stuart and eight other men

proceeded north from Fort Okanogan three hundred miles up the Okanogan River

leaving Alexander Ross behind to serve as Clerk-in-charge at Fort Okanogan

Alexander Ross recorded in his journal: “…**but while the building was in a half-finished state… Mr. Stuart and the remaining men set off on a journey towards the north, or headwaters of the Okanogan, intending to return in the course of a month, while I was to remain alone at the establishment till Mr. Stuart’s return, my only civilized companion being a little Spanish pet dog from Monterey, called Weasel.”[[92]](#footnote-92)**

WILSON PRICE HUNT’S PARTY ENTERS THE ROCKY MOUNAINS

Wilson Price Hunt decided to veer again to the southwest and follow a distinct and easy Indian trail

where Hunt had heard another river cut a way through the Rocky Mountains

and they would see buffalo again -- September 15, 1811

Hunt led his Astorians southwest along the high country touched here and there with snow

after forty miles they reached a high ridge which commanded a wide view

a hunter pointed to where three towering majestic peaks that loomed in snowy grandeur

pierced the sky far to the west

(these were the famous Three Tetons astride present-day Wyoming-Idaho border)

Hunt said that at the feet of the Tetons was the tributary of the Columbia River

and named the peaks “Pilot Knobs”

ASTOR’S OVERLANDERS CROSS THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE

Wilson Price Hunt turned northwest again to seek a pass through the Rocky River Mountains

they frequently encountered snow as they approached the summit

Wilson Price Hunt and his Overland expedition crossed the Continental Divide -- September 16, 1811

(probably at Union Pass south of today’s Dubois, Wyoming)

Eight miles of riding southward from (Union Pass) led the Overland Party to a little mountain stream

Astorians followed the flowing water to the Green River Valley (Wyoming)

They halted beside the Green River in a beautiful green meadow where many buffalo grazed

here they were surrounded by mountains

Hunt supposed this river would empty into the Columbia River

(in fact, after emptying into the Colorado River it reaches the Gulf of California

Hunt and his Astorians were on the north fork of the Colorado River

this was not the Columbia River as Hunt had anticipated)

WILSON PRICE HUNT IS LOST AND DOES NOT KNOW IT

Hunt led his Overland Expedition northwest where he thought the Columbia River was located

they turned up a small stream that flowed from the mountains

where they stopped to dry the last buffalo meat they would need

before they reached the Columbia River and could catch fish -- September 18, 1811

While hunting, some of the men met Indians who appeared extremely frightened by the whites

Hunt, Donald McKenzie, Robert McClellan and two others gave chase for eight miles

before finally catching two young men who were put at ease and led the whites to their camp

these were Shoshone Indians who had come to this area to hunt and dry meat

they fed the Astorians and made them feel welcomed

they had only one buffalo robe and a dozen beaver pelts which the Astorians bought

Hunt urged them to kill more of the beaver and told them they would return to their camp

to trade with them which seemed to please the Indians a great deal

Hunt purchased nearly two thousand pounds of dried buffalo meat that when added

to the more than four thousand pounds Hunt’s men had prepared loaded all of the horses but six

DAVID STUART BUILDS A THIRD PORT FOR THE PACIFIC FUR COPANY

Stuart and his party of eight men became the first whites to travel through the Okanogan Valley

as they searched the area between the Columbia and Fraser rivers

looking for a place to locate yet another trading post

Stuart and his men passed Osoyoos Lake and Okanogan Lake

and continued through Thompson River country to the forks of the Thompson River

this was the land of the Shu-swap Indians (in present British Columbia)

David Stuart with his eight men arrived at “Cumcloups”

(the original Shu-swap Indian name for Kamloops meaning “meeting of the waters”)

Stuart intended to establish a fur trading empire for the United States-based Pacific Fur Company

Stuart spent the (winter) trapping and trading in that region at a post (later named Kamloops)

INDIANS AROUND ASTORIA BECOME VERY THREATENING

Months would pass before full details of the tragedy of the *Tonquin* would be learned

but even before the full story was known at the post Astorians sensed Indian trouble was brewing

inspired by rumors about the fate of Astor’s ship

natives along the Columbia River had begun making strong talk:

if the white man’s ship could be captured, why not a similar attack on his fort?

Luckily a secondary Chinook chief sounded a warning

alarmed Astorians threw up a long palisade around their warehouse,

dragged cannon into the corner bastions and instituted drills and watches

CHIEF FACTOR DUNCAN McDOUGALL THREATENS THE CHINOOK INDIANS

Acting head of Pacific Fur Company stationed at Astoria Chief Factor Duncan McDougall

learned of the dreadful loss of Indian life that had resulted from a smallpox epidemic

Indians were mortally fearful of contracting the disease

he also remembered the terror which the man-dressed Kootenai prophetess

had inspired with her talk of smallpox

Duncan McDougall sought to bolster the Astorians’ defenses by a bluff

he called the local principal chiefs to meet together inside the post

he closed the doors, held up a small bottle and asked the natives if they remembered smallpox

their serious faces showed that they did

McDougall showed them the small vial and told them it contained smallpox

he said: **“Listen to me. I am the great smallpox chief. In this little bottle I keep the great smallpox. If I uncork the bottle and let it out I will kill every man, woman, and child of the Indians. Now go in peace, but if you make war upon us I will open the bottle, and you will die.”[[93]](#footnote-93)**

Appalled, the Indians were frightened and promised to behave

but they had lost respect for a chief who would use such tactics

and they did not forget the white man’s claim of being able to control disease

LORD SELKIRK’S COLONISTS REACH HUDSON BAY

After a stormy voyage of nearly two months across the North Atlantic Ocean

Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk’s ships entered the barren strait leading to Hudson Bay

they anchored along the shallow western shore of Hudson Bay

where two rivers, the Nelson and the Hayes, enter the bay and the passengers disembarked

they marched to Hudson’s Bay Company’s York Factory on the north bank of the Hayes River

There was not enough room for all of the colonists at York Factory

so they crossed to the Nelson River

and ascended it until they found a large stand of white spruce

here they built a post for the (winter) under the direction of Governor Miles Macdonell

settlers naturally banded themselves into groups based on their original home

as fall (and winter advanced) and living conditions grew increasingly harsh

these groups with their separate grievances gave Macdonell a great deal of trouble

PACIFIC FUR COMPANY OVERLANDERS DEPART FROM THE GREEN RIVER VALLEY

Wilson Price Hunt and his Overland Expedition broke camp -- September 24, 1811

their westerly course across the Gros Ventre Range of the Central Rocky Mountains

In a rugged valley and within close view of the Three Tetons Mountains

they reached a stream where Kentuckians Edward Robinson, John Hoback, and Jacob Reznor

had trapped beavers a year before

Edward Robinson, John Hoback, and Jacob Reznor announced this was a branch

of the Columbia River and the southern edge of Jackson’s Hole (Wyoming)

Hoback River (as it is still called) is a tributary of the Snake River

and therefore one of the source streams for the Columbia River

here they stopped to rest

HUNT’S OVERLAND PARTY LEAVES THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Wilson Price Hunt’s Party continued down the Hoback River through precipitous passes

to its mouth where it emptied into wider turbulent waters of Snake River

at times there was barely a ledge wide enough for their horses

one of the pack horses fell into the river from a height of nearly two hundred feet but was not hurt

Camp was made at the confluence of the Hoback and Snake rivers -- September 27, 1811

men and horses were given a rest

this opportunity was taken to kill and dry meat enough for the remainder of their journey

There was great joy in camp that night

they had crossed two hundred and sixty miles of hard country during September

evening meal was a feast of celebration as all believed their troubles had ended

they now were apparently almost within hailing distance of the Columbia River

four of the men who had joined for the purpose of hunting and trapping

cast off from the party and launched into the wilds on their own

Since the expedition was camped near the headwaters of the Snake River

it was hoped they could continue their journey by water -- voyageurs set about canoe-making

however, finding suitable trees for building canoes proved to be impossible

WILSON PRICE HUNT DISPATCHES A TRAPPING PARTY TO FORT HENRY

Three French-Canadians were sent north to investigate beaver streams

Andre La Chapelle, Jean-Baptiste Turcotte and Francois Landry

they were fitted out with traps, arms, ammunition, horses and every other necessity

these three trappers set out to the northeast away from the Snake River

in a effort to reach the Missouri River

HUNT’S OVERLAND EXPEDITION MAKES CANOES TO TRAVEL DOWN THE SNAKE RIVER

Wilson Price Hunt moved his camp further down the Snake River -- September 29, 1811

because the trees there were better suited for making canoes

Voyageurs happily went about their work constructing canoes as sleet and rain impeded their efforts

many trees were felled that were not useful because they were filled with knots

and their wood grain was not strait enough

WILSON PRICE HUNT PREPARES FOR A DESPERATE FUTURE

Because the lack of food prevented any delay in their journey

Hunt and the remainder of the Overland Expedition went to work sorting their baggage

they set aside only what was most necessary and began to dig holes

to cache the remainder of their goods

rain fell so hard it was impossible to finish digging the holes

Clerk John Reed along with hunter John Day and interpreter Pierre Dorion

were sent down the Snake River to try to get horses and provisions from the local Indians

and learn if the river was passable beyond where Hunt investigated -- September 30, 1811

SOME CONSTRUCTION AT ASTORIA IN OREGON IS COMPLETED

In spite of the troubles and illnesses of the Astorians and Kanakas,

some sort of a post was finally completed -- but not until late September

It was planned that Astor’s agents would secure most if not all of the furs trapped by coastal Indians

these furs would be sent to Canton, China and exchanged there for tea and silk at a profit

tea and silk would be sold in New York City at an added profit

however, the destruction of the *Tonquin* and lack of trade goods made this impossible

NORTH WEST COMPANY BRIGADE IS DUE AT SALEESH HOUSE

Carrying supplies from North West Company headquarters on Lake Superior

the supply brigade was due to arrive at Saleesh House-- October 1, 1811

however, the expedition was late and some goods were left east of the Rocky Mountains

loss of these supplies and trade goods left a negative effect on morale and trade

which would be felt (all through the coming winter)

WILSON PRICE HUNT RELEASES FOUR MORE MEN TO TRAP

Alexander Carson, Louis St. Michel, Pierre Detaye and Pierre Delaunay

were released from duty -- October 1, 1811

they were to trap the upper part of Snake River and its neighboring streams

then make their way to the Columbia River with their catch

Trappers generally worked in pairs so they could assist, protect and comfort each other

in their lonely and perilous occupations

Carson and St. Michel formed one couple, and Detaye and Delaunay another

All four trappers took leave of their comrades and started off with stout hearts and cheerful attitudes

to return eastward to trap the headwaters of the upper Snake River

these trappers would probably be busy for some months

when they had collected a sufficient quantity of pelts they were to pack them on their horses

and make their way the best they could to the mouth of Columbia River

or to any intermediate post which might be established by the Pacific Fur Company

ASTORIAN CLERK JOHN REED RETURNS TO WILSON PRICE HUNT’S CAMP

Rain continued to hinder their digging holes and the work was not finished until October 2, 1811

when they put their baggage and merchandise into six caches

Clerk John Reed, John Day and Pierre Dorion returned to the camp after scouting the river ahead

they had gone beyond where Hunt had scouted the river but met no Indians

they said the Snake River maintained its furious course between rocks that rose like walls

boiling through narrow rugged channels

in disgust and despair Reed’s men had named one long volcanic chute they followed

“The Devil’s Scuttle Hole”

they reported they had been obliged to leave their horses

as they were of no help in climbing the mountains

after an hour’s effort to get through on foot along the river banks

they had been forced to abandon their attempt

they concluded that to get across the peaks would have been an endless labor

Snake River became very narrow with its twisting course obstructed by many rapids

so far as the scouts could see the river continued to flow through the heart of the Rockies

and was not navigable

Their report only added to the general feeling of hopelessness

Hunt concluded it would be necessary to look farther downstream for wood for their canoes

to avoid the dangers that stood in their path

ASTORIANS ON THE COLUMBIA RIVER LAUNCH A SMALL SHIP OF THEIR OWN

Framework of a small ship was carried in the hold of the *Tonquin*

this small trading schooner was constructed at Astoria

as other planking was made from native woods grown along the Columbia River was added

christened *Dolly* in honor of Mrs. John Jacob Astor, she was launched -- October 2, 1811

this was the first boat to be constructed in the Pacific Northwest by Americans

HUNT’S OVERLAND EXPEDITION SETS OUT FROM THE HOBACK AND SNAKE RIVERS

Preparations for what Hunt believed would be the last mountains they would have to cross

were completed -- October 4, 1811

Wilson Price Hunt’s Overland Expedition crossed the Snake River in water

up to the bellies of their horses

while the storms had ended the surrounding slopes were covered with snow

Camp was made that night at the foot of the Teton Range of the Rocky Mountains

HUNT’S ASTORIANS TRAVEL THROUGH THE TETON MOUNTAINS

Climbing the mountain range began -- October 5, 1811

guided by Shoshone Indians the expedition followed an easy heavily-used trail

Edward Robinson, John Hoback, and Jacob Reznor were also familiar with the route

HUNT’S OVERLANDERS REACH FORT HENRY ON THE SNAKE RIVER

Wilson Price Hunt’s Astorians now numbering about fifty-two people

reached Fort Henry on Henry’s Fork of the Snake River (near present-day St. Anthony, Idaho)

during a squall of wind and snow -- October 8, 1811

nearly three months after leaving the Arikara villages

Andrew Henry had abandoned the post [during the spring 1811]

however, several small buildings remained along the bank of Henry’s Fork of the Snake

Hunt took possession of the Henry’s Fort for John Jacob Astor’s Pacific Fur Company

WILSON PRICE HUNT INSISTS ON CONSTRUCTING CANOES

Hunt was obsessed with reaching the Pacific Ocean by water rather than land

the Snake, at least in Wilson Price Hunt’s mind, provided a water route to the Columbia River

and on to the Pacific Ocean

Hunt decided to abandon the horses at Henry’s Fort in favor of the Snake River

he insisted on building canoes for the run down the Snake River

his voyageurs spent ten valuable days building cottonwood canoes

LAMAZEE MANAGED TO RETURN TO ASTORIA AFTER SEVERL MONTHS

Lamaze, who had served as interpreter for Chief Trade Alexander McKay onboard the *Tonquin,*

reached Astoria several months where he was persuaded to tell his tale

although the Chehalis Indian was not convincing regarding his own part in the tragedy

none-the-less clerk Gabriel Franchere recorded Lamazee’s story in his *Journal*:(after Chief Trader Alexander McKay had both been killed in the attack on the *Tonquin* Lamazee said) **“I jumped overboard, to escape a similar fate to that of the captain and Mr. M’Kay: the women in the canoes, to whom I surrendered myself as a slave, took me in, and bade me hide under some mats which were in the pirogues; which I did. Soon after, I heard the discharge of firearms, immediately upon which the Indians fled from the vessel, and pulled for the shore as fast as possible, nor did they venture to go alongside the ship again the whole of that day.”[[94]](#footnote-94)**

Lamazee was the only Pacific Fur Company employee to survive the attack

JOHN JACOB ASTOR NEGOTIATES AN ARRAGNEMENT WITH THE RUSSIANS

Astor had diligently pursued an arrangement with the Russian-American Company

to bind his trading companies and the Russians to an agreement:

•neither company would enter each others hunting grounds;

•neither company would provide weapons or ammunition to the Indian;

•both companies would provide mutual support against any rival company

that entered their area;

•in addition the Pacific Fur Company would have exclusive rights to supply the Russian posts

and receive payment in pelts;

•Pacific Fur Company also would carry Russian furs to Canton, sell them at a commission

and bring back the proceeds

This arrangement was agreed to by the Russian Czar -- October 1811

it was to run for four years and could renewable for another four

This arrangement was meant to exclude rival trapping and trading companies from the Pacific coast

and would change the nature of the fur trade from the arrival of an occasional trading ship

to a fleet of Pacific Fur Company trading ships operating constantly along the Pacific coast

JOHN JACOB ASTOR DISPATCHES A SUPPLY SHIP TO HIS COLUMBIA RIVER POST

Four hundred ninety ton ship *Beaver* under Captain Cornelius Sowle

was loaded with stores and trading equipment in New York City

for the post at the mouth of the Columbia River

and to supply the Russians in Russian-America

also on board was John Jacob Astor’s newest partners John Clarke

five clerks, fifteen American laborers and six French-Canadian voyageurs

Astor planned to diminish the importance of former Nor’Westers working for him

and increase the significance of Americans to make the Pacific Fur Company American

American John Clarke had been employed in the fur trade since the age of sixteen

*Beaver* sailed from New York City -- October 10, 1811

Captain Cornelius Sowle was to journey first to the Hawaiian Islands

to learn of the fortunes of the *Tonquin* and, if a post had been established on the Columbia,

he was to take as many Kanakas (Hawaiians) with him as possible

when Captain Sowle arrived at the Columbia River he was to use great caution

because even if a post had been built it could have fallen into hostile hands

he was to put in as if he were under distress and say he was a coasting trading ship

he was not to say anything about the ship belonging to John Jacob Astor

until he was certain who possessed the post

if the post was operating as hope he was to land the cargo intended for Astoria

then proceed to New Archangel, Russian-America with supplies for the Russians

these were to be paid for with pelts

Captain Sowle was then to return to Astoria and take in the furs there

before sailing for Canton, China

HUNT DISPATCHES A TRAPPING PARTY TO WORK THE SURROUNDING COUNTRY

After an outburst of rage by Astor’s hot tempered partner Joseph Miller

it was decided Miller would lead a party of trappers composed of the Kentuckians

Edward Robinson, John Hoback and Jacob Reznor who had completed their service as guides

and wanted to remain in their old trapping grounds and seek beaver pelts

they were accompanied by Martin Cass who had joined the expedition at the Arikara Villages

they took two Shoshone Indians, four horses two beaver traps as they set out down the mountains

to find an Indian tribe to acquire useful information regarding their hunt -- October 10, 1811

Joseph Miller along with Edward Robinson, John Hoback, Jacob Reznor and Martin Cass

struck a northerly route from Fort Henry on the Snake River (Idaho)

these trappers followed the Snake River until it began to turn westward

they remained in the region around Fort Henry but not in the lands they already knew

HUNT’S OVERLAND EXPEDITION PREPARED TO CONTINUE WEST

Wilson Price Hunt turned loose his seventy-seven horses

in the care of two Shoshone Indians -- October 17, 1811

Hunt loaded the freight onto fifteen canoes and left the Indians in charge of the post

saddles were cached and their location was shown to two young Shoshone Indians

Indians in the vicinity of Fort Henry (Idaho) were very poor

while many buffalo and some elk visited the region in season

hunger plagued these people the remainder of the year

wind blew constantly and often violently from the west and caused a great deal of damage

WILSON PRICE HUNT SETS OUT FROM FORT HENRY ON THE SNAKE RIVER (IDAHO)

Hunt and his forty-four men, Marie Dorion and her two children left Fort Henry

and started down Henry’s Fork of the Snake River

in their newly-made canoes loaded with goods and supplies -- October 19, 1811

Presently Henry’s Fork joined with the green-tinted waters of a river Hunt named the “Canoe River”

(today’s Teton River)

they were over six hundred miles above the point where Lewis and Clark

had launched their canoes on the Snake River six years before

Wilson Price Hunt’s fleet ran the Snake River with ease as down the widened river

sped the canoes at a rapid pace

voyageurs were singing to the swift rhythmic strokes of their paddles

they made thirty miles before they camped for the night

banks of the river were lined with small cottonwoods with beaver, ducks and geese common

it was cold and snowed all day

WILSON PRICE HUNT’S JOURNEY BECOMES MORE DIFFICULT

Snake River became more beautiful and much larger as they continued downriver -- October 20, 1811 forty miles were made that day but throughout the last twenty the river was broken by rapids

with increasing velocity the current swept them into the great semicircular curve the river

carved through southern (Idaho)

they passed over some of the rapids by cordelling from shore with a towline

as the canoes were tied to ropes and floated down the river

two of the canoes were swamped and Hunt’s expedition was forced to stop

Hunt sent his canoe and one other to the rescue as the men were saved

but a good deal of merchandise and supplies were lost to the river

Rocky Mountains remained on their left as they moved on

it was cold as they traveled on still within sight of Pilot Knob (the Grand Tetons)

DAVID THOMPSON CROSSES ATHABASCA PASS

From Boat Encampment, Nor’Wester David Thompson struck overland toward Athabasca Pass

to Henry House (near today’s Jasper, Alberta)

David Thompson then, once again, re-crossed Athabasca Pass -- October 21, 1811

returning to Boat Encampment on the Canoe River (British Columbia)

HUNT AND HIS ASTORIANS CONTINUE THROUGH THE RAPIDS OF THE SNAKE RIVER

They kept to Snake River for ten grueling days of portages, cordelling and disheartening hazards

mishap followed mishap as the surrounding land grew barren

treeless cliffs of black lava two and three hundred feet high pinched tight on the boiling water

hopes for an easy completion of their journey were dashed

Their dangers and difficulties increased daily

canoes had to be lightened to pass through the very rough waters

during these perilous passages, Marie Dorion, in a boat with her husband Pierre,

held on to her two children amid the icy spray lest they fall overboard and be lost

portages were necessary to avoid waterfalls and rapids

they found a large rock obstructed the river from bank to bank

ropes were used to lower the canoes

they lost four canoes along with most of the cargo in them

ASTORIAN JOSEPH MILLER AND HIS TRAPPERS SEARCH FOR BEAVER STREAMS

Astor’s partner Joseph Miller with Edward Robinson, John Hoback, Jacob Reznor and Martin Cass

veered south where the Snake River until it began to turn westward

they and trekked more than two hundred miles across the Continental Divide

but their route did not cross through any mountain pass

they entered the desert and their route took them to the Bear River (Utah)

after almost a month of travel on the lower end of the Bear River

they found streams alive with beaver and halted to gather a rich harvest of pelts

in (today’s Great Salt Lake region)

SNAKE RIVER BECAME A RAGING TORRENT AT CALDRON LINN

Continuing the journey down the Snake River Wilson Price Hunt’s Overland Expedition reached

raging rapids they **n**amed “Caldron Linn” that threatened the destruction of both men and canoes

(today’s Star Falls where the Snake Rivers squeezes down to less than forty feet wide

west of today’s Burley, Idaho) -- October 28, 1811

French-Canadian boatmen leaped into action

to avoid being sucked into the vortex of a whirlpool that formed behind a huge rock

river-wisevoyageurs managed by almost superhuman effort

to pull the first boat out of the suction caused by the whirlpool and reached the safety of land

Ramsay Crooks’ canoe steered by Antoine Clappine was not as fortunate

this canoe was sucked into the watery vortex

Ramsay Crooks and one of the oarsmen stayed afloat long enough

to be cast on the river’s bank by the revolving current

two other voyageurs hung precariously to a rock protruding out of the white water

Clappine clung to the dugout but was eventually shaken loose

sucked into the angry water the former Nor’Wester was seen no more

Clappine was one of the most experienced and skillful of the French-Canadian voyageurs

his death was a great loss to the expedition

Hunt and his shaken companions made camp next to the raging waters of Caldron Linn

Astor’s partners held a council to contemplate their future course

loss of the supplies and especially the loss of Antoine Clappine was extremely distressing

Hunt sent three men downriver along the south bank of the Snake River in search of a portage site

Hunt took three men ahead to see if they could take their canoes through the north side of the gorge

they traveled along the bank of the river for thirty-five miles following the river northwest

through the mountains as the river bed narrowed to a width of from sixty feet to ninety feet

full of rapids with waterfalls from ten to forty feet high

Hunt discovered there were only two places where they could climb down to the river

as high cliffs compressed the river along most of its route

supper that night for Hunt and his three companions consisted of the fruit of a rose tree

isolated from the main group they slept beside their campfire that night

WILSON PRICE HUNT RETURNS TO CALDRON LINN

Hunt returned to his camp along Caldron Linn -- October 29, 1811

there he learned from the three men he had sent along the south bank that they had found a place

where they believed a portage of six miles could be taken around Caldron Linn

Sixteen voyageurs with the expedition’s four best canoes followed the route to the portage

that had been suggested along the south bank of the Snake River

to see if they could progress past Caldron Linn

WILSON PRICE HUNT’S OVERLAND EXPEDITION’S SITUATION IS CRITICAL

After some two hundred and fifty miles of water travel down the Snake River

they had experienced cataracts and waterfalls that forced laborious portages

and finally deep gorges with sheer walls that made progress almost impossible

advice from Shoshone Indians the met along the way had convinced Hunt

that the Snake River Canyon would smash any canoe

nearly a month had been lost in indecisiveness and inaction since leaving the Missouri River

Pacific Fur Company expedition became disorganized and demoralized:

•Snake River was unnavigable;

•horses were 340 miles away -- too far to be of any use;

•Indians in the area were poverty-stricken themselves;

•food was giving out, only five days’ worth remained, and game was scarce;

•(winter) was advancing as snow and cold increased their anxiety

Snake River itself was labeled by Wilson Price Hunt the “Accursed Mad River”

WILSON PRICE HUNT PREPARES FOR A DESPERATE FUTURE

Once again clerk John Reed was dispatched along with three men

this time he was travel down the Snake River to try to get horses and provisions from the Indians

and learn if the river was passable beyond where Hunt had investigated -- October 31, 1811

Because the lack of food prevented any delay in their journey

Hunt and the remainder of the Overland Expedition went to work sorting their baggage

they set aside only what was most necessary and began to dig holes

to cache the remainder of their goods

rain fell so hard it was impossible to finish digging the holes

HUNT’S SIXTEEN VOYAGEURS WHO ATTEMPTED THE SUGGESTED PROTAGE RETURNED

Sixteen of Wilson Price Hunt’s voyageurs had followed the suggested route to the portage

they had tried to force a passage through the Snake River Canyon

They struggled back up the river through a pelting rain

to give their depressing report to Hunt -- October 31, 1811

they said the banks of the Snake River had been investigated for forty miles

with discouraging results as the river channel was impassable because of treacherous rapids

and narrow canyons

ahead lay 212 foot high (Shoshone Falls) where the Snake river plunges down

through a narrow chase between towering sides of sheet rock

this was followed by 182 foot high (Twin Falls)

one of their canoes and its load of merchandise was lost

three other canoes were caught among the rocks and had to be left

ASTOR’S PARTNERS LEADING THE OVERLAND EXPEDITION MAKE A FATEFUL DECISION Situation of Wilson Price Hut’s Overland Expedition was virtually without positive prospects:

•they were in the heart of an unknown wilderness unexplored by white men;

•they were at a loss as to what route to take and how far they were from Astoria;

•they did not know what direction to travel to find people to give them information;

•repeated accidents to their canoes had reduced their provisions to five days allowance

it strongly appeared that famine would be added to their list of sufferings

There appeared to be no way to continue their journey by water -- November 1, 1811

after losing two canoes, one man and most of their provisions in the wild Snake River

Astor’s partners who shared responsibility for the expedition decided

to split into smaller groups and fan out on foot in different directions

in hopes of finding either a passable route or Indians who would provide them horses

WILSON PRICE HUNT SPLITS HIS EXPEDITION INTO SEPARATE PARTIES

Wilson Price Hunt decided the only way to escape from the Snake River was to divide into sections he hoped one of the sections might find game or a way out of the Snake River’s Caldron Linn

and report their success to the others

Remaining forty-six Overland Astorians were separated into five parties -- November 3, 1811

•Astor’s partner Donald McKenzie with four men would turn northward in the hope

that a trek across the arid Snake River Plains would enable them to find a route

that would bring them ultimately to a navigable branch of the Columbia River;

•Astor’s partner Robert McClellan with three men returned on foot back up the Snake River

hoping to encounter a Shoshone Indian encampment

where they might be able to procure food and a few horses

if this hope failed, they were to make the long journey back to Fort Henry on the Snake River

where they hoped to find the horses that had been left behind

and return with them to the main body;

•Astor’s partner Ramsay Crooks with three men would return on foot back up the Snake River

hoping to encounter a Shoshone encampment

where he might be able to procure food and a few horses

if this hope failed, he was to make the long journey back to Fort Henry on the Snake River

where he hoped to find the horses that had been left behind

and return with them to the main body;

•two hunters to search for game animals were dispatched by Wilson Price Hunt;

•Astor’s partner Wilson Price Hunt would keep the main party of thirty-one men with him

plus the pregnant Marie Dorion and her two children Baptiste and Paul

they set a net in the river in preparation to setting out but managed to catch only one fish

Hunt led the main contingent in four canoes and paddled back upstream away from Caldron Linn

while going around a point in the middle of some rapids they lost a canoe but saved the cargo

RAMSAY CROOKS RETURNS TO HUNT’S MAIN PARTY

Wilson Price Hunt’s hunters caught up with the main party -- November 4, 1811

they had killed only eight beaver -- scant relief for the thirty-six traveling with Hunt

Ramsay Crooks unexpectedly returned with his three men

for a moment joy spread through the Astorians as they thought Crooks had found food and help

joy turned to despair as Crooks reported they had found the distance to Fort Henry

greater than they had expected and difficulties increasing with each step

Crooks concluded that he could not reach Fort Henry and get back before (winter)

therefore he abandoned the scheme

Thirty-seven Astorians plus Marie Dorion and her sons Baptiste and Paul

continued east back up the Snake River away from Caldron Linn

one avenue of hope, John Reed, was all but closed

remaining hope centered on the party led by clerk Robert McClellan

(partner Donald McKenzie had been assigned to travel directly to the Columbia River)

ALEXANDER ROSS FACES LIFE ALONE AT FORT OKANOGAN

Alexander Ross traded one hundred-ten beaver pelts for a yard of white cloth

one morning before breakfast

Clerk-in-charge Ross filled the loneliness by writing, **“The novelty of white men, and particularly of a white man alone, drew crowds of inquisitive Indians about the place. I mixed with them, traded with them, and at last began to talk with them, and … soon came to understand them; but still the evenings were long and the winter dreary. Every night before going to bed I primed my gun and pistol anew and barricaded the door of my lonely dwelling; and the Indians, friendly inclined, always withdrew from the house at dusk. Yet they often had alarms among themselves and often gave me to understand that enemies or ill-disposed Indians were constantly lurking about; and whenever they began to whoop or yell in the night, which they frequently did, I, of course, partook of the alarm.”[[95]](#footnote-95)**

**“One night I was suddenly awakened out of my sleep by the unusual noise and continual barking of Weasel, running backwards and forwards through the house. Half asleep, half awake, I felt greatly agitated and alarmed. My faithful gun and pistol were at hand, for they lay always at my side in bed; but then all was dark; I could see nothing, could hear nothing but the barking of Weasel, which was continually growing louder and louder.**

**I then thought there must be somebody in the house, for I was ready to put the worst construction on appearances. In this perplexing dilemma I got my hand, with as little noise as possible, to the muzzle of my gun, and gradually drawing out the ramrod, tried, with my right arm stretched out, to stir up the embers so that I might see; but here again a new danger presented itself: I was exposing myself as a mark to a ball or an arrow, without the chance of defending myself, for the light would show me to the enemy before I could see my object. But there was no alternative and something must be done.**

**Between hope and despair I managed to stir up the ashes, so that I could see little Weasel running to and fro to the cellar door. I concluded that the enemy must be skulking in the cellar. I then, but not without difficulty, got a candle lighted. Holding the candle in my left hand, I laid hold of my pistol. With the lynx eye and wary step of a cat ready to pounce on its prey, I advanced rather obliquely, with my right arm stretched out at full length holding the cocked pistol, till I got to the cellar door, the little dog all the while making a furious noise; when, lo! what was there but a skunk sitting on a roll of tobacco! The shot blew it almost to atoms, and so delicately perfumed everything in the house that I was scarcely able to live in it for days afterwards.”[[96]](#footnote-96)**

**“October had now passed by and November also, but no Mr. [David] Stuart came, and various reports were circulated by the Indians as to his fate; and I now began to despair of his return. The delay of Mr. Stuart’s party had a visible effect on the conduct of the Indians: they became more bold, neglected their hunting and loitered about the place, as if in expectation of some sudden change. Strange Indians were every day swelling the camp; they held councils, too; altogether they were a changed people.”[[97]](#footnote-97)**

TWO OF CLERK JOHN REED’S MEN RETURNED TO THE MAIN PARTY

Clerk John Reed and three men had set out [October 31] to investigate the Snake River

beyond the area already investigated by Wilson Price Hunt

Two of those men now arrived back at Hunt’s main party and were hopefully received

but their report only added to the general feeling of hopelessness -- November 6, 1811

they had gone beyond where Hunt had scouted the river but met no Indians

the Snake River maintained its furious course boiling through narrow rugged channels

and between rocks that rose like walls

in disgust and despair Reed’s men had named one long volcanic chute they followed

The Devil’s Scuttle Hole

DONALD “FATS”McKENZIE’S DETACHMENT HAD DISAPPEARED ACROSS THE PLAINS

With no accurate maps or experienced guides to rely on the followed an old Indian trail

(near the lava fields which now comprise the Craters of the Moon National Monument (Idaho)

it was believed that crossing the trackless wilderness of the (Idaho) plains would be very difficult

for five days McKenzie and his four men attempted to support themselves

by trapping and fishing along the Snake River -- both of which were unproductive

they soon exhausted their scant provisions and were unable to find any food at all

to appease their hunger they ate beaver skins roasted over the fire

HUNT’S OVERLAND EXPEDITION FACES A DESPERATE SITUTATION

Both of the men traveling with clerk John Reed returned to the main expedition

reporting no Indians could be found nor was any prospect of a route to take them to safety

Wilson Price Hunt and Ramsay Crooks had a choice of impossible options:

•to wait for help that was not even expected from Donald McKenzie meant starvation;

•they could abandon the Snake River and launch out over the vast trackless plains without food

where they could perish of hunger or thirst

in fact, deserts of sand and gravel lay ahead of them

all the way from the Snake River to the Columbia

there was thin vegetation for pasture for game

treeless desolate and barren prairies stretched on for hundreds of miles

(this, of course, was all unknown to Hunt and Crooks)

•they could keep to the river where they would always have water and possibly fish or beaver

also, there was a stronger possibility of meeting Indians who could provide them food

WAR OF 1812 BACKGROUND

Great Britain was locked in a long and bitter conflict with Napoleon Bonaparte’s France

in an attempt to cut off supplies from reaching their enemy

each combatant attempted to block the United States from trading with the other combatant

Many issues had remained unresolved since the end of the American Revolution [1783]

major American complaints against Great Britain included:

•trade restrictions brought about by Britain’s continuing war with France;

•insults to American national honor by British humiliations on the high seas;

•impressment (kidnapping) of American merchant sailors into the British Navy;

•Britain support for American Indian tribes impeding America’s expansion;

•American interest in annexing part of Canada which had been denied

at the end of the Revolution

United States took the opportunity to attempt to invade Canada

Indiana Territory Governor William Henry Harrison fought the Battle of Tippecanoe against

Shawnee Indian leader Tecumseh, his brother Tenskwatawa (known as “The Prophet”)

and an Indian confederation of tribes -- November 7, 1811

this attack convinced the Indians of the region they needed British protection from America

British government then sent 15,000 more troops to North America

(United States declared war on Great Britain, Ireland and England’s North American colonies

and their Indian allies [June 18, 1812])

DONALD McKENZIE SUDDENLY ENOUNTERS JOHN REED

Some distance below what had been named the Devils Scuttle Hole

Donald McKenzie unexpectedly encountered clerk John Reed and his traveling companion

these seven Astorians traveled together following the banks of the Snake River

through one of the most rugged sections of the United States

to their west lay the vast canyon of the Snake River -- in places more than a mile deep

ahead and to the right timber-choked mountains towered above them

there was seldom any fresh water to be found on the arid plains high above the Snake River

thirst-crazed men of the McKenzie-Reed Party drank their own urine

Members of the McKenzie-Reed party became so exhausted

that McKenzie was forced to carry his own pack plus two of his men’s blankets

WILSON PRICE HUNT MAKES ANOTHER ILL-ADVISED DECISION

Wilson Price Hunt and Ramsay Crooks agreed the best course was to divide the company

into two parties and proceed independently along the Snake River -- November 8, 1811

Wilson Price Hunt would led nineteen men Astorians plus Marie Dorion and her two children

along the north bank of the Snake River

Ramsay Crooks would lead nineteen others along the south bank

More time was lost as supplies and trade goods were cached in nine separate locations

each cache was placed in an underground depository lined with dry grass, sticks, or poles

these were covered and camouflaged

their excess supplies were thus hidden for future recovery

men caught a few beaver which increased their scanty food supply only slightly

essential items were put in twenty pound packs

each person carried five pounds of food including a quarter pound of meat

expedition’s forty pounds of corn, twenty pounds of fat and five pounds of bouillon cubes

were divided among the packs to keep forty-three Astorians alive

some blankets, ammunition, traps and other essentials were packed

in addition each person also carried their own articles and equipment

OVERLAND EXPEDITION SETS OUT ON OPPOSITE SIDES OF THE SNAKE RIVER

Far below the Astorians the river raged at the foot of cliffs two hundred and three hundred feet high

Wilson Price Hunt set out with his nineteen men, Marie Dorion and her sons Baptiste and Paul,

along the north bank of the Snake River

Ramsay Crooks led his nineteen men along the south bank of the Snake River

from a place (later known as “Farewell Bend” where the Oregon Trail left the Snake River)

Hunt and his companions trudged for twenty-eight miles -- November 9, 1811

Marie Dorion bore her pack -- frequently with the added weight of her two-year-old son Paul

while the other child Baptiste aged four marched beside her

there is no record of any complaint from her although she was now seven months pregnant

Hunt’s Astorians camped under an outcropping of overhanging rocks high above the river’s edge

some rain had fallen during the day and puddles of water provided adequate relief from thirst

as it was only with great difficulty that water could be brought up from the river in a kettle

HUNT CONTINUES WITH HIS PARTY OF ASTORIANS ALONG THE SNAKE’S NORTH BANK

Wilson Price Hunt’s Astorians pressed onward with the river far below them

thirsty except for little pockets of water they found on in hollows of rock

Finally they came to place where they could reach the Snake River -- November 10, 1811

everywhere the river was filled with rapids but at this spot the water was quiet

McKENZIE-REED PARTY DISCOVERS MORE ASTORIANS

Below the Devils Scuttle Hole on the Snake River the seven men of the McKenzie-Reed party

met Robert McClellan and his three men as they continued to follow the Snake River

they had suffered great privations and were desperate

McKenzie-McClellan-Reed party consisted of eleven men -- two of Astor’s partners and a clerk

they were all in the same predicament

without horses, provisions, or information of any kind

they agreed it would be worse than useless to return to Hunt with so many starving men

their only prospect was to remove themselves from this land of starvation as soon as possible

and make their way to the Columbia River

WILSON PRICE HUNT REACHES A SHOSHONE INDIAN CAMP

Hunt found a trail well worn by horses that he chose to follow rather than climb the cliffs

following this route his party met two Shoshone Indians who showed Hunt a knife

that had been given to the Indian by some other Astorians (probably Donald McKenzie)

Hunt and his party of twenty-two were led along the path away from the Snake River

across a prairie to where a few Indians were camped -- November 11, 1811

at their approach women fled in fear in such haste they left their babies that could not walk

they simply covered the infants with straw

when Hunt lifted the straw he could see the babies were terrified

even the men trembled in fear

however, the Indians gave the Astorians a small amount of fish and sold them a dog

One of these Indians guided the Astorians to the river where they found it lined with Indian tents

Hunt made camp nearby and the Astorians were visited by about fifty Shoshone men

(Hunt later reported these people were honest and very obliging)

WILSON PRICE HUNT PRESSES ON WITH HIS OVERLAND EXPEDITION

Hunt purchased two more dogs from the Shoshones

one of which they had for breakfast -- November 12, 1811

Their difficult march continued over jagged, volcanic rocks, across plains of sagebrush,

and stretches of sand -- although always within sight of the Snake River far below them

fresh water was never within reach

after twenty-eight miles of tortuous travel they were able to scramble down rocks close enough to the river to obtain a kettle of water with great difficulty

Over the next three days they traveled sixty-three miles generally to the northwest

they again met Indians whose women were badly clad and their children were worse off

Ahead of them was a snow-covered mountain that the river seemed to penetrate

McKENZIE-McCLELLAN-REED PARTY STRUGGLES ACROSS THE SNAKE RIVER PLAINS

Pressing on along the river bank traveling downstream, the McKenzie-McClellan Reed Party

clambered over rocks and high hills

although almost constantly within sight of water, one of their greatest sufferings was thirst

as the river had carved a deep channel through the Rocky Mountains hundreds of feet below

no streams or brooks flowed in the vicinity of the Astorians high above the river

only occasionally would they discover pockets of rainwater to quench their burning thirst

NOR’WESTER DAVID THOMPSON REACHES SALEESH HOUSE

David Thompson journeyed along (British Columbia’s) Canoe River to the Columbia River

and continued down the Columbia to Spokane House on the Spokane River

he continued on to Saleesh (Flathead) House where he arrived -- November 13, 1811

Thompson (will spend the winter of [1811-1812]) at Saleesh House on the Clark Fork River

and take several short trapping trips throughout the (winter)

WILSON PRICE HUNT CONTINUES TO FOLLOW THE SNAKE RIVER

Hunt and his overland Astorians walked twenty-eight miles along the Snake River

which was entirely free of rapids along this stretch -- November 15, 1811

stench of dead salmon lining the banks of the river permeated the whole atmosphere

a chance meeting with some Indians added two dogs and some salmon to their food supply

Indians they met told them some of the Astorians (McKenzie’ party) had passed through this area

WILSON PRICE HUNT AND HIS ASTORIANS TRUDGE ON

Snake River once again became turbulent as it forced its way

through a narrow channel between steep rocks and tumbled down a violent rapids

Twenty miles along a rugged road was traveled -- November 16, 1811

as they approached a mountain in the northwest that was covered with snow

They had only dried corn and the remains of their dried meat to eat

WILSON PRICE HUNT’S ACQUIRES A HORSE

Wilson Price Hunt was successful in obtaining a horse from a reluctant native

in exchange for a tin kettle -- November 17, 1811

Hunt purchased the animal to use as a pack beast because his men had grown so weak

from hunger and fatigue that they could no longer carry their packs

Hunt’s expedition reached the area of (present-day Glenns Ferry, Idaho) -- November 18

they had only a quart of grain and a piece of fat for each person

no wood was available for a fire which made for a miserable camp that night

WILSON PRICE HUNT AGAIN MAKES A BAD DECISION

Hunt traded a tomahawk, a steel for making fire, a knife and some beads

for a horse for his own use -- November 19, 1811

Following the advice of the Indians Hunt once again changed course

he led his starving and exhausted Astorians across a prairie where there was no water at all

it appeared things would improve the next day, but that was a false hope

twenty-five miles to the northwest was covered before camp was made

fortunately for Hunt and his Astorians it began to rain during the night

water collected in puddles was used to quench their thirst

RAIN BRINGS LIFE TO WILSON PRICE HUNT’S ASTORIANS

Wilson Price Hunt with his nineteen Astorians, Marie Dorion and her two children

started out at dawn as rain fell throughout the day -- November 20, 1811

thirst was replaced by hunger as they trudged across the prairie for thirty-three miles

on only a little dried corn

Rain continued throughout the night

HUNT’S ASTORIANS COME UPON ANOTHER INDIAN ENCAMPMENT

At daybreak Wilson Price Hunt’s party saw the Snake River ahead as it flowed to the northwest

its banks lined with cottonwood and willow trees -- November 21, 1811

(at a point about ten miles west of present day Boise, Idaho)

Indians had made camp there and had many horses

they were better clothed than other natives they recently had seen

Hunt was told that upstream beaver were plentiful but there only a few in this vicinity

Here an Indian told Hunt that the horse he was riding had been stolen from him

because it was necessary to get food for the expedition Hunt returned the horse

he purchased some fish and two dogs

Two Astorians, one was Pierre Dorion, each purchased a horse in exchange for a buffalo robe

Pierre Dorion’s pregnant wife Marie and her two children were provided a great deal of relief

because they occasionally were able to ride

When Wilson Price Hunt questioned local Indians regarding the distance to the Columbia River

they could not even tell him which direction to travel in order to find it

Hunt’s expedition returned to the Snake River in an effort to maintain their bearings

rain was so heavy that only twelve miles were made that day

however, spirits were raised by a meal of fish and dogs purchased from the Indians

WILSON PRICE HUNT’S ASTORIANS ENTER THE FOOTHILLS

Mountains ahead were covered with snow

Hunt’s party continued their trek westward suffering the same hardships

that had accompanied them throughout the month of November

Occasional meetings with Indians provided them the opportunity to barter for food

information about the Columbia River was even more difficult to acquire

When the foothills of the (Salmon River Mountains) were reached they crossed the Snake River

and began the difficult climb -- November 26, 1811

before them was a wintry looking mountain covered with snow on all sides

TRAVEL BECOMES VERY DIFFICULT FOR WILSON PRICE HUNT’S EXPEDITION

Wilson Price Hunt’s Pacific Fur Company over land expediting toiled through a canyon

so sheer walled that horses had to be unpacked so they could get through -- November 27, 1811

Marie Dorion carried her children and her pack through this area without complaint

for more than two weeks Hunt and his men with the Sioux woman and her children

wandered through the mountains near the Snake River

Day followed day with harsh conditions being the rule rather than the exception

sometimes they found a little game or met with Shoshones

and obtained a couple of dogs or a few horses -- most often they went hungry

Indians told Hunt some whites who had followed the same trail they were taking

and about some other whites who had passed on the opposite side of the river

this news relieved Hunt greatly regarding Ramsay Crooks and his companions

Mountains whose heights were covered with pines and snow narrowed the Snake River channel

they could advance only with the greatest difficulty because of the sharp rocks

and steep cliffs that plunged to the very banks of the river

they killed a black-tailed deer which gave them an excellent meal

SPIRITS ARE RAISED AT ASTORIA

Robert Stuart returned from a successful venture into the Cascade Mountains

hardly a hundred miles away from Astoria near the mouth of the Columbia River

It was learned by the Astorians at the post that David Stuart had found a prosperous site for a post

where the Okanogan River enters the Columbia River

These positive reports had an uplifting effect on morale

however, pessimism soon crept back as the rain-swept year dragged toward an end

with no word from the reinforcements crossing overland from St. Louis

HUNT’S EXPEDITION IS STOPPED

Wilson Price Hunt’s party traveled only thirteen miles -- December 1, 1811

terrain had a great deal to do with it as the country became increasingly broken

this resulted in the distance covered decreasing each day

hunger sapped their strength -- their diet that day consisted of one small beaver

and some frozen blackberries and chokeberries for all twenty men, a woman and two children

Weather added to their misery as rain in the gorges and snow knee deep on the ridges

accompanied by bitter winds increased the pain of their travel -- and it was extremely cold

horses had to be unloaded to remain on the narrow trail close to the Snake River

baggage was carried in the arms of the Astorians up icy crags

a large snow storm the cut travel time to zero -- December 2

and only nine miles were covered the following day

WILSON PRICE HUNT WAS FORCED TO LEAVE THE SNAKE RIVER

Once again the Astorians, Marie Dorion and her sons Baptiste and Paul climbed into the mountains

that were covered with snow up to their knees

temperatures remained extremely cold and the members of the expedition were nearly exhausted

By good luck they reached a grove of pine trees at sunset -- December 4, 1811

they were comforted by a warm fire

although they had struggled ahead all day because of the twisting course of the river

they had traveled only four miles from the camp of the day before

WILSON PRICE HUNT RETURNS TO THE SNAKE RIVER

It began to snow on their pine tree encampment about 3:00 a.m. December 5, 1811

visibility was reduced to three hundred feet but the roar of the river could be heard far below

they followed the sound as they slid down the mountainside

one horse fell several hundred feet with his load but the animal was not hurt

Weather was less severe in the valley than it had been on the mountain slopes

it was raining there and the snow was only ankle deep

only six miles were covered that day and Hunt had to kill another horse for food

almost a month of brutal toil had brought Hunt’s group

(to today’s Seven Devils Mountain area beside the Grand Canyon of the Snake River)

WILSON PRICE HUNT’S PARTY AND RAMSAY CROOKS’ PARTY COMMUNICATE

Stumbling to the Snake River for water during the snowy morning -- December 6, 1811

Hunt’s men to their astonishment and distress saw white men on the south side of the Snake River

they appeared to be Ramsay Crooks’ party

Both Hunt’s and Crook’s Astorians had traveled parallel routes but out of touch with each other

on either side of the Snake River

Ramsay Crooks hailed Hunt’s people across the river

much shouting over the sounds of the Snake River elicited the fact

that Crooks and his eighteen men were nearly starved and exhausted

they had been completely unsuccessful in the search for food or Indian guidance

worn with fatigue and emaciated from hunger

they seemed in even more wretched physical condition and desolate than Hunt’s people

WILSON HUNT BUILDS A BULL BOAT TO CROSS THE SNAKE RIVER

Hastily Wilson Price Hunt returned to his camp and built a bull boat with the hide of the horse

he had killed the night before

When one of the voyageurs volunteered to ride the bull boat across the raging Snake River

Hunt launched it and successfully delivered some food to their starving companions

RAMSAY CROOKS IS TAKEN ACROSS THE SNAKE RIVER

On the return trip in the bull boat Ramsay Crooks and French-Canadian Francois Le Clerc

were ferried to the north bank

Crooks was almost completely exhausted by fatigue and hunger, Le Clerk was ill

After he had eaten, Crooks told a hopeless tale of impassable cliffs along the river

they were returning from a point about three day’s journey down the Snake River

where they could not continue because there were no longer banks and ledges

and cliffs cut them off from drinking water hundreds of feet below

mountain walls of rock rose almost perpendicularly

from their base in the boiling waters to their crests covered in snow

there were equally impassable snowdrifts in the mountains

(this was the Grand Canyon of the Snake River)

for six days they had had only the meat of their dogs for food

yesterday Crooks and his party had eaten the last of their food -- their moccasins

Wilson Price Hunt spent a sleepless night reflecting on their situation

WILSON PRICE HUNT CONSIDERS HIS PROSPECTS

Hunt was now responsible to provide for both his party and that of Ramsay Crooks

he had more than twenty famished people to care for including Marie Dorion and her two sons

something had to be done for Ramsay Crooks’ men on the south side of the Snake River

no time could be lost -- to linger was to starve

ahead the depth of snow in the rugged mountains seemed impossible to conquer

their only alternative appeared to be to turn back, seek out the Indians and purchase horses

even this alternative would condemn the Astorians to starvation

as they would have only wild berries, hawthorn plants and one skin and bone horse left

and Hunt knew Ramsay Crooks and several of his men were too ill to accompany them

Once again the bull boat was sent across the Snake River to deliver food to Crooks’ men

this time the bull boat was lost

thorough searches of the area revealed there was no ready material available

with which to construct another boat so a raft was made of driftwood

Several unsuccessful attempts were made through the turbulent waters

to send Ramsay Crooks and Francois Le Clerc on the raft back across the river

with the remainder of the meat to the starving men

however, all efforts to float a raft across the raging Snake River failed

their failure demonstrated there was no means of crossing the river

Crooks and Le Clerc would have to travel with Wilson Price Hunt

leaving Ramsay Crooks’ eighteen men on the south shore without an official leader

ONCE AGAIN HUNT MAKES A FATERUL AND INCORRECT DECISION

With the little remaining strength they possessed both Hunt’s party and Crooks’ former party

slowly retraced their painful course back up the Snake River -- December 7, 1811

retracing the steps they had only just recently taken along both banks of the Snake River

It was soon apparent that Crooks and Le Clerc were too feeble to walk so Hunt slowed the pace

knowing the great distance they had to travel to reach a Shoshone Indian camp if it was still there

Hunt’s twenty-four traveling companions grew impatient with the delay

they believed remaining with Crooks and Francois Le Clerc meant starvation

by ones and twos Hunt’s men left him to retrace their steps at a faster pace

until only five remained with Crooks and Le Clerc

ANOTHER ATTEMPT IS MADE TO SEND SUPPLIES ACROSS THE SNAKE RIVER

Another raft was built to send Ramsay Crooks and Francois Le Clerc back to Crooks’ men

but the crossing could not be made because of the swift current -- December 8, 1811

It was very cold that night and one of the men was severely frostbitten

Ramsay Crooks became very ill -- another two days would be lost

before an Indian village they had passed while traveling down the Snake River could be reached

WILSON PRICE HUNT DECIDES TO LEAVE CROOKS AND LE CLERC BEHIND

Wilson Price Hunt left two men to care for Ramsay Crooks and Francois Le Clerc

he left two beaver skins with them and took another for himself

Hunt and three companions set out to catch the main body of his party -- December 9, 1811

traveling through the terrible cold on empty stomachs was grueling

sharing one beaver tail for supper helped very little

WILSON PRICE HUNT CATCHES HIS MAIN PARTY OF OVERLAND ASTORIANS

Hunt and his three companions overtook the main body of Astorians -- early December 10, 1811

one horse remained, the one belonging to Pierre Dorion that he had paid for it with a buffalo robe it carried his pregnant wife, children and his possessions

Hunt suggested slaughtering the animal but Dorion would not consent to the idea

despite the fact the animal was a walking skeleton

Pierre realized that Marie would need the strength of the horse to carry her and his children

after she had given birth to the baby

Wilson Price Hunt threatened and offered bribes, but Dorion would not change his mind

finally it was agreed to let the animal live

until they knew if the Shoshone village they were seeking remained in the same place

They did not travel far until they came upon Shoshones who had come down from the mountains

after the Hunt’s Overland Expedition had passed by on their way west

these Indians had twenty horses grazing in front of their tepees

Hunt purchased five horses and one was killed immediately, hastily cooked and devoured

as some of Hunt’s men had not eaten since they had left him [November 7]

some of the meat was taken by horseback to the men staying with Ramsay Crooks

Hunt learned a camp of Indians was located ahead at the mouth of the (Weiser River [Idaho])

Ramsay Crooks’ starving eighteen men were still not able to cross the Snake River

they saw the arrival of the five horses and the butchering of a horse across the river

although they were crying out for food none of Hunt’s men were willing to risk crossing the river

WILSON PRICE HUNT LOSES ANOTHER MAN

Ramsay Crooks and his three companions used the horse that brought them meat

to reach the main camp -- early morning December 11, 1811

When Crooks arrived in camp he was shocked to find

that although Hunt’s people were well supplied with food none had been sent to his people

at this location the river was narrow but deep and everything could be seen and heard across it

Crooks called out to his men to set water boiling in their kettles as he was sending over meat

across the Snake River -- Crooks ordered a bull boat constructed -- December 11, 1811

when all was ready Crooks in his weakened state collapsed while trying to launch it

however his effort thoroughly shamed the men

Finally Ben Jones, a hunter, volunteered and successfully delivered the raw meat

after Jones returned across the river to the main party

one of Crooks’ voyageurs, Jean-Baptiste Prevost, ran up and down the beach crying out

to be taken across the river away from starvation

he said he would not take another step but would lay down and die

Once again the bull boat was sent across the river carrying more supplies

this time with voyageur Joseph Delaunay aboard

when Delaunay arrived on the south side of the river Prevost insisted on being taken across

he could not wait for the meat to cook -- he needed to eat immediately

Prevost forced himself aboard the bull boat as preparations were made for the return trip

but as the opposite bank was approached Prevost became frantic

at the sight of meat roasting over a fire in Hunt’s camp

Prevost’s energetic activities upset the bull boat

throwing Delaunay and Prevost into the churning water -- Prevost was lost

but Delaunay, after much difficulty and heroism by the Astorians, was rescued

however, the bull boat was swept away by the turbulent current

JOHN DAY JOINS WILSON PRICE HUNT’S ASTORIANS

Wilson Price Hunt killed another horse and had a bull boat made out of the hide

which he used to send over more supplies to the opposite shore

John Day, a hunter and one of Ramsay Crooks party, became convinced he was dying

he requested that he be allowed to spend his last hours

with his former employer and commander Crooks

Day was transported across the Snake River

poor John Day, once an active and vigorous man was now more feeble than Crooks

WILSON PRICE HUNT LEAVES CROOKS, DAY AND DUBREUIL BEHIND

All of their scanty resources had been distributed to both sides of the river -- December 12, 1811

Hunt was determined to lead his party to an Indian village

but John Day would never be able to keep up

unwilling to abandon the man, Ramsay Crooks urged Hunt to keep the expedition together

French-Canadian, Jean-Baptiste Dubreuil also was ill and requested to remain with Crooks

WILSON PRICE HUNT’S PARTY CONTINUES ALONG THE SNAKE RIVER

Hunt, now traveling with eighteen men, Marie Dorion and her two sons Baptiste and Paul set out

leaving Ramsay Crooks, John Day and Jean-Baptiste Dubreuil behind -- December 13, 1811

all three Astorians were ill

Hunt left two horses with them and part of the carcass of the last horse that had been killed

this, he hoped, would be sufficient to sustain them until they could reach an Indian camp

Weather was so cold that ice was running in the Snake River and snow fell frequently

eighteen Astorians with Wilson Price Hunt traveled along the north side of the Snake River

they came to a stream (probably Boise Creek)

They followed the Snake River’s bank upriver some distance

before nightfall they found a small encampment of Shoshone Indians

who had constructed a winter lodge along a nearby creek

there were a number of horses pawing for grass under the light snow

Indians traded a horse for an old pewter kettle and some glass beads

Hunt’s party camped for the night in level open country next to the Shoshone Indian lodge

RAMSAY CROOKS STOPS AT A SHOSHONE CAMP

Ramsay Crooks, John Day and Jean-Baptiste Dubreuil reached a Shoshone camp

Crooks stopped to make a winter camp along Snake River where they remained for twenty days

as they treated John Day’s physical and mental deterioration

although Day was completely unable to travel Crooks refused to abandon his friend

who had worked for Crooks and always proved to be most faithful

over the days John Day and Jean-Baptiste Dubreuil deteriorated in health

Ramsay Crooks, John Day and Jean-Baptiste Dubreuil were without resources

they had nothing to offer the destitute Shoshone Indians who remained with them

soon the Indians drifted away

Death seemed very near for everyone when a couple of Shoshone Indians wandered by,

started a fire and fed them a meal before continuing on

somewhat revived John Day managed to kill a wolf that had been prowling around the camp

this improved the condition of the two very sick men and Ramsay Crooks

While the three Astorians remained in camp they were shocked to see the arrival of

Astorians Andre La Chapelle, Jean-Baptiste Turcotte and Francois Landry

who had gone off on their own from Fort Henry (Idaho) to investigate beaver streams

along the Missouri River

Crooks and the men with him remained in the camp for twenty days

as they treated John Day’s physical and mental deterioration

although Day was completely unable to travel Crooks refused to abandon his friend

who had worked for Crooks and always proved to be most faithful

occasionally Crooks and his men were assisted by friendly Indians

WILSON PRICE HUNT FINDS A SHOSHONE INDIAN CAMP

Hunt and his traveling companions saw a dozen Shoshone Indian tepees

along a small tributary of the Snake River -- December 16, 1810

Descending from the mountains Hunt and his Astorians reached a broad lava plain

where they camped on the banks of a river they had previously crossed [November 26]

Hunt noted they had futilely tried to find a passage along the Snake River for twenty days

Hunt rested his party for a few days beside the Shoshone camp

he was informed it would not be possible to find a passage following the river

Hunt purchased a horse and a dog on one day

and another horse, dried fish, a few roots and some pounded cherries the next day

Hunt spent most of his time attempting to find a route to the Columbia River

and the Cayuse Indians who lived there

advice was plentiful but always differed from what had just been learned

however, all agreed the trail was good

and the journey would take seventeen to twenty-one nights

there would be snow waist high in the mountains

Hunt visited every Indian lodge asking for someone to guide them across the (Blue) mountains

no one would accept regardless of what he offered as a reward for the service

Shoshones invited the Astorians to remain with them until (spring)

Hunt was again in a dilemma, to attempt a mountain crossing without a guide was certain death

to remain there, after having already been so long on the journey and at such great expense,

was worse to him than “two deaths”

Hunt changed his tactics and berated the Indians for lying about the conditions in the mountains

because they were afraid and lacked courage

one Indian agreed to guide the Astorians across the mountains for a gun, a pistol,

three knives, two horses and a little bit of everything the traders had with them

McKENZIE-McCLELLAN-REED PARTY PASS THROUGH THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

After crossing the Snake River Plain the eleven members of the McKenzie-McClellan-Reed Party

arrived at the Seven Devils and Craig Mountains of the Rocky Mountain chain

which loomed in front of them

they began to force their way up steep grades and through the canyons against terrifying obstacles

Sufferings from hunger because there was no game

they subsisted on strips of beaver skin broiled on the campfire coals

an allowance barely enough to keep them alive -- then they ran out of beaver strips

still they feebly dragged one limb after another suffering from thirst and hunger

until a severe snow storm forced them to stop

to struggle against it, in their exhausted condition, was impossible

cowering under an impending rock at the foot of a steep mountain,

they prepared themselves for that wretched fate which seemed inevitable

ONCE AGAIN WILSON PRICE HUNT SETS OUT WITH HIS OVERLAND EXPEDITON

Wilson Price Hunt and his party left the Shoshone Indian camp -- December 21, 1811

soon their guide was joined by two others Shoshone Indians who led them to the Snake River

no rafts could be found to make a crossing so two horses were killed and a bull boat made

on the south side they met thirteen of Ramsay Crooks’ leaderless men who reported they had not seen Crooks or the two men with him since they left

McKENZIE-McCLELLAN-REED PARTY FACES FAMINE

With death by starvation very near Robert McClellan looked higher up the mountain

where he saw a bighorn sheep standing on a rock on the hillside above

he was the only member of the party with the strength to go in pursuit

McClellan set off to get within range of the animal -- his companions watched in breathless anxiety

their lives depended on his success

McClellan made a cautious circuit and when he arrived at the proper distance

he leveled his rifle, took careful aim and fired -- the animal dropped dead where it stood

this was very fortunate as no one had the strength of pursue a wounded animal

McClellan rolled the carcass down the mountain to the waiting Astorians

who were too feeble to climb the rocks

they displayed amazing self-denial as they carved up the bighorn sheep

they made themselves content with soup made from the bones

and saved the flesh for the future

Strengthened by the food the eight Astorians continued their agonizing journey

frequently they were reduced once again to near starvation

only their small number kept them alive as they could survive on little food

enabled them to travel through this desolate region and remain alive

WILSON PRICE HUNTS GATHERS UP SOME OF RAMSAY CROOKS’ MEN

All of Ramsay Crooks’ men crossed the Snake River using the bull boat -- December 23, 1811

Crooks’ men were extremely weak and exhausted -- four of them even more than the others

three of them were so weak they expressed the wish to remain with the Shoshones

WILSON PRICE HUNT CONTINUES HIS JOURNEY

Three of Ramsay Crooks’ men took the bull boat across the Snake River -- December 24, 1811

Hunt gave them some supplies and the bull boat

Hunt’s party now consisted of twenty-eight Astorians, a very pregnant Marie Dorion

and her two sons, and three Shoshone Indians who served as guides

they had five exhausted, half-starved horses that carried their baggage

and, in case of need, were to furnish them with provisions for their trip over the mountains

Hunt’s guides set out northwest away from the Snake River -- morning December 24, 1811

they headed for the chain of forested and snow-covered (Blue Mountains) of eastern Oregon

rising between the men and their goal -- but their hardships would not end

Conditions remained intolerable

they made only fourteen miles a day across plains and over hills occasionally covered in snow

one sparse meal a day of horsemeat hardly took the edge off their hunger

rain and snow impeded their march

heavy frosts at night chilled them through as they lay in camp

and gave an icy temperature to the streams they were obliged to cross from time to time

HUNT’S MAIN PARTY OF ASTORIANS REACH THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

Wilson Price Hunt’s remaining expedition crossed a northward flowing stream -- December 28, 1811

(this was the Powder River flowing out of Oregon’s Blue Mountains)

turning west the thirty-two traveling companions penetrated the rugged (Blue Mountains)

as they continued forward snow and rain fell -- twice they were forced to cross the icy river

Mountains crowded in on each side -- to the left was one they had to climb

it extended from north to south was heavily wooded and was covered with snow

WILSON PRICE HUNT’S OVERLAND PARTY CROSS THE (BLUE MOUNTAINS)

Traveling for two weeks, Hunt’s cold, hungry party average twenty-eight miles a day

in rain and snow as they crossed the rugged Wallowa Mountains (of Oregon)

they entered the (Grande Ronde) region -- a beautiful valley several miles wide and very long

with a pretty stream meandering through it -- beaver seemed to be plentiful

Happily the Astorians found six Shoshone tepees and many horses

these Indians sold them four horses as well as three dogs and some roots

they said it would be three nights to sleep before the Cayuse Indians were reached

they pointed out a pass in the mountains that had to be taken

Indians said there would not be much now but Hunt doubted this information

as they were surrounded by snow-blanketed mountains

McKENZIE- McCLELLAN-REED PARTY CONTINUES THEIR JOURNEY TOWARD ASTORIA

Meat of the bighorn sheep temporarily gave them strength to pursue their journey

Donald McKenzie, Robert McClellan and John Reed and their seven men crossed overland

north toward the Clearwater River

they trudged across mammoth ridges, through dense forests and past the gorges

of the Little Salmon and the Salmon rivers

they were frequently reduced almost to starvation

only the small number in the party that required only a small amount of food

MARIE DORION GIVES BIRTH TO HER THIRD CHILD

Madame Marie Dorion gave birth in the bleak and snowy dawn -- December 30, 1811

hers was the first child born on the trek across North America

Wilson Price Hunt’s decency was divided between his senses of duty toward the expedition

and his feelings of humanity for the mother and infant

he hesitated about taking up the day’s march even in the face of their situation

food was very scarce and every hour of delay was dangerous

author Washington Irving described the birth of the baby: **“…the** [wife] **of Pierre Dorion, who had hitherto kept on without murmuring or flinching, was suddenly taken in labor, and enriched her husband with another child. As the fortitude and good conduct of the poor woman had gained for her the good-will of the party, her situation caused concern and perplexity. Pierre, however, treated the matter as an occurrence that could be arranged and need cause no delay. He remained by his wife in the camp, with his other children and his horse, and promised soon to rejoin the main body, who proceeded on their march.”[[98]](#footnote-98)**

(a marker on the Oregon Trail near North Powder, Oregon approximately locates the site)

Overland Astorians pressed onward while Dorion and his children remained with the mother

DORION FAMILY CATCHS UP WITH HUNT AND THE ASTORIANS

Pierre Dorion walked into the camp leading his skeleton of a horse -- December 31, 1812

which, perhaps with this emergency in mind, he had deliberately refused to have killed

author Washington Irving again describes the scene: **“In the course of the following morning the Dorion family made its reappearance. Pierre came trudging in advance, followed by his valued, though skeleton steed, on which was mounted his** [wife] **with her new-born infant in her arms, and her boys of two and four years old wrapped in a blanket and slung at her side. The mother looked as unconcerned as if nothing had happened to her.”[[99]](#footnote-99)**

McKENZIE- McCLELLAN-REED PARTY ARRIVES AT THE CLEARWATER RIVER

After twenty-one days of toil and suffering, the eleven Astorians crossed through

the Seven Devils and Craig Mountains of the Rocky Mountain

They arrived at the southern fork of the Snake River (today’s Clearwater River)

here they found wild horses -- the first they had seen west of the Rocky Mountains

Donald McKenzie, Robert McClellan and John Reed and their eight men

made their way to the Snake River where they found a friendly tribe of Indians

(probably Nez Perce) who provided food and shelter

Living with the Nez Perce was a young white man in a mentally unstable condition

when he was lucid he told the Astorians he was Archibald Pelton from Connecticut

he had worked for Manuel Lisa and came west with Andrew Henry

he had helped build Fort Henry on the Snake River (Idaho)

at the post he had survived an attack by hostile Indians and had wandered for three years

when he came upon this friendly band who took him in cared for him

Horses were acquired from the Indians -- one was slaughtered for food

McKenzie-McClellan-Reed Party members gratefully mounted the remaining animals

they set out to the west with Archibald Pelton accompanying them

ALEXANDER ROSS IS NOT HAPPY TO SPEND THE WINTER ALONE AT FORT OKANOGAN

Alexander Ross was unhappy to spend the winter among the natives alone at the post

he kept an account of his experiences in the wilderness: “**Only picture to yourself, gentle reader, how I must have felt alone in this unhallowed wilderness, without friend or white man within hundreds of miles of me, and surrounded by savages who had never seen a white man before. Every day seemed a week, every night a month. I pined, I languished, my head turned gray, and in a brief space ten years were added to my age. Yet man is born to endure, and my only consolation was in my Bible.**

**“The first thing I did after my friends left me was to patch up the house a little and put the few goods I had, so tempting to Indians, into a kind of cellar, which I made in the middle of the house. This done, I set to in earnest to learn the Indian language, and wrote vocabulary after vocabulary; and although the task was a hard one, I soon found from my progress that perseverance would overcome many difficulties.”[[100]](#footnote-100)**

ASTORIAN JOSEPH MILLER AND HIS TRAPPERS SEARCH FOR BEAVER STREAMS

Astor’s partner Joseph Miller along with Edward Robinson, John Hoback and Jacob Reznor,

and Martin Cass had successfully worked the Snake River Country

They left the region around Fort Henry on the Snake River (Idaho)

and veered south where the Snake River until it began to turn westward

they and trekked more than two hundred miles across the Continental Divide -- winter 1811-1812

but their route did not cross through any mountain pass

ASTORIANS ALONG THE COLUMBIA RIVER EXPAND THEIR AREA OF OPERATION

Astorians at the fort made the best of bad conditions -- winter 1811-1812

brisk trade was established with the neighboring natives

Indians kept them informed of other activities happening in the area

Astorians had competition from North West Company trappers

who had heard of Astor’s venture and did not wish to share the natural wealth

Partner Robert Stuart and Clerk Donald McGillis

led a trading party up the Willamette River to investigate Champoeg -- December 1811

ASTOR’S OVERLAND EXPEDITION WAS FORCED TO STOP

Wilson Price Hunt urged his party of thirty-three Astorians to hit the trail

but soon found that not a French-Canadian worthy of the name would travel on New Year’s Day

In spite of the pitiful conditions Hunt’s party faced,

permission for a holiday was granted and the celebration began

New Year’s Day 1812 was greeted with roasted, boiled, fried and fricasseed horsemeat,

edibles of dog and boiled roots and a punch composed almost entirely of hot water

musicians in the expedition brought out their fiddles as the voyageurs danced and sang

WILSON PRICE HUNT’S OVERLAND EXPEDITION IS AGAIN UNDER WAY

Having celebrated the New Year as best they could, Hunt and his party

began walking across (today’s Grande Ronde) valley

following a small stream for several miles into the Blue Mountains -- January 2, 1812

Local Indians pointed out a distant gap through which they must pass to cross the Blue Mountains

they assured the Astorians there would be little snow

and in three days they would arrive among the Cayuse Indians living beside the Great River

Hunt put no stock in this pronouncement as he had been deceived several times before

WILSON PRICE HUNT’S PARTY AGAIN ENTERS THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

Hunt and his people followed a small stream for several miles into the Blue Mountains

after crossing the (Grande Ronde) valley they climbed many pine-covered hills -- January 3, 1812

at the summits they waded through snow to their knees and at times to their waists

fresh water was not available

DORION FAMILY CATCHES UP WITH HUNT AND THE ASTORIANS

Wilson Price Hunt and his Astorians were high in the snow covered Blue Mountains

weather was overcast and cold

Pierre Dorion walked into the Shoshone Indian village

leading their of a skeleton horse -- January 4, 1812

which, perhaps with this emergency in mind, he had deliberately refused to allow to be killed

author Washington Irving again describes the scene: **“In the course of the following morning the Dorion family made its reappearance. Pierre came trudging in advance, followed by his valued, though skeleton steed, on which was mounted his** [wife] **with her new-born infant in her arms, and her boys of two and four years old wrapped in a blanket and slung at her side. The mother looked as unconcerned as if nothing had happened to her.”[[101]](#footnote-101)**

BLUE MOUNTAINS CONFRONT HUNT’S OVERLAND ASTORIANS

Once more Wilson Price Hunt’s thirty-three Astorians assailed the Blue Mountains -- January 5, 1812

as they trudged toward the mountains pass in the distance

There appeared to be no end to the difficult terrain

for three days they struggled along over boulders and fallen trees

as knee deep and sometimes waist-deep snow and added to their misery

they followed trails that ended in impassable mountains or canyons and had to retrace their route

they grew weak from hunger, fatigue and despair

McKENZIE- McCLELLAN-REED PARTY REACHES THE SNAKE RIVER

When the river they were following emptied into an even larger stream, the eleven Astorians realized

they had finally reached the Columbia River (at present-day Pasco, Washington)

From their knowledge of the Lewis and Clark Expedition

they now believed they had been riding along the Snake River

(only later did they discover in fact they had returned to the river they had earlier abandoned)

Here another gathering of Indians agreed to trade two canoes for the Astorians’ horses

eleven men of the McKenzie-McClellan-Reed Party was water bound down the Columbia River

portaging around the rapids, waterfalls and obstacles at the Dalles and the Cascades

WILSON PRICE HUNT’S PARTY CROSSES THE SUMMIT OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

High in the Blue Mountains Wilson Price Hunt’s remaining Overland Expedition members

saw the sun for the first time since climbing into the mountains -- January 6, 1812

far below them to the west was a broad plain

they reached a small stream that led them to an extremely narrow pass

Hunt’s thirty-three Astorians crossed the Blue Mountains -- January 7

and began the descent down the Western slopes

everywhere they found horse trails used by Indians to hunt black-tail deer

many herds were seen

as the sun came out, warmer air melted the snow which disappeared

their little stream joined another much larger one

In the five days since leaving the Shoshone camp they had come about sixty miles

hard travel and the cold temperatures weakened some of the men so badly they could not keep up

their guide assured them they would be among the natives of the Columbia River the next day

an encouraged Wilson Price Hunt ordered the party to push on

he hoped to find a friendly Indian village on the (Umatilla Plains) ahead

where he might obtain food and shelter

DEATH AGAIN VISITS THE HUNT EXPEDITION

Wilson Price Hunt briefly noted in his journal -- January 7, 1812

**“In the course of this day’s march the recently-born child of Pierre Dorion died.”[[102]](#footnote-102)**

no record had been made of the child’s name or gender

Marie Dorion amazingly had not caused a moments delay thus far on the trip

she had obviously withstood many more hardship than any man on the trek

There was not much of a funeral that evening as the little body was wrapped in a piece of cloth or fur

and with little ceremony was buried in an unmarked grave

(probably near Duncan Station, Oregon)

Pierre remembered a brief prayer which he spoke

rocks were mounded over the tiny grave to further protected the body from scavenging animals

WILSON PRICE HUNT HAS A FORTUNATE MEETING WITH FRIENDLY INDIANS

Hunt’s party had only two horses left and both were reduced to skin and bones

in this desperate condition after so many terrible hardships

and the loss of several members of their party, another friendly encampment was seen

thirty-four Indian mat lodges could be seen along a small creek in the distance

Wilson Price Hunt pressed his thirty-three Astorians forward to reach the native village

many of the men dropped behind the main group because they were so feeble

they could not keep up with the already snail-like movement of the pacesetters

Hunt’s Overland Party, including Marie Dorion and her two surviving children

arrived in the camp of friendly and prosperous Cayuse and Nez Perce Indians

who were camped on (today’s Umatilla River) -- January 8, 1812

Indians informed Hunt the Columbia River was only two days away

These Indians had at least two thousand horses

their tepees were made of matting

they were clothed in good robes of buffalo or deerskin

they had deerskin shirts and leggings as good as the best-provided Indians Hunt had seen yet

they had kettles and copper pots in their homes which suggested trade with the coastal Indians

their tools consisted of axes and stone hammers used to pound roots, cherries and other fruit

as well as fish into pemmican

pointed pieces of elkhorn served as wedges to split wood into planks for all kinds of uses

women had willow-twig hats very neatly made and decorated

After the typical greeting, Hunt succeeded in buying a mare and colt which were immediately shot and prepared for the stew kettle along with some roots

soon the hunger of the entire party was temporarily appeased

WILSON PRICE HUNT AND HIS PARTY REMAINS WITH THESE NATIVES FOR SIX DAYS

Trade was conducted and horses were obtained very cheaply from the Cayuse and Nez Perce Indians

who owned a large herd

an old musket, a rifle, a tomahawk, a kettle and a small amount of ammunition brought in return four horses, three dogs and a quantity of edible roots

a blanket or knife or a half pound of blue beads would purchase a horse

eight horses and two colts were purchased by Hunt

two of there were given to Hunt’s guides as payment for their service

many of the men got horses for their individual use because of the low prices

Roots, horsemeat and dogmeat roasted on the fire for several nights

all feasted on these delicious provisions

several men became ill -- some from overeating and others apparently from eating roots

still other men remained lame from their trek across the Blue Mountains

Natives gave the expedition a great deal of information about conditions at Astoria

here Wilson Price Hunt and his thirty-two Astorians learned that a band of white men

had recently gone down the river (probably the Umatilla River)

which flowed by this encampment on to the Columbia River

Hunt and the members of his party were overjoyed to learn this good news

from the accounts of the party given him by the Indians

Hunt reasoned from the numbers and descriptions given

that they were the men led by Donald McKenzie, John Reed and RobertMcClellan

Nez Perce Indians in the camp also spoke of Nor’Wester Jaco Finlay

with whom they had traded for tobacco

this indicated to Hunt that their Canadian competition was in the vicinity

Astorians remained with the Cayuse and Nez Perce Indians for six days

as stragglers staggered into camp until all but one voyageur, Michel Carriere, had arrived

he was expected momentarily as he had been seen the previous afternoon sitting on horseback

behind a Shoshone Indian in front of a lodge the expedition had passed

the night before a few miles from the camp

Astorians made preparations to continue their journey -- each person made himself moccasins

two men were sent to look for Michel Carriere but they could not find him

as the Shoshones seen with him had moved on and no information could be learned

WILSON PRICE HUNT AND HIS ASTORIANS CONTINUE ON THEIR JOURNEY TO ASTORIA

Hunt and his thirty-two Astorians left the Cayuse and Nez Perce Indians’ camp -- January 15, 1812

they followed the (Umatilla) river Hunt’s downstream toward the Columbia River

Hunt’s expedition reached a village of Cayuse Indians camped along the (Umatilla) river

they were superb horsemen who hunted deer by chasing them on horseback and surrounding them

then killed the animals with remarkable skill using bow and arrow

these Indians had some venison but they wanted to sell it at such a high price

the Astorians could not afford to purchase it

Indians informed Hunt that in about six nights they would be at the Great Falls of the Columbia

It rained so heavily during their stay on the banks of the (Umatilla) river

that water rose with amazing speed and the Astorians were forced to break camp in a hurry

three of the Astorians’ horses tied to stakes in the lowlands drowned

Cayuse Indians also had to move to higher ground and Hunt bought four more horses from them

he wanted a lot of horses because the Cayuse Indians told him

he could get a canoe in exchange for a horse and Hunt had thirty-three people to transport

WINTER AT ASTORIA PASSED PEACEFULLY

Fears of Indian hostility proved unfounded

as winter pressed on the Indians seemed to disappear from the sea coast

to such an extent provisions became difficult to acquire for the Astorians

who often faced half-rations of food

hunters made frequent and wide excursions in search of game

but the terrain was so difficult and the forest so dense that little success was achieved

long lasting rains made keeping their weapons in order almost impossible

RAMSAY CROOKS STOPS AT A SHOSHONE CAMP

Astor’s partner Ramsay Crooks with John Day and Jean-Baptiste Dubreuil who were both ill

reached a camp of Shoshone Indians -- January 1812

Crooks stopped to make a winter camp along Snake River

as they treated John Day’s physical and mental deterioration

although Day was completely unable to travel Crooks refused to abandon his friend

who had served Crooks as a very faithful employee

Crooks, Day and Dubreuil were without resources and had nothing to offer the destitute Shoshones

who remained with them -- soon the Indians drifted away

over the days John Day and Jean-Baptiste Dubreuil deteriorated in health

Death seemed very near for everyone when a couple of Shoshone Indians passed by,

they started a fire and provided a meal to the Astorians before continuing on

somewhat revived John Day managed to kill a wolf that had been prowling around the camp

this improved the condition of Ramsay Crooks and the two very sick men

While the three Astorians remained in camp they were shocked by the arrival of three more Astorians

Andre La Chapelle, Jean-Baptiste Turcotte and Francois Landry

who had gone off on their own from Fort Henry (Idaho) to investigate beaver streams

along the Missouri River

(they had fallen in with a band of Shoshones and were attacked by Blackfoot Indians

northeast of the Snake River)

Ramsay Crooks and the two men with him remained in the camp for twenty days

occasionally they were assisted by friendly Indians passing by

JOSEPH MILLER’S PARTY OF TRAPPERS IS ROBBED BY INDIANS

Astor’s partner Joseph Miller with Edward Robinson, John Hoback, Jacob Reznor and Martin Cass

had crossed the continental divide of the Rocky Mountains by an unknown route

and entered the (Utah) desert

after almost a month of travel and their route took them to the Bear River

they had traveled an erratic path that led them more than 1000 miles

through land that had been seen only by Indians

while on the lower end of the Bear River they found streams to be alive with beaver

they halted to gather a rich harvest of pelts in (today’s Great Salt Lake region)

These five Astorians continued south into Arapaho Indian country

where they saw their good luck run out as they were robbed by Arapahos -- January 1812

Joseph Miller with Edward Robinson, John Hoback, Jacob Reznor and Martin Cass set up a camp

probably in (Wyoming’s) northern foothills of the Medicine Bow Mountains

(or perhaps to the northwest along the southern tributary of the Wind River Mountains)

they had only two horses with them

McKENZIE- McCLELLAN-REED PARTY ARRIVES AT ASTORIA

Shouts went up when up from the men at Astoria -- about 5:00 p.m., January 18, 1812

two canoes carrying white men were approaching along the Columbia River

Astoria commander Duncan McDougall being ill sent clerk Gabriel Franchere

who hurried out to provide the welcome Donald McKenzie Robert McClellan,

John Reed and their eight traveling companions all in dreadful condition

McKenzie-McClellan-Reed party arrived at Astoria exhausted, emaciated and in rags

they were the first of the Overland Expedition to arrive at Pacific Fur Company’s Astoria

Donald McKenzie estimated the length of his journey at more than 3,500 miles

(although it does not exceed 1,800 miles in a direct line)

these emaciated new arrivals scarcely resembled men

even massive Donald McKenzie who normally weighed three hundred pounds

resembled a hide-covered skeleton

DONALD “FATS” McKENZIE REFLECTS ON HIS NORTH WEST COMPANY ROOTS

Experienced, energetic, ambitious Donald McKenzie has suffered several personal set-backs

“Fats” originally had been attracted by Astor’s promises of wealth and advancement

he had expected to be a co-leader of the overland expedition

but Astor had put Wilson Price Hunt in charge of the expedition

McKenzie and Hunt had argued, often rancorously, about significant leadership questions

McKenzie’s rational, informed opinions were usually ignored

by the impractical, impulsive and quite often unaware Wilson Price Hunt

WILSON PRICE HUNT WAS UNDER WAY ONCE AGAIN

Hunt bought yet another horse from the Cayuse Indians

(he later reported these were the cleanest Indians he had seen in his travels

like all other natives they were very proud people Cayuse natives ate neither dogs nor horses

and would not allow anyone to bring this meat into their tents)

they were very pleased to be told by Hunt that he would return to their village

with merchandise to trade for beaver pelts

they told a confusing tale of white men coming to trade with them

traders gave the Indians some tobacco and then sat and smoked with them

one of these white men had told the Indians he lived in a house on the Columbia River

Hunt’s voyageurs believed these must be North West Company rivals)

Having regrouped their numbers and regained their strength after satisfying their appetites

Hunt and his thirty-two weary Overland Astorians set out down the Umatilla River

in the direction of the Columbia River -- January 19, 1812

several, including Hunt, were on horseback

one man, Michel Carriere, had not yet caught up so he was left behind to forage on his own

WILSON PRICE HUNT AND HIS OVERLAND EXPEDITION REACHES THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Two days of gentle walking across a rolling prairie led Hunt and his thirty-two Astorians

to the Columbia River at the mouth of the Umatilla River -- January 21, 1812

they had trekked 240 miles through wintry wastes and the rugged Blue Mountains

since leaving the Snake River

Columbia River had been a cherished goal for a long, long time

they had come 1,751 miles and lived through unbelievable hardship and privation

since their departure from the Arikara Villages on the Missouri River

This area was occupied by a wretchedly poor tribe that had neither moccasins nor leggings

their clothing consisted of only a robe of buffalo, deer, rabbit, fox, or even duck skin

to this meager protection they sometimes add wolf-skin sleeves

their huts were well constructed of matting with roofs like the roofs of houses

these structures were very well lit and warm

holes scooped out of the ground and lined with mats were living quarters

women were usually naked -- some had a fragment of robe to cover their shoulders

but all of them wore around their waists a leather belt that passed between their thighs

and indicated an intention of modesty

these Indians were better stocked with food than the Shoshones as dried salmon was plentiful

they gave Hunt’s party many fresh trout they had caught at the mouth of the Umatilla River

this was excellent fish

their canoes were made of pine tree trunks split in half

since they had no adze they used fire to hollow out their canoes

around them the area was filled with beaver dams

Hunt learned from native sources that people at “the large house” (Astoria)

were anxiously awaiting the coming of many of their friends from the east

Indians said there was a road on the north side of the Columbia River

when the members of the Overland Expedition were seen by a Yakima Indian

from across the Columbia River that evening he swam across the river to their camp

and gave the Astorians a detailed description of whites who preceded them downriver

WILSON PRICE HUNT LEADS HIS PARTY DOWN THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Hunt spent all day making the crossing the of the Columbia River

to the north (Washington) side -- January 22, 1812

Hunt purchased some fish and nine dogs -- January 23, 1812

he and his Astorians followed down the north bank of the Columbia River

this route along the river was very good

weather had become beautiful and very mild much like a beautiful day in [October]

camp that night was made close to a village of Indians who had about fifty canoes

Hunt purchased nine dogs that were quite fat and made a delicious dinner

WILSON PRICE HUNT AND HIS OVERLAND EXPEDITION FOLLOWS THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Columbia ran almost directly west and the banks were bare making travel easy -- January 24-28, 1812

frequently the thirty-three Astorians came on Indian lodges and purchased fish and dogs

but they put such a high price on elk or deer venison that the Astorians could not afford it

departures in the morning were often delayed as Indians took the ropes tethering the horses

if not the horses themselves and time was lost capturing stray animals

Sixty miles were crossed before they reached hilly country where the Columbia River

became constricted between rocky banks and poured over numerous tumultuous rapids

Indians in this region appeared wealthier and arrogant

Hunt received word from these Indians that a number of white men had built a large house

at the mouth of the great river and surrounded it with a wooden wall

Wilson Price Hunt became aware the natives had turned untrustworthy -- January 22, 1812

Indians they met attempted to steal their stray horses

At one village they learned a successful native hunter had killed an elk

upon approaching him to obtain some venison

they soon found that his price was far beyond their ability to pay,

so they traded for dog meat and considered it a fine delicacy -- far superior to horse meat

WILSON PRICE HUNT CAMPS ACROSS FROM THE DESCHUTES RIVER

Camp was made along the north side of the Columbia River

across the river from the mouth of (today’s Deschutes River)

Indians came in great numbers to dance in honor of the arrival of the Astorians -- January 30, 1812

but they arrived in such large numbers that Hunt became concerned

he pretended to be ill and asked to be left alone -- in a short time the Indians complied

WILSON PRICE HUNT AND HIS OVERLANDERS PASS CELILO FALLS

Hunt’s party reached the falls known to the Indians as Timm or Tumwater (today’s Celilo Falls)

here the Columbia River’s course was dammed by rocks over which the water rushed

violently through several channels

They reached a village of Wishram Indians on the north river bank -- early morning January 31, 1812

this was the greatest fishing area of the Columbia River

on both sides of the river the Astorians saw large platforms made of carefully woven stakes

used by the Indians to dry their fish.

ground around the platforms was covered with bones and heads of fish

(Hunt later reported that the Indians in this area were the most intelligent encountered so far

one of them who knew a few English words

he told Hunt that David Stuart had gone to one of the northern tributaries of the Columbia

to spend the winter -- in fact, this native had visited Stuart’s trading post

he also recounted the disaster that overtook Alexander McKay and the ship *Tonquin*

as well as the tragic loss of Alexander McKay with the *Tonquin*

he asked for news about Mr. Lewis and Mr. Clark and some of their companions

however, this Indian had somehow learned of the death of Meriwether Lewis

an incredible amount of information reached the Indians of the Columbia River

Not far below the waterfalls they saw a snow-covered peak on the south bank

Hunt supposed this was Captain George Vancouver’s Mount Hood

WILSON PRICE HUNT CONTINUES DOWN THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Hunt saw several extremely well made canoes with elevated bows and sterns -- February 1, 1812

some were capable of carrying three thousand pounds and more

however, he found it difficult to bargain with these natives who were more intent on pilfering

Hunt could purchase only one canoe which cost him a horse

After traveling another twelve miles on this day camp was made -- February 1, 1812

Wilson Price Hunt soon found he was surrounded by Indians loitering around the camp

seeking out what they could pilfer -- but a close watch impaired these activities

Toward evening a number of warriors entered the camp painted and dressed for battle

they were armed with lances, bows and arrows and scalping knives

they informed Wilson Price Hunt that a party of thirty or forty braves

were coming from a village downriver to attack the camp and steal the horses,

but that they were determined to stay with him and defend him

Hunt was unimpressed with their story but he gave them a pipe to smoke

he then set up a watch around the camp and the warriors dejectedly left

however, the warriors returned bringing with them a still more heroically dressed warrior

who was introduced as the chief of the attacking villagers

it was said that he had used his authority to prevent the attack on the Astorians

Hunt again produced the pipe and smoked with the chieftain and his companions

but made no further display of gratitude

the warriors remained all night but in the morning they left

having received nothing but smoke for the efforts

Despite Hunt’s keeping a close watch the Indians managed to acquire an axe

encouraged by this success several of them followed the Overland Expedition the next day

WILSON PRICE HUNT FINDS HE IS IN A COMMUNITY OF THEIVES

Indians continually attempted to pilfer anything that was attractive or of interest to them

they snatched two guns -- February 2, 1812

although the horses were kept in the camp that night

one horse was lost about eleven o’clock

WILSON PRICE HUNT TAKES TO THE WATER

Hunt embarked in a canoe and sent his horses ahead along the trail -- February 3, 1812

he rejoined his Overland Expedition at a village at the mouth of the Klickitat River

there he purchased three additional canoes each costing one horse

but while the trade was being transacted Indians took a tomahawk and Hunt’s last axe

Pierre Dorion assumed he was immune from theft because he was married to an Indian woman

and was a Metis himself

he decided to set his camp apart from the rest of the Astorians

his cherished horse tethered beside his tent was stolen during the night

much to his embarrassment and chagrin -- Marie was without a mount to ride

WILSON PRICE HUNT IS STOPPED BY BAD WEATHER

Violent winds forced Hunt to remain with these Indians for five days -- February 5-10, 1812

he believed the land portion of expedition was over as the trail ended at this village

cottonwoods, oaks and ash trees grew to the edge of the river

hills covered with pine trees became snow-covered once again

rain increased -- sometimes accompanied with snow

When Hunt tried to get canoes from his Indian neighbors he soon learned they were hard traders

after several days of watchful waiting and painful negotiations

he purchased another canoe for a horse and traded his last three horses for two more canoes

he now had enough canoes for the final leg of the trip to Astoria

however heavy winds delayed his start

RAMSAY CROOKS LEADS HIS MEN FROM THE SHOSHONE INDIAN CAMP

When John Day was finally well enough to be able to travel -- February 1812

Ramsay Crooks, John Day and Jean-Baptiste Dubreuil finally felt able to follow Hunt’s trail

Andre La Chapelle, Jean-Baptiste Turcotte and Francois Landry chose to remain behind

they preferred their own miseries to unknown grief

they returned to a Shoshone encampment where they passed the remainder of winter

(historian Daniel Lee in *Ten Years in Oregon*, claimed Landry, La Chapelle and Turcotte

“deserted” Crooks, Day and Dubreuil

more likely they returned to the Shoshones who had guided Hunt [in October])

Ramsay Crooks and his party followed in Wilson’s Price Hunt’s tracks for several days

they usually slept in the open air and suffered untold hardships

eventually they came to a low prairie where the trail faded out

Ramsay Crooks, John Day and Jean-Baptiste Dubreuil became lost in the Blue Mountains

they wandered for weeks in and around the (Grand Ronde) valley

subsisting sometimes on horse meat, sometime on beavers and their skins

and part of the time on roots alone

LIFE IMPROVES AT ASTORIA

Shortages of game experienced during the winter were replaced by huge runs of smelt-like fish

that the Indians called “uthlecan” (candlefish) that appeared at the mouth of the Columbia River

in schools often more than five feet deep and easily scooped with nets at the end of long poles

these had a delicious flavor and were so fat they often were burned like candles by the natives

arrival of these fish soon brought the Indians back to the coast -- February

men caught them and filled their canoes or piled them along the river bank

women dried them and strung them on cords

trade with the Indians was again conducted at Astoria

sturgeon made their appearance shortly after the candlefish

these were sometimes speared by the natives but more often were caught with hook and line

occasionally a long line was sunk in the river with a buoy at one end to keep it floating

hooks attacked to short lines a few feet apart were baited with small fish

these were set out at night and brought up in the morning often with several sturgeon

although a large strong fish sturgeon seldom fight when caught

JOHN JACOB ASTOR’S SUPPLY SHIP ARRIVES IN THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

When Captain Cornelius Sowle reached the Hawaii with the supply ship *Beaver --* February

he heard rumors of the disastrous fate of the *Tonquin*

this news increased doubts that a post had been constructed at the mouth of the Columbia River

after some consideration the captain took on board twelve Kanakas (Hawaiians)

to serve at Astoria -- if the post existed

Captain Sowle sailed the *Beaver* for the mouth of the Columbia River

WILSON PRICE HUNT BEGINS THE FINAL LEG OF HIS JOURNEY TO ASTORIA

Hunt was finally able to set out down the Columbia River -- February 10, 1812

these last 220 miles downriver by canoe should have been calm, peaceful and refreshing

after the distress and disasters of the previous winter

however, Hunt’s troubles were not yet over

violent head winds accompanied by snow and rain continued to impede his progress

however, he was favored by the current so the flotilla made good progress

Traveling fifteen miles from Celilo Falls they arrived at the beginning a series of a short rapids

Hunt examined the north bank for a passage -- 10:00 a.m. February 10

he discovered a trail about a mile and a half long and the portage was made around the rapids

these rapids provided the Indians with a second abundant fishery

after making the portage around the short rapids Hunt’s Overlanders pressed on to a long rapids

which required a portage of three miles

Oaks and ash trees became more common along with hazelnut trees

numerous little rivers plunged down from the mountains to add to the beauty of the countryside

here camp was made for the night

WILSON PRICE HUNT AND HIS ASTORIANS REACH THE CASCADES OF THE COLUMBIA

About eight miles from the long rapids Hunt and his thirty-two Overland Expedition members

again were forced to land their canoes and portage around the rapids at the Cascades

where the Columbia River crashes through the Cascade Mountains -- February 11, 1812

here the river dropped fifteen feet in a tumult of violent water 1½ miles long

(together Celilo Falls, the short, long rapids and Cascade rapids became known as the Dalles

[Wascopam to the natives] an eight miles stretch of violently turbulent water)

Below the Cascades Rapids the Columbia spread out until it was about three-quarters of a mile wide

hills diminished in size and retreated from the banks of the river

pine, oak, ash, cottonwood, maple, hazelnut and willow trees filled in the gaps

WILSON PRICE HUNT PASSES THE WILLAMETTE RIVER

Hunt and his flotilla of canoes passed the mouth of (Oregon’s Sandy River) -- February 13, 1812

twenty miles on they reached the (Willamette) river

with a large island (Sauvie Island) at its mouth

several small islands stretch out below the bigger island

seals became numerous indicating the nearby ocean -- rain, hail and snow fell all day long

WILSON PRICE HUNT MAKES CONTACT WITH THE SEA PARTY ASTORIANS

Mountains closed in on the Columbia River once again -- February 14, 1812

camp was made that night on the north bank of the (Cowlitz) river

here Indians talked about the trader living at the post on the Columbia River

they said it would be one more night before the destination was reached

Hunt led his canoes glided past several large islands in the Columbia River -- February 15, 1812

he stopped at some Indian huts and found four Astoria men trading for sturgeon and candlefish

after travelling twenty-seven miles camp was made on two low islands near the south bank

WILSON PRICE HUNT ARRIVES AT ASTORIA

Hunt and his Pacific Fur Company Overland Party set out early -- February 16, 1812[[103]](#footnote-103)

four months after putting their canoes in at Fort Henry at Henry’s Fork of the Snake River

what remained of John Jacob Astor’s Overland Party were joyfully welcomed to Astoria

with cannon fire and salutes from rifles and muskets

Thirty-two Astorians had completed the expedition with Wilson Price Hunt -- February 16, 1812

his party, which had been given up for lost, was warmly welcomed by their fellow Astorians

Hunt noted the occasion: **“On the 16th we started early. It had rained all night. The fog was so thick that we could see only the lowlands and some small islands; all was covered by it. It disappeared in the afternoon at high tide. I found that we were navigating along a large bay, and shortly afterward I saw the fort of Astoria on the southerly bank.**

**“I had the pleasure there of again meeting Messrs. McKenzie and McClellan, who had arrived more than a month before, after having suffered incredible hardships…. It was a very real pleasure for travelers harassed by fatigue to rest in quiet and be surrounded by friends after so long a journey in the midst of savages, of whom it is always prudent to be wary. We had covered 2073 miles since leaving the Arikaras’ village.”[[104]](#footnote-104)**

PACIFIC FUR COMPANY EMPLOYEES CELEBRATE AT ASTORIA

Astoria Commander Duncan McDougall and the Astorians within the post held a grand celebration

in honor of the arrival of Wilson Price Hunt and his companions

Cannon and small arms continued to be fired, liquor kegs were tapped,

a huge table in the banquet hall was spread with such delicacies as fish, beaver-tails, and roasted venison

In fact, Wilson Price Hunt’s Overland Expedition had been a dismal failure

Astor’s partners Donald McKenzie, Robert McClellan and company clerk John Reed

had safely reached Astoria along with eight voyageurs

of Hunt’s and Ramsay Crooks’ combined parties of forty Astorians

thirty-three had reached Astoria

(only fourteen Astorians both the *Tonquin* and the Overland Expedition

will become permanent settlers of Oregon

William Canning (or Cannon), Joseph Gervais, Pierre Dorion, Marie Dorion,

Alexander Carson, John Coxe (Kanaka), Jean-Baptiste Dubreuil, “Sailor Jack,”

Louis I. LaBonte, Michel Laframbois, Etienne Lucier, Jean McKay, Francois Payette

and George Ramsey)

nothing had been seen of Ramsay Crooks, John Day, Jean-Baptiste Dubreuil,

and the three voyagers who early had dropped out of the march

Andre La Chapelle, Jean-Baptiste Turcotte and Francois Landry

or of Astor’s partner Joseph Miller along with the Kentuckians Edward Robinson,

John Hoback, Jacob Reznor accompanied by Martin Cass

they all were now counted as lost

WILSON PRICE HUNT TAKES COMMAND OF ASTORIA

Astor’s partner and experienced trader Duncan McDougall was replaced by Wilson Price Hunt

who took over command of the Pacific Fur Company operations at Astoria

Hunt had no practical experience in leading an enterprise as large as Astoria

he had been spectacularly unsuccessful leading the Overland Party from St. Louis to Astoria

THREE FRENCH-CANADIANS SEEK OUT SHOSHONE INDIANS FOR ASSISTANCE

Astorians Andre La Chapelle, Jean-Baptiste Turcotte and Francois Landry were destitute

they had chosen to remained in a Shoshone camp but they wore out their welcome

La Chapelle, Turcotte and Landry informed the Shoshone chief

they knew where a great quantity of food and trade goods had been left in caches

by Wilson Price Hunt and his Astorians while they were traveling west

La Chapelle, Turcotte and Landry said there was enough there to enrich the whole tribe

These Astorians led the Shoshones to the caches at Caldron Linn

Shoshone Indians could not believe their good fortune as **“Blankets and robes, brass trinkets and blue beads were drawn forth with chuckling exultation, and long strips of scarlet cloth produced yells of ecstasy.”[[105]](#footnote-105)**

they were now armed, equipped and decorated with the riches they had uncovered

ASTORIA WAS IN DISARRAY WHEN HUNT TAKES COMMAND

Little settlement at Astoria was in agitation -- March 1812

several important things needed to be done:

•it was necessary to send a supply of goods to David Stuart’s Fort Okanogan;

•cache of supplies left by Wilson Price Hunt at Caldron Linn

had to be collected and brought to Astoria;

•new trading posts had to be established to compete with North West Company

and to open new territory;

•dispatches had to be sent to John Jacob Astor in New York

reporting the loss of the *Tonquin*

announcing the arrival of the Overland Expedition informing him of conditions at Astoria

and relating the unknown status of the several trading expeditions

that had set out from Henry’ Fort on the Snake River (Idaho);

•trade with the Russian-America Company needed to be undertaken

Wilson Price Hunt believed Astoria now had enough personnel to expand their operation

beyond simply Astoria and Fort Okanogan with excursions into the Thompson River region

preparations were begun to develop new trading posts in the interior

PIERRE AND MARIE DORION LIVE IN COMFORT AT ASTORIA

Pierre Dorion worked as a hunter

being skilled in his trade he contributed his fair share to the larder at Astoria

Meanwhile, Marie Dorion lived in comparative luxury in the settlement

while her two boys regained their health

WHILE AT ASTORIA CLERK ROSS COX DESCIRBES A RED-HEADED INDIAN

In his journal Ross Cox reported on an Indian who visited Astoria

who had the name Jack Ramsay tattooed on his left arm **“His skin was fair, his face partially freckled and his hair quite red. He was about five feet ten inches high, was slender, but remarkably well made; his head had not undergone the flattening process; and he was called ‘Jack Ramsay’.”[[106]](#footnote-106)**

Clatsop Indians alleged that his father had been an English sailor

who had deserted from a trading ship and had lived for many years among their people

he married one of their women

when Jack was born his father insisted on preserving the child’s head in its natural state

but while he was young the name “Jack Ramsay” was tattooed into his arm

Old Ramsay had died some twenty years before [about 1792] -- he had several children

Ross Cox noted in his journal that Jack Ramsay was fond of his father’s countrymen

he had the decency to wear trousers whenever he came to the fort

therefore a collection of old clothes was taken for his use

this provided him clothing sufficient to last for several years

This must have been the same man William Clark had described [1805]

in his journal of the Lewis and Clark Expedition

NEWLY WEALTHY SHOSHONE INDIANS DECIDE TO HUNT BUFFALO

Andre La Chapelle, Jean-Baptiste Turcotte and Francois Landry

had shown the Shoshones the location of the caches left by Wilson Price Hunt

now rich beyond their wildest imaginings the party of Shoshone Indians

decided to go to hunt buffalo so their larder would match their new economic state

Andre La Chapelle, Jean-Baptiste Turcotte and Francois Landry accompanied them

as the Indians safely crossed the Rocky Mountains and descended on the east side

to the headwaters of the Missouri River where they generated havoc with the buffalo herds

Their hunting camp was full of meat and the Shoshone Indians gorged themselves

as they remained busy drying buffalo meat and making buffalo jerky

in the midst of their revelry a band of Blackfoot Indians surprised them

several Shoshone were killed on the spot as the others fled into the mountains

accompanied by the three French-Canadians without meat, horses or anything else

DAVID THOMPSON LEAVES SALEESH HOUSE TO GO TO SPOKANE HOUSE

Nor’Wester David Thompson had spent the [winter of 1811]-1812 at Saleesh House

where he made a couple of surveying expeditions along the Clark Fork River

he traveled to (today’s Missoula, Montana) to see the route traveled by Lewis and Clark

later he made a journey to the south end of Flathead Lake

David Thompson left Saleesh House bound for Spokane House -- March 13, 1812

to build canoes for the journey east to North West Company headquarters at Fort William

ALEXANDER ROSS’ SOLITARY LIFE AT FORT OKANOGAN

Clerk-in-charge of Fort Okanogan Alexander Ross had remained alone at the post

with no more company than his dog Weasel

Ross’s plight continued until March 22, 1812

as he recorded in his journal: **“December now was passed, and the new year of 1812 ushered in, but still there was no account of the absent party. January passed, and likewise February, but no Mr.** [David] **Stuart; nor was it until the 22nd of March that little Weasel announced early in the morning the approach of strangers, and I was rejoiced to meet again at my lonely dwelling my long-expected friends all safe and well.**

**“During Mr. Stuart’s absence of 188 days I had procured 1,550 beavers, besides other peltries, worth in the Canton market 2,250 £ sterling, and which on an average stood the concern in but 5.5£ apiece, valuing the merchandise at sterling cost, or in round numbers 35£ sterling -- a specimen of our trade among the Indians!**

**“Here follows Mr. Stuart’s account of his journey: ‘After leaving this place,’ he said, ‘we bent our course up the Okanogan, due north for upwards of 250 miles till we reached its source; then crossing a height of land fell upon Thompson’s River…. The snow fell while we were in the mountains and precluded our immediate return, and after waiting for fine weather the snows got so deep that we considered it hopeless to attempt getting back and therefore passed our time with the She Whaps and other tribes in that quarter. The Indians were numerous and well disposed, and the country throughout abounds in beavers and all other kinds of fur; and I have made arrangements to establish a trading post there** [today’s Kamloops] **….The distance may be about 350 miles.”[[107]](#footnote-107)**

ASTORIAN DAVID STUART’S TRAPPING PARTY RETURNS TO FORT OKANOGAN

Astorian David Stuart and his trapping party of eight men returned to Fort Okanogan

from the forks of the Thompson River (Kamloops)

they provided Alexander Ross glowing accounts of the trade possibilities farther to the north

AT ASTORIA WILSON PRICE HUNT PREPARES THREE EXPEDITIONS

Robert Stuart would lead a four-man expedition including a young clerk, Ross Cox,

to forge up the Columbia River to take supplies to David Stuart, Robert’s uncle, at Fort Okanogan

also they were to collect additional furs from the Indians along the way

and to establish a new post on the Spokane River

Clerk Russell Farnham the tall “Green Mountain Boy” from Vermont would head an expedition east

to pick up supplies that Wilson Price Hunt had cached along the way at Caldron Linn

and to search for Ramsay Crooks, John Day and Jean-Baptiste Dubreuil

gather any pelts accumulated by them and return to Astoria

Farnham was accompanied by another clerk, Donald McGiles,

also a guide and eight additional men to assist in bringing home the cached goods

Clerk John Reed had just completed the westward ordeal with Donald McKenzie,

Reed, an eager and energetic young Irishman, was entrusted to deliver dispatches

to John Jacob Astor in New York City announcing the arrival of the Overland Expedition,

loss of the *Tonquin* and other items of significance

reflecting his Irish enthusiasm for a task, John Reed had a shiny tin case made

in which the letters and papers to Astor were soldered

he planned to carry it strapped to his back at all times

Reed was accompanied by Kentucky hunter Ben Jones and two voyageurs

it was hoped he might find Astor’s partner Ramsay Crooks so Reed carried a small supply

of goods and provisions to aid Crooks and those with him on their way to Astoria

Astor’s partner Robert McClellan, who had announced his desire to give up his partnership

and leave the country, decided to travel east with John Reed

because he was a strong-willed man it was determined let him go without opposition

THREE GROUPS OF ASTORIANS WOULD TRAVEL TOGETHER

Route of these parties would be the same for nearly four hundred miles up the Columbia River

and the notorious Wishram Indians would be encountered at The Cascades

it was thought advisable the three groups would start at the same time and to keep together

as they traveled up the Columbia River as a unit led by Robert Stuart

to provide mutual protection in the treacherous region of the Dalles

accordingly seventeen men in two canoes set out from Astoria -- March 22, 1812

Clerk Ross Cox wrote a narrative of his exploits along the Columbia River

he also gave an account of an encounter of a different kind: **“We had half expected Indian trouble, but were totally unprepared for that overwhelming army of fleas that attacked on the front, flank, and rear. Our only defense was to strip off clothes and dip them in the water, thus drowning the swarms of invaders.”[[108]](#footnote-108)**

RAMSAY CROOKS, JOHN DAY AND JEAN-BAPTISTE DUBEUIL CONTINUE ON

Crooks, Day and Dubeuil, lost in the Blue Mountains, wandered aimlessly

their crossing was as harrowing as the exploits of the other Astorians

they were rescued and sustained from time to time by small bands of Indians

who often were not much better off than were Crooks and his men

Finally Jean-Baptiste Dubreuil gave out and was left in the lodge of a Shoshone Indian

who agreed to care for the French-Canadian hunter -- end of March

Ramsay Crooks and John Day still continued on now that the snow had diminished

they gathered information from the Indians regarding how to cross this last mountain range

happily, they succeeded and reached the lodge of Yeckatapam a Walla Walla Indian

living along the banks of the Walla Walla River who kindly received the wanderers

and killed a horse for them to eat

he gave them directions to find the Columbia River

ROBERT STUART LEADS THE ASTORIANS UP THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Robert Stuart continued to lead his expedition for Fort Okanogan

accompanied by two other expeditions

Russell Farnham was on his way the caches at Caldron Linn left by Wilson Price Hunt

John Reed was carrying a shiny box of dispatches to deliver to John Jacob Astor in New York

Robert Stuart arrived at the Long Rapids, a notorious plundering place -- early April

here it was necessary to unload the canoes and portage both canoes and cargoes by land

three miles to the head of the rapids

seventeen men were not enough to accomplish the task

they were forced to seek the assistance of Wishram Indians

who loaded some of the goods on their horses

Stuart’s caravan set off accompanied by the Indians with their horses well loaded

first load was conveyed by John Reed and five well-armed men

with the gallant Irishman striding along at the head of the parade

his tin case of dispatches glittering on his back

while passing through a rocky and intricate defile some of the Wishrams

turned their horses up a narrow passage and galloped off

carrying with them two bales of goods and a number of smaller articles

following them was useless

ROBERT STUART’S ASTORIANS SPEND A WATCHFUL NIGHT IN CAMP

Stuart set up a guard at the Wishram village to protect the remaining supplies

this duty made sleep impractical

At first light the Astorians pushed up the Columbia River

Wishrams were not so easily discouraged from their desire to possess the trade goods

and especially the shiny tin box that was so securely guarded

that it must contain “strong medicine”

Astorians had not gone far when they discovered Wishram natives

whooping and yelling in groups along the river bank

ASTORIANS REACH THE LOWER END OF THE SHORT RAPIDS

Here they were surrounded by upwards of four hundred Wishram natives

armed with bows and arrows, war clubs and other weapons

Indians pressed forward with offers to carry the canoes and goods around the short portage

Robert Stuart declined to allow them to carry the supplies,

but did allow the canoes to be taken up river accompanied by eight well-armed Astorians

When the short portage was completed the Wishram became mischievous

to the point of attempting to destroy the canoes thus holding the Astorians hostage for more theft

this ploy was stopped by an old man who dispersed his fellow natives

although about fifty Indians crossed to the north side of the river and laid in wait

ROBERT STUART AND HIS EXPEDITION REACH CELILO FALLS

In an effort to outwit the Wishram Indians Robert Stuart roused his men in the dead of night

he proposed they portage the goods themselves by the bright moonlight

Stuart led the first group carrying supplies

while John Reed and Robert McClellan stayed below the falls with remainder of the goods

By dawn only two loads of goods remained to be brought to the head of the Dalles

Robert Stuart sent several men back to retrieve the remaining supplies

with instructions for John Reed to keep as many men as necessary

to protect the final load of trading goods

Reed decided he and McClellan were be able to protect the remnant themselves

and sent the other Astorians back upriver with all they could carry

JOHN REED AND ROBERT McCLELLAN COME UNDER ATTACK

Indian canoes carrying about fifty men arrived from across the Columbia River

they had been guided by the glint of the sun on the tin box carried by John Reed

thus what was meant to protect the dispatches in fact exposed them to peril

Reaching shore the Wishrams sprang toward the remaining trade goods

Robert McClellan saw a native holding a buffalo robe advancing as if to trade

McClellan stepped back just as the warrior lunged to stab him

raising his rifle, McClellan shot him through the heart

John Reed, at this time, was fumbling with his rifle

he was hit on the head with a war club that laid him senseless on the ground

his rifle, pistols and the glimmering tin box all were immediately stripped away

WISHRAM INDIANS ARE DRIVEN OFF

Just in the nick of time Robert Stuart who had heard the native war cries

reached the scene with Ben Jones and seven other men

Jones shot a one warrior who was standing over John Reed raising a tomahawk

all of the warriors took flight taking the tin box of dispatches with them

John Reed was carried to the head of the portage around Celilo Falls

where preparations were attempted to escape from the savage attack

confusion broke out when it was discovered

the expedition’s canoes had been damaged and were too leaky to put in the water

and the paddles had been left at the bottom of the falls

Robert Stuart restored order

two men were sent to retrieve the paddles while the others caulked the canoes

ROBERT STUART MANAGES TO REACH A TRUCE WITH THE WISHRAM INDIANS

Robert Stuart discussed with his men the possibility of retreating back to Astoria to escape

however, the two men who returned with the paddles

reported the route was cut off by Wishram warriors

who had traveled down the north side of the Columbia River on horseback

faster than the Astorians could repair their equipment and travel on water

Astorians held parlay with the Wishram chief who decided he would be appeased

by the acceptance of blankets for the dead native and some tobacco for the living

ROBERT STUART’S EXPEDITION MEMBERS DECIDES TO TRAVEL TO FORT OKANOGAN

Since the tin box carrying reports and dispatches to John Jacob Astor had been lost

the purpose of Robert Stuart’s journey was gone

All three parties of Astorians, Robert Stuart, Russell Farnham and John Reed,

changed their courses to go to David Stuart’s Fort Okanogan on the Okanogan River

accompanied by Astor’s partner Robert McClellan

who had been frustrated in his effort to go home

JEAN-BAPTISTE DUBREUIL ATTEMPTS TO TRAVEL ON HIS OWN

French-Canadian voyageurJean-Baptiste Dubreuil had been left in a friendly Shoshone village

by Ramsay Crooks and John Day when they departed

After leaving that village, Dubreuil had traveled alone and became lost in the Blue Mountains

fortunately, he stumbled on a friendly village of Shoshone Indians

where he was nurtured for the winter

(he set out on his own once again in the [spring])

ASTORIAN DONALD McKENZIE ENTERS THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY

Rebounding quickly from the ordeal of his overland crossing

McKenzie left Astoria with William Matthews and Joseph Gervais

to explore up the Willamette River educate the Indians on how to better preserve fur pelts

that the trappers were especially interested in acquiring

They reached a tributary of the Willamette River now bearing McKenzie’s name

there they started another promising trading post (near today’s Eugene, Oregon) -- April 1812

When McKenzie and Matthews returned to Astoria they reported an abundance of beaver

and wild game was available in the region to the south

ASTORIANS LEAVE FORT OKANOGAN TO RETURN TO ASTORIA

After their ordeal on the Columbia River at Celilo Falls portage

Robert Stuart led his party to Fort Okanogan on the Okanogan River

to supply his uncle, David Stuart

Robert Stuart and his party rested for two or three days at Fort Okanogan

before again taking the Columbia River back to Astoria

during that time Alexander Ross enjoyed the company of other Astorians at Fort Okanogan

in addition to his dog Weasel

Robert Stuart, Russell Farnham, John Reed and their parties along with Robert McClellan

left Fort Okanogan accompanied by David Stuart on the downriver journey to Astoria

David Stuart along with three members of his trapping party brought out 2,500 beaver pelts

that had been gathered at Fort Okanogan and while wintering in the Thompson River region

(Kamloops, British Columbia)

SHOSHONE BUFFALO HUNTERS RETURN TO THEIR SNAKE RIVER ENCAMPMENT

After being robbed while hunting buffalo the now destitute Indians

and Astorians Astorians Andre La Chapelle, Jean-Baptiste Turcotte and Francois Landry

plodded back to their homeland deprived of horses, meat and all of their possessions

La Chapelle, Turcotte and Landry were poorer than ever -- but they had their lives

By good fortune while staying with the destitute Shoshone Indians the Astorians

met Pacific Fur Company hunter Jean-Baptiste Dubreuil who wandered into camp alone

Dubreuil had become so exhausted he had been left by Ramsay Crooks and John Day

when they set out in an effort to reach Astoria [March 1812]

he had become lost in the Blue Mountains and wandered about alone and without hope

RAMSAY CROOKS AND JOHN DAY REACH THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Traveling from Yeckatapam’s lodge on the Walla Walla River

Ramsay Crooks and John Day reached the Columbia River -- mid-April 1812

They followed the Columbia downstream for about one hundred miles

until they had just passed the mouth of a river (now known as the John Day River)

they came to within twenty miles of Celilo Falls

here they met the local Wishram natives who received them in a friendly way and fed them

but as the two Astorians were eating, their rifles were stolen

Crooks and Day were robbed of everything, stripped naked and were forced to leave

even Crooks’ request for a flint and steel to make fire were refused

Fearing Indians downriver and in a desperate condition of deteriorating physical and mental health

Ramsay Crooks and John Day had no idea how far they were from Astoria

Now even worse off than they had been and with their spirits broken

they decided to try to retrace their steps back up the Columbia River

to friendly Walla Walla Indian Yeckatapam’s lodge

Crooks and Day traveled about eighty miles back up the Columbia River

they subsisted on rotting fish they found along the river bank

DAVID THOMPSON ARRIVES AT SPOKANE HOUSE

After building canoes for his cross-continent trip to North West Company Fort William headquarters

David Thompson left Spokane House for the final time -- April 22, 1812

This time he led thirty North West Company voyageurs who paddled six canoes

as they transported 122 bales of furs each weighing ninety pounds

to the company’s supply depot and central meeting place and headquarters

at Fort William on Lake Superior (now Thunder Bay, Ontario)

these furs were worth approximately $50,000 on the London market

Thompson and the members of his expedition set out for their first stop at Boat Encampment

Kanaka (Hawaiian) Chief Naukane now known as “John Coxe” had arrived on the *Tonquin,*

he became a loyal North West Company employee

he accompanied David Thompson from Astoria by canoe and portage across the continent

Nor’Wester Finan McDonald remained in charge of Spokane House

he and the other Nor’Westers soon learned their fur trade monopoly in the Columbia Department

was being challenged by John Jacob Astor’s Pacific Fur Company out of New York

RAMSAY CROOKS AND JOHN DAY ARE MIRACALOUSLY RESCUED

To their amazement Crooks and Day saw four canoes paddled by white coming down the Columbia

both of the desperate men shouted in an effort to catch the voyageurs attention -- May 1, 1812

Men in the canoes saw two wretched individuals standing beside the river entirely naked

they paddled to shore as Crooks and Day approached without weapons and nearly starved

these voyageurs proved to be the Astorians David and Robert Stuart, Russell Farnham, John Reed

and their expedition along with Robert McClellan

on their way from Fort Okanogan to Astoria

Ramsay Crooks and John Day experienced boundless joy to again be among their countrymen

who gave they a warm and hearty welcome

Crooks learned of the disasters which had befallen “Fats” McKenzie, McClellan and Reed

who were the first of Hunt’s Overland Expedition to reach Astoria [mid-January 1812]

Astor’s partner Robert McClellan had decided that the hardships and dangers

were not worth the company shares which he had been allotted

MANUEL LISA ARRIVES BACK IN ST. LOUIS

New Missouri Fur Company launched an aggressive trade expedition -- May 1, 1812

Manuel Lisa sent eighty-five men to the upper Missouri River region

on the way they built Fort Manuel among the Arikaras (south of Mobridge, South Dakota)

to gain passage upriver Toussaint Charbonneau then making his third trip to the Upper Missouri

hired out to fur trader Manuel Lisa

district judge of Louisiana Territory Henry M. Brackenridge traveling in the same group

wrote that Charbonneau **“…who had spent many years amongst the Indians, was become weary of civilized life.”[[109]](#footnote-109)**

although Charbonneau returned to the Arikara villages additional traces of the rest of his life

occur in journals and records from other frontier travelers

(Later the New Missouri Fur Company dispatched trapping parties to the Wind River [Wyoming],

the Little Big Horn River [southern Montana] and to the Arkansas River)

STUARTS AND THEIR ACCOMPANYING ASTORIANS CONTINUE DOWNRIVER

While traveling down the Columbia River from Fort Okanogan

Robert Stuart managed to enlighten the Wishram natives

regarding the high prices the Chinook Indians were getting for their furs at Astoria

(this information resulted in so many Indians eventually coming to Astoria

that it was necessary to call upon Chief Comcomly

to help maintain amicable relations during trading)

THREE ASTORIANS REACH THE SHOSHONE CAMP ON THE SNAKE RIVER

Shoshone Indians’ encampment had become the home of voyageurs

Andre La Chapelle, Jean-Baptiste Turcotte, and Francis Landry who had been join by

voyageur Jean-Baptiste Dubreuil when he wandered into the encampment alone

Three other straggling members of Wilson Price Hunt’s Overland Expedition made their appearance

Alexander Carson, Louis St. Michael and Pierre Delaunay

all were trappers who had been accompanied by Pierre Detaye

they had been left by Hunt to trap beaver in the mountains [October 1811]

they had reached the upper Missouri River where they successfully trapped beaver

but the group had been attacked by Crow Indians

Pierre Detaye was killed and the rest robbed

dejected and destitute Carson, St. Michael and Delaunay returned to the Pacific Fur Company

JOHN JACOB ASTOR’S SUPPLY SHIP *BEAVER* REACHES THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Captain Cornelius Sowle, a timid and inflexible man, sailed the Pacific Fur Company supply ship

*Beaver* as near as possible to the mouth of the Columbia River -- May 6, 1812

two cannons were fired as a signal to John Jacob Astor’s post -- if it existed

no answer was returned increasing doubts regarding the existence of a post

As night came on the *Beaver* stood out to sea -- as the land faded so too did hope

ASTOR’S SUPPLY SHIP *BEAVER* RETURNS TO THE MOUTH OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Captain Cornelius Sowle sailed to within four miles of shore and again fired his signal guns

again there was no reply from the post -- May 7, 1812

Captain Sowle dispatched a boat to find a channel over the sandbar so an entrance could be attempted

tremendous swells and breakers hampered the effort -- *Beaver* again turned out to sea

One more attempt was made to approach the river’s entrance -- evening May 7

when the signal guns were fired there was again no response

all hope was given up and the *Beaver* stood off to sea once again

it was believed no post existed because the Astorians had been killed before they arrived

or a post had been built and Indians massacred the occupants

Astor’s newest partner, tall, handsome, boastful and vain America John Clarke arrived on the *Beaver*

he was another former Nor’Wester who was experienced in the fur trade

John Clarke announced to Captain Sowle that he would establish a post

using the Astorians on board the *Beaver*

ONCE AGAIN THE SUPPLY SHIP *BEAVER* APPORACHES THE MOUTH OF THE COLUMBIA

Once again Captain Cornelius Sowle fired the *Beaver’s* signal guns -- morning May 8, 1812

to the great joy of the ship’s crew three distinct guns were heard in response

Captain Sowle, timid and hesitant by nature, remembered Astor’s instructions

Sowle proceeded with great caution believing the Indians could be treacherous and cunning

perhaps the natives had fired the response signal to lure in the *Beaver* in to attack her

when a white flag was hoisted on Cape Disappointment as a signal those on the *Beaver* cried out

but the captain believed this too could be a trick

when a signal fire burned through the night Captain Sowle claimed it was treachery

and the hesitant captain turned out to sea

*BEAVER* ANCHORS OF CAPE DISAPPOINTMENT OUTSIDE THE BAR OF THE COLUMBIA

*Beaver* came to anchor off Cape Disappointment -- morning May 9, 1812

toward noon a canoe was seen making for the ship -- all hands were ordered on full alert

then a barge was seen following the canoe

hopes and fears were both raised for those on board the supply ship

Captain Cornelius Sowle ordered armed sailors to receive the visitors

it was soon discovered the canoe was occupied by Chinook Chief Comcomly and six Indians

the barge held Astor’s partners Duncan McDougal and Robert McClellan and eight voyageurs

with the captain’s fears quelled the *Beaver* crossed the bar piloted by the Astorians

and safely anchored in Baker Bay

BOTH STUARTS ARRIVE AT ASTORIA BRINGING RAMSAY CROOKS AND JOHN DAY

David Stuart and his nephew Robert, John Reed, Robert McClellan and Russell Farnham

arrived back at Astoria -- May 11, 1812

they were accompanied by the long-lost Ramsay Crooks and John Day

Robert Stuart had to report the disastrous loss of John Reed’s dispatches and all of their trading goods

to the Wishram Indians at the Dalles

David Stuart and his three companions delivered the only good news to be heard at Astoria

they had brought out 2,500 beaver pelts from the Fort Okanogan and Thompson River regions

they also gave a glowing account of conditions up the Columbia River

NOR’WESTER DAVID THOMPSON LEAVES BOAT ENCAMPMENT

Traveling from Spokane House on his way to deliver pelts to North West Company’s Fort William

Thompson left Boat Encampment and the Canadian Rocky Mountains

he reached the house of William Henry on the Athabasca River -- May 11, 1812

(“Henry House” was in the Jasper, Alberta area)

Thompson continued on to Fort Augustus and Boggy Hall (near present-day Edmonton, Alberta)

where his wife Charlotte lived with their five children

Accompanied by his family, Thompson and the brigade journeyed with $50,000 in furs

to Cumberland House by way of the Churchill River

[he arrived there June 18, 1812]

CONDITIONS IMPROVE AT ASTORIA WITH THE ARRIVAL OF THE *BEAVER*

Morale for the Astorians skyrocketed with the sight of the supply ship *Beaver*

soon the *Beaver* loaded with stores and trading equipment managed to get the supplies to Astoria

where they were unloaded -- at last the Astorians had abundant materials

New reinforcements of men also arrived and spirits soared at last

*Beaver* had brought out thirty-six more eager clerks and fresh workers

and twelve Kanakas (Hawaiians) hired to work at Astoria

in the Columbia River region a number of Kanakas served asvoyageurs and laborers

JOHN JACOB ASTOR’S PARTNERS HOLD A MEETING IN ASTORIA

Improved conditions and morale at Astoria were reflected as Wilson Price Hunt called a meeting

of Astor’s partners to discuss future plans to develop the Pacific Northwest -- May 1812

Fort Okanogan on the Okanogan River was to be reinforced

four new posts were planned up the Columbia River

another attempt was to be made to recover the cached goods near Caldron Linn

it was still necessary to make a second attempt to deliver dispatches to Astor

in New York City

in spite of the almost euphoric mood at Astoria, there were major obstacles to success

unfriendly Indians, commercial pressure from the North West Company,

United States had instituted a policy of refusing to trade with Great Britain or France

and war with Britain was looming

Ramsay Crooks, like Robert McClellan, gave up his partnership status

both waited for an opportunity to return east and home

ARRIVAL OF THE SUPPLY SHIP *BEAVER* MAKES IT POSSIBLE TO EXPAND OPERATIONS

Pacific Fur Company partners at Astoria could now establish new posts in the interior

Astor’s partners would throw out a ring of forts thus blocking any advance

down the Columbia River by the North West Company:

David Stuart, recently arrived at Astoria from Fort Okanogan,

was to deliver supplies up the Columbia River to Fort Okanogan and to again lead

a party into the Thompson River region (today’s Kamloops region for the winter)

Donald McKenzie, who had been staying at Astoria, was given the task to lead

a trapping party into Snake River country and open a third outpost (for the winter)

traveling with McKenzie was the Irishman John Reed

newly arrived Astor partner John Clarke was to construct a post up the Columbia River

at a location that would provide competition to the North West Fur Company

Robert Stuart, although he had arrived in Astoria aboard the *Tonquin*

and had never crossed the continent, was selected to lead an expedition east

to deliver dispatches to replace those lost by John Reed

first to St. Louis and then to John Jacob Astor in New York City

ROBERT STUART’S ASSIGNMENT WAS ESPECIALLY VITAL TO THE ASTORIANS

John Jacob Astor needed the reports to determined supplies, trade goods and personnel

necessary to maintain Pacific Fur Company operations

Robert Stuart’s youth and vigor were believed sufficient to equip him to lead the expedition

Four Astorians who had accompanied Wilson Price Hunt across the continent would accompany him

hunters Ben Jones and John Day, voyageurs Andre Vallar and Francis Le Clerc

in addition, John Jacob Astor’s former partners Ramsay Crooks and Robert McClellan

who had given up their shares in the company would accompany Robert Stuart to the east

WAR OF 1812 BREAKS OUT BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND GREAT BRITAIN

President James Madison was pressured by “War Hawks” in Congress for a Declaration of War

this demand for war came from the American South to increase the area under slavery

and the West to increase the availability of cheap land for farming

War was announced by President Madison -- June 18, 1812

in fact the United States was not ready for war as few ships sailed under the American flag

and the United States Army was small and badly trained

oddly, this war which was fought for America’s freedom of the seas

started with a United States attack on Canada

(throughout the war all of America’s efforts to invade Canada failed)

News of the hostilities dampened the spirits of Yankee traders and merchants

many merchant ship captains hastened to tie up in neutral ports

to escape attack by British fighting ships

When the War of 1812 was declared the American trapper and trader Alexander Henry

enrolled in the United States Army and rose to the rank of major

Captain Oliver Hazard Perry built a small fleet of ships on Lake Erie

and, after a major battle, successfully cut off British supplies to their frontier forts

Perry proclaimed: **“We have met the enemy and they are ours”[[110]](#footnote-110)**

British soldiers attacked Washington City in retaliation for America’s invasion of Canada

they burned the capitol city to the ground and attacked Fort McHenry in Baltimore Harbor

during this battle Francis Scott Key wrote new words to an old English drinking song

this music became known as *The Star Spangled Banner*

(it will become America’s national anthem [1931])

America’s Navy enjoyed better success in the war effort than did the Army

UNITED STATES NEEDS INDIAN ALLIES IN DURING THE WAR OF 1812

U.S. Government was looking for someone to keep the Missouri River Indians neutral

or perhaps induce them to join with the Americans

on the recommendation of Louisiana Territory Governor William Clark

Manuel Lisa was chosen for the task

Lisa not only kept the Indians from joining the British

but he organized them into bands operating for the Americans

JOHN JACOB ASTOR’S PLANS ARE THREATENED BY THE WAR OF 1812

It was a terrible blow for John Jacob Astor’s Pacific Fur company plans

when the War of 1812 broke out

No news had been heard of the fate of the *Tonquin* or her crew

or of Wilson Price Hunt’s Overland Expedition

Manual Lisa had predicted the overland party would be destroyed

some North West Company employees had spread rumors to that effect

significantly elevating the levels of anxiety regarding the expedition

NORTH WEST COMPANY LEADERS LEARN OF THE OUTBREAK OF WAR

North West Company partners-in-the-field were gathered for their annual meeting at Fort William

(today’s Thunder Bay, Ontario) on Lake Superior

they received word of America’s declaration of war by express canoe from Montreal

they realized this event was a serious threat to their operations not only in Canada

but also in Pacific Northwest whose ownership was in doubt

North West Company employee John George McTavish along with Alexander Henry the Younger

were named leaders of the annual Nor’Wester supply brigade to the West from Rainy Lake House

they were to alert North West Company employees in the Columbia Department

to the danger

(Nor’Wester John George McTavish had wintered at Spokane House [1811-1812]

he also had accompanied David Thompson to the North West Company’s headquarters

at Fort William [April 1812])

seventy-five singing, beaded, belled and fringed voyageurs

left the Montreal company headquarters

RUSSIAN-AMERICAN COMPANY ESTABLISHES FORT ROSS IN CALIFORNIA

Russian trappers and traders in Russian-America (Alaska) found it difficult to grow their own food

as the growing season was very short

Because of native hostility to Europeans and Americans in the territory south of Russian-America and because of the increasing presence of British and American traders in Oregon

Russian American Company abandoned all attempts to create trading outposts in Oregon

company leaders reasoned a permanent a settlement in California

would provide both food and access to the abundant sea otter trade there

War of 1812 had hardly more than begun when Ivan Kuskov in his capacity

as senior assistant to Russian-American Company leader Alexander Baranov

extended the Russian fur trade into Spanish California

Russian traders sailed from New Archangel (Sitka, Alaska) down to Bodega, California where Kuskov constructed a trading post with permission from the Spanish authorities

which was subsequently transformed into a fort

Fort Ross (short for Russia) was built about seventy-five miles north of San Francisco -- 1812

(in the vicinity of today’s Sacramento, California)

this was the most southern outpost of Russian power in America

it was composed of a fourteen-foot stockade with two-storied blockhouses

mounted guns protected fifty-nine buildings including living quarters, warehouses,

Russian Orthodox chapel, steam bath house and jail

fifty Russians resided at the fort within the redwood walls

they were occupied with hunting, shipbuilding, raising cattle and crop farming

Russians were assisted by a small encampment of Aleut Indians located outside the walls

(When Spanish authorities changed their mind and objected to the Russian fort in their territory

Russian settlers refused to budge despite the indignant cries from Mexico City

Fort Ross later was later sold to John Sutter for $30,000 [1841])

FOUR PARTIES SET OUT FROM ASTORIA BOUND FOR THE WALLA WALLA RIVER

Astor’s partners Donald McKenzie, David Stuart, Robert Stuart and newly arrived John Clarke

were given their assignments:

Donald McKenzie was to build a trading post on the Clearwater River

David Stuart was to return to Fort Okanogan

John Clarke was to compete with North West Company’s Spokane House

Robert Stuart was to deliver news of the fate of the *Tonquin* to St. Louis

Four Astorians led their combined parties that numbered sixty Astorians including partners, clerks, voyageurs, Kanakas (Hawaiians) and American hunters out of Astoria -- June 29, 1812

to proceed past the treacherous Dalles of the Columbia River

treacherous for two reasons -- rapids and Indians

guns of Astoria were fired in salute

This united expedition was to travel to the mouth of the Walla Walla River

where they would divide into their assigned tasks

they traveled in ten canoes and two barges and were to keep together for mutual protection

JOHN DAY BECOMES COMPLETELY DERANGED

They were barely under way when hunter John Day became restless and uneasy

this was shocking as he was usually very cheerful and easy-going

it appeared his previous trials in the wilderness seemed to weigh on his mind

While Robert Stuart and his Astorians were camped near the Columbia River’s (Wapato Island)

John Day became increasingly agitated and he began to talk wildly and incoherently

and to show signs of becoming mentally deranged -- July 2, 1812

Ramsay Crooks explained the horrors and suffering both he and Day

had experienced during the horrifying journey West to Astoria

John Day became violent as the sight of Indians through him into a rage

Day’s mental sufferings led him to become frantic and he attempted to kill himself

he was disarmed and became very quiet before apologizing for his actions

he pretended to fall asleep but just before daylight he leaped up and grabbed two pistols

in his rush to commit suicide he fired high and missed his head

he was secured and placed under guard in one of the barges

What to do with John Day became a concern for the members of the expedition

clearly he could no longer accompany them on their journey east

fortunately a party of Wapato Indians known to the Astorians was met

Robert Stuart sent John Day without a weapon back to Astoria in the care of Wapato Indians

who regarded insanity as a sign of being possessed by a great spirit

John Day returned safely to the Pacific Fur Company post on the Columbia River

where he continued to serve as a hunter and trapper primarily in the Willamette River Valley

ASTORIANS TRAVELING TO THEIR ASSIGNEMENT REACH THE LONG RAPIDS

Fifty-nine Astorians camped at the foot of the Long Rapids -- July 6, 1812

Early the next morning guards were posted along the portage route -- July 7

every man was armed and his cartridge box was replenished

each wore an arrow proof overcoat of elk hide reaching from the neck to the knees

five officers took positions at each end of the three mile portage

lookouts were posted high on the cliffs above the portage route

everyone else busily dragged the barges and canoes up the Columbia River

and carried supplies and goods along the narrow portage trail

Their preparations proved profitable as a canoe overturned sinking some goods and floating others

immediately hordes of Indians who had remained unseen set out to claim the prize

one bundle washed up on an island and half of the treasure was divided among the natives

while the other half was stored in a lonely hut on the island

Robert Stuart set out in a canoe with five men and regained the lost items

Similar precautions were taken at the Short Rapids and at Celilo Falls

fifteen days were taken to ascend the eighty miles of rapids

WILSON PRICE HUNT DECIDES TO TRAVEL WITH THE SUPPLY SHIP *BEAVER*

Wilson Price Hunt was John Jacob Astor’s agent in charge of Pacific Fur Company operations

no one at Astoria was aware of the outbreak of the War of 1812

Astor’s supply ship was to carry supplies to the Russian trappers and traders in Russian-America

it was decided by the council of partners at Astoria that Wilson Price Hunt would travel with her

on its journey to New Archangel (Sitka) Russian-America (Alaska)

he was to become acquainted with the coastal trade

and to negotiate the terms to be established in supplying Russian trappers and traders

and carry a portion of the Russian’s harvest of pelts to Canton, China

Hunt was to return to Astoria on the supply ship [in October]

after which the *Beaver* would proceed to Hawaii and on to Canton, China

FIFTY-NINE ASTORIANS REACH THE HEAD OF THE DALLES

After reaching the area above Celilo Falls great speed was made on the Columbia -- July 19, 1812

as the Astorians took advantage of the smoother water only occasionally interrupted

by rocks and rapid that allowed the voyageurs to use sails to ease their efforts

hills, cliffs and forests disappeared -- tufts of short grass were scorched by the summer sun

Natives in this region all lived on the north side of the Columbia

they were hunters and fishermen and had a great number of horses

some of these were purchased and killed on the spot

however, finding fuel for fires was difficult

as threats from the natives diminished those concerns were replaced by rattlesnakes

which infested the rocks of the rapids and portage routes

at one place a nest of snakes lay coiled together basking in the sun

several guns were fired at them and thirty-seven were killed or wounded

to keep the snakes away at night tobacco was occasionally placed around the tents

Because they were in the region (of today’s John Day River) where Ramsay Crooks and John Day

had been robbed and stripped guards were posted at night around the camp

RAMSAY CROOKS RECOGNIZES TWO INDIANS WHO HAD ROBBED HIM

In the morning a number of Indians gathered around the camp during breakfast -- July 20, 1812

to his great delight Ramsay Crooks recognized two of the intruders who had robbed him

they were instantly seized, bound hand and foot and thrown into one of the canoes

where they lay in unhappy fear expecting to be executed

Crooks, however, was not a vengeful man and agreed to release the offenders

as soon as the pillaged property was restored

Indians immediately started off in different directions

before night the rifles of Crooks and Day were produced

both of the thieves were released

FIFTY-NINE ASTORIANS REACH THE MOUTH OF THE WALLA WALLA RIVER

Continuing up the Columbia River the Astorians arrived at the Walla Walla River -- July 27, 1812

where the combined parties who had thus far voyaged together were to separate

When Walla Walla Indians who had aided Ramsay Crooks and John Day

learned of the arrival of the Astorians they traveled to greet them

in celebration the Indians built a great bonfire in their camp

men and women danced singing the praises of the white men and welcoming them

ROBERT STUART PREPARES TO UNDERTAKE HIS TRIP ACROSS THE CONTINENT

Trade with the Walla Wallas was begun to procure horses for the overland journey -- July 27, 1812

Stuart purchased twenty horses for his expedition -- some for riding; others for the baggage

Robert Stuart spent two days arranging pack saddles and preparing for his arduous journey

with the loss of John Day he was now accompanied by five men -- a small number for the task

Robert McClellan and Ramsay Crooks, both had given up their partnerships in the company,

hunter Ben Jones and two French-Canadians Andre Vallar and Francis Le Clerc

all but McClellan were young men full of courage, health and good spirits

they were stimulated by their travels to St. Louis rather than appalled by danger

ROBERT STUART SETS OUT TO CROSS THE CONTINENT

Robert Stuart and his five men mounted their horses to undertake their own adventures

they took leave of their fellow Astorians to hearty cheers from those left behind -- July 29, 1812

Stuart traveled to the southeast down the Walla Walla River retracing the disastrous course

taken by Wilson Price Hunt (the winter before)

in the distance were seen the Blue Mountains they would have to cross

Robert Stuart’s expedition continued up the Walla Walla River for about fifty miles

to where they found a Cayuse Indian village of forty huts covered with mats

REMAINING FIFTY-THREE ASTORIANS REMAINED AT THE WALLA WALLA RIVER Expedition leaders and Astor’s partners Donald McKenzie, David Stuart and John Clarke

met to lay plans

they agreed to rendezvous at the mouth of the Walla Walla River (beginning of [June1813]

to provide mutual protection when they traveled together back to Astoria

during the necessary journey past the Wishram Indians on the Columbia River)

DAVID STUART CONTINUES UP THE COLUMBIA RIVER TO FORT OKANOGAN

David Stuart led a party of Astorians eight from the mouth of the Walla Walla River -- July 31, 1812

they continued up the Columbia River on their way back to Fort Okanogan

(when they arrived there he delivered a supply of trade goods and ammunition

to clerk-in charge Alexander Ross who had remained at the trading post)

DONALD McKENZIE LEADS TEN ASTORIANS UP THE SNAKE RIVER

McKenzie set out from the Walla Walla River up the Columbia River

to the mouth of the Snake River

Traveling with his second-in-command clerk Alfred Seton, John Reed and eight other Astorians

this trapping party turned up the Snake River

wandering bands of Indian tribes were seen traveling in various directions

some of these people had large herds of horses

JOHN CLARKE IS ASSIGNED TO ESTABLISH A POST TO COMPETE WITH NOR’WESTERS

It was John Clarke’s plan store his barges at the mouth of the Walla Walla River

and proceed overland about 150 miles to the east to reach the Spokane Indians

where he would construct a new trading post to compete with North West Company’s

Spokane House operated by Finan McDonald

John Clarke bartered with the Nez Perce Indians for horses but they asked a high price

Clarke spent a week before he could acquire a sufficient number on animals to make the trip

during this time he was annoyed by repeated thefts

his demands to the chiefs for restitution resulted in no compensation

Ross Cox, a clerk traveling with John Clarke described the lifestyle of the Indians

**“These Nez Perces** [Pierced Noses] **live in huts made of poles covered with mats of bark or rushes. Some houses were oblong, some cone-shaped, and some square. An opening at the top served the double purpose of window and chimney. They were clean, ambitious, smart-looking people who were fond of their children and kind to the aged. Apparently, they were all in good health, although many were afflicted with sore eyes. Both men and women wore a sort of leather shirt reaching to the knees. In addition, the men wore leggings made of some kind of skin. The Nez Perces were good hunters and excellent horsemen. Their saddles were made of dressed deerskin and stuffed with hair. The wooden stirrups were covered with raw skin which, when dry, became hard and lasted a long time. Bridles were merely ropes made out of the hair from horses’ tails.”[[111]](#footnote-111)**

ROBERT STUART AND HIS FIVE TRAVELING COMPANIONS CROSS THE DESERT

Robert Stuart set out from the Cayuse Indian village along the Walla Walla River

he had counted on a more favorable season than (winter) as had been faced by Wilson Price Hunt

to provide abundant plant and animal life to provision them in their crossing of the continent

however, each season provided its own unique type of hardship

they had not gone far when they found themselves among arid hills without vegetation

sand and clay soil had been baked brittle and seemed to have never seen rain

not a spring, pool or stream of running was to be seen

dusty ravines in the sun burnt landscape showed where the (winter’s) water once ran

One day they continued on without resting with a blazing sun over their heads

parched desert lay at their feet with just enough wind to surround them with dust from the sand

their sufferings became intense -- their only companion, a young dog, died of thirst

they were approaching despair when what appeared to be a fringe of forest was seen ahead

they knew where there were trees there would be water

they quickened their pace as even the horses seemed to sense water ahead

It was late at night when they reached the trees and heard a pleasantly rippling brook

their horses raced ahead, plunged their muzzles into the water and drank deeply

riders also took long drinks in an effort to quench their thirst

they had covered forty-fives that day before camp was made on the bank of the stream

they slept until well into the morning hours the following day

WILSON PRICE HUNT SAILS TO NEW ARCHANGEL RUSSIAN-AMERICA (SITKA, ALASKA)

John Jacob Astor’s supply ship *Beaver* under the command of Captain Cornelius Sowle

sailed from Astoria carrying Astor’s agent and commander of the Pacific Fur Company

Wilson Price Hunt to New Archangel, Russian-America (Sitka, Alaska) -- August 4, 1812

Hunt left former Nor’Wester Duncan McDougall in charge of Astoria

Hunt was to negotiate a contract to supply the Russian trappers of the Russian-American Company carry the company’s furs to Canton, China and sell them before returning to Russian-America

with more supplies and the proceeds from the sale of the pelts

once these arrangements had been completed the *Beaver* was to return to Astoria

to deliver Wilson Price Hunt to the post

before continuing on carrying Russian pelts to Canton

*Beaver* and Wilson Price Hunt were expected to return to Astoria [in October]

*BEAVER* PUT OUT TO SEA BOUND FOR NEW ARCHANGEL

With the departure of the *Beaver* and the various brigades, Astoria had only a few men remaining

this was soon noticed by the Chinook Indians who became more insolent and hostile

Fishing season brought villages of coastal Indians to the fishing grounds of the Columbia River

including the villagers who had massacred the crew of the *Tonquin* on Vancouver Island

these natives also were disrespectful and aggressive

Precautions were taken at Astoria to guard against danger

bastions around the post were heightened and guards were posted around the clock

fortunately the Chinooks and other resident people remained peaceful

old Comcomly maintained control of his people because he was aware of the advantages

of having white traders as allies and neighbors

he remained a firm friend of the Astorians and protected them against hostile visitors

ROBERT STUART AND HIS FIVE COMPANIONS SET OUT ONCE AGAIN

When camp in the trees along the babbling brook was broken in the morning

Robert Stuart and his four Astorians recognized the Umatilla River

where Wilson Price Hunt and his companions had arrived after their difficult and hazardous

crossing of the Blue Mountains which now lay ahead of them

Robert Stuart led his party into the Blue Mountains through dense forests and deep ravines

sometimes they followed the raging creeks below steep cliffs on either side

at other times to make progress they were forced to cross and re-cross stream beds

dark dense forest continued on for mile after mile

then, almost as if by magic, the landscape changed into beautiful hills

and sparkling gravel brooks surrounded by lush pasture

Leaving the Blue Mountains they entered the (Grande Ronde Valley) almost sixty miles across

rich soil was seen with streams meandering through in every direction

cottonwood and willow trees fringed the banks of the brooks

these provided an abundant resource for dams for the profuse beaver seen in the vicinity

Astorians passed beside a great pool three hundred yards in circumference fed by a sulfur spring

elk horns, which had been shed in the (springtime), were strewn about the pond

JOHN CLARKE FINALLY IS ABLE TO BEGIN HIS TREK TO THE SPOKANE INDIANS

After acquiring an adequate number of horses, John Clarke made arrangements for his departure

he laid up his barge and canoes in a sheltered location on the Walla Walla River

where they were protected from the sun by the shade of overgrown shrubs and willows

he promised compensation to an old Nez Perce chief for keeping a watchful eye of over them

during the Astorians’ absence

John Clarke took his place at the head of the column of thirty-two Astorians and their horses

as they began the journey to the Spokane Indians -- August 7, 1812

like other expeditions traveling to the east they experienced steep and rocky hills,

cliffs and crags and miles of sunburned plains abounding with rattlesnakes

both men and horses suffered with intolerable heat and thirst

JOSEPH MILLER AND HIS TRAPPING PARTNERS RETURN TO (TODAY’S IDAHO)

(Joseph Miller with Edward Robinson, John Hoback, Jacob Reznor and Martin Cass

had been attacked by Arapaho Indians [January] and had made winter camp

somewhere in [Wyoming’s] northern foothills)

During the (spring) and summer they had traveled to (Idaho’s) Boise River

where they camped about seventy miles above the mouth of the river

and busied themselves with trapping -- August 1812

Martin Cass was no longer with the trappers

ROBERT STUART AND HIS FIVE COMPANIONS REACH (WOODVILE CREEK, IDAHO)

Robert Stuart and his party arrived on the banks of Woodvile Creek (western Idaho)

where they saw a herd of nineteen antelopes -- August 10, 1812

they attempted to shoot one but were unsuccessful as the animals remained out of range

Stuart had reached the region where Wilson Price Hunt had left Ramsay Crooks and John Day behind

before beginning their ascent of the Blue Mountains

ROBERT STUART AND HIS ASTORIANS ARRIVE AT THE SNAKE RIVER

Stuart continued to lead his five companions on their trek across the continent to St. Louis

they reached the banks of the Snake River -- August 12, 1812

each of Robert Stuart’s companions with the exception of Stuart himself

remembered the hardships they had faced here -- August 12, 1812

they had reached the area of (today’s Farewell Bend

where later the Oregon Trail would leave the Snake River as pioneer traveled westward)

They entered the Rocky Mountains following the southern bank of the Snake River

ROBERT STUART’S PARTY IS VISITED BY A LONE SHOSHONE INDIAN

A single Shoshone native visited the Astorians’ camp -- August 14, 1812

he told Stuart there was a white man living with his tribe a day’s journey up the Snake River

this was thought to probably be a survivor of Wilson Price Hunt’s Overland Expedition

everyone was eager to press on and find their lost comrade

Stuart and his men set out early in the morning -- August 15

they traveled for two days without finding the survivor

ALL OF THE OHIO VALLEY COULD BE LOST TO THE BRITISH

2,500 United States troops under General Hull captured most of (today’s) Michigan

General Hull camped at Fort Detroit across the Detroit River from 100 British regulars,

300 militia and 150 Indians led by Tecumseh

General Hull crossed the river and made his headquarters in a Canadian farmhouse

he attempted to terrorize the Canadians in the Great Lakes region by distributing printed flyers

however, he failed to protect American forts on Lake Michigan

Fort Michilimackinac fell to a small force of British soldiers and Indians under Tecumseh

Fort Dearborn (Chicago) was lost to the Indians

After these small but strategic victories, small bands of Indians from the Ohio and Mississippi rivers

hurried north to join Tecumseh on the Canadian frontier

within a short time, the great Indian commander had more than six hundred braves

all ready and eager for battle

General Hull grew increasingly nervous at the thought of facing an enemy force of British regulars

sharpshooting Canadian backwoodsmen and hundreds of angry Indians

in near panic General Hull ordered his troops to retreat to Fort Detroit across the Detroit River

Fort Detroit was attacked by British troops and Indians under hundreds of Indians under Tecumseh

seeing advancing force and hearing hundreds of Indians raising their war cries

struck terror into General Hull who surrendered Fort Detroit -- August 16, 1812

although his forces outnumbered the attackers

in addition to winning an easy victory, the daring invaders captured valuable goods,

including thirty-three cannon, a large quantity of stores and equipment, a number of horses

and a newly built sailing ship

even more significantly the British had gained a valuable ally in Chief Tecumseh

U.S. Army suffered defeat after defeat against British, Canadians and Indians

it was obvious the whole Ohio Valley could be lost to the British

ROBERT STUART LEARNS OF A PARTY OF WHITE MEN IN THE AREA

Robert Stuart and his five companions arrived at the mouth of a large river

that entered the Snake from the east (today’s Bruneau River) -- August 16, 1812

this was a major fishing area and meeting ground for the local Shoshone Indians

When Stuart encountered an Indian camp he enquired about the white man

he was told there were white men living with the Indians across the Snake River

Ramsay Crooks hoped these were the discouraged men he had left behind

Andre La Chapelle, Jean-Baptiste Turcotte and Francois Landry

others thought they might be Astor’s partner Joseph Miller, Martin Cass

and the three Kentuckians Edward Robinson, John Hoback and Jacob Reznor

who had left the main body at Fort Henry (Idaho) to trap along mountain streams

Stuart sent an Indian across the Snake River to question the white men and bring them to his camp

that night swarms of mosquitoes prevented virtually any sleep

ROBERT STUART RECEIVED INFORMATION ABOUT SEVERAL WHITE MEN

Morning found Stuart and his five Astorians in an ill mood due to lack of sleep from mosquitoes

and the anticipation of finding their long lost companions -- August 17, 1812

when the Indian returned without any further information they grew even more irritable

As they broke camp and began their day’s trek a Shoshone Indian galloped after them

Stuart stopped to wait for the Indian but when he arrived

he threw his arms around Stuart’s horse’s neck and appeared to attempt to kill the animal

the horse seemed neither alarmed nor displeased by this greeting

he said the horse had been his prized possession and had been stolen by Walla Walla Indians

in fact, this was a prized animal -- admirably shaped, graceful in movement and fleet of foot

Robert Stuart had intended to take him to New York and present him to John Jacob Astor

Suddenly some of the Astorians recognized the Shoshone Indian as an old friend and ally

who had guided Wilson Price Hunt’s expedition to Fort Henry (Idaho) the preceding (autumn)

he had also been one of the two Indians left at Fort Henry to take charge of the horses

when Hunt set out with canoes

as the Astorians questioned the Indian he explained the cache had been plundered

and the saddles and equipment were carried off

this Indian said Joseph Miller and his companions had trapped for some time

but had fallen into the hands of marauding Crow Indians

who robbed them of their horses, weapons and trade goods

he said he had met with three other white men about ten days before

they were in miserable condition having one horse and one rifle among them

they had been mistreated by Crow Indians

when the Indian tried to pronounce the names of the whites it was suspected they were

three of the four hunters detached from Wilson Price Hunt’s expedition

Alexander Carson, Louis St. Michel, Pierre Detaye and Pierre Delaunay

in the course of the conversation the Indian said the route taken by Wilson Price Hunt was bad

he knew a much shorter and easier way through the Rocky Mountains

Robert Stuart urged him accompany the Astorians as a guide and promised to reward him

with a pistol with powder and ball, a knife, an awl, some blue beads, a blanket

and a looking glass -- the native could not refuse such a generous offer

besides, he said, he was tired of salmon and longed for buffalo meat

he left immediately to get his weapons and equipment and promised to return the next day

he was good to his word

SHOSHONE INDIAN RETURNS TO GUIDE ROBERT STUART AND HIS ASTORIANS

Because the Shoshone Indian said nothing more about Stuart’s horse they traveled in harmony

although the Indian occasionally was seen looking wistfully at the horse -- August 18, 1812

They had traveled only about nine miles when they came to a great bend in the Snake River

here their guide told them that cutting across the hills would save them many miles

however, this route would be a long day’s journey

he advised them to make camp for the night and get an early start in the morning

they took his advice

ROBERT STUART GETS AN EARLY START

All six Astorians rose early to begin their ascent of the Rocky Mountains -- August 19, 1812

they soon discovered their guide was missing and supposed he was checking the route ahead

when they began to collect the horses Robert Stuart’s prized steed was missing

a quick search for the horse belonging the Shoshone Indian found it also was missing

tracks of two horses, one being ridden and the other following, were found leaving camp

it was obvious the horse had been taken during the night

they followed the tracks for a few miles until they crossed the Snake River

from then on the night was divided into three watches with one person mounted at all times

It was decided to keep to the Snake River rather than attempting the proposed short cut

during the day heat was oppressive and the horses became almost frantic from the sting of flies

nights were suffocating and it was impossible to sleep because of the swarms of mosquitoes

*BEAVER* ARRIVES AT NEW ARCHANGEL, RUSSIAN-AMERICA (SITKA, ALASKA)

Wilson Price Hunt sailing with Captain Cornelius Sowle aboard the supply ship *Beaver*

did not reach New Archangel (Sitka) until August 20, 1812

New Archangel was a fort placed at the crest of a rocky promontory

it displayed one hundred large and small guns, and was impregnable to Indian attack

Hunt met with Count Alexander Baranov the Russian governor of the different colonies

Count Baranov was a rough, rugged, hospitable, hard-drinking old Russian

somewhat of a soldier, somewhat of a trader and above all a fun-loving, rowdy companion

Count Baranov commanded sixty Russians and a vast number of Kodiak Indian hunters

who continually came and went and lounged and loitered around the New Archangel fort

Baranov, although addicted to vodka and amusement, was a strong disciplinarian

seven guards were posted in the fort day and night

Baranov also commanded numerous maritime traders who extended the governor’s power

along the whole Pacific coast

American captains whose ships were engaged the maritime trade

would arrive at New Archangel empty-handed

they would be furnished with about fifty canoes and a hundred Kodiak hunters

who were given provisions enough to hunt sea otter

then the American captains would sail for California

where parties of hunters would be dropped off in their canoes

when enough pelts were collected the American captains would gather the hunters

and return to New Archangel to deliver the hunters and the pelts

for their service to the hunters the captains kept one-half of the skins

ROBERT STUART AND HIS FIVE COMPANIONS AGAIN TAKE UP THEIR TREK

Robert Stuart continued to parallel the Snake River as the day grew sultry -- August 20, 1812

some of the Astorians became parched with thirst and left the others to go to the river bank

as they passed through a line of willow trees they were surprised to see a white man fishing

this proved to be the Kentucky trapper John Hoback -- one of their lost comrades

Almost immediately three other men who had been sleeping came out of the willows

Astor’s partner Joseph Miller, Jacob Reznor and the long ago scalped Edward Robinson

Astorian Martin Cass who had traveled with the others was missing

all four had left Wilson Price Hunt’s Overland Expedition at Fort Henry (Idaho)

Stuart quickly made camp as Miller, Robinson, Hoback and Jacob Reznor expressed their great joy

all of the Astorians celebrated the amazing luck of the accidental discovery

JOSEPH MILLER AND HIS TRAVELING COMPANIONS TELL THEIR STORY

Joseph Miller, Edward Robinson, John Hoback and Jacob Reznor explained

that after leaving Hunt’s expedition at Caldron Linn they continued eastward with Martin Cass

along the south bank of the Snake River until they reached (today’s Porteneuf River)

there they turned south aiming for a pass that Shoshone Indians had told them about

they made their way about two hundred miles where they trapped beaver on a river

which according to their account, discharge itself into the ocean to the south of the Columbia

(this actually proved to the be Bear River that empties into Lake Bonneville

west of the Rocky Mountains)

after collecting a large number of beaver pelts they made them into packs and loaded their horses

they traveled two hundred miles east where they encountered sixty Arapaho lodges

these natives attacked the trappers and robbed them of their pelts, most of their clothing

and several of their horses

fortunate to escape with their lives, some of their clothing and a few of their horses

they proceeded about fifty miles east and made camp (for the winter)

according to Joseph Miller, Edward Robinson, John Hoback and Jacob Reznor

tsuffered from starvation because of a lack of game and fish during the [winter 1811-1812]

Miller, Robinson, Hoback and Reznor resumed they journey [early in the spring]

but they encountered a Crow war party that frightened them to the north

as they fled along (what is today’s Idaho-Wyoming border) the Crows followed,

stole every horse and left them afoot in the wilderness

Miller, Robinson, Hoback and Reznor had pressed on suffering great hardships

they still had their rifles and ammunition but the desert offered no game birds or animals

they were forced to follow rivers and subsist by fishing

but at times no fish were available -- starvation added to their suffering

then just two weeks before being found the trio had been robbed yet again

this time by Shoshone Indians who took one of their two horses, beaver pelts,

equipment and nearly everything else

they said their last horse was taken by Martin Cass

now without horses Joseph Miller and his three companions

endured hunger, thirst and exhaustion while traveling across barren wastes

their worn and gaunt look and naked condition spoke of their extensive suffering

(later when Edward Robinson was relating their story to Astorian John Reed

he stated that Martin Cass had been killed by Arapahos

because of these inconsistencies rumors spread that Cass’s four companions had killed

and eaten him during the lean winter)

Once again the Kentuckians Edward Robinson, John Hoback and Jacob Reznor

spoke of going home only to decide to remain and trap

they agreed to remain with Astor’s Pacific Fur Company

they were provided traps, weapons, ammunition and equipment for a two year hunt

(for nearly a year the three men trapped the country around Jackson Hole [Wyoming])

Joseph Miller decided to join Robert Stuart, Robert McClellan, Ramsay Crooks, Ben Jones,

Andre Vallar and Francis Le Clerc on their journey to St. Louis

ROBERT STUART AND HIS ASTORIANS CONTINUE THEIR JOURNEY EAST

Robert Stuart and his now six traveling companions set out together -- August 21, 1812

for several days they followed the Snake River occasionally taking shortcuts across hills

where the river bent and turned

they passed several Shoshone camps where they purchased salmon

Robert Stuart attempt to purchases horses for the recently discovered Astorians

but most often the Indians were too poor to be able to conduct trade

JOHN CLARKE ACCIDENTALLY LEAVES A MAN BEHIND

John Clarke’s party of thirty-two Astorians continued on horseback

on their way to the Spokane Indians

Ross Cox, a young clerk, took a nap in the warm afternoon sun of an August day

he awoke about 5:00 to find the previous night’s campsite deserted

coals from the fire indicated his companions left about three hours before

they had left him with no supplies, no equipment, no horse and no weapon

Ross Cox was unprepared for the adventures that might lie ahead and was terrified

he was not an experienced man of wilderness as indicated by the fact he wore

**“a gingham shirt and summer trousers, badly worn moccasins, and no hat”[[112]](#footnote-112)**

Cox made camp for the night near the Astorians’ former campsite

Early the next day he traveled east in an attempt to catch up with the other Astorians

on the following night he was confronted by a giant rattlesnake but he escaped unharmed

on the third night he was about to settle into a small cave

when he was surprised and terrified by a large gray fox that emerged

GEOGRAPHER DAVID THOMPSON REACHES FORT WILLIAM ON LAKE SUPERIOR

David Thompson with thirty North West Company voyageurs who paddled six canoes

and his wife Charlotte and their five children transported 122 ninety pound bales of furs

worth approximately $50,000 on the London market to North West Company headquarters

at Fort William on Lake Superior (now Thunder Bay, Ontario) -- August 1812

David Thompson attended the annual meeting of North West Company partners-in-the-field there

for six years he had been in charge of trading in the North West Company Columbia Department

beyond the Rocky Mountains

North West Company sent a delegation to accompany the bundles of pelts to London England

Kanaka John Coxe was a member of the delegation

and was probably the first Hawaiian to visit England

NOR’WESTER DAVID THOMPSON RETIRES FROM THE NORTH WEST COMPANY

Now forty-five years old David Thompson was never again to travel west to the great rivers,

the Rocky Mountains and beyond to the Columbia Department he had developed

After the Nor’Westers meeting David Thompson moved to Terrebonne (near Montreal, Quebec)

while many traders simply left their native families in the bush

Thompson settled down with his family

he had his children baptized and his marriage to Charlotte solemnized in a Catholic Church

Thompson, the “praying trapper” also was known as Koo-Koo-Sint

“the Man Who Looks at Stars”[[113]](#footnote-113) remained in eastern Canada for the rest of his life

David Thompson was now ready to attempt to draft a detailed map of the Columbia Department

he had traveled over 1,200,000 square miles of Canadian territory

he had traveled over 500,000 square miles of eventual United States territory

North West Company put David Thompson to work for five years [1812-1817]

he constructed a monumental (ten and one-half feet by five and one-half feet) detailed map

of the Pacific Northwest

ASTORIANS AND NOR’WESTERS MEET ON THE SPOKANE RIVER

John Clarke and his party of Astorians reached the Spokane River

where North West Company operated Spokane House under Finan McDonald

Cordial relations were quickly established between the trappers of the rival companies

Pacific Fur Company and North West Company men were most jovial toward each other

amiable horse races were held between the competing companies

after all, most of the men at Astoria were former North West Company associates

at the same time each company was sending scouts to watch Indian trappers

to assure their company would get first pick of the Indians’ trapping successes

JOHN CLARKE BUILDS FORT SPOKANE FOR THE ASTORIANS

Astor’s partner John Clarke began construction on the Pacific Fur Company trading post

on a point of land at the junction of the Spokane and “Pointed Heart” (Little Spokane) rivers

within a hundred yards of the North West Company’s Spokane House -- August 1812

Fort Spokane was built on a grand scale to impress the natives (when it was completed in [December]

this post housed thirty-two laborers, clerks and traders who operated it

There was intense but friendly competition between the two companies

for trade with the Spokane, Kootenai and Flathead natives

Americans dispatched trading brigades to undercut the Nor’Westers among the Kootenai and Flathead Indians [in the fall]

however, both companies agreed not to use alcohol to obtain furs from the Indians

ROBERT STUART AND HIS COMPANIONS REACH SALMON FALLS

Stuart and his seven traveling companions reached a great fishing place

which they named Salmon Falls (north of Twin Falls, Idaho) -- August 25, 1812

here on the north side of the Snake River was a twenty foot waterfall

while a series of rapids were on the south side

There were about a hundred Shoshone lodges at the falls

and the Indians were busy catching and drying salmon

shortly after sunrise the fish began to leap and the natives swam to the center of the falls

and stood on the rocks while others stood up to their waists in the water holding spears

salmon were taken in incredible numbers as they attempted to leap the falls

Robert Stuart purchased a good supply of salmon and the Astorians resumed their journey

ASTORIAN ROSS COX ARRIVES AT FORT SPOKANE

After two weeks on his own in the wilderness Ross Cox had shredded his clothes

his **“moccasins were completely gone, and…** [his] **feet were torn and bruised by thorns and sharp rocks”[[114]](#footnote-114)**

unarmed, it was impossible to kill any game for nourishment

Cox encountered a grizzly bear and escaped when he climbed a tree and waited several hours)

For two weeks after he had fallen behind John Clarke’s expedition to Spokane Indians Ross Cox crossed the desolate country alone with no weapon for protection or food

Ross Cox chanced upon a Spokane Indian camp these friendly natives fed and clothed him

he was escorted by Spokane natives to the Spokane River the next day -- August 1812

where John Clarke and other Astorians were building a third post -- Fort Spokane

right next door to North West Company’s Spokane House

Cox wrote of his reunion: **“My deerskin robe and tanned complexion deceived them for a minute, but when they recognized me a great shout went up. All the men thronged around me, asking me questions, and congratulating me upon being found. I had been given up for lost. Just the day before, my clothing had been sold at auction, but now the purchasers hurried to bring it back to me. A holiday was declared to celebrate my return, and the Indians who had taken care of me were liberally rewarded.”[[115]](#footnote-115)**

LORD SELKIRK’S COLONISTS ARRIVE AT THE RED RIVER

Governor Miles Macdonell led seventy colonists from the shore of Hudson Bay

toward Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk’s colony to be located almost forty miles

from the mouth of the Red River where the river bends sharply east forming Point Douglas

(in the present-day city of Winnipeg, Manitoba) -- August 30, 1812

Metis (mixed French and Indian blood) settlers living in the area received the colonist

wearing war paint and making threatening signs

this was the country of the fur traders -- settlers were not wanted

they must move further inland

in contrast, full-blooded Indians camping along the Red River welcomed the colonists

ROBERT STUART NOW TRAVELS WITH SIX COMPANIONS

Robert Stuart accompanied by Astor’s former partners Ramsay Crooks and Robert McClellan

along with hunter Ben Jones, voyageurs Andre Vallar and Francis Le Clerc

and newly added Joseph Miller who declined to remain and trap with the three Kentuckians

set out to continue the journey to St. Louis -- September 1, 1812

they followed the Snake River eastward as the hills that had closed in on the river

opened to wide plains -- occasionally belts of green interrupted the dusty desert

fringes of willow and cottonwood followed the river bank and could be seen from hilltops

which allowed shortcuts to be taken and return to the river

summer had parched the ground and little game was to be had

each of the Astorians searched in vain across the barren landscape

For a week they moved eastward suffering from thirst and hunger

they depended on the few fish the streams offered and an occasional dog

purchased from very poor and forlorn Shoshone Indians

DONALD McKENZIE AND HIS MEN REACH THE CLEARWATER RIVER

Donald McKenzie and his ten traveling companions had continued up the Snake River

for fifteen or sixteen days when they reached the Clearwater River

McKenzie dispatched John Reed and four men to continue up the Clearwater for two days

to look for the caches left by Wilson Price Hunt at Caldron Linn

McKenzie was planning to use these supplies to supplement what he had carried with him

John Reed was familiar with the surrounding countryside as he had been there the year before

McKenzie continued up the Snake River with six men for several days

but an absence of signs of beaver discouraged him

he returned down the Snake River to the mouth of the Clearwater River

DONALD McKENZIE AND HIS MEN CONSTRUCT McKENZIE’S POST

Donald McKenzie built McKenzie’s Post on a prairie beside the Clearwater River

(about eight miles north of today’s Lewiston, Idaho) -- beginning of September 1812

local Indians here will demonstrate little interest in trapping and trading

much to the frustration of Donald McKenzie and his Nor’Westers

TWO INDIANS ARRIVE AT McKENZIE’S POST ON THE CLEARWATER RIVER

John Reed was gone less than a week when two Indians arrived at McKenzie’s Post

they announced the caches had been robbed by Shoshones

who had been guided by whites staying with the Indians

as proof the they produced an English saddle and bridle that belonged to Ramsay Crooks

ROBERT STUART AND HIS SIX ASTORIANS STRIKE AWAY FROM THE SNAKE RIVER

Joseph Miller, now traveling with Robert Stuart and his men, visited the area earlier while trapping

he informed his companions he knew a better route that also avoided the Blackfoot Indians

tired of the trackless wastelands they had been crossing, Stuart’s party followed the guidance

given by Miller and left the banks of the Snake River -- September 7, 1812

Joseph Miller soon became bewildered by the rugged hills and unknown streams

and the burnt and barren desert they faced

eventually they reached the river where Miller had previously trapped

Robert Stuart’s Astorians named this “Miller River” (presumably today’s Bear River, Utah)

they followed up the river for two or three days surviving on fish

ROBERT STUART’S PARTY BECOMES CONCERED ABOUT CROW INDIANS IN THE AREA

Astor’ partner’s Robert Stuart Ramsay Crooks, Robert McClellan and Joseph Miller

along with hunter Ben Jones, voyageurs Andre Vallar and Francis Le Clerc

found themselves in very dangerous country

camp was made early to allow time for fishing -- September 12, 1812

when they returned to camp they found a number of Indians prowling about

to the concern of the Astorians they proved to be Crows

Upon seeing the whites the Crow chief, a huge Indian about six-foot-four,

approached them with a confident air -- however, he conducted himself peacefully

he sent some of his men back to his camp to collect buffalo meat to share

the huge chief informed Stuart that he was on his way to trade with the Shoshones

who resided below Fort Henry (Idaho) where they cultivated tobacco that was greatly desired

however, there was something sinister about this man

Little by little throughout the night an increasing number of Crow Indians arrived in camp

until there were twenty-one who became belligerent, disrespectful and troublesome

great uneasiness was felt by the Astorians who were concerned about their goods and horses

everyone kept a watchful eye during the night

ROBERT STUART IS CONFRONTED BY THE GIGANTIC CROW INDIAN CHIEF

Morning dawned without any incident having taken place -- September 13, 1812

Robert Stuart purchased all of the buffalo meat the Crow Indians could spare

As they prepared to depart the Indian chief requested gunpowder and offered horses in exchange

Stuart thought it ill advised to further arm these people and flatly refused

At this the gigantic chief stepped forward and slapped his chest indicating he was an important chief

it was customary for great chiefs to exchange gifts -- he requested Stuart’s horse

when this was refused the chief grabbed Stuart and rocked him back and forth in the saddle

Stuart remained calm and shook his head

next the chief grabbed the horse’s bridle and jerked it startling the animal

nearly knocking Stuart out of the saddle

Robert Stuart drew his pistol and pointed at the chief’s head

ending his swaggering, the chief leaped behind his horse to escape the expected shot

as the other Crows watched from a distance

Stuart told his men to level their rifles on the Indians but not to fire

Indians fled or threw themselves on the ground out of sight

left alone the chief quickly recovered himself and began laughing to indicate this was a joke

Robert Stuart joined in -- knowing only the small size of the Indian party

and the alertness of the Astorians and prevented an open attack

After the Indians had departed it was discovered they had taken a bag

containing almost all of the eating utensils belonging to the party

ROBERT STUART AND HIS MEN CONTINUE THEIR TREK TOWARD ST. LOUIS

Robert Stuart set a course to the east over a chain of hills -- September 13, 1812

they had gone many miles when they saw columns of smoke rising in different directions

from the summits of the highest mountains

these signal fires were proof the Astorians were traveling through hostile country

great numbers of Indians could be expected in a short period of time

Robert Stuart changed direction to travel to the north away from Miller’s (Bear) River

they followed a large tributary into the Salt River Range of the Rocky Mountains (Wyoming)

and made camp for the night

all of the horses were hobbled or tethered and an armed guard was posted until morning

everyone slept with his rifle on his arm

ROBERT STUART AND HIS ASTORIANS WERE AGAIN ON THE MARCH

Keeping in a northerly direction Robert Stuart and six his Astorians

soon began to ascend the Rocky Mountains -- September 14, 1812

no sign of the Crow Indians was seen but that did not improve the confidence of the white men

Camp was made on the edge of a stream after twenty-one miles had been covered

in the evening an alarm regarding the arrival of Indians was given and put everyone on alert

but they proved to be three Shoshones who were informed about the band of Crow Indians

prowling in the vicinity -- the Shoshones left showing signs of great concern

ROBERT STUART AND HIS MEN CONTINUE NORTH

Weary days and watchful nights had brought the seven Astorians to a rapid north-running stream

they concluded this was one of the branches of the Snake River -- September 15, 1812

(probably today’s Salt River in Wyoming)

It was decided to follow this river as it would take them away from Crow Indian country

they would look for the route Wilson Price Hunt had taken on his way west

and follow it across the Rocky Mountains

that way they would at least be sure of their route

ROBERT STUART AND HIS COMPANIONS AGAIN REACH THE SNAKE RIVER

Following (Wyoming’s Salt River) for three days brought Astorians to a large raging, roaring river

they camped on the banks of the Snake River -- September 18, 1812

Six days had passed since their encounter with the Crow Indians

they had traveled 150 miles to the north and west and began to relax their vigilance

where there was good pasture they lingered sometimes for half a day

as the horses needed time to rest and recover from their forced march over rugged hills,

among rocks and fallen timer and across swampy valleys

CROW INDAINS RETURN TO SEEK REVENGE

Robert Stuart and his six Astorians arose at dawn -- September 19, 1812

some had begun to prepare breakfast while others arranged the packs for the day’s march

Stuart was on the bank of the Snake River when he heard a blood-curdling yell

as a Crow Indian galloped past the camp bearing a red flag and stopped on a knoll

where he sat on his horse and waved the banner

another blood-curdling yell was heard beyond the horses on the opposite side of the camp

Stuart described the scene: **“We were all up soon after the dawn and I had just reached the river bank, when I heard the Indian yell raised in the vicinity of our Camp, and the cry ‘To Arms.’ ‘There’s Indians’ echoed by all of our Party -- We had just time to snatch our arms when two Indians at full gallop passed 300 yards to one side of our station driving off every horse we had….”[[116]](#footnote-116)**

The horses became frightened and dashed across the camp toward the red flag that attracted them

as the Indian holding the banner galloped his horse away from camp

he was followed by the horse herd that was now even more frightened

by the shouts and howls of Indians behind them

Stuart and the Astorians grabbed their rifles and attempted to cut of the Indians following the herd

their attention was drawn to shouts and yells coming from the opposite direction

yet another party of Crow Indians were about to carry off their baggage

Astorians raced to secure their belongings but the Indians rode off yelling in triumph

the last to leaved was the gigantic Crow leader who stood in the saddle

and made an insulting gesture

Ben Jones raised his rifle and took aim but Robert Stuart assured him

it would mean death for all of them

Now without horses or most of the belongings the Astorians gazed at the raiders in shame and despair

however, they did have to admire the daring of the twenty Indians who made the raid

ROBERT STUART AND HIS COMPANONS FACE A GRIM FUTURE

Seven disheartened Astorians surveyed the prospect of crossing rugged mountains

and vast trackless plains that lay before them on foot while carrying on their backs

what remained of their food, clothing, weapons and other necessities -- September 19, 1812

without options, they set about immediately creating packs of indispensable items

what remained was placed in caches -- all day was consumed with these preparations

after a small meal of their remaining provisions they slept to escape their grave concerns

ROBERT STUART AND HIS SIX COMPANIONS TRAVEL ON FOOT

At first light they were up and completed their preparations while Ben Jones visited a beaver trap

he had set on the river bank the night before

this effort was rewarded with a medium-sized beaver which served as breakfast

as Ben Jones was returning to camp he glanced the sight of two heads watching him from a cliff

he believed they probably were wolves but when they remained in place it occurred to him

they might be Indian scouts

had they not been out of range of his rifle he would have confirmed his suspicions

When he reached the camp he pointed out his observers and everyone agreed they were Indians

probably watching to see where the caches would be hidden

it was decided to deprive the Crows of their next reward and take everything he could with them

what remained was burned or thrown into the river

About 10:00 a.m. they set out along the bank of the Snake River -- September 20, 1812

Robert Stuart held out hope they might find Shoshone Indians to buy horses to carry the baggage

fatigue from carrying their heavy packs was accompanied by hunger

trout caught in the Snake River were inadequate to provide needed nourishment

fortunately they had taken a beaver trap with them which occasionally provided meat

that was immediately cut up and distributed

Eighteen miles a day were made before the seven Astorians stopped

to build two rafts to cross to the north side of the Snake River -- September 22, 1812

ROBERT STUART AND HIS ASTORIANS CROSS THE SNAKE RIVER

After completing the construction of the rafts and sleeping through the night

four Astorians on one raft and three on the other crossed the Snake River -- September 23, 1812

Discovering the rafts were sturdy enough to withstand the rushing water

they decided to float down the river with the current

mountains of black rock towered above them where the river had cut its channel

those on the east side were the Rockies

while the hills on their west side were bleak and barren

fortunately there were no rapids or waterfalls on this portion of the Snake River

vast quantities of beaver provided nourishment for the men

Ben Jones also killed a deer and a wolverine -- both were placed on a raft

For two days they kept to the river drawing their rafts on shore to camp at night -- September 23-24

in their travels they passed an island that was home to a herd of elk

Ben Jones killed one of the animals and the Astorians continued on as a storm was gathering

Next day they remained in camp -- September 26

sheltering themselves as best they could from rain and snow

this sign of early winter did not escape Robert Stuart, Ramsay Crooks, Robert McClellan,

Joseph Miller, Ben Jones, Andre Vallar and Francis Le Clerc

McKENZIE’S POST ON THE CLEARWATER RIVER IS COMPLETED

Three weeks after beginning work on the trading post the task was finished -- later September

McKenzie’s Post was composed of a store, a house for the men

and two additional houses for McKenzie and second-in-command clerk Alfred Seton

This was the season of migration and various tribes were passing and re-passing in great numbers

location of McKenzie’s Post appeared to be a great thoroughfare

for tribes traveling across the Rocky Mountains to make war on the Plains Indians

and to hunt buffalo and gather roots

North West Company was bothered by no rival trading opposition whatsoever

JOHN REED GATHERS UP LOST ASTORIANS

Clerk John Reed and his party of four men had no difficulty in reaching the Snake River

there he camped with Shoshone Indians near Fort Henry (Idaho)

In the Shoshone encampment John Reed met six white men who had accompanied Wilson Price Hunt

on the Overland Expedition across the continent and had wintered east of the Blue Mountains

Alexander Carson, Louis St. Michael, Pierre Delaunay and Pierre Detaye

had been left by Hunt to trap beaver in the mountains (the proceeding October)

this group had been attacked by Crow Indians

Pierre Detaye had been killed and the others robbed

Andre La Chapelle, Jean-Baptiste Turcotte and Francois Landry had led the Shoshone Indians

to the caches before joining the natives in a buffalo hunt

they were subsequently robbed and left destitute by Blackfoot Indians

they had returned to this Shoshone Indian camp with nothing but despair

All eleven of the Astorians now led by John Reed

headed back to McKenzie’s Post on the Clearwater River with the sad news

that the Caldron Linn cache had been thoroughly plundered

ROBERT STUART AND HIS SIX ASTORIANS CONTINUE DOWN THE SNAKE RIVER

Although the storm had brought cold weather

their rafts provided easy transportation for two days-- September 25-26, 1812

they had floated about ninety-one miles when they discovered the mountains to the east

were reduced in size so they landed and prepared to again set out on foot

Reed and his men spent one day making moccasins from the elk hide

and jerky from the meat -- September 27

each man was given twenty pounds of jerky to carry

ROBERT STUART AND HIS PARTY ARE AGAIN ON FOOT

Stuart and his six Astorians traveled northeast keeping to the southern edge of the same mountains

where Fort Henry (Idaho) was located -- September 28, 1812

Their walk was slow and difficult as they traveled over rough hills

and passed through thick growths of willows, cottonwoods and hawthorns

Hunting was not possible as any shot might be heard by Blackfoot Indians

they came on a large horse trail and followed it until they made camp beside a small stream

where the Indians had camped about three weeks before

ROBERT STUART AND HIS MEN RECOGNIZE THERE ARE INDIANS IN THE AREA

In the morning the seven Astorians set out from camp -- September 29, 1812

they followed the well-marked Indian trail but after some time they discovered the Indians

had formed hunting parties and separated in every direction

in addition to losing the trail this meant the Indians had remained in the region

Caution was necessary and every Astorian kept a vigilant eye looking for scouts or smoke

nothing was seen as the landscape was harsh and lifeless

Camp was made that night in a deep gully near several hot springs

(about thirty miles from Tetonia, Idaho)

for two days Ramsay Crooks had been ill and he developed a high fever that night

ROBERT STUART AND HIS MEN BREAK CAMP JUST AFTER DAYBREAK

Stuart’s six Astorians resumed their trek -- September 30, 1812

they stopped to hold a meeting to discuss their course of travel

they considered continuing to skirt the mountains and perhaps encounter Blackfoot Indians

it seemed more advisable to cross directly over the mountain

hot-headed and indolent Robert McClellan objected to this plan saying he would rather

face hostile Indians than attempt the difficult and painful mountain crossing

McClellan lost the discussion

As the younger Astorians began their ascent of the mountain following the Teton River upstream

McClellan who was twice their age soon lost his breath and fell behind the others

when it was McClellan’s turn to carry the heavy beaver trap he suddenly stopped

he would go no further and threw the trap halfway down the hill

he was offered a package of meat to carry but he also threw this on the ground

STUART AND FIVE OF HIS ASTORIANS STRUGGLE OVER THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Robert Stuart, Robert McClellan, Joseph Miller, Ramsay Crooks, Ben Jones, Andre Vallar

and Francis Le Clerc continued their difficult climb through deep snow

over the Rocky Mountains -- October 1, 1812

although all of the other Astorians objected,

Robert McClellan set out to walk around the mountain rather that over it

being strong willed and something of a braggart

he often took pride in doing foolish things

Robert Stuart and his men crossed the summit early in the afternoon

and saw the familiar “Pilot Knobs” (Three Tetons)

below them was a river about fifty yards wide sometime gleaming in the sun

and other times running through the shadows of willows on the river banks

they descended into Jackson Hole (Wyoming)

those who had traveled west with Wilson Price Hunt pointed out the countryside to Robert Stuart

they indicated the direction to Fort Henry (Idaho) where they had abandoned their horses

On their way down the mountain the six Astorians saw Robert McClellan in the distance

he had continue to attempt to walk around the mountains

crossing through (today’s 8,431 foot high Teton Pass)

McClellan made no indication of seeing them and continued in his brooding solitary travel

when the Astorians reached the plain they continued for about six miles

until they reached a knee-deep river fringed with willow trees -- here they made camp

During the night Ramsay Crooks’ fever rose so high that it was impossible for him to travel

several of the men insisted they continue on and leave Crooks behind

they believed they were in imminent danger from Blackfoot Indians,

the season was late and the weather had turned very cold,

the mountains would soon be impassable with snow

their provisions were exhausted and there was no game to be seen

they could not fire their rifles anyway because of the fear of Blackfoot Indians

Robert Stuart refused to leave Crooks behind explaining the fever would break in a few days

and he would be able to travel

ROBERT STUART AND HIS ASTORIAN REMAINED WITH RAMSAY CROOKS

Astorians remained in the camp under the willow trees beside the shallow river -- October 2, 1812

as Ramsay Crooks was far too ill to travel

because they could not fire a rifle for fear of attracting Blackfoot Indians

they were forced to rely on the beaver trap

which had been retrieved after Robert McClellan’s outburst

Since they were to remain in camp for several days and the beaver trap could not be relied on

Ben Jones received permission to risk hunting in an area away from their camp

he set off at daybreak to find a an area to hunt

while tramping through a thicket with the trap on his shoulder and his rifle in his hand

he heard a crashing noise and turned to see a growling grizzly bear advancing

leveling his rifle he fired -- the bear was wounded but not killed

luckily the great animal retreated and escaped

Ben Jones came upon a herd of elk and killed five about six miles from camp

Ramsay Crooks was carried to where the elk lay as he could not walk

Robert Stuart built a small oval hut of willows and covered it with a hide

he made the sick Ramsay Crooks crawl naked inside and steamed him red

by throwing water onto hot stones

Astorians remained there for three days drying meat to carry with them as Crooks recuperated

WILSON PRICE HUNT COMPLETES NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE RUSSIAN LEADER

Wilson Price Hunt, Astor’s Agent, attempted to negotiate with Russian Alexander Baranov

Russian-American Company’s manager at New Archangel (Sitka), Alaska

Negotiations did not go well for the Astorian as Count Baranov subjected him to endless rounds

of bargaining punctuated by drunken brawls

Hunt, at heavy cost to his stomach, noted: **“He is continually giving entertainments by way of parade, and if you do not drink raw rum, and boiling punch as strong as sulfur, he will insult you as soon as he gets drunk, which is very shortly after sitting down to table.”[[117]](#footnote-117)**

When an agreement was finally reached after forty-five days of drunken negotiations

Astorians delivered $56,000 worth of goods to be paid for with 80,000 seal skins

to be sold in Canton, China

it was then revealed by the Russian governor that the seal skins were warehoused

on the island of St. Paul in the Bering Sea

Wilson Price Hunt was required to travel to St. Paul Island with Captain Cornelius Sowle

aboard John Jacob Astor’s supply ship *Beaver* -- October 4, 1812

ROBERT STUART AND IS ASTORIANS CONTINUE ACROSS THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Ramsay Crooks recovered sufficiently to continue the journey to the south -- October 5, 1812

his pack had been divided and they progressed very slowly

only eight miles through swamps made by beaver were traveled that day

they killed a grizzly bear which was added to their supply of elk jerky

Next day Ramsay Crooks was strong enough to carry his own rifle and pistols

eighteen miles were made that day -- October 6

ONCE AGAIN ROBERT STUART’S ASTORIANS FACE DIFFICULT CONDITIONS

Their journey through the Rocky Mountains became increasingly difficult

and their suffering increased dramatically as they were forced to walk in the channel of a river

they continued across the rugged summit of the Three Tetons

which were covered in snow nine inches deep

For several day they traveled eastward as much as possible

sometimes they walked along steep cliffs several hundred feet above the raging torrent

sometimes they crossed over rocky heights and deep ravines and across swift icy cold rivers

they reached the Hoback River following the route previously taken by Wilson Price Hunt

numb with despair they plodded along the grueling canyon of the river

from the river’s upper reaches they crossed to the sagebrush plains

which stretched farther than they could see

hunger added to their suffering as the small amount of meat they had been able to carry ran out

there was little time to hunt and little game to be seen

they ate nothing for three days but a small duck and a few small trout

antelopes were seen but they could not get within range of the shy animals

only one was killed and provided meager rations for several days (today’s Green River)

JOHN REED RETURNS FROM HIS EXPEDITION TO THE CACHES AT CALDRON LINN

Clerk John Reed and his men reached Donald McKenzie’s Post on the Clearwater River

from their journey to the caches -- October 1812

they were accompanied by three surviving members of the overland expedition

Alexander Carson, Louis St. Michael and Andre La Chapelle

Reed reported to Donald McKenzie that most of the caches had been discovered and destroyed

SIGNS OF ROBERT McCLELLAN ARE DISCOVERED BY ROBERT STUART AND HIS MEN

Robert Stuart, Joseph Miller, Ramsay Crooks, Ben Jones, Andre Vallar and Francis Le Clerc

camped on a small stream near the foot of “Spanish River Mountain” -- October 11, 1812

(they were approaching today’s Wind River Mountains section of the Rockies)

here they saw traces of Robert McClellan left behind on his solitary journey east

he had camped at this spot the night before and had dined on a miserable wolf

but he was better off than the five Astorians as they had nothing to eat

ROBERT STUART AND HIS ASTORIANS AROSE HUNGARY AND ALERT

Robert Stuart and his traveling companions left Wilson Price Hunt’s trail

they set out for the pass south of the Wind River Mountains -- dawn October 12, 1812

these proved to be very steep and difficult

traces of ancient volcanic eruptions could been seen in several directions

their desperate detour to Fort Henry (Idaho) and the non-existent caches

they realized all too painfully had taken them 400 miles out of their way

Robert Stuart, Joseph Miller Ramsay Crooks, Ben Jones, Andre Vallar and Francis Le Clerc

reached the headwaters of the Green River (Wyoming) about noon

and continued to follow downstream through the afternoon

they had expected to find buffalo on the plain below -- this hope had driven them onward

to their great disappointment the river bank was deserted and the landscape barren

Starving, the Astorians continued on for several miles looking for signs of beaver

finding some they made camp and Ben Jones set out to trap

Suddenly the smoke from a large campfire was seen some distance to the southwest

great joy was expressed as food might be found

even fear of the Blackfoot paled in the face of starvation

Francis Le Clerc was sent by Robert Stuart to reconnoiter

remaining Astorians stayed up until midnight waiting for Le Clerc and hoping for food

when he did not appear they settled into a hungry sleep hoping the trap had better results

ROBERT STUART AND HIS ASTORIANS DISCOVER ROBERT McCLELLAN

At daybreak the famished campers walked to their beaver trap -- October 13, 1812

they found only a forepaw in the trap chewed off by its owner in the effort to escape

They took up their journey with dejected spirits and had not gone far when they saw Francis Le Clerc

they hurried to meet him hoping for good news -- he had none to give

Le Clerc said the fire belonged to Robert McClellan and had spread while he fished -- unsuccessfully

during the twelve days McClellan found little to eat

as alone he followed the route taken by Wilson Price Hunt on his westward journey

McClellan was ill, worn down and heartsick-- now even his stubbornness was exhausted

he announced to Le Clerc that he would waited in his camp for the others

hoping they would bring food

When Robert Stuart and his men reached McClellan’s camp they found him so feeble

he could barely raise his head -- but the arrival of his old comrades revived him somewhat

they had no food to give him but encouraged him to get up continue with them

he shook his head -- he would die were he lay as there was no hope in continuing

After a great deal of persuasion McClellan rose to his feet and moved forward

in this way they traveled seventeen miles over level plains of sand

until they saw a few antelopes in the distance and made camp beside a small stream

everyone who was capable of exertion set out to hunt for a meal

they returned to camp after dark famished and without success

For the third night they prepared to lie down to sleep without food

Francis Le Clerc, wild with hunger, approached Robert Stuart

they would all die before they could reach St. Louis

it would be better to cast lots for one to die so the others could live

as an added inducement Le Clerc suggested the leader of the party would be exempt

Stuart’s efforts to convince Le Clerc his horrible suggestion was unacceptable were ignored

at last, reaching for his rifle Stuart said if Le Clerc persisted he would be shot on the spot

Le Clerc dropped to his knees and begged forgiveness

promising never again to make such a suggestion

Robert Stuart, exhausted by the scene, spent a sleepless night considering their desperate prospects

STARVING ASTORIANS ARE AGAIN UNDER WAY

Robert Stuart and his six companions set out before daylight -- October 14, 1812

they had nothing to detain them and to linger was to starve

faint and weak they proceeded slowly past the skulls and bones of buffalo

that only mocked their misery

Traveling nine miles along the plain they climbed a range of hills for two more miles

at the crest of the hill they saw an old bull buffalo standing alone

taking great care as their lives depended on success they managed to kill the animal

he was instantly cut up -- they were so hungry they ate the flesh raw

they carried the remaining meat to a nearby brook, made camp, lit a fire and began to cook

Robert Stuart was fearful they would over indulge and become sick

he had a soup made of some of the meat to be eaten before supper

this apparently worked -- although they sat up late into the night eating no one became ill

ROBERT STUART’S ASTORIANS ARE ABLE TO PROCEED

Next morning the feasting resumed -- October 15, 1812

somewhat refreshed Robert Stuart, Robert McClellan, Joseph Miller, Ben Jones, Andre Vallar

and Francis Le Clerc set out once again toward a mountain towering to the east about midday

they expected to see the headwaters of the Missouri River on the other side

buffalo skeletons continued to be scatted about the plain in every direction

they crossed an Indian trail about fifteen days old that reached north

as they relentlessly walked toward the east in the direction of St. Louis

SEVEN ASTORIANS COME ACROSS AN OLD INDIAN CAMP

Robert Stuart and his men crossed a large river its banks covered with pine trees -- October 16, 1812

they found traces of a large Crow Indian camp and many buffalo bones strewn about

(in the vicinity of today’s Pinedale, Wyoming)

this camp had apparently been abandoned about a month before

in the center was a lodge approximately 150 feet in circumference

it was supported by twenty tree trunks twenty-four feet long and twelve inches in diameter

pine and willow branches were piled against the framework to provide shade

at the west end of the lodge immediately opposite the door lay three bodies

buried with their feet toward the east

at the head of each grave was a red cedar branch planted in the ground

at the foot was a large buffalo skull painted black

ornaments and a large number children’s moccasins were placed about the lodge

these were probably the bodies of noted warriors and hunters

ROBERT STUART AND HIS SIX MEN CONTINE BESIDE THE WIND RIVER MOUNTAINS

Seven Astorians crossed two large tributaries

whose sources were in the Wind River Mountain section of the Rocky Mountains

surrounding peaks were spectacularly high, rugged and coved in many places with snow

They saw a few buffalo bulls and some antelope but could not kill any -- October 17, 1812

their supply of provisions began to run out

As they trudged southeast parallel to the spectacular peaks of the Wind River Mountains

game disappeared

ROBERT STUART AND HIS ASTORAINS CROSS THE WIND RIVER MOUNTAINS

Seven Astorians crossed the plain south of the Wind River Mountains -- October 18, 1812

they waded across branches of the “Spanish River” (today’s Green River)

on one occasion they climbed a river bank and met about 130 Shoshone Indians

they were friendly and led the Astorians to their camp three miles away

Shoshone Indian camp was made up of about forty tepees made primarily of pine branches

these Indians were very poor and had been harassed by marauding Crow Indians

who took most of their horses, several women and most of their property

in spite of their poverty these natives were very friendly and welcomed the hungry strangers

Astorians purchased a supply of buffalo meat and leather for moccasins for a few trinkets

however, their most prized purchase was a sorry old horse -- the only one that remained

he had cost a pistol, an axe, a knife and a few other small articles

shifting their loads to the animal made walking easier

Robert Stuart learned a large encampment of Crow Indians was to the east

Stuart explained to them the power of the white man would soon be felt

Shoshones could ally themselves with the whites and take revenge on the Crows and Blackfoot

Shoshones expressed great joy for the opportunity

Indians and whites, both forlorn, smoked to their eternal friendship and vengeance on their enemies

ROBERT STUART AND HIS MEN FIND AN INDIAN TRAIL TO FOLLOW

By sunrise the seven Astorians had loaded their old horse with buffalo meat for five days

they took leave of their new friends, the poor but hospitable Shoshones -- October 19, 1812

they began once again through the increasingly cold weather toward the snowy mountains

here the ground was level surrounded by lofty mountains both east and west

They traveled about three miles to the south where they reached a large Crow Indian trail

that had been used four days before by a very large band of Indians

since it was easy to follow and ran to the southeast the Astorians decided to follow it

they cautiously followed the track of the Indians across mountain streams and along long ridges

and through narrow valleys as a cold wind blew from the northeast with flurries of snow

Robert Stuart and his men made camp early on the sheltered bank of a brook

Andre Vallar and Francis Le Clerc killed a young buffalo bull in the evening

as the wind blew snow about them the seven Astorians sat beside their campfire

and ate a hearty meal in warmth

ROBERT STUART AND HIS PARTY CONTINUE TO CROSS THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Snow had fallen during the night

it was late morning before they again took up their trek -- October 20, 1812

they did not travel far before the trail they followed changed direction to the north-northeast

they abandoned the trail with some feeling of relief at leaving potentially hostile Indians behind

they traveled eighteen miles through beautiful rolling country

with the main chain of the Rocky Mountains on their left and high ridges on their right

Robert Stuart discovered a series of plains and plateaus leading across the Continental Divide

they passed over a low ridge to their right and came to a level plain abound ten miles across

encrusted with salt twelve to eighteen inches deep

they had moved from Blackfoot and Crow country to that of the Sioux Indians

Camp was made on the open prairie with nothing to use to make a fire

they wrapped themselves in their blankets to escape the biting northeast wind

that evening Robert McClellan, who had regained his strength, killed a buffalo

but is was some distance from camp so they waited until morning to collect the meat

SEVEN ASTORIANS CONTINUE THEIR WALK ACROSS THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

When they again took up their trek the weather was cold and snow fell -- October 21, 1812

they trudged toward the summit of a mountain that lay ahead

they again found a large Indian trail reaching a little to the right of the mountain peak

it was presumed this was another band of Crow Indians on a hunting expedition

With (winter) on the land the party was forced to stop after fifteen miles

where they found enough wood for a fire but no water was available in the vicinity

ROBERT STUART AND HIS MEN CROSS THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Once again Robert Stuart and his party were up at daybreak -- October 22, 1812

they faced the challenge of scrambling eight miles up the mountains

which provided an easy gateway through the Rocky Mountains

they suffered from thirst and cold as they moved into a broad gray defile

(it is generally believed the party crossed South Pass in Wyoming’s Wind River Range

which is, in fact, the easiest route across the Continental Divide)

this experience led Robert Stuart to claim that **“a journey across the continent of North America might be performed with a wagon”[[118]](#footnote-118)**

(indeed, South Pass was later used by wagons crossing the continent

its ascent was so gentle later travelers would have trouble locating the exact summit)

After a short rest at the summit to take in the beautiful but wild view

they began the rugged descent down the east side along deep ravines and defiles

and overhangs of crags and cliffs where bighorn sheep leaped fearlessly from rock to rock

two of these were shot to provide nourishment for the men

They passed through a low gap and reached the East side of the Rocky Mountains

(their route was later used as the route to Oregon, California and Utah between [1841] and [1869]

more than 250,000 emigrants followed the Oregon Trail, Mormon Trail and California Trail

this route also was used by military expeditions, mountain men, hunters, trappers, Indians,

freighters, stage coaches, Pony Express riders, telegraph lines and Wyoming highway 28)

Robert Stuart and his six Astorians found a spring of water oozing out of the ground

which they fancied looked and tasted like the Missouri River

here they camped for the night and enjoyed mountain mutton

ROBERT STUART AND HIS ASTORIANS LEAVE THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Morning broke bright and very cold -- October 23, 1812

early in the day they came to a stream running east between low hills of blue earth

Robert Stuart supposed this was the headwaters of the Missouri River

and decided to follow its banks

After a march of twenty-six miles they arrived at the summit of a hill and he changed his mind

he saw a vast plain bounded only by the horizon with the stream wandering though it

since it ran south-south-east it could not be the Missouri River

Stuart changed his course to the east toward a range of mountains sixty miles away

now the weather was so severe and traveling so difficult Stuart decided to stop for the winter

that night they had to camp in the open near a small pool of water with no wood for a fire

ROBERT STUART AND HIS SIX ASTORIANS CAN FIND NO CAMPSITE FOR THE WINTER

An inhospitable cold northeast wind forced the Astorians to break camp early -- October 24, 1812

for two days they traveled in an easterly direction against the bitter wind and occasional snow

lack of water forced them to drink melted snow

lack of pasture reduced their poor pack horse to skin and bones

while they saw a few buffalo the wind blew in a direction that gave the animal warning

and they ran away

ROBERT STUART AND HIS MEN REACH THE SWEETWATER RIVER

Astorians turned east-northeast toward a wooded ravine through a mountain -- October 26, 1812

to their great joy they discovered an abundant stream running under willowed banks

(this was the Sweetwater River, Wyoming)

they had arrived at the headwaters of the North Platte River system

that eventually empties into the Missouri River

Sweetwater River was followed for twenty miles until it crossed a low prairie

which provided excellent pasture for numerous herds of buffalo

Late in the afternoon they came to where the stream became much larger

and carved its way through a narrow ravine of red stone two hundred feet high

this passage looked like a frightful spectacle in the gathering darkness

Here the seven Astorians halted for the night and Ben Jones luckily trapped a beaver

they killed three buffalo cows which provided them with three savory humps

Robert Stuart decided to remain in camp the next day feasting and resting -- October 27

their exhausted horse also earned a rest from his labors

ROBERT STUART AND HIS ASTORIANS CONTINUE ALONG THE SWEETWATER RIVER

Part of the day the Sweetwater River’s wild wanderings took the Astorians

through a variety of scenes -- October 27, 1812

sometimes they were high on the plain with herds of buffalo around them

other times rocky defiles broken into cliffs and sheer drops

were home to blacktail deer and bighorn sheep that basked on the sunny cliffs

During the afternoon they came upon a spectacular sight as they passed across a mountain

here the Sweetwater River roared through a deep ravine out of sight far below

masses of rock that had fallen into the river stirred the river to a foaming rampage

as they crept along the terrifying heights they saw the river thunder down a succession

of waterfalls throwing up clouds of spray and making a remarkable roar

they stopped to gaze in awe at the furious cataract

which Robert Stuart named “The Fiery Narrows”

(although the name has been changed several times

today it is Pathfinder Canyon in Pathfinder National Wildlife Refuge)

ROBERT STUART AND HIS FIVE ASTORIANS DECIDE TO CAMP FOR THE WINTER

Morning dawned gloomy with showers of rain and sleet -- October 28, 1812

Robert Stuart, Robert McClellan, Joseph Miller, Ben Jones, Andre Vallar and Francis Le Clerc

resumed their journey in spite of the weather

after they had traveled about thirty miles along the Sweetwater River they stopped

they had no idea where they were

discussions were held to determine how they should proceed

it was determined not continue on in this weather which promised to become worst

they were still hundreds of miles away from the Missouri River

their route crossed immense barren and bleak prairies with no wood for fires

ahead were hostile Sioux or Cheyenne Indians or both

they decided to winter as this forlorn region provided protection against attack

When they came to an excellent wintering place the decision was unanimous

there was a bend in the river just below where it exited the mountains and turned northeast

this point of land was covered with cottonwood and willow trees for building and for fires

moderately high mountains stood about two miles away to the east, south and southwest

their cliffs offered innumerable bighorn sheep while the woods provided bear and deer

there were buffalo grazing on the lower ground

(they were camped along Poison Spider Creek

about twenty-eight miles west of today’s Casper, Wyoming)

LIFE AT ASTORIA BECAME MORE DIFFICULT WITH THE CHANGE IN SEASON

Autumn began the season of scarcity in the Pacific Northwest and lasted until (February)

to better provision Astoria a number of men were dispatched to the Willamette Valley

this river entered the Columbia River about sixty miles upriver from Astoria

here the country bordering on the river is finely diversified with prairies and hills

forests of oak, ash, maple and cedar provide habitat for elk and deer

streams entering the Willamette River were well-stocked with beaver

Failure of the supply ship *Beaver* to return with Wilson Price Hunt

caused great anxiety at Astoria during October

she may have suffered the same fate as the *Tonquin* or been wrecked along the coast

Duncan McDougall, acting commander of Astoria in Hunt’s absence, became despondent

his added responsibilities and concerns destroyed his confidence

and dampened his personality

Pacific Fur Company became a burden and every circumstance indicated disaster was near

DONALD McKENZIE HEARS OF OTHER WHITE MEN IN THE AREA

Indians had informed McKenzie at McKenzie’s Post and his second-in-command, clerk Alfred Seton

that white men were building houses at a location some two days away

McKenzie sent Seton with four men to investigate who this could be -- end of October 1812

food for two days was packed and the Astorians rode off to find who was rivaling them

after a day of hard riding their guide was asked when they would reach their destination

he told Seton the white men were three day’s hard ride away

this was discouraging news as they had food for one more meal

it was not until three hungry days later they reached their destination and discovered the whites

were John Clarke and his men at Fort Spokane

who received their fellow Astorians as best they could

Clarke reported to Seton that North West Company was not happy about having competition

less than one hundred yards from their Spokane House post

Alfred Seton returned to Donald McKenzie’s Post to report good trapping in the area of Fort Spokane

in spite of the very close competition with the North West Company

ASTOR’S SUPPLY SHIP *BEAVER* ARRIVES AT ST. PAUL ISLAND (ALASKA)

*Beaver* carried Wilson Price Hunt from New Archangel (Sitka) to St. Paul Island,

one of five islands located in the Bering Sea, where she arrived -- October 31, 1812

Hunt found about one hundred native hunters living in cabins that looked like upside down canoes

these were formed from a whale jaw bone placed as rafters

pieces of driftwood covered with long grass, large sea animal skins and dirt cover the bone

these structures proved to be warm and comfortable

Hunt moved into of the cabins to oversee the loading of pelts on board the *Beaver*

this was a slow process as it was necessary to inspect every pack

before being taken in large boats out to the ship that remained some distance from shore

One night while Hunt and some of the crew were busy inventorying 80,000 seal skins

Captain Cornelius Sowle and the *Beaver* were caught in a Bering Sea storm

when daylight broke the supply ship *Beaver* could not been seen

all day a vigil was kept but in vain

day after day wintry storms pounded the village and the sea

ROBERT STUART AND FIVE OF HIS MEN GO HUNTING

Before they made camp for the winter the Astorians began gathering provisions -- November 2, 1812

Robert Stuart, Robert McClellan Ben Jones, Andre Vallar and Francis Le Clerc went hunting

leaving Robert McClellan to watch the camp

their hunting was unusually successful -- in two days they killed thirty-two buffalo

this meat was collected about a mile from the camp near a small brook

fortunately, a severe frost froze the river so the meat was easily carried to camp

next day a herd of buffalo came by and more fifteen were killed

they now had enough meat for the winter and freezing weather to preserve it

only the appearance of a grizzly bear caused alarm in this idyllic setting

All of the men set to work constructing a lodge eight feet wide and eighteen feet long

walls were six feet high and the whole structure was covered with buffalo hides

a fireplace in the center emitted smoke through a hole in the roof

Hunters were next sent out to acquire deer skins for clothing and moccasins

twenty-eight bighorn sheep and black-tail deer were killed in two days

now the party had an abundance of food and supplies

Evenings were spent in the peace and quiet of winter dining on roasted, boiled and broiled meat

feasting on venison, mountain mutton, buffalo hump and bone marrow

and telling stories of past adventures waiting for (spring)

when they would float down the (Sweetwater to the North Platte to the Missouri river

to reach St. Louis)

One morning at daybreak they were startled by a savage yell and they grabbed their rifles

two or three other voices repeated the yell

cautiously peering out of their lodge they saw several warriors all armed and in war paint

Joseph Miller informed his friends these were the same Arapaho warriors who had robbed him

preparations were made to fight it out

Robert Stuart, as the leader of the party, was selected to meet with the Indians

he stepped out of the lodge holding his rifle in one hand

he extended his other hand to the man who appeared to be the chief

both of the men shook hands in a token of friendship

The Arapaho Chief explained they were tracking a party of Crow Indians

who had attacked their village while the warriors were gone and had taken several of their women

and most of their horses

they were seeking vengeance but had had little to eat for several days

they had heard gunshots and seen the place where the deer had been killed

following the tracks they came to the lodge

Robert Stuart invited the chief and a lieutenant inside the lodge but made signs for the others to wait

twenty-three warriors gathered at the door as the two Indians entered

both the chief and his lieutenant looked longingly at the rafters where the meat hung

Stuart invited them to help themselves which they eagerly did

meat was passed outside to the others and a feast was begun that lasted into the night

after an incredibly huge meal the chief and lieutenant were invited back into the lodge

where they could be held hostage if the need arose

night was spent comfortably although occasionally and Indians sleeping outdoor would awaken

and indulge in another round of food

as the Astorians took turns standing watch through the night

In the morning Robert Stuart again invited the Indians to take what they needed with them

on their expedition to find the Crow Indians

the chief request gunpowder as they had none telling Stuart the whites would be rewarded

when the Arapaho warriors returned in two weeks with many horses and scalps

Stuart told them to bring the horses and then they would get gunpowder

When the Arapaho war party had traveled beyond hearing distance the Astorians held a council

their security had been breached and they faced three potential enemies:

Arapahos, Sioux and Cheyennes

DONALD McKENZIE’S POST IS A DISAPPOINTMENT

Astorian Donald McKenzie had endured an unsuccessful effort at McKenzie’s Post

where the men suffered several desertions and death due to disease

he was heartily disgusted and disappointed with his trading post

he had difficulty with the Nez Perce Indians

who, being interested in horse trading and buffalo hunting,

did not turn their attention to trapping and had limited furs to offer

majority of his trade goods were spent acquiring horses to eat

rather than the few furs that might be available

also, the natives stole his goods and cut off his food supplies

McKenzie spent most of his time grumbling about the refusal of the Nez Perce to trap

returns were slim and he resolved to abandon the post

When Donald McKenzie heard from Alfred Seton that trapping and trading prospects were better

at Fort Spokane among the Spokane Indians he traveled to pay a visit to fellow his Astorians

to evaluate the prospects at John Clarke’s and Ross Cox’s post

NORTH WEST COMPANY OUTFITS A SUPPLY SHIP FOR THE COLUMBIA RIVER

North West Company’s merchant ship *Isaac Todd* under Captain Fraser Smith

sailed from London to Canada -- fall 1812

on board were North West Company partner Donald McTavish

(not to be confused with John George McTavish currently en route to Astoria)

and partner John McDonald of Garth along with six voyageurs, four clerks

and Kanaka (Hawaiian) John Coxe returning to Astoria from London

Because of the ongoing war Isaac Todd’s decks were refitted to accommodate twenty cannon

in case she met with American ships en route

North West Company partners asked the British government for protection

arrangements were made to sail the Atlantic Ocean with a fleet of merchant vessels

guarded by a convoy of Royal Navy warships

in addition, the British Admiralty agreed to provide a 36-gun frigate, H.M.S. Phoebe

to escort the Isaac Todd all the way through the Pacific Ocean to the Columbia River

In an effort to keep secret the final destination of the *Isaac Todd* and *Phoebe* the British Admiralty

issued sealed orders marked Most Secret to the Phoebe ’s Captain James Hillyar

to be opened in the South Atlantic after he cleared the port of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

LIVING CONDITIONS ALONG THE RED RIVER BECOME INCREASINGLY HARSH

Temporary tents and cabins were constructed -- fall 1812

colonists named their settlement Ossinibonia -- but it was commonly called Red River Colony

It became apparent the second (winter) in Canada threatened to be almost as difficult

as the first winter had been along the Red River

Governor Miles Macdonell found a suitable place to spend the winter south of the Pembina River

here a storehouse and other buildings were put up

and the little encampment was surrounded by palisades

as a finishing touch a flagstaff was raised in the stockade, and the post was named Fort Daer

in honor of one of Lord Selkirk’s titles (located near today’s Pembina, North Dakota)

ASTOR’S SUPPLY SHIP *BEAVER* SAILS TO THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

After the storm passed the badly damaged *Beaver* returned to St. Paul Island -- November 13, 1812

quickly the remainder of the cargo was loaded and the *Beaver* put out to sea

Hunt wanted to return to Astoria, but Captain Cornelius Sowle refused

Captain Sowle determined the *Beaver’s* sails and rigging had been so badly damaged

it would not be possible to cross the sandbar of the Columbia River to reach Astoria

Captain Sowle announced they would sail to Canton, China with the cargo of furs

however, if they sailed directly to Canton they would arrive so late in the trading season

that prices would be depressed by the flood of pelts that had arrived earlier

and the purchase of supplies for the return trip would be extremely expensive

Captain Sowle produced a letter from John Jacob Astor

giving him complete control over his ship’s movement

Wilson Price Hunt considered it to be in the best the interest of the Pacific Fur Company

to proceed at once to the Hawaiian Islands where he would wait for the arrival

of John Jacob Astor’s annual supply vessel from New York

and then take passage to Astoria aboard that ship

In a bargain struck between Captain Sowle and Wilson Price Hunt it was decided

to sail the *Beaver* for Hawaii where repairs could be made

Hunt would be left there as the *Beaver* sailed on taking her valuable cargo to Canton

Hunt could take passage on Astor’s next supply ship while *Beaver* sailed for China

NORTH WEST COMPANY’S SUPPLY BRIGADE ARRIVES AT SALEESH HOUSE

Nor’Wester’s supply brigade led by John George McTavish and Alexander Henry the Younger

accompanied by Nor’Wester James McMillan with fifteen men, goods and supplies

paddled upstream to the foot of the Rocky Mountains and crossed Athabasca Pass

they canoed down the Columbia to Kettle Falls

as they brought trade goods for the North West Company posts

(in present-day western Montana, northern Idaho and Eastern Washington)

at Kettle Falls they switched their cargo to ten horses for the last leg of their journey

traveling to Kootanae House on the Kootenay River

and Saleesh House on the Clark Fork River

Finan McDonald and James McMillan remained at Saleesh House

John George McTavish’s brigade also carried the news of war

between the United States and Great Britain

after departing from Saleesh House Nor’Wester John George McTavish

led his fifteen men of the North West Company supply brigade on to Spokane House

where he had previously had been stationed

DONALD McKENZIE LEARNS OF WAR BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND THE U.S.

Donald McKenzie set out from McKenzie’s Post on the Clearwater River for Fort Spokane

he left clerk Alfred Seton in change of the post and the trappers in the area

He reached Fort Spokane -- November 17, 1812

he discovered that during his six months absence Spokane House was nearly completed

in spite of the fact North West Company’s Spokane House was only one hundred yards distant

McKenzie was favorably impressed

As McKenzie was admiring the development of Fort Spokane when the North West Company’s

annual supply brigade under John George McTavish and Alexander Henry the Younger

arrived at the Nor’Westers’ Spokane House

JOHN GEORGE McTAVISH DELIVERS NEWS OF WAR BETWEEN THE U.S. AND BRITAIN

McTavish quickly and happily crossed the short distance to Pacific Fur Company’s Fort Spokane

to share the news that war had been declared on Great Britain by the United States

with his competitors Donald Mackenzie and John Clarke at Fort Spokane

McTavish produced a copy of President James Madison’s proclamation of war

that had been delivered to McTavish at Lake Winnipeg by the North West Company partners

McTavish also informed the Astorians that a North West Company supply ship was due to arrive

at the mouth of the Columbia [in the spring] escorted by a Royal Navy warship

this war ship was also bringing a new North West Company governor

John George McTavish further informed the Astorians at Fort Spokane

this was only a vanguard with other British warships to follow

Astoria was to be eliminated from the Pacific Northwest

McTavish further warned the Astorians that French-Canadians trading under the American flag

would find themselves in difficulty with British authorities

Donald Mackenzie and John Clarke realized that the residents of Astoria must be informed

they decided the most sensible course of action would be for McKenzie

to return to the Clearwater River and close his trading post before traveling downriver

to Astoria with his men

with the urgency of the news of the war on his mind, Donald McKenzie left John Clarke

at Fort Spokane while he rushed back to the Clearwater River post

CONDITIONS AT MACKENZIE’S PORT ON THE CLEARWATER RIVER ARE DIFFICULT

Several parties that had been sent out to trap returned to the post extremely cold and hungry

fearful that all of the Pacific Fur Company trapping parties could be suffering

Alfred Seton, then in charge of McKenzie’s Post, sent for Donald McKenzie

WALLACE HOUSE IS CONSTRUCTED ALONG THE WILLMATTE RIVER (OREGON)

Astorian William Wallace established Wallace House to conduct trade in the Willamette Valley

on edge of Champoeg (opposite Newberg, Oregon) -- November 23, 1812

Wallace House served as the wintering place for part of the expedition

and became the headquarters for several trappers in the Willamette Valley

William Wallace brought out seventeen packs of furs

and thirty-two bales of dried venison to help sustain the residents of Astoria

SUCCESSFUL PACIFIC FUR COMPANY OUTPOSTS HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED

William Wallace had established a trading post along the Willamette Valley at Champoeg (Oregon)

Both John Clarke at Fort Spokane and Alexander Ross at Fort Okanogan

along with their clerks and assistants had succeeded admirably

in establishing branch stations for John Jacob Astor

David Stuart had enjoyed success in the Thompson River (Kamloops) region

he sent some of his company back to the mouth of the Columbia River

but he himself wintered at Okanogan

Donald McKenzie’s Post had been less successful as he was not able to established a permanent post

along the Clearwater River

DONALD McKENZIE CLOSES HIS POST ON THE CLEARWATER RIVER

McKenzie made the three-day ride from Fort Spokane to McKenzie’s Post on the Clearwater River

to prepare to lead his employees back to Astoria -- November 25, 1812

Donald McKenzie gathered his clerks together at his post along the Clearwater River

he informed Alfred Seton, John Reed and John Coxe and his men of the war that was in progress

McKenzie had already decided to return to Astoria with his men

remaining trade goods from his post would be delivered to John Clarke at Fort Spokane

who could make better use of them as they were in good beaver country

McKenzie set out for fort Astoria in the rain

TWO ASTORIANS JOIN A BUFFALO HUNT

Buffalo hunting Shoshone Indians on their incursions into Blackfoot country

were sometimes accompanied by fur traders

this caused frequent skirmishes and brought Americans and French-Canadians

further into natives’ conflict with the Blackfoot Indians

Astorians Ross Cox and Russell Farnham set out from Spokane House to hunt buffalo

in the upper Missouri River region -- November or December 1812

ALFRED SETON CARRIES SURPLUS McKENZIE POST SUPPLIES TO FORT SPOKANE

Seton with three men and thirteen horses loaded with supplies from McKenzie’s Post

he set out with provisions for ten days of travel -- early December 1812

on the first day out it began to snow but they pushed on until they were forced to stop

camp was made on a mountaintop where they made a temporary shelter out of two blankets

in an effort to keep the snow off

DONALD McKENZIE BECOMES CONCERNED ABOUT SETON AND HIS MEN

McKenzie suspected the snow had detained Alfred Seton and his men on their way to Fort Spokane

he backtracked and reached Alfred Steton’s makeshift camp with the supplies but the animals were too weak from lack of pasture to continue to Fort Spokane

Together Donald McKenzie and Alfred Seton set out together back to McKenzie’s Clearwater post

after a walk of thirty miles in two feet of snow they reached the post an hour before sunset

Next morning forty fresh horses were taken to the makeshift camp, the horses were loaded

and the supplies were returned to McKenzie’s Post

Delivering the supplies to Fort Spokane would delay the return of McKenzie and his men to Astoria

it was decided to lightly load some of the horses with McKenzie Post supplies

but it would be necessary to cache the remainder along the Clearwater River

Donald McKenzie set out down the Columbia River with John Reed and Alfred Seton

to deliver new of the war to Fort Astoria

cold weather and a raw wind made travel down the Columbia harsh

every drop of water they encountered was icy

low water in the river made the current very strong and the icy rapids very dangerous

ROBERT STUART AND HIS MEN SADLY SAID GOOD-BYE TO THEIR CAMP

Stuart and his six Astorians decided to leave their (Poison Spider Creek) winter camp

as the appearance of the Arapaho way party presented too much of a danger to remain there

They again took up their eastward trek following (today’s North Platte River) -- December 13, 1812

toward its confluence with the Missouri River

if they could not get that far at least they could reach a part of the river

where canoes could be built

Travel was difficult as the snow was covered by a thin layer of frost not able to hold their weight

their feet became sore breaking through the crust and their legs exhausted by the lack of footholds

their horse suffered the same hazards walking

and had only the tips of willow twigs and cottonwood tree bark to eat

for the first three days the memory of their warm and comfortable camp increased their fatigue

Stuart’s small party of Astorians grew stronger as they pressed on making 330 miles in fourteen days

during this time the weather varied -- sometimes the snow was deep

for a day or two it felt like a mild and tranquil (autumn) had set in

then the river froze so solid they could walk on the surface

ROBERT STUART SEES THE COUNTRY AROUND HIM CHANGE

As Robert Stuart, Ramsay Crooks, Robert McClellan, Joseph Miller, Ben Jones, Andre Vallar

and Francis Le Clerc traveled they noted the timber gradually diminished -- December 26, 1812

there was scarcely enough wood for fuel for their fire and game became scarce

snow was fifteen inches deep and progress was extremely painful

They reached a vast plain with no timber to be seen and not even the sign of an animal

they stopped to consider their situation

to continue to follow the (North Platte) river in this country was extremely dangerous

weather was threatening to change and a large snowstorm could be fatal

they had passed a sheltered place surrounded by forest populated by animals

but it was seventy-five miles behind them

they voted five to two to return to the sheltered place back up the (North Platte) river

ROBERT STUART AND HIS MEN DECIDE TO BACKTRACK

Seven Astorians retraced their steps seventy-five miles in intense cold

to make winter camp -- December 27, 1812

three days later a thick forest of cottonwood trees and herds of buffalo were their reward

They made a second winter camp along Muddy Creek (near today’s Torrington, Wyoming)

where there was **“…a sheltering growth of forest trees and a county abundant in game.”[[119]](#footnote-119)**

several animals were killed, they put up a shed and began to build a lodge

here there were trees large enough to make canoes

ALEXANDER ROSS SPENDS A SECOND WINTER AT FORT OKANOGAN

Ross had spent the previous winter [1811-1812] in solitude at Fort Okanogan

now he spent the winter of 1812-1813 in the company of five men

who trapped in the area between Fort Okanogan and Fort Spokane

these six Astorians trapped and traded with the local Indians

and into the interior as far north as the Thompson River (today’s Kamloops, B.C.)

WILSON PRICE HUNT REMAINS IN THE SANDWICH ISLAND (HAWAII)

Astor’s supply ship *Beaver* under Captain Cornelius Sowle received repairs to her rigging and sails

after a stay of seven weeks she sailed from (Oahu, Hawaii) for Canton, China -- January 1, 1813

Hunt remained on Oahu to await the arrival of John Jacob Astor’s annual supply ship

to deliver him to the Pacific Fur Company post of Astoria

Astor’s next supply vessel was to have sailed from New York City [September 1812]

however wartime delays kept her in port

(Hunt’s stay was far longer in Hawaii than he had anticipated

month after month he looked for the arrival of the supply ship -- always in vain

leaving his Pacific Fur Company companions at Astoria concerned and fearful

had Hunt followed Astor’s orders the *Beaver* would have delivered him to the post,

taken on the cargo of furs and delivered them in Canton, China along with the Russian furs

huge profits would have been the reward for everyone involved in the enterprise)

ROBERT STUART AND HIS SIX ASTORIANS CELEBRATE THE NEW YEAR

Work in the winter camp along Muddy Creek (today’s Torrington, Wyoming) was suspended

while the day was given to feasting -- January 1, 1813

choice buffalo hump and tongues were roasted and marrow bones were devoured

having no tobacco they cut up Joseph Miller’s old tobacco pouch and smoked it

in honor of the day

Work was again taken up -- January 2, 1813

soon an abundance of buffalo were killed

winter passed without any visitors, hostile or friendly, and game remained plentiful

two large cottonwood trees were felled and shaped into canoes to carry them to St. Louis

ASTORIA WAS IN A CONSIDERABLY WEAKENED CONDITION

Since the sailing of *Beaver* with Pacific Fur Company Commander Wilson Price Hunt [August 1812]

nothing had been heard although the ship was due back at Astoria [fall 1812]

(months of September, October, November and December had passed

apprehension regarding the fate of the ship now began to plague the Astorians

perhaps the *Beaver* had been wrecked along the Pacific coast

or surprised like the *Tonquin*

no one was more concerned than acting commander of Astoria Duncan McDougall

whose confidence gave way to despondency regarding the future of their enterprise

To increase McDougall’s concerns

Indians had raised their prices outrageously making trade very difficult to conduct

Astor’s partners Alexander Ross, John Clarke, Robert Stuart and David Stuart were in the interior

Astor had provided for an annual supply ship but it was late in arriving

and the crisis at the fort had depleted stocks to well below normal levels

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY AND NORTH WEST COMPANY STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL

Metis (mixed-blood) workers for both the North West Company and Hudson’s Bay Company

were employed as free traders or buffalo hunters supplying pemmican for the fur traders

Metis workers reacted violently to the agricultural invasion of the Red River district

they feared losing their land since they were “squatters” and did not hold legal title

although they had long occupied the region

Hudson’s Bay Company wanted to stop the Metis

from selling pemmican to the North West Company

Red River Colony Governor Miles Macdonnell imposed a law

to stop the sale of pemmican -- January 1813

Metis leader Cuthbert Grant and his followers ignored the new law

which led to constant conflict between the Metis and the Red River Colony settlers

ASTOR’S SUPPLY SHIP *BEAVER* ARRIVES SAFELY AT CANTON, CHINA

In China, Captain Cornelius Sowle learned of the War of 1812

Captain Sowle also found a letter from John Jacob Astor waiting for him -- 1813

directing the captain to deliver new instructions to Astoria

Captain Sowle wrote a reply in which he refused the orders

he said he would wait in Canton until peace had been arranged between the U.S. and Britain

then he would sail to New York City

Captain Sowle was offered $150,000 for the Russian furs he had taken on board at St. Paul Island

trade items provided to the Russians cost about $25,000 in New York

Sowle could have taken the money and purchased Chinese goods for sale in New York

if he was concern about being intercepted by the British Navy

he could have placed his Chinese cargo in storage

and returned to Astoria without difficulty

there he could report the success of selling the Russian furs

and the prospect of even greater returns with the sale of American pelts

instead Captain Sowle refused the offer of $150,000 and demanded higher terms

furs began to fall in value as new supplies reached Canton which only stiffed Sowle’s resolve

soon the price fell so low that Sowle could not sell at all

he had borrowed money at 18% interest on Astor’s account to repair his ship

and kept the ship in port while waiting for peace

expenses had outstripped potential income possibilities

(*Beaver* remained in hiding in Canton he until the war was over)

WAR OF 1812 U.S.WAS NOT GOING WELL FOR THE AMERICANS

American losses are high in (present-day) Michigan at the Battle of Frenchtown -- January 1813

those who survived the battle were killed by Indians the next day in the Raisin River Massacre

(more Americans were killed in this fighting than any other battle of the War of 1812)

Two weeks after the battle, Brigadier General James Winchester reported that 547 of his men

were taken as prisoners-- only thirty-three escaped the battlefield

DONALD McKENZIE UNEXPECTANTLY ARRIVES AT ASTORIA WITH NEWS OF WAR

Donald McKenzie shocked Astorians when he unexpectedly returned to Astoria -- January 16, 1813

McKenzie brought news of the declaration of war on Britain by the United States [in June 1812]

that had been carried by Nor’Wester John George McTavish to John Clarke’s Fort Spokane

McTavish also said there was talk of an impending British naval invasion

in addition McKenzie said John George McTavish was at this moment on his way to Astoria

this information immediately cast doubt on John Jacob Astor’s ability

to send the yearly supply of provisions and trade goods necessary for continuing operations

Donald McKenzie was disappointed to discover Wilson Price Hunt was absent

he had boarded the supply ship *Beaver* and gone to meet with the Russians in New Archangel

no news had been received concerning the *Beaver* or her passengers and crew

this caused grave concern as the ship had been due to return to Astoria [in the fall]

DUNCAN McDOUGALL AND DONALD McKENZIE DECIDE TO ABANDON ASTORIA

Pacific Fur Company’s working agreement called for a formal partners’ meeting

to abandon their posts and dissolve the enterprise if it proved to be unprofitable for five years

Duncan McDougall and Donald McKenzie were all that remained of Astor’s partners

all of the others had either resigned or were in the interior on expeditions

Donald McKenzie, who had been demoted from Pacific Fur Company co-commander,

continued to bear several real and imagined grudges against John Jacob Astor

and the other partners for his loss of power and prestige to Wilson Price Hunt

Astor’s two partners knew that a state of war made resupplying Astoria difficult if not impossible

without fresh supplies and trade goods no trade could be conducted

also, if Astor had failed to send them a relief ship there could be no escape by sea

Commander Duncan McDougall suggested the future fur trading prospects were in doubt

both of John Jacob Astor’s partners believed Astoria should be abandoned

portable property should be removed to the interior before the British ships arrived

Pacific Fur Company partners, clerks and voyageurs must return across the Rocky Mountains

plans were laid to cross overland to St. Louis with the journey to begin [July 1, 1813]

(because of Donald McKenzie’s previous overland ordeal with Wilson Price Hunt

this decision suggests desperate sincerity rather than treachery)

McDougall and McKenzie decided to keep the plan to abandon Astoria secret from their men

for fear their employees would become lazy and belligerent

Commander McDougall and McKenzie suspended all trade with the natives except for provisions

they already had more pelts than they could carry away and needed all of their trade goods

to barter for horses, clothing and food for their people when they crossed the continent

Donald McKenzie began preparations to travel to David Stuart’s Fort Okanogan

and John Clarke’s Fort Spokane to inform them of the decision to end the Pacific Fur Company

JOHN JACOB ASTOR HAD NOT FORSAKEN HIS POST ALONG THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Actually the merchant was playing every angle he could

Astor advised the United States government concerning the progress of his business at Astoria

he pointed out that even the slightest military support would hold the post

against any British attack by sea

Astor wrote a letter to Wilson Price Hunt the head of the Pacific Fur Company -- if it existed

he warned Hunt to be on his guard against any attempt of surprise attack from the British

or the Canadian North West Company

John Jacob Astor made every effort to supply his Columbia River post

John Jacob Astor had attempted to dispatch his annual supply ship

but because of delays caused by the war she did not put to sea from New York

when Astor was unable to secure an escort vessel from the American government

to defend his supply vessel from British seizure

he sent to his agents in London £12,000 to buy and outfit the British brig *Forester*

and sail her to the Northwest under British colors

chaos in England’s war-harassed ports delayed the *Forester*

Astor took the bold step of outfitting the 300-ton *Lark* in New York City -- March 1813

*Lark*, a ship known for its speed, made ready to sail but at the last moment her captain

refused the assignment and the ship was place under former first mate Samuel Northrup

Nicholas G. Ogden, a well trusted Astor employee, sailed as supercargo

(the person placed in charge of trade goods and conducting trade)

Astor finally sprang his annual supply ship through the British blockade -- March 6, 1813

by means of a sailing permit the Russian consul obtained from the English admiralty

on the pretext that the *Lark* was going to Russian-America (Alaska)

ROBERT STUART AND HIS SIX TRAVELING COMPANIONS BECOME WATERBORNE

Robert Stuart’s expedition across the continent had been forced to spend (winter) along Muddy Creek

where that stream entered the North Platte River (near today’s Torrington, Wyoming)

When the ice on the North Platte River broke up -- March 8, 1813

Robert Stuart, Ramsay Crooks, Robert McClellan, Joseph Miller, Ben Jones, Andre Vallar

and Francis Le Clerc launched their two canoes in an effort to deliver dispatches to St. Louis

before Robert Stuart would continue to New York City and meet with John Jacob Astor

They soon discovered the island-filled river was too shallow for their vessels

progress was difficult as they waded and dragged their canoe over sandbars and islands

at last the effort was abandoned and they were again on foot aided by their faithful packhorse

Stuart correctly guessed they were on the North Platte River

they followed a more southerly route than that taken by Lewis and Clark

Inclement weather again forced a stop

DONALD McKENZIE SETS OUT FROM ASTORIA BACK UP THE COLUMBIA RIVER

With the decision to abandon Astoria made, several items of business needed to be addressed

it was necessary to close Fort Okanogan and Fort Spokane and retrieve the cache of goods

that were not taken to Spokane House from McKenzie’s Post

it also was necessary purchase horses and provisions for the caravan back across the Rockies

Donald McKenzie set off for his abandoned post on the Clearwater River

he was accompanied by two of the clerks, John Reed and Alfred Seton, and seventeen men

McKenzie carried dispatches from Astoria Commander Duncan McDougall

to David Stuart at Fort Okanogan and John Clarke at Fort Spokane informing them

of the intensions to close Astoria and giving them time to make preparations of their own

they were to close their posts and barter for horses to be used to carry

all of the portable assets of the Pacific Fur Company to St. Louis

McKenzie and his men traveled in two canoes without any incident

until they arrived in the neighborhood of the always difficult Columbia River Dalles rapids

after they stopped for a small lunch they portaged around the long narrows when the portage was completed they faced a long evening that required watchfulness

as they anticipated approaching the short narrows

ANOTHER INCIDENT AT THE WISHRAM INDIAN VILLAGE

Across the Columbia River from where Donald McKenzie and his men made camp

was a village of the Wishram Indians whose bad reputation was widely acknowledged

they previously had attacked John Reed and stolen his shiny tin box of dispatches

Reed’s rifle was still retained by the villagers as a trophy

Donald McKenzie suggested to his men that if anyone would accompany him

he would cross the river and demand the return of Reed’s rifle

two volunteers, clerk Alfred Seton and cook Joe de la Pierre stepped forward

These three men soon crossed to the southern bank of the Columbia River

landing, they primed their pistols and rifles

they followed a path from the river for one hundred yards

as it wound among the rocks and crags to the village

no notice seemed to be taken of their approach -- even the village dogs were silent

When the three Astorians entered the village a boy made his appearance

silently he pointed to the largest house in the village

as they entered the lodge the three Astorians had to stoop to pass through the low opening

when they crossed the threshold, the narrow passage behind them

was filled by a sudden rush of Indians who had kept out of sight

McKenzie and his two companions were in a twenty-five by twenty-foot room

there was a bright fire on side of the room and nearby sat the sixty-year-old Wisham chief

one glance around the room revealed the dangerous assembly into which they had intruded

Indians in large numbers wrapped in buffalo robes sat in rows three deep

forming a semicircle around three sides of the room

all retreat was cut off by the crowd of natives which now blocked the entrance

Wishram chief pointed to the vacant end of the room opposite to the door

he motioned for the white men to sit there -- all three Astorians complied

there was a deadly silence as grim warriors sat like statues each in his robe watching the intruders

who felt they were in a perilous predicament

McKenzie said to his companions: **“Keep your eyes on the chief while I am addressing him. Should he give any sign to his band, shoot him, and make for the door.”[[120]](#footnote-120)**

McKenzie moved toward the chief and offered a tobacco pipe but it was refused

McKenzie told the Indians of the reason for their visit

he proposed to exchange two blankets, an axe, some beads and tobacco for the rifle

when the Wishram chief responded his voice which was quiet at first

became increasingly loud and violent as he worked himself into a furious rage

matters were verging on a crisis as it became evident the warriors

were only waiting for a signal from their chief before springing on their prey

during the speech McKenzie and his two companions had gradually raised their rifles

resting the gun barrels in their left hand

McKenzie’s muzzle was within three feet of the speaker’s heart

Astorians cocked their rifles and the sound of hammers being drawn back gave the natives pause

Donald McKenzie, Alfred Seton and Joe de la Pierre casually but promptly

made their way to the door of the lodge and the Indians fell back and allowed them to pass

Cautiously they walked back to their canoe, crossed the Columbia River and safely returned to camp

they decided the stolen weapon was not worth a second visit

DONALD McKENZIE MEETS NOR’WESTER JOHN GEORGE McTAVISH

Donald McKenzie with clerks Alfred Seton and John Reed and seventeen men broke camp

they resumed their struggle up the Columbia River on their way to Astor’s interior posts

to retrieve the trade goods cached there

Some distance above Celilo Falls they saw two bark canoes merrily sweeping down the river

carrying fifteen white men and flying the British flag

French-Canadian voyageurs, as usual, where boisterously singing as they paddled

these canoes belonged to Nor’Wester John George McTavish who was commander

of the seventy-five North West Company employees employed at Spokane House

bound for the mouth of the Columbia River to await the arrival of their supply ship

and its British Naval escort

both Pacific Fur Company and North West Company voyageurs greeted each other as comrades

rather than as employees of rival trading companies whose countries were at war

Both the Astorians and the Nor’Westers made camp together that night

DONALD McKENZIE AND JOHN GEORGE McTAVISH GO THEIR SEPARATE WAYS

After breaking camp in the morning

Astorian Donald McKenzie resumed his difficult effort up the Columbia to the interior posts

to deliver Commander Duncan McDougall’s dispatches to forts Okanogan and Spokane,

retrieve the caches and begin negotiations for horses with which to exit the country

Nor’Wester John George McTavish continued his leisurely trip down the Columbia River

to its mouth where they would await the arrival of the North West Company ship

and her British Navy escort

JOHN JACOB ASTOR HAS REASON TO WORRY ABOUT HIS PACIFIC FUR COMPANY

Astor received information justifying all of his concerns regarding British hostility -- March 20, 1813

North West Company had written a second memorial to the British government expressing fears

that if the establishment at Astoria was not crushed

North West Company could be driven from the Pacific Northwest

this was of great concern to Astor as a large portion of his employees in the Pacific Northwest

were Scotsmen and French-Canadians

several of whom had worked for North West Company

in fact, the partner in charge of the *Tonquin* expedition was Duncan McDougall

whose loyalty to the Pacific Fur Company had been attacked by Captain Jonathan Thorn

there was even a possibility the British government would send a military force

as this had previously been requested by the North West Company

Astor wrote to United States Secretary of State James Monroe but had heard no response

probably because the U.S. government was actively engaged in war

ROBERT STUART AND HIS MEN AGAIN TAKE UP THEIR TRAVELS TO ST. LOUIS

After being stopped in their journey to St. Louis by inclement weather

Robert Stuart and his six Astorians set out once again down the North Platte River

traveling in two newly constructed canoes -- March 20, 1813

NORTH WEST COMPANY SENDS A MERCHANT SHIP TO THE PACIFIC COAST

North West Company outfitted the *Isaac Todd* at Portsmouth, Ontario to travel to the Columbia River

carrying supplies and trade goods to its Columbia Department trading posts -- March 25, 1813

also aboard were North West Company partners Donald McTavish and John McDonald of Garth

along with six voyageurs, four clerks and Kanaka (Hawaiian) John Coxe

who was returning from Astoria from London

ROBERT STUART PARTY LEAVES THEIR CANOES AND SET OUT OVERLAND

Continual difficulties with the canoes forced the seven Astorians to abandon their canoes

they took up their eastward journey to St. Louis on foot -- March 27, 1813

Spring weather had brought pasture and the land was teeming with game

buffalo dung replaced wood as fuel for campfires to ward off the cold of the nights

three buffalo were killed one evening simply for their hides to make a shelter

Continuing on over the days they crossed one hundred miles of prairie without trees

they saw sixty-five wild horses -- buffalo seemed to cover the country

wild geese abounded and a swamp was home to immense flocks of ducks and a few swans

They found the sameness of the landscape became dreary and tiresome

(famous sights that would later mark the Oregon Trail were passed during this time:

Devil’s Gate, Independence Rock, Upper Platte Canyon, Scotts Bluff, Chimney Rock,

Courthouse Rock and Jailhouse Rock)

they longed to see a forest, grove or even a single tree

they began to focus on signs they were nearing the end of the wilderness

bunches of grass or driftwood with axe marks were seen as positive signs

still, the hoped-for Missouri River eluded them

They found a Pawnee Indian hut that held three old women too sick to accompany their people

who had gone south to hunt buffalo -- otherwise the country was completely deserted

Continuing on, Robert Stuart, Ramsay Crooks, Robert McClellan, Joseph Miller, Ben Jones,

Andre Vallar and Francis Le Clerc passed from the North Platte River to the Platte River

LORD SELKIRK’S COLONISTS MOVE BACK TO THE RED RIVER

Governor Miles Macdonell moved his colonists back to the Red River

after spending the (winter) at Fort Daer -- spring 1813

As the season advanced solid structures were constructed on this site

Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk’s Hudson’s Bay Company settlement

became known as Red River Colony

attempts were made to farm but the only agricultural implement colonists brought was a hoe

they tried fishing by the river produced an inadequate catch

even the bushes failed to produce fruit -- they resorted to using weeds as food

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY AND NORTH WEST COMPANY CONFLICTS ESCALATE

When Hudson’s Bay Company and North West Company trappers and traders invaded the same area

they fought a series of battles in an attempt to control the region

As the competition heightened bloody incidents increased in frequency and intensity

especially in the vicinity of the Red River Colony

owned by Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk

whose claim comprised parts of (today’s Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Northern Minnesota

and North Dakota)

ROBERT STUART AND HIS PARTY SEE THEIR FIRST SIGN OF CIVILIZATION

Stuart’s six men recognized their first landmark, an island about seventy miles long -- April 6, 1813

this they assumed was Grand Island which meant they were 140 miles from the Missouri River

Three days later they met an Otto Indian who confirmed their location -- April 9

NOR’WESTER JOHN GEORGE McTAVISH ARRIVES AT ASTORIA

John George McTavish paddling down the Columbia River from Spokane House

arrived at Astoria with fourteen voyageurs -- April 11, 1813

John George McTavish met with the Pacific Fur Company Commander Duncan McDougall

and told him of the expected North West Company supply ship and British Royal Navy escort

John Jacob Astor’s partner at Astoria decided to wait behind his fortified walls to see what developed

THERE SEEMED LITTLE CAUSE FOR ALARM AT FORT ASTORIA

Relations between the Astorians and the Nor’Westers were so friendly

that the Nor’Westers were invited by their fellow French-Canadians at Astoria

to participate in the post’s annual birthday celebration -- April 12, 1813

John George McTavish and his North West Company employees

enjoyed the good food and liquor which made for a festive time

John George McTavish proceeded down the Columbia River to its mouth

to make his camp at Baker Bay below Astoria

there he would await the approach of the North West Company supply ship

and her British Royal Navy escort

which he expected to arrive within a few weeks to seize the American post

in truth, the immediate future of Nor’Wester John George McTavish and his camp was in doubt

they had only a slim store of provisions and their situation was uncertain

both of the North West Company ships were long overdue which raised doubts

perhaps something had happened to them -- or perhaps the whole story was a bluff

But more than Astoria was a risk as the Columbia River itself was the great prize

American Captain Robert Gray had won it after British navigators had given it up [1792]

Nor’Wester David Thompson had explored the full length from source to mouth [1811]

but he found the Astorians’ post had been constructed

and they controlled the river’s commerce

British claims to the Columbia Department centered on David Thompson’s trading posts

to the north of Columbia and Spokane rivers

ROBERT STUART’S PARTY LEARN OF THE WAR BETWEEN THE U.S. AND BRITAIN

Robert Stuart and his six Astorians were guided to an Otto Indian village

(located at present-day Yutan, Nebraska)

There they met two white trappers (who had arrived three days before) -- April 13, 1813

Baptiste Dorouin and Francois Roi were the first white men they had encountered

since setting out from Caldron Linn [September 1, 1812]

Stuart and his men first learned of the outbreak of the War of 1812

Two days were spent with questions regarding national affairs and especially the war

during this time the fur traders employed Indians to make a canoe frame

twenty feet long, four feet wide and eighteen inches deep to be covered with buffalo hide

Stuart left their faithful horse with Dorion

who gave the Astorians enough supplies to reach Fort Osage, Missouri on the Missouri River

ROBERT STUART AND HIS PARTYARE AGAIN WATERBORNE EN ROUTE TO ST. LOUIS

Entering their buffalo hide canoe they again drifted down the Platte River -- April 16, 1813

they had traveled about ten miles when a high wind forced them to camp

here they set about making oars

Continuing merrily down the river the next day -- April 17

they traveled for thirty-five miles then merged into the Missouri River

whose current carried them briskly downriver

After a couple of hundred miles the frame of their canoe began to show the effect of the voyage

they found two wooded canoes left behind by some hunting party and took the larger

after another fifty-five miles they arrived at Fort Osage (today’ Sibley, Missouri)

where Wilson Price Hunt’s expedition had begun their journey eighteen month before

Robert Stuart and his travel companions remained at Fort Osage for two days

resting and waiting for the weather to clear

it was noted after their return to civilization that the luxury the seven Astorians most missed

was bread -- they had eaten none in over a year

COMPANY BATTLES ESCALATE INTO COMPANY WARS

Competition between the North West Fur Company and Hudson’s Bay Company

exploded beyond all bounds of reason or sanity

bloodshed, debauchery of the Indians and a frantic stripping of the country

of every possible fur-bearing animal became integral parts of the struggle for supremacy

Although the Columbia Department lay far from the actual conflict around the Red River Colony

repercussions inevitably reached across the Rocky Mountains

as the discipline of the trappers and traders crumbled

Warfare kept the best North West Company voyageurs east of the Continental Divide

in their place Iroquois and Abenaki Indians from the St. Lawrence River region

were used in the Columbia Department

undependable at best, these untrustworthy, explosive Eastern Indians

harassed their Western Indian counterparts

wanton pillaging and horse thievery so inflamed the Willamette and Cowlitz Indians

that both of these fur-rich valleys had to be written off the books

as potential fur grounds for the next few seasons

ROBERT STUART AND HIS PARTY REACH ST. LOUIS

After incredible hardships Astorians Robert Stuart, Robert McClellan, Ramsay Crooks, Ben Jones,

Andre Vallar and Francis Le Clerc arrived at St. Louis in good health -- April 30, 1813

they had been joined late in their travels by trappers Baptiste Dorouin and Francois Roi

Their return caused quite a sensation in the town as they delivered the first news

of Wilson Price Hunt and his expedition

and of the establishment of Astoria, Fort Okanogan and trading operations in Oregon

Efforts to absorb the changes that had taken place in the United States during their three year absence

took them from houses to stores and taverns as they gather information regarding the war

they learned the Upper Great Lakes had fallen into British hands

and Indians there had joined the British cause against the Americans

Native Americans from as far away as the Missouri River were flocking to the British

Robert Stuart’s Astorians had traversed 3,700 miles in 306 days

their route through (Idaho), (Wyoming) and (Nebraska) was almost precisely the path

later followed by the (Oregon Trail)

Robert Stuart wrote an account of the journey from Astoria to St. Louis: *Journal of a voyage across the Continent of North America from Astoria The pacific Fur Company principal Establishment on the Columbia To the City of New York kept by Robert Stuart* [sic]

in his rendition Robert Stuart identified sites for future Pacific Fur Company trading posts

in this literary effort, young Stuart traced the route which, with some modifications,

would later become famous as the Oregon Trail

(Accounts of Robert Stuart’s exploits and those of the *Tonquin*

were written by American author Washington Irving in *Astoria* published [1836])

JOHN JACOB ASTOR HAD HEARD NO WORD FROM HIS PACIFIC FUR COMPANY

Although Astor was a great businessman and not easily discouraged

the dangers faced by his enterprise slowly eroded his spirits and confidence

he was gloomily sitting by a window at his home reflecting on the loss of the *Tonquin*

and the sad fate of her unfortunate crew fearing the overland expedition had met a similar fate

he received the evening newspaper and saw a paragraph that announced the arrival

of Robert Stuart and his party at St. Louis

they had carried the news that Wilson Price Hunt and his companions

had reached the mouth of the Columbia River

DUNCAN McDOUGALL FINALIZES PLANS TO CLOSE THE PACIFIC FUR COMPANY

Astoria Commander McDougall did not plan to defend Astoria against a North West Company

he saw no reason to treat his fellow Scotsmen with anything other than decent hospitality

McDougall announced to everyone that Astoria would close [July 1, 1813] -- May 21, 1813

McDougall busied himself with preparations to cross overland to St. Louis

McDougall’s decision cast no small about of doubt on his loyalty to the Pacific Fur Company

his old relationship with the North West Company seemed to have resurfaced

he had been very hospitable North West Company commander John George McTavish

as if he was a friend rather than a competing company employee come to reconnoiter

and to wait for the arrival of a hostile ship

had Duncan McDougall given the word, the Chinook Indians would have driven off the rivals

but instead McDougall supplied the Nor’Westers from the stores in Astoria

and treated them as friends -- thus they were accepted as such by the Chinooks

DONALD McKENZIE AND HIS MEN ARRIVE AT McKENZIE’S POST ON THE CLEARWATER

McKenzie, Alfred Seton and John Reed and seventeen men in two canoes hastened up the Columbia

until they reached the abandoned post on the Clearwater River

to begin work to retrieve the caches and to start bartering for the three or four hundred horses that would be necessary for transporting the huge cavalcade to St. Louis

McKenzie’s return to the deserted post was very distressing

he discovered, to his chagrin, that his caches had been found and rifled

in fact, he was dependent on the now stolen goods for the purchase horses from the Indians

McKenzie sent men out in all directions to locate the thieves

Nez Perce villagers, who the whites assumed were guilty, denied the thefts

Not believing the Nez Perce, McKenzie took reckless action

he and John Reed stalked angrily from tepee to tepee

they slashed open potential hiding places with their daggers

completely surprised by the Astorians’ arrogance the Indians promised

to produce the stolen articles if the whites would stop their destruction

McKenzie gave in (although only a portion of the goods were returned)

this did nothing to enhance the Pacific Fur Company’s relations with the Indians

JOHN REED WAS SENT BY DONALD McKENZIE TO THE OTHER INTERIOR POSTS

McKenzie sent far-wandering John Reed to deliver dispatches from Commander Duncan McDougall

to David Stuart at Fort Okanogan and John Clarke at Fort Spokane

stating his intention to close Astoria and return to the United States

David Stuart and John Clarke were to close their posts and barter for horses

to carry all of the Pacific Fur Company’s portable assets to St. Louis

McDougall ordered them to rendezvous at the confluence of the Walla Walla

and Columbia rivers [June 1, 1813]

DONALD “FATS”McKENZIE’S OWN HORSE TRADING STARTS SLOWLY

Nez Perce Indians, resentful of his highhanded tactics regarding the stolen goods, declined to barter

exasperated, McKenzie began pointing toward whatever animal he wanted,

he offered a fair price, and then on being refused, shot the horse dead

this was repeated until the Indians relented and began to barter

McKenzie’s actions shocked and alarmed the Nez Perce who counted their wealth in horses

ASTORIA COMMANDER DUNCAN McDOUGALL’S DIRECTIVE IS NOT WELL RECEIVED

Astor’s partners David Stuart at Fort Okanogan and John Clarke at Fort Spokane

had been very successful at their posts

when they received the directive written by Astoria Commander Duncan McDougall

they were very unhappy with McDougall making such a decision on his own

without even waiting for their arrival at Astoria

especially when he knew they would not agree

they considered McDougall’s orders to abandon their posts to be rash and cowardly

they refused to comply

no arrangements were made by either Stuart or Clarke to leave the country

instead they made preparations to expand their prosperous establishments

however, they did prepare to take the winter’s catch to the rendezvous site

JOHN JACOB ASTOR LEARNS OF THE NORTH WEST COMPANY’S *ISAAC TODD*

John Jacob Astor learned the North West Company merchant ship *Isaac Todd*

was en route to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil escorted by a British Navy frigate HMS *Phoebe*

Astor was very aware of the menace this provided to his Pacific Fur Company and Astoria

Astor wrote a letter to Secretary of State James Monroe asking that President James Madison

be shown a copy of the report on the activities of the North West Company included by Astor

although he had little hope of this actually happening

President Madison was eventually shown the report and the United States government

decided to send the frigate *Adams* under Captain William Crane

to protect the American foothold and commerce in the Pacific Ocean

When Astor learned of this plan he immediately outfitted the supply ship *Enterprise*

with additional supplies to accompany the *Adams* bound for Astoria

ASTOR’S PARTNER JOHN CLARKE SETS OUT FROM FORT SPOKANE

As the appointed time for the rendezvous approached,

John Clarke packed all his furs from Fort Spokane on twenty-eight horses

Clarke departed from Fort Spokane with fifty-seven men -- May 25, 1813

bound for the rendezvous site at the confluence of the Columbia and Walla Walla rivers

he left a clerk and four men in charge of the post

ASTORIANS FROM THE INTERIOR POSTS REACH THE RENDEZVOUS LOCATION

David Stuart paddled down the Columbia River from the company’s first outpost at Fort Okanogan

he was the first to arrive at the rendezvous point on the Columbia River

where the Walla Walla River entered

Donald “Fats” McKenzie leading a retreat from his unsuccessful venture at McKenzie’s Post

arrived next after he had incited of the Nez Perce Indians with his reckless actions

slashing tepees until he recovered part of the goods stolen from his Clearwater River cache

and shooting Indians’ horses until the Nez Perce agreed to sell him adequate stock

to allow him to cross the continent to St. Louis

JOHN CLARKE REACHES THE LOCATION WHERE HE HAD LEFT HIS CANOES AND BARGE

John Clarke and most of the men from Fort Spokane reached the Nez Perce village

at the mouth of the Walla Walla River where they had exchanged their canoes and barge

for horses to continue on to the Spokane Indians

their vessels had been left under the protection of an old Nez Perce chief

who had kept careful watched over his charges

although Clarke planned to continue on to the rendezvous on horse back

his vessels were found in very good order needing only minimal repair -- May 30, 1813

Camp was made near the Indian village

because this village frequently engaged in pilfering, Clarke ordered a close eye be kept

John Clarke was a tall handsome man somewhat given to pomp and ceremony

which made him a person of note in the eyes of the natives

he had a silver goblet (drinking cup) which he used with a magnificent air

then, after an appropriate ritual, he would lock his goblet in a large wooden case

which accompanied him in his travels and stood in his tent when in camp

this goblet had been a gift from John Jacob Astor to his partner Alexander McKay

who had been killed in the explosion of the *Tonquin* and had arrived after the ship had sailed

Astor’ partner John Clarke took possession and appreciated the cup’s sentimental value

This glittering silver goblet could not help but be attractive to the villagers

such a wonder had never been seen in this land before

Indians talked about it among themselves and noted the care taken when it was used

they concluded that it must be of great worth

that night Clarke failed to lock up the prized possession

when the wooden case was opened in the morning the precious relic was gone

JOHN CLARKE IS OUTRAGED BY THE LOSS OF HIS SILVER GOBLET

Clarke threatened that unless the goblet was returned promptly he would hang the thief should that unfortunate person ever be discovered

day passed into evening without the return of the goblet

That night guards were secretly posted about the Astorian camp

even at that, a native sneaked into the American camp undetected,

it was only when he attempted to leave the camp that he was discovered and captured

Astorian John Clarke was sure this was the thief who had stolen his precious goblet

SUPPOSED THIEF OF THE GOBLET WAS BROUGHT TO TRIAL

At daybreak the suspect was brought to trial and promptly convicted of theft -- May 31, 1813

immediately he represented the person responsible for all of the pilfering

done to the Astorians by these villagers

John Clarke passed a sentence of death upon him

Astorians constructed a gallows of oars, the village chief and his people were assembled

the offender was brought forward and his legs and arms were tied

Clarke berated the villagers telling them of all of the benefits they had received from the whites

and the many thefts and other misdeeds that had taken place and been ignored

this man was to be punished for his actions and as a warning to all of the other natives

Indians now gathered around John Clarke

they were willing that he be punished severely, but they pleaded that his life be spared

other Astorians, too, considered the sentence too severe

they advised Clarke to moderate the punishment but he remained unbending

Russell Farnham, a clerk who had himself been robbed of a pistol, acted as executioner

at the signal the poor Indian resisting, struggling and screaming was launched into eternity

Indians stood about in stunned silence and mute astonishment

but they had made no attempt to stop the execution, or even show any emotion whatsoever

JOHN CLARKE DECIDES TO TRAVEL DOWN THE COLUMBIA RIVER BY CANOE

John Clarke realized his party would have had to pass through Nez Perce Indian country

Nez Perce were all excellent horsemen and hard riders

they might pursue them to take vengeance for the death of their comrade

John Clarke changed his plans -- May 31, 1813

rather than proceeding on horseback as he originally intended

their loads were transferred to canoes to be taken to the rendezvous site

Clarke and his men set out down the Columbia River -- May 31, 1813

four members of Clarke’s Party were sent back to Fort Spokane with the horses

although the four Astorians made light of the danger when they departed

they traveled quickly

(all four eventually were glad to find themselves safely at Fort Spokane)

ASTOR’S PARTNER JOHN CLARKE ARRIVES AT THE RENDEZVOUS LOCATION

John Clarke led fifty-three Astorians down the Columbia River -- June 1, 1813

on their arrival at the rendezvous point they found the other Astorians waiting

Clarke informed them of the punishment he had inflicted on the Nez Perce native,

he anticipated admiration would be heaped upon him for meting out justice

instead, he was strongly censured by Donald McKenzie for being inhumane,

and likely to provoke hostilities from the Nez Perce Indians

David Stuart and John Clarke intended to return to Fort Okanogan and Fort Spokane to trade

rather than continue on to Astoria as they had been ordered by Commander Duncan McDougall

INDIANS WERE ALSO IN THE VICNIITY OF THE RENDEZVOUS POINT

Threatening Indians in large numbers were seen near the rendezvous point

word of the unprecedented hostile actions by Donald McKenzie and John Clarke

had spread quickly from village to village

ALL OF THE ASTORIANS AT THE RENDEZVOUS DECIDE TO RETURN TO ASTORIA

Astorians were warned of an impending attack by an agitated Indian chief

David Stuart and John Clarke decided to return to Astoria with Donald McKenzie

rather than journey back to Fort Okanogan and Fort Spokane

As a precaution camp was broken in the middle of breakfast -- June 2, 1813

Donald McKenzie and his twelve men along with David Stuart and his twenty Astorians

and John Clarke leading fifty-three more Pacific Fur company employees

formed a squadron of two barges and six canoes

they managed to escape to safety as more and more excited Indians arrived in the area

ASTORIANS OPERATING IN THE WILLAMATTE VALLEY REACH ASTORIA

William Wallace had led a fourteen-man trapping and trading expedition into the Willamette Valley

they had opened and maintained Wallace House in the area of Champoeg

where he and his men trapped and traded for numerous packs of beaver pelts

Wallace abandoned Wallace House and return to Astoria carrying numerous packs of beaver pelts

as a result of seven months’ worth of effort -- June 2, 1813

ASTORIANS SET OUT FROM THE RENDEZVOUS BOUND FOR ASTORIA

Donald Mackenzie paddled down the Columbia River from the rendezvous point -- June 3, 1813

he was accompanied by Astor’s partner David Stuart, John Clarke and eight-five Astorians

who had come down the river from McKenzie’s Post, Fort Okanogan and Fort Spokane

David Stuart and a group of twenty Astorians were attacked while making the portage at the Cascades

Stuart was wounded by arrows and their goods were stolen but the party escaped with their lives

David Stuart and his men reunited with the main party and continued down the Columbia River

DUNCAN McDOUGALL ANNOUNCES THE CLOSING OF ASTORIA

Astoria Commander Duncan McDougall called a meeting of Pacific Fur Company clerks

to discuss the future of Astoria -- June 3, 1813

warnings were given not to tell the Indians about the decision to close the post

fearing their neighbors would take it as a sign of weakness and attack

INTERIOR TRADING PARTIES ARRIVE AT ASTORIA

Astor’ partners Donald McKenzie David Stuart and John Clarke with eighty-five Astorians

delivered their valuable cargo of pelts from the interior posts to Astoria -- June 12, 1813

McKenzie, David Stuart and Clarke found Duncan McDougall actively preparing to close Astoria

in anticipation of departing to cross the continent to St. Louis (on July 1, 1813)

as had been agreed to by McDougall and Donald McKenzie

David Stuart and John Clarke expressed their vigorous opposition to this plan

McDougall’s ties with the North West Company led to questions regarding his dependability

and his friendly treatment of Nor’Wester John George McTavish was provided

as evidence of disloyalty to John Jacob Astor

Astoria Commander Duncan McDougall, in turn, was disappointed to find

that neither David Stuart nor John Clarke had made preparations to comply with his directives

to purchase horses and provisions for a caravan across the Rocky Mountains to St. Louis

it was now too late to make preparations necessary in time to cross the Rockies before (winter) abandoning Astoria and the Pacific Fur Company’s operations had to be postponed

CONDITIONS AT ASTORIA BECOME STRAINED

Population at Astoria swelled with the arrival of the interior traders

putting a huge strain on the limited store of supplies

Over the next two weeks bickering between Astor’s partners and clerks added to the tension

Commander McDougall insisted they should quit the post, pack everything of value

and head overland across the Rocky Mountains to St. Louis and the United States

McDougall asserted that the war and poor returns made abandonment inevitable

(actually trade had been quite productive as reported by the clerks on [June 1]

returns from the Columbia, Okanogan, Spokane and Willamette regions

had been better than anticipated)

David Stuart and John Clarke were reluctant to abandon the financial returns

they had achieved at Fort Okanogan and Fort Spokane based only on the strength

of Commander Duncan McDougall’s spur-of-the-moment decision

with the support of Donald “Fats” McKenzie

they criticized McDougall’s judgment and McKenzie’s allegiance to John Jacob Astor

they insisted their trapping success in the interior justified holding the posts and the region

to say nothing of trade arrangements that might be made with the Russian-America Company

David Stuart and John Clarke also noted Astoria was well armed

and would withstand any attack short of a naval bombardment

they resented the decision of the two partners to sell Astoria to the North West Company

Duncan McDougall enjoyed the vocal support of Donald McKenzie

who used his skill and prestige to push for abandonment of the enterprise

McKenzie argued the only course was for the Astorians to save what they could

before the British navy came and took everything

summing up his position, Mackenzie noted, **“All these inauspicious circumstances taken together point out the absolute necessity of abandoning the enterprise as soon as possible.”[[121]](#footnote-121)**

NOR’WESTER JOHN GEORGE McTAVISH IS RUNNING LOW ON SUPPLIES

It had become apparent the supply ship and British Naval escort had encountered difficulties

John George McTavish traveled from his camp at the Columbia River’s Baker Bay to Astoria

there he requested a small supply of trade goods be provided to him

so he could conduct business with Indians during his return journey to Spokane House

John George McTavish’s request was discussed by Astor’s partners

Duncan McDougall urged the request be honored

he further suggested that Fort Spokane should be given up

as the Astorians lacked sufficient trade goods to compete with the North West Company

(in fact, this was not true -- the Astorians had more trade goods than the Nor’Westers)

JOHN JACOB ASTOR RECEIVES A LETTER FROM ROBERT STUART THEN IN ST. LOUIS

While Astor was making preparations to sail the supply ship *Enterprise* to Astoria

escorted by the United States Navy frigate *Adams*

Astor received a letter from Robert Stuart (dated May 1, 1813) -- middle of June 1813

confirming newspaper accounts of his arrival in St. Louis

and of the arrival of Wilson Price Hunt’s land expedition at Astoria

Robert Stuart also wrote of the success enjoyed by Astorians of the Pacific Fur Company

Astoria was establish and Fort Okanogan was in operation along the Okanogan River

also successful trapping ventures had been conducted in the Willamette Valley

and along the Thompson River (Kamloops)

at the same time Astor learned the supply ship *Beaver* had arrived at Astoria

this provided Astor additional hope for success

Astor concluded the future of his Pacific Fur Company looked bright

Wilson Price Hunt, an American, led the operation and Astoria was being supplied

a third supply ship (after the *Lark*), *Enterprise,* was about to set sail for the post

Quickly these happy prospects faded away as Commodore Isaac Chauncey at Lake Ontario

called for reinforcements to his command which was under attack by British forces

frigate *Adam’s* crew was immediately transferred to Lake Ontario and the *Adams* was laid up

Astor decided to send the *Enterprise* to take her chances unescorted

but just then the British Navy arrived off New York City and blockaded the harbor

*Enterprise* was unloaded and dismantled putting Astor’s hopes solely on his supply ship *Lark*

WILSON PRICE HUNT CHARTERS THE *ALBATROSS* TO SAIL TO THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Wilson Price Hunt had remained in the Hawaiian Islands since [November 1812]

where Astor’s supply ship *Beaver* had deposited him before sailing on to Canton, China

Hunt had waited in vain for the arrival of the Pacific Fur Company’s annual supply ship

American merchant ship *Albatross* sailing under Captain William Smith

reached the Hawaiian Islands from Canton, China -- June 20, 1813

Captain Smith delivered the news of America’s war with Great Britain to the islands

this explained Hunt’s long wait for a ship to take him back to Astoria

Hunt also learned a fleet of British warships had departed from Rio de Janeiro

HMS frigate *Phoebe* was joined by sloops-of-war *Cherub* and *Raccoon*

accompanied a North West Company’s *Isaac Todd* mounted with twenty cannons

it was assumed Astoria was to be destroyed

Wilson Price Hunt immediately thought of the welfare of Astoria

he concluded the Pacific Fur Company employees would be in need of supplies and leadership

he chartered the *Albatross* for $20,000 to deliver him at Astoria

supplies were loaded and the *Albatross* sailed for the mouth of the Columbia River

this would be the second time this American ship had visited the Columbia River

she had previously been brought to the Pacific Northwest by the Winship Brothers [1810]

FORMAL MEETING OF ASTOR’S PARTNRS IS NECESSARY TO ABANDON THE ENTERPRISE

Pacific Fur Company’s Commander Duncan McDougall called an official meeting of Astor’s

four partners in Astoria -- McDougall, Donald McKenzie, David Stuart and John Clarke

they were to discuss the future of Astor’s Pacific Fur Company and Astoria -- June 25, 1813

this debate centered on relinquishing the post to the North West Company

even resident clerks were assembled although they had no vote in policy decisions

Commander Duncan McDougall responded to the criticisms of David Stuart and John Clarke

McDougall wrote his official explanation of his actions in the company letter book: **“We are now destitute of the necessary supplies on the trade, and we have no hopes of receiving more. We are yet entirely ignorant of the coast, on which we always had great dependence. The interior parts of the country turn out far short of our expectations. Its yearly produce in furs is very far from being equal to the expenses the trade incurs; much less will it be able to recover the losses already sustained, or stand against a powerful opposition and support itself. In fine, circumstances are against us on every hand, and nothing operates to lead us into a conclusion, that we can succeed.”[[122]](#footnote-122)**

this version of events was carefully worded by McDougall to support his actions

DAVID STUART AND JOHN CLARKE BEGIN TO HAVE SECOND THOUGHTS

No supply ship had arrived from John Jacob Astor and the failure of the supply ship *Beaver*

to return with Wilson Price Hunt increased David Stuart’s and John Clarke’s concerns

that conditions were deteriorating

they began to listen to the arguments proposed by Duncan McDougall and Donald McKenzie

perhaps the Astorians situation of being left alone on a hostile coast surrounded by enemies

was as desperate and hopeless as it had been depicted

left without the support of John Jacob Astor they must shift for themselves or perish

By the end of the meeting all four of Astor’s partners reached an agreement -- June 25, 1813

McDougall and McKenzie together had convinced Stuart and Clarke to accept their proposition

David Stuart and John Clarke consented to abandon Astoria

It was obvious Duncan McDougall’s proposal to leave the country [on July 1] was unachievable

any overland journey during the present summer was impossible

because of delays in leaving the interior trading posts

and the complexities of packing the furs, goods, supplies and provisions then at Astoria

ASTOR’S PARTNERS MAKE PLANS TO REMAIN IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST FOR A YEAR

Commander Duncan McDougall stated Fort Okanogan and Fort Spokane

would be sold to the North West Company

Astoria would be abandoned but the Astorians would spend one more year in the Northwest

new departure date of [July 1, 1814] was set by the partners

however, the store of goods at Astoria would not be adequate to meet the needs

of all of the Astorians for a year

John Jacob Astor’s partners agreed on the necessary tasks to remain in the field for another year:

•acquire enough food to exist until their anticipated departure [July 1, 1814];

•purchase enough horses to convey all of the Pacific Fur Company’s portable goods

over the Rocky Mountains and across the Great Plains to St. Louis;

•collect as many pelts as they could acquire with their diminished supply of trade goods

ASTOR’S PARTNERS AGREE ON ASSIGNMENTS FOR THE COMING (WINTER)

Astor’s partner Duncan McDougall would remain in command of Astoria

he would keep forty men to ready a fleet of canoes to transport goods to the Willamette Valley

if a British sail was sighted

because if the post was captured before they could depart everything would be lost

men at Astoria would have to depend at least partially on local Chinook Indians for their food

while they currently remained friendly it was feared if the future of the post was known,

or how weak the post actually had become, the Chinooks might become hostile;

Partner Donald McKenzie, because it was necessary to make Astoria independent from the natives,

would take four hunters and eight men to Wallace House to the Willamette Valley

they would lower the strain on Astoria’s limited supplies and supply needed provisions

but also remain in a position to receive Astoria’s trade goods if that became necessary;

Partner David Stuart and clerk Alexander Ross would travel to Fort Okanogan

Stuart would close the Thompson River operation among the She Whap Indians

(near today’s Kamloops, British Columbia)

clerk Alexander Ross would spend another (winter) at Fort Okanogan

Because there were too many clerks for the number to trappers and traders at Astoria

three men, all British subjects, Ross Cox, Donald McGillis and Robert McClellan,

went to work for the North West Company

Ross Cox, who distinguished himself as an historian at Astoria,

was the first established trader to stress the practical need for missionaries

in the Pacific Northwest

NORTH WEST COMPANY TRAPPERS ARE ASSIGNED TO THE SNAKE RIVER REGION

Nor’Wester Clerk John Reed was to establish a (winter) headquarters on the Snake River plains

with hunters Pierre Dorion and Pierre Delaunay

voyageurs Francis Landry, Jean-Baptiste Turcotte, Andre La Chapelle and Gilles Le Clerc

Kentuckians Edward Robinson, John Hoback and Jacob Reznor

and American free trappers William Canning (or Cannon) and Alexander Carson

as usual Pierre Dorion was accompanied by his wife Marie and their two children

Reed was to trap for beaver along the Malheur River (eastern Oregon) on the Snake River plain

and gather supplies for the trip across the continent to St. Louis -- 1813

ASTOR’S FOUR PARTNERS SIGN A RESOLUTION TO ABANDON ASTORIA

With assignments now in place, an agreement was drawn up that stated unless John Jacob Astor

provided orders to continue Astoria and necessary support and supplies were received,

Astoria would be abandoned -- July 1, 1813

Commander Duncan McDougall was empowered to arrange for sale of all posts, goods and furs

to the North West Company

Pace of activities at Astoria quickened

furs had to be baled, remaining trade goods packed, personal items secured

all of this activity caught the attention of the Chinook Indians who began to ask questions

ASTORIA COMMANDER DUNCAN McDOUGALL NEGOTIATES WITH THE NOR’WESTERS

Faced with the bleak prospect of being unable to trade for provisions with the natives

Astorians made a remarkable proposal to John George McTavish:

•Nor’Westers would acquire Astorians’ Kootenai House and Fort Spokane

in return the North West Company would promise the Astorians a year’s free hand

in the Willamette Valley using Willamette House and the Snake River region

•Astorians would make available to the Nor’Westers whatever goods they could spare to be paid for [in the spring] with horses;

•Nor’Wester John George McTavish was also requested to forward dispatches to Astor

by way of the North West Company winter express

McTavish and McDougall further agreed not to reveal news about the War of 1812

to the neighboring Indians or the common laborers until the British warship arrived

North West Company’s Columbia Department was thus divided with the Astorians

NOR’WESTER JOHN GEORGE McTAVISH TRAVELS FROM ASTORIA

Supplies from Astoria were loaded into North West Company canoes

to be taken to Fort Okanogan or Fort Spokane -- both now under the Nor’Westers’ control

McTavish and his voyageurs set out up the Columbia River -- July 5, 1813

in addition to added trade goods and a promise of horses in exchange Astor’s forts

McTavish carried private letters, reports and dispatches to be delivered to John Jacob Astor

by the usual (winter) North West Company overland express

ASTORIANS BEGIN THEIR JOURNEYS TO THEIR (WINTER) ASSIGNMENTS

Sixty-eight Astorians pushed up the Columbia River led by John Clarke -- July 5, 1813

David Stuart and clerk Alexander Ross set out for Fort Okanogan and the Thompson River

John Clarke set out the Clearwater River to conduct a (winter) trapping operation

Alexander Ross and John Reed began their travels to their respective trapping assignments

clerk John Reed to trap in the rugged regions of the Snake River

DONALD McKENZIE GOES TO THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY

Donald McKenzie with four hunters, two clerks and six laborers

the left Astoria for Wallace House along the Willamette River at Champoeg

in the Willamette Valley -- July 8, 1813

McKenzie set up a hunting camp to feed Duncan McDougall’s force at Astoria,

he also journeyed back and forth along the Willamette River bartering for fish

in an effort to lower the strain on Astoria’s limited supplies

TRADE EXPEDITIONS FROM ASTORIA ARRIVE AT THE UMATILLA RIVER

Astorians David Stuart, John Clarke, Alexander Ross and John Reed reached the Umatilla River

John Reed was the first expedition leader to leave for his assigned area on the Snake River plains

twenty-one year old Marie Dorion urged Reed to go across the Blue Mountains

Pierre Dorion advised doing this because of the desirability of setting up winter camp as soon as possible

John Reed chose to disregard this advice

rather he chose to lead his party by some route, now unknown, to the Snake River

REMAINING ASTORIANS SEPARATE AT THE UMATILLA RIVER

After John Reed’s departure the other three parties of Astoria trappers and traders

continued up the Columbia River:

•John Clarke to McKenzie’s Post on the Clearwater River

•David Stuart and clerk Alexander Ross to Fort Okanogan

with Stuart continuing on to the She Whap Indians (near today’s Kamloops)

AMERICAN PRIVATEER SHIP HARASSES BRITISH SHIPPING IN THE PACIFIC OCEAN

While communicating with Spanish officials in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

British Rear Admiral Manley Dixon discovered that the American privateer *Essex*

under Captain David Porter was operating in the Pacific Ocean

he had captured fourteen British whaling ships as prizes

NORTH WEST COMPANY’S *ISAAC TODD* REACHES RIO DE JANEIRO

North West Fur Company merchant ship *Isaac Todd* under Captain Fraser Smith

had been provided a British naval escort vessel to Rio de Janeiro

HMS *Phoebe* under British Royal Navy Captain James Hillyar accompanied the *IsaacTodd*

Shaken by the activities of the American privateer Captain David Porter of the *Essex*

British Rear Admiral Manley Dixon decided to dispatch two additional war ships

to convoy the *Isaac Todd* to the mouth of the Columbia River

in addition to the *Phoebe,* HMS *Raccoon* and HMS *Cherub* were assigned to escort duty

Captain Hillyar on HMS *Phoebe* led the four ship convoy

*ISAAC TODD* AND HER ROYAL NAVAL ESCORT DEPART FROM RIO DE JANEIRO

After a short stay to replenish supplies both ships sailed into the Atlantic Ocean

as instructed, *Phoebe’s* Captain James Hillyar opened his secret orders -- July 10, 1813

he learned that his mission was to **“render every assistance in your power to the British traders from Canada and to destroy and if possible totally annihilate any settlements which the Americans may have formed on the Columbia River or on the neighboring coasts”[[123]](#footnote-123)**

after reading his orders Captain Hillyar requested Nor’Wester partner John McDonald of Garth

come aboard the *Phoebe* to serve as a representative of the North West Company

in the event she arrived first at the Columbia River

North West Company partner Donald McTavish would remain on board the *Isaac Todd*

NORTH WEST COMPANY PARTNERS MEET AT FORT WILLIAM ON LAKE SUPERIOR

North West Company held its annual meeting of partners-in-the-field

at its Fort William headquarters on Lake Superior -- July 18, 1813

Nor’Wester leaders decided to follow-up on partner Angus Shaw’s message

to his nephew John George McTavish regarding the arrival of a company supply ship

and navy escort to the Columbia River with renewed action

Alexander Henry the Younger, Alexander Stuart and James Keith were ordered

to lead the summer express across the Rocky Mountains with seventy-five Nor’Westers

to augment the company forces already in the West

in addition Alexander Henry the Younger was to locate a transport route

from New Caledonia (British Columbia) via the Fraser River and Lake Okanogan

to the Pacific just as though Columbia Department was already in British hands

Nor’Westers’ supply brigade brought out such items as 208 axes of different sizes, 3,000 thimbles,

335 brass and copper kettles, fifty bright new rifles and a quarter ton of ammunition,

sacks of Chinese beads, 500 pounds of tobacco, 1,000 darning needles, 2,000 cheap rings,

quantities of blankets, yard goods, shirts and wholesale foodstuffs

ranging from rice, salt, dried salmon to molasses and vinegar

DAVID STUART AND ALEXANDER ROSS CONTINUE UP THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Traveling together both Astorians hurried up the Columbia River to Fort Okanogan

previously established by David Stuart at the mouth of the Okanogan River

David Stuart and his party stayed at Fort Okanogan for only two days

after supplying the post with trade goods and ammunition

Stuart left clerk Alexander Ross in charge of the post where he was to spend the (winter)

and continued to the Thompson River operation among the She Whap Indians

(near today’s Kamloops, British Columbia) to close that operation

ASTORIA COMMANDER DUNCAN McDOUGALL TAKES A COMPANION

McDougall was now less concerned with managing affairs at Astoria but eager to assure security

Commander Duncan McDougall sought the good will of the neighboring Chinook Indians

by wooing the head-flattened, oil-anointed eldest daughter of crafty old Comcomly

the tribe’s one-eyed chief

Comcomly demanded the high price of fifteen guns, fifteen blankets and assorted small trinkets

McDougall took his companion -- July 20, 1813

Mrs. (Princess Choim) McDougall expressed a less than buoyant attitude toward her marital status

looking out of the window of her home one day she saw a large hog

that was rolling in the mud and basking in the sun

Choim called her husband to the scene and commented, **“You profess to be a Chief, but I see you hard at work every day, behind the counter, at the desk, and your time is so fully employed that you scarcely have time to eat your food, or to enjoy the society of your wife a moment.”**

pointing to the hog she noted, **“See there, that is the true chief; he has no labors to perform like a slave, when hungry his food is served him; he fills himself and then lies down in the cool mud, under the influence of the warming rays of the sun, sleeps, and takes his comfort.”[[124]](#footnote-124)**

*ISAAC TODD* PROVES TO BE A SLOW SHIP

Leaving Rio de Janeiro North West Company merchant ship *Isaac Todd* proved to be very slow

because of the added weight of twenty cannons that

arrangements were made to rendezvous with *Phoebe, Raccoon* and *Cherub* off the coast of Chile

*Isaac Todd* sailed as best she could on her own

in a gale off the coast of South America she became separated from her British Navy escort

she failed to arrive for an appointed rendezvous off the Juan Fernandez Islands, Chile

in the South Pacific (she would arrive five months late)

While waiting for the *Isaac Todd,* British Royal Navy Captain James Hillyar of the *Phoebe*

considered his orders to capture or destroy any American facility he found on the Columbia River

before planting the British flag on the ruins to the Raccoon’s Captain William Black

Captain Hillyar decided to transfer North West Company partner John McDonald of Garth

who was part of *Phoebe’s* cargo to the *Raccoon*

JOHN REED’S EXPEDITION REACHES THE SNAKE RIVER

John Reed led his party composed of hunters Pierre Dorion and Pierre Delaunay

and voyageurs Francis Landry, Jean-Baptiste Turcotte, Andre La Chapelle and Gilles Le Clerk

Kentuckians Edward Robinson, John Hoback and Jacob Reznor along with

two American free trappers William Canning (or Cannon) and Alexander Carson

also Marie Dorion and her two children traveled with the party into the Snake River country

They reached the mouth of the Weiser River (Oregon) where it enters the Snake River -- August 1813

two American free trappers William Canning (or Cannon) and Alexander Carson

set out on their own beaver hunt

AN UNKNOWN SHIP ENTERS THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Astoria Commander Duncan McDougall was sitting with his wife Mrs. (Princess Choim) McDougall

at their table when her brother, Gassacop, burst in

he announced a sail was seen off the mouth of the Columbia -- about noon August 20, 1812

McDougall, thinking this might be the anticipated North West Company ship hurried to the river,

jumped into a boat and ordered the hands to pull with all speed for the river’s mouth of the river

those who remained at Astoria watched the entrance to the river

anxious to know if they would be greeting a friend or fighting an enemy

anxiety became intense until an American flag was seen on the ship

shouts of joy and cannon salutes thundered from the post

Duncan McDougall was seen to go aboard the ship where he stayed until late afternoon

Astorians along the river bank watched with straining eyes as the sun went down

evening was near before the ship was seen to be the *Albatross* under Captain William Smith

just arrived from the Hawaiian Islands and carrying Wilson Price Hunt

shecame to anchor across the Columbia River from Astoria and fired a return salute

Duncan McDougall came ashore accompanied by Wilson Price Hunt

who was greeted like someone returning from the dead

WILSON PRICE HUNT LEARNS OF PLANS TO ABANDON ASTORIA

When Wilson Price Hunt learned of the decision of Duncan McDougall and Donald McKenzie

to abandon the Pacific Fur Company enterprise he was extremely exasperated -- August 20, 1813

but events had moved far beyond any possibility to oppose the decision

Hunt’s own experiences had been discouraging and the amount of John Jacob Astor’s money

that had been required to maintain the enterprise was far greater than Hunt thought acceptable

little by little Hunt came to accept the partners’ decision

his only concern now was that Astor lose no more money

(Hunt did not understand the vast amounts of money that Astor was willing to invest)

HUNT MAKES ARRANGEMENTS TO SAIL TO THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

There were a large numbers of furs at Astoria which needed to go to market

and there were twenty-five Kanakas (Hawaiians) who needed to be returned to their homeland

as had been agreed to in their contract with the Pacific Fur Company

it was obvious a ship was necessary

but *Albatross* was already under contract to carry sandalwood to Canton, China

by way of the Marqueas Islands and the Hawaiian Islands

she could not be used to carry Americans to a safe port on the Eastern seaboard

Duncan McDougall agreed that Hunt would accompany the *Albatross* to the Sandwich Islands

to deliver the Kanakas to their homeland

Hunt would acquire another ship and return to Astoria by {January 1, 1814] if possible

bringing supplies and provisions to the post for the voyage to the east coast

if something happened to Hunt, it was proposed that Nor’Wester John George McTavish

be allowed to hire all the Astorians the North West Company could afford to pay

North West Company would be reimbursed these expenses from goods at Astoria

it was further decided that these arrangements, if they became necessary,

would be negotiated by Duncan McDougall

WILSON PRICE HUNT SAILS FOR THE MARQUEAS AND HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

Captain William Smith agreed to carry Wilson Price Hunt back to the Sandwich Islands

where he could make arrangements for another ship to return to Astoria

while the *Albatross* proceeded on to the Marqueas Islands

Hunt was expected to sail back to the Columbia River with a new ship sometime in [January 1814]

Astorians could then take passage to the East coast after filling the Pacific Fur Company

contract for supplies with the Russians at New Archangel

However, disappointed so many times before, the Astorians had little confidence in this plan

an option was negotiated by Duncan McDougall and the others: **“Having already experienced so many unforeseen disasters in the prosecution of our plans and Human life being so uncertain, it is hereby agreed and concluded that Wilson Price Hunt draw three sets of exchange on John Jacob Astor of New York to the amount of $20,000 to be left with Duncan McDougall in case of being disappointed in said Wilson Price Hunt’s return, to meet the demands of our people at St. Louis or elsewhere.”[[125]](#footnote-125)**

once Hunt had sailed to Hawaii, McDougall was in full command of Astoria **“…to conclude any arrangements we may be able to make with whoever may come forward on the part of the North West Company.”[[126]](#footnote-126)**

In an effort to save what he could, Hunt departed from Astoria on the *Albatross*

after a visit of only six days at Astoria -- August 26, 1813

bound for the Hawaiian Islands by way of the Marqueas Islands

to take home thirty-two Kanakas (Hawaiians)

and find another ship for Wilson Price Hunt

JOHN REED’S PARTY CONTINUES UP THE SNAKE RIVER

John Reed, his nine Astorians along with Marie Dorion and her two children

and two independent American fur trappers reached a large Shoshone village on the Snake River

Less than a month after leaving the Columbia River

Reed’s party arrived at Caldron Linn -- September 1813

there the remaining contents of the two or three caches left by Wilson Price Hunt

that had not been disturbed were retrieved

Reed then led this party to the Malheur River area of the Snake River plains today’s eastern Oregon)

ALEXANDER ROSS REACHES FORT OKANOGAN

Alexander Ross expected to spend (winter) on the Okanogan River without rivals -- September 1813

he was surprised by the unannounced arrival of some seventy-five Nor’Westers headed to Astoria

with the summer supply brigade

they were led by Alexander Henry the Younger, John Stuart and James Keith

they had journeyed from North West Company headquarters at Fort William [July 1813]

Nor’Westers carried copies of newspapers dated [June 1813]

that carried stories of American defeat after defeat to both the British and the Canadians

Alexander Henry the Younger had succeeded in luring Astor’s partner John Clarke

who had closed McKenzie’s Post on the Clearwater River

into joining North West Company with promises of a quick promotion

NORTH WEST COMPANY SUPPLY BRIGADE REACHES COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT

Alexander Ross expected to spend (winter) on the Okanogan River without rivals -- September 1813

he was surprised by the unannounced arrival of the summer supply brigade

of some seventy-five Nor’Westers headed to Astoria

they were led by Alexander Henry the Younger, John Stuart and James Keith

and had journeyed from North West Company headquarters at Fort William

Nor’Westers carried copies of newspapers dated [June 1813]

that carried stories of American defeat after defeat to both the British and the Canadians

JOHN REED’S ASTORIANS CONSTRUCT A BUILDING ALONG THE MALHEUR RIVER

John Reed was instructed to trap and trade on the Snake River plains along the Malheur River

Reed directed construction of a house along the Boise River as a (winter) shelter -- September 1813

located between Bully Creek and Willow Creek (near today’s Vale, Oregon)

his party of Astorians was composed of French-Canadian voyageurs Francis Landry,

Jean Baptiste Turcotte, Andre la Chapelle and Gilles Le Clerc

hunters Pierre Delaunay and Pierre Dorion with his wife Marie and their two children

and Kentuckians Edward Robinson, John Hoback and Jacob Reznor

while the others were out trapping Reed and one other man usually remained at the post

with Marie Dorion and her sons Baptiste and Paul

Natives in the area had a reputation as being friendly

but when the Reed Party arrived they became troublesome

these Indians asked for guns and ammunition which Reed refused to provide

because of two hostile acts committed by the natives:

•Andre La Chapelle had his great-coat stolen from him,

•an arrow was sunk into the flank of one of the horses

Reed’s expedition was forced to relocate

as good judgment dictated they move from this location -- Astorians’ house was abandoned

(it was later burned by the natives)

JOHN REED AND HIS PARTY BUILD REED’S POST ON THE BOISE RIVER

John Reed led his six Astorians and three Kentuckians

accompanied by Marie Dorion and her two children away from the Malheur River

back up the Snake River to the mouth of the Boise River

there Reed and his men worked with a will to build another house -- Reed’s Post

on the banks of the Snake River near the mouth of the Boise River

(in the vicinity of present-day Caldwell, Idaho)

JOHN REED’S POST ALONG THE BOISE RIVER IS COMPETED

John Reed’s Boise River post served as base for a (fall and winter hunt) on the Snake River plains

it served as protection for the trappers, their trade goods and supplies

his party of Astorians was composed of hunters Pierre Dorion and Pierre Delaunay

voyageurs Francis Landry, Jean-Baptiste Turcotte, Andre La Chapelle

and Gilles Le Clerc

and Kentuckians Edward Robinson, John Hoback and Jacob Reznor

as usual Dorion was accompanied by his wife and two children Baptiste and Paul

Parties of trappers were sent out to search for potential locations to establish remote trapping camps

Pierre Delaunay who was by disposition sullen, mean and moody set out alone

(he was not heard from again)

Marie Dorion managed the base camp while the men were gone sometimes for days at a time

she cooked and dressed pelts, made and mended clothing and took care of her two boys

friendly Shoshone Indians often visited the Astorians at their post

DONALD “FATS” McKENZIE RETURNS TO ASTORIA

Donald McKenzie had led a party of four hunters, two clerks and six laborers to Wallace House

at Champoeg in the Willamette Valley to acquire supplies for the Astorians remaining at Astoria

this plan worked very well and McKenzie successfully hunted for food to sustain Astoria

McKenzie set out from Champoeg with two clerks

traveling down the Willamette River to the Columbia River -- October 2, 1813

they continued down the Columbia toward Astoria

ASTORIANS AND NOR’WESTERS MAKE CAMP

Both the Astorians and the Nor’Westers made camp together that night -- October 5, 1813

leaders of the two expeditions maintained a friendly atmosphere

although the North West Company voyageurs were less polite

they anticipated a British invasion of Astoria and the conquering of the Pacific Northwest

during the evening Donald McKenzie met secretly with his clerks

they decided to quietly break camp before daylight to rush to inform Duncan McDougall

McKenzie’s plan failed the next morning when they were joined by the ever-alert McTavish

accompanied by two North West Company clerks and eleven men

this vanguard was to travel to Astoria leaving the remaining Nor’Westers behind

to await orders and protect their large quantity of furs ready to be shipped to market

with his scheme shattered Donald McKenzie and John George McTavish

both set out down the Columbia River on their way to Astoria

NOR’WESTER JOHN GEORGE McTAVISH ARRIVES AT ASTORIA

John George McTavish with his two clerks and eleven voyageurs reached Astoria -- October 7, 1813

so sudden an arrival of so many Nor’Westers stunned Duncan McDougall and the Astorians

(McTavish had previously visited Astoria [April 1813] and had stayed several months

awaiting the arrival of North West Company ship *Isaac Todd* and her military escort)

this time they expected the North West Company merchant ship *Isaac Todd*

and her escort ship to already be at the mouth of the Columbia River

Pacific Fur Company clerk Gabriel Franchere recorded the arrival of the Nor’Westers: **“Mr McTavish visited us and gave us a letter addressed to him by Mr A**[ngus] **Shaw, one of the agents of the North West Company, in which this gentleman informed him that the Isaac Todd had sailed last March** [1813] **from London in company with the English frigate Phoebe, which was coming under government orders for the express purpose of taking possession of our post, which had been represented to the Lords of the Admiralty as a colony established by the American government on the banks of the Columbia River”[[127]](#footnote-127)**

John George McTavish’s thirteen Nor’Westers set up camp outside the walls of Astoria

under the Pacific Fur Company’s guns where they raised the British colors

McTavish and his men took on the airs of invaders

some of the North West Company voyageurs could not help chuckling

that soon the British would be in control of Astoria

and the Americans would be driven out of the country

COMMANDER DUNCAN McDOUGALL EXPLAINS THE SITUATION TO HIS ASTORIANS

Astoria Commander Duncan McDougall read the letter from Angus Shaw carried by McTavish

Shaw was McDougall’s uncle and a principal partner in the North West Company Shaw had reported the coming of the *Isaac Todd* and HMS *Phoebe*

**“to take and destroy everything American on the northwest coast.”[[128]](#footnote-128)**

Astoria Commander Duncan McDougall believed this was a disaster for the Astorians

as everything could be lost to the British

Astor’s partners and employees were themselves almost all British subjects

and former North West Company employees

even so, the Americans working at Astoria were greatly insulted

by the British flag flying outside of their post

they were also disturbed by the offensive actions of the Nor’Westers

these patriotic Americans were not frightened by the proposed arrival of British ships

because they would have to anchor many miles from Astoria and any boats sent to invade

could easily be destroyed by Astoria’s cannons -- after all there was a war going on

Astor’s employees at Astoria wanted to nail the American colors to the flagpole

but Pacific Fur Company Commander Duncan McDougall forbid the gesture

STATUS OF ASTORIA HAS CHANGED

With Pacific Fur Company Commander Wilson Price Hunt gone from Astoria once again

Astor’s partners at the post Duncan McDougall, Donald Mackenzie and John Clarke

were in a predicament because the Pacific Fur Company had already been dissolved

all that remained was the stock of trading goods, supplies, furs and the posts

if the British war ships arrived it would not be necessary for the Nor’Westers

to give the Americans anything at all for the Astorians’ assets

those Astorians remaining at the post had expected to wait behind their fortified walls

and enjoy a quiet (winter) before leaving for St. Louis [July 1, 1814]

these plans were now dashed by the arrival of Nor’Wester John George McTavish

if the British war ships arrived the Nor’Westers would simply capture Astoria

and take possession of all Pacific Fur Company assets and trading posts

Commander Duncan McDougall was a man who always viewed the darkest side of any situation

once again he was stampeded by the first hint of trouble

JOHN GEORGE McTAVISH MAKES AN OFFER TO BUY OUT THE PACIFIC FUR COMPANY

John George McTavish knew he could not stay long in his exposed camp under the guns of Astoria

he was low on supplies -- food shortages forced him to purchase provisions from the Astorians

also the Nor’Westers were protected from the Indians by the guns and good will of the Astorians

Nor’Wester John George McTavish approached the Duncan McDougall -- October 8, 1813

McTavish felt the *Isaac Todd* and HMS *Phoebe* were due to arrive at any moment

McTavish made what he believed was a reasonable offer to John Jacob Astor’s partners at Astoria

he would buy all of the holdings of the Pacific Fur Company including Astoria,

Fort Okanagan on the Columbia River, Fort Spokane on the Spokane River,

and small outposts on the Clearwater, Clark Fork, Kootenai and Thompson rivers

everything from kitchen utensils and blacksmith tools, to furs and buildings

at a price approximately ten per cent above cost

salaries of the Pacific Fur Company employees would be paid and jobs provided

for those men who decided to switch allegiance to the Nor’Westers

McTavish’s argument was simple: why risk death and destruction

ASTORIANS CONSIDER NOR’WESTER JOHN GEORGE McTAVISH’S PROPOSAL

Partners Donald Mackenzie and John Clarke empowered Astoria Commander Duncan McDougall

to negotiate the terms of sale of the Pacific Fur Company

in the event Wilson Price Hunt did not return from the Hawaiian Islands

in time to save the post for Astor

Duncan McDougall refused McTavish’s offer and proposed terms better for the Astorians

but not at a price high enough to satisfy Astor’s other partners

John George McTavish refused to negotiate with the Astorians -- October 8, 1813

he insisted on his offer was the only proposal he would accept

REMAINDER OF JOHN GEORGE McTAVISH’S NOR’WESTERS ARRIVE AT ASTORIA

North West Company fleet of canoes from the confluence of the Walla Walla and Columbia rivers

arrived at Astoria where they joined John George McTavish’s camp outside the walls of Astoria

Another round of negotiations was undertaken with the Nor’Westers assuming the role of victors

Astorians watched the scene with indignation and impatience

they were disgusted with the attitude of the Nor’Westers

and with Duncan McDougall who they felt was both disloyal and spineless

instead of remaining inside Astoria and receiving counter-offers

he continually visited the Nor’Westers’ camp outside the walls of Astoria

DUNCAN McDOUGALL BELIEVES THE SITUATION AT ASTORIA IS HOPELESS

Duncan McDougall convened a meeting of Astor’s partners and clerks to discuss how to proceed

in dealing with Nor’Wester John George McTavish -- October 9, 1813

In spite of escalating complications they faced most of the Americans at Astoria

and some of the French-Canadians (and many later students of history)

felt the Astorians should have put up a fight

counting their Chinook allies, the Astorians’ force was at least as strong

as their rivals who were short of food

it was obvious the anticipated British warship could be easily evaded by loading their furs

into canoes and retreating to an unnavigable tributary of the Columbia River

where a large British warship could not enter

ASTORIANS AND NOR’WESTERS COME TO AN UNDERSTANDING REGARDING ASTORIA

Duncan McDougall and Donald McKenzie were determined to abandon the Pacific Fur Company

and cross the Rocky Mountains to St. Louis (they planned to depart July 1, 1814)

Both McDougall and McKenzie felt they needed to reach a quick decision

to their minds the safest course was to sell out to the North West Company

McDougall told John George McTavish that much remained to be settled -- October 12, 1813

there are two clues as to why the Astorians seriously considered the Nor’Westers’ offer

Gabriel Franchere noted in his diary: **“Situated as we were expecting every day to see a warship arrive to deprive us of what little we had, we listened to those proposals and after several consultations set a price upon our furs and our remaining merchandise.”[[129]](#footnote-129)**

Duncan McDougall in his will [1817] stated he hoped it might be known: **“…how much and how unjustly my character and reputation has suffered and been injured by the malicious and ungenerous conduct of some of my late associates in the later Pacific Fur Company -- And I here declare in the most solemn manner that I did every thing in my power to do the utmost justice to the trust and confidence reposed in me by John Jacob Astor.…and the charge that devolved upon me in consequence of Wilson Price Hunt’s absence, agreeable of and in conformity with the resolves of the Company, passed and signed by my associates and myself in the months of June, July, and August 1813, and the meaning and tenor of our agreement with aforementioned John Jacob Astor.”[[130]](#footnote-130)**

BARGAINING CONTINUES THE NEXT DAY

Duncan McDougall and John George McTavish continued to negotiate -- October 13, 1813

discussions quickly sank into a mire to accusations and protests

As was to be expected the main problem was the price

goods and furs had to be inventoried and priced prices and arrangements made for the employees

McDougall was willing to sell, but only at a high rate

he demanded full New York and Montreal prices -- McTavish demanded discounts

McTavish promptly left the post in a huff and returned to his camp outside the walls

DUNCAN McDOUGALL AND DONALD McKENZIE HIT ON A SCHEME

McDougall and McKenzie became so provoked by the superior attitude of John George McTavish

that they devised a plan to bring matters to a head

Astorians closed the gates of their post and manned the bastions

they trained the post’s guns on John George McTavish’s camp of Nor’Westers

Astorians sent a message giving the Nor’Westers a choice

close the sale in two hours or move to other quarters and get off Astor’s property

John George McTavish had no intention of retaliating to the threat

as the post’s defenses made such a venture foolhardy

besides Duncan McDougall’s recent marriage to Chief Comcomly’s daughter

made the Indians a strong possible ally to the Americans

also, McTavish wanted to conclude the sale before (winter) arrived

ASTOR’S SUPPLY SHIP *LARK* APPROACHES THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

*Lark* approached the Hawaiian Islands but was not yet in sight of land as a gale sprang up

which blew with tremendous violence buffeting the ship -- October 13, 1813

mountains of water swept over the ship causing her to roll over on her side

orders were given by Captain Samuel Northrup to cut away the masts

but in the confusion the boats were also cut adrift and all of the hatch covers were removed

as recalled by Captain Samuel Northrop, **“The Ship was almost keelout. Being destitute of experienced officers and a greate parte** [sic] **of the Crew young and unacquainted with any kind of Seaman Ship** [sic]**, we ware** [sic] **in greate Confusion and disorder”[[131]](#footnote-131)**

when the hulk was righted *Lark* was full of water with heavy seas washing over her

she was kept afloat only by a number of casks of rum in the hold

When the masts had been cut away and began floating the rigging held them close to the ship

*Lark* lay on her side rolling in the heavy waves with masts and spars banging against her

half drowned crewmen clung to the floating masts or stood on debris in water up to their waists

being beaten against the ship by the sea and unable to escape

one man was missing and was later found drowned under the forecastle (front deck)

*Lark* filled with water until her superstructure alone was above water

*Lark* eventually was righted but she was mostly under water

she remained in this condition for four days and nights

sailors dared not sleep for fear they would let go and be swept away

the only dry place on the ship was the bowsprit and they took turns being tied to it

for half an hour at a time -- this was the only opportunity for sleep

Survivors using broken spars finally succeeded in building a make-shift platform

that were pieced together into a deck out of reach of the waves

so they could keep themselves dry and sleep comfortably

(this became a precarious perch for the crewmen for sixteen days)

*Lark’s* first mate died at his post and was swept away by the surging ocean -- October 14, 1813

TALKS REGARDING OWNERSHIP OF ASTORIA AND THE OTHER POSTS CONTINUE

Still no supply ship *Isaac Todd* or British war ship were to be seen

uncertainty now began to afflict the Nor’Westers

suppose American ships had swept the sea clear of all British shipping

Both Astorians and Nor’Westers met again to settle accounts -- October 14, 1813

once again John George McTavish took on the role of conqueror

expecting the Americans to become the vanquished

once again North West Company proposals were received with indignation and impatience

by all of Astor’s partners -- with the exception of Duncan McDougall

YET ANOTHER ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS REGARDING THE FUTURE OF ASTORIA OPENS

Donald McKenzie and John Clarke pointed out the Astorians’ position was far from desperate

Astorians could hold out for their own terms in the negotiations

they were well housed and had ample provisions

they had sixty armed men with ammunition, boats and everything necessary

to defend themselves or to retreat

if an enemy might appear they could pack up the most valuable part of their property

and move to some place to hide -- or escape into the interior

Nor’Westers, on the other hand, were camped under the guns of the Astorians’ post

they had little ammunition and few goods to trade with the Indians for provisions

they were so destitute they had to be fed from the Astorians’ store of food

even as John George McTavish negotiated the purchase of Pacific Fur Company assets they could hold out for better terms as the Astorians possessed food and trade goods,

Nor’Wester McTavish proposed an interesting bargain to Astorian Duncan McDougall

McTavish offered to purchase necessary supplies from the Astorians for $858 to be paid

in horses or any other goods acceptable to Astor’s four partners the following (spring)

Duncan McDougall chose to ignore the facts pointed out by McKenzie and Clarke

he lowered his asking price to meet that proposed by Nor’Wester John George McTavish

in addition both sides also agreed that during the coming weeks

they would not compete against each other when trading with the natives

DUNCAN McDOUGALL AGREES TO JOHN GEORGE McTAVISH’S TERMS

Passage home for the Kanakas (Hawaiians) was the last item to be arranged

John George McTavish promised North West Company would pay their passage and wages

each Kanaka was to receive a new gun, supplies of powder and three pounds of tobacco

Negotiations were completed and an agreement was reached -- October 16, 1813

North West Company would take possession of the Pacific Fur Company’s Astoria,

Fort Spokane, Fort Okanogan their furs and merchandise for a little less than $40,000

Pacific Fur Company had sold seventeen thousand pounds of beaver

and two thousand other skins worth upwards of $100,000

North West Company would provide safe passage to all who desired to leave the country

and did not want to join with the Nor’Westers

back wages for the Astorians would be paid by the North West Company

with that expense deducted from the price paid for Astoria

total cost to the North West Company was $58,291.02

this was an absurd sum considering the advantages the North West Company was receiving:

•Russian trade alone was worth many times that amount;

•Astor placed the value of his holdings at $200,000:

-in real value the furs alone were worth in excess of $100,000,

-additional goods purchased were worth at least another $100,000

in the way of business, North West Company claimed a £3,000 loss

McTavish and McDougall also agreed not to reveal news about the War of 1812

to the neighboring Indians or the common laborers until the British warship arrived

Control of Astoria was transferred from American to British hands

Pacific Fur Company ceased to exist as the British flag was unfurled above the post

Pacific Fur Company would receive payment -- North West Company would gain the post

North West Company now had the coastal port they had long desired

Duplicate copies of the Bill of Sale of Pacific Fur Company to the North West Company were written

WRECKAGE OF THE *LARK* CLAIMS MORE VICTIMS

Two sailors, faint and exhausted were washed overboard -- October 17, 1813

but the waves threw their bodies back on the deck where they remained washing back and forth

a ghastly vision for the survivors

supercargo Nicholas G. Odgen called to the men nearest the bodies to fasten them to wreck

as a last horrible resource to ward off starvation if necessary

As the gale gradually subsided and the sea became calmer

sailors crawled feebly about the wreck clearing spars away -- October 17, 1813

anchors and cannons were thrown overboard and the bowsprint was rigged as a mast

waves continually broke over the *Lark* with such force the steersman had to be lashed to the helm

famine and thirst continued to take their toll on the men

these discomforts diminished when one Kanaka, an expert swimmer,

was able to enter the cabin and bring out a few bottles of wine

subsequent trips into the cabin resulted in rum and a quarter cask of wine being delivered

and a little raw pork was distributed among the sailors

TRANSFER OF ASTORIA TO THE NORTH WEST COMPANY IS COMPLETE

Duncan McDougall and his Astorians got down to the business of transferring Astoria

to the North West Company -- October 18, 1813

clerks prepared inventories of goods and supplies

all the trade goods including blankets, knives, beads, cotton fabrics

and foodstuffs such as brandy, gin, flour and rice were identified and recorded

John Jacob Astor had invested $400,000 -- most of the merchandise was gone

Duncan McDougall gave John George McTavish the keys to Astoria’s storehouse -- October 22, 1813 in reality, whoever controlled the storehouse controlled the future of the region

John George McTavish and his Nor’Westers broke camp

and prepared to occupy their newly purchased post

(Throughout the rest of 1813 the Astorians and Nor’Westers shared a common life

they enjoyed a great deal of visiting and socializing as they waited for the British warship

which Nor’Wester John George McTavish continually declared was expected daily)

SOME ASTORIANS ARE SUSPICIOUS REGARDING DUNCAN McDOUGALL’S INTENSTIONS

Duncan McDougall’s motives were strongly questioned by Astor’s other partners

they said he abused his position as commander

and sacrificed the interest of Astor and his partners

in the promise or hope of personally advancing in the North West Company

McDougall, however, insisted he had made the best bargain possible for John Jacob Astor

with the British frigate expected in the very near future -- then all would have been lost

(in fact, Duncan McDougall became a partner in the North West Company

he received a share in the company and a handsome income)

In the end, Astor’s partners agreed to terms unfavorable to Astor for several reasons:

•they had national ties with the other Scotsmen of the North West Company,

•there were personal conflicts among John Jacob Astor’s partners,

•there was a general feeling that Astor had insulted them by ignoring them

and would sacrifice them to the British

GAINS HAD BEEN MADE IN OREGON BY THE ASTORIANS BUT AT A HIGH COST

On the positive side:

•two parties, Wilson Price Hunt and Robert Stuart, had crossed the continent overland

by routes far different than that used by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark;

•after two years on the Okanogan and Spokane rivers vast regions had been thoroughly explored

as Astor’s men took out 140 packs of furs

they had become familiar with Eastern Washington, Northern Idaho

and southern British Columbia;

•Willamette Valley had been opened to trappers and traders in the area of Champoeg

On the negative side:

•John Jacob Astor had lost two ships -- *Tonquin* and *Lark;*

•altogether approximately sixty men had lost their lives:

-twenty-seven with the *Tonquin,*

-Snake River country claimed nine,

-eight crossing the Columbia River bar with Captain Thorn,

-the *Lark* took at least eight more,

-five with Wilson Price Hunt on the overland journey,

*-*three at Astoria,

-(one final victim lost his life just as the Americans were leaving for home)

TRAPPING COMPANY EMPLOYEES BECAME PERMANENT SETTLERS OF OREGON

Fourteen Astorians of the Pacific Fur Company remained permanently in Oregon:

Louis L. Bonte, William Canning (Cannon), Alexander Carson, (Kanaka) John Coxe,

Pierre Dorion, Marie Dorion, Jean Baptiste Dubreuil, Joseph Gervais, Michel Laframbois,

Etienne Lucier, Jean McKay, Farncois Payette, George Ramsey and “Sailor Jack”

Twenty North West Company men remained permanently in Oregon:

Andre Belanger, Alexis Bellant, Julian Bernier, Angus Bethune, Augustin Boisvert,

Jean Baptiste Bouchard, Michel Boullard, Antoine Cayalle, Joseph Cire, Michel Cotenoir,

Joseph Gailloux, William Henry, Francois Latour, Etienne Longtain, Louis Majeau,

Joseph Mochcomau, Antoine Moineau, Thomas Ocanasawaret, Amable Quesnel

and Charles Rondeau

REMAINS OF THE *LARK* MAKES SLOW PROGRESS UNDER A SCANTY SAIL

With the bowsprint jury-rigged as a mast the wreck of the *Lark* slowly drifted toward land for a week

numerous sharks swam about the *Lark* patiently waiting for their prey

when the cook died he was thrown overboard and was instantly seized -- October 24, 1813

Crewmen came within sight of the island of Maui about ten miles away -- October 25, 1813

this happy event was cloaked with fear as the sailors knew that when the ship struck the beach

it would be impossible to keep her from breaking up

their only hope was the reach land in native canoes and protect the wreckage

(for three more days they continued to drift within sight of the shore)

CREWMEN OF THE *LARK* SEE A CANOE APPROACHING

Sandwich Island natives came alongside the *Lark*

and brought a supply of potatoes -- October 28, 1813

*Lark’s* second mate and a sailor went ashore in a of the canoe for water and provisions

and to get help from the natives in towing the wreck into a harbor

neither of the men returned nor was any assistance sent from shore

MORE NATIVES CANOES PADDLE OUT TO THE *LARK*

Ten or twelve canoes came alongside but they simply roamed around the wreck like the sharks

they would give no help in towing the remains of the stricken ship to land -- October 29, 1813

Wreckage of the *Lark* finally reached the shore of (Maui) where all of the remaining sailors

were able to scramble to the safety of the beach -- however, at least eight men had perished

all of the survivors were immediately surrounded by the natives and stripped almost naked

Wreckage of the *Lark* drifted ashore throughout the night

numerous casks of provisions floated on the tide

these were collected by the natives who wanted the iron hoops

members of the crew were not allowed to gather the contents or to go on board the wreck

When he got the opportunity supercargo Nicholas G. Odgen managed to slip away

and make his way to the island of Oahu where he made arrangements with the Hawaiian king

to assist his unfortunate companions

however, the wreck of the *Lark* had to be given to the king

this demand was agreed to by Mr. Ogden

SOME OF JOHN REED’S MEN ESTABLISH A SMALLER OUTPOST

John Reed and his party of trappers accompanied by Marie Dorion and her two sons

had settled into Reed’s Post on Snake River near the mouth of the Boise River

(in the vicinity of today’s Caldwell, Idaho)

Pierre Dorion, Giles Le Clerc and Jacob Reznor traveled up the Boise River

about five days distance from Reed’s Post to an area well stocked with beaver

they constructed a rude hut in this remote area and proceeded to work a beaver trap line

WILSON PRICE HUNT ARRIVES IN THE MARQUESAS ISLANDS

Hunt had only just arrived in the Marquesas Islands -- November 15, 1813

when the islands were visited by the America war ship *Essex* under Captain David Porter

who had made a sweeping cruise of the Pacific Ocean

he brought with him a number of London whalers as prizes of war

Captain Porter gave Wilson Price Hunt alarming news that the British frigate *Phoebe*

was accompanying a British supply ship mounted with cannons to attack Astoria

this ship was sailing from Rio de Janeiro accompanied by sloops-of-war

*Cherub* and *Raccoon* bound for the mouth of the Columbia River

Wilson Price Hunt became very concerned about the safety of Astoria

he had been eager to remove all of the property there with as little loss as possible

now it appeared the whole venture would be captured by the British Navy

it would be impossible to charter a ship in the Hawaiian Islands

when word the invasion was delivered to the islanders by Captain Porter

Hunt offered to purchase one of the whaling ships brought in by Captain Porter

but the American captain demanded $25,000-- an impossibly high price

Captain Porter did tell Hunt he would sail the *Essex* to Astoria if the situated was warranted

but Porter was not sure that action would ever be warranted

MORE NORTH WEST COMPANY MEN ARRIVE AT ASTORIA

North West Company partners Alexander Henry the Younger and Alexander Stewart accompanied by

John Stuart, clerk James Keith and eighteen men of the Nor’Westers’ supply brigade

traveling by canoe across the continent from Fort William on the shores of Lake Superior

arrived at Astoria -- November 15, 1813

John Stuart was the same explorer who had been with Simon Fraser

on the first waterborne voyage of the Tacoutche-Tesse (Fraser River)

Alexander Henry the Younger’s party had been instructed to travel down the Columbia River

to assist Nor’Wester John George McTavish at Astoria

Alexander Henry was quite surprised to learn the *Isaac Todd* had not yet arrived

Pacific Fur Company clerk Gabriel Franchere recorded their arrival: **“They brought us some Canadian newspapers, from which we learned that to date British arms had had the advantage. They also confirm the news that a frigate was to come to seize our former establishment and they even seemed surprised not to see the Isaac Todd in the roadstead.”[[132]](#footnote-132)**

Alexander Henry the Younger found John Gorge McTavish

and his party of Nor’Westers at Astoria

both the Nor’Westers and the Astorians were running low on trade goods

Nor’Westers anxiously awaited the arrival of their supply ship and her armed escort

all the time fearing the sudden appearance of an American warship

Meanwhile, the Astorians found themselves in limbo

it was impossible to estimate whether an American ship might reach the Columbia River

anytime soon to carry them back to New York and it was too late in the fall

to attempt to cross the Rocky Mountains

Nor’Westers had agreed that their former rivals could remain in their posts (until spring)

when the overland route to the United States would be open

Nor’Westers hired several Astorian clerks and workers for their expanded operations

WILSON PRICE HUNT REMAINS STRANDED IN THE MARQUESAS ISLANDS

*Albatross* remained in the Marquesas Islands conducting business

while Wilson Price Hunt grew increasingly concerned and frustrated

*Albatross* finally set sail for the Hawaiian Islands -- November 23, 1813

Hunt continued to hope that John Jacob Astor had sent another supply ship

that would stop in Hawaii to deliver him to Astoria

MYSTRY SHIP IS SIGHTED ENTERING BAKER BAY

Nervous Astorians and anxious Nor’Westers had been keeping a close eye

on the mouth of the Columbia River for a ship

Confusion at Astoria became complete -- November 30, 1813

Joseph Ashton reported the vessel fired no signal guns and she was flying a white ensign

this flag was used by both British and American ships

if she was American privateer she would bolster the American presence on the Columbia

and what would be the status of North West Company’s newly-acquired possession

if she was British where was her accompanying ship

Nor’Westers wondered how they would explain to the captain

that Astoria had been purchased and the ship’s voyage was unnecessary

Whoever’s ship she was bad weather kept her anchored isolated in Baker Bay

DUNCAN McDOUGALL AND JOHN GEORGE McTAVISH WORK OUT A PLAN

Duncan McDougall, who at least nominally remain in charge of Astoria,

launched a canoe manned by himself and former Astorians John Halsey, Joseph Ashton

and several others -- mid-morning November 30, 1813

they paddled for the ship and were to tell the captain they were either American or British

depending on the nationality of the ship

As an added precaution, Nor’Wester John George McTavish hastily filled two canoes

with furs and supplies and scurried them to safety up the Columbia River

out of sight behind Tongue Point three miles up the river

there he waited for a signal from McDougall indicating the nationality of the ship

if she was British all was well for the Nor’Westers

if American McTavish would have a head start to carry the furs to the interior

CAPTAIN WILLIAM BLACK ANNOUNCES HIS ARRIVAL

*Raccoon*, *Cherub* and *Phoebe* provided a military escort for North West Company’s *Isaac Todd*

Captain William Black had orders to destroy any American settlements on the Pacific Coast

*Raccoon* arrived ahead of the others

Captain Black dispatched an armed cutter to the fort to find a place to tie off

*Raccoon’s* cutter had not proceeded very far when a large birchbark canoe approached

carrying Duncan McDougall, chief agent of Astor’s Pacific Fur Company

McDougall was ushered aboard the ship

Captain Black reported North West Company Partner John McDonald of Garth

was aboard the *Raccoon* -- he was to take charge of Astoria for the North West Company

also being carried as a passenger was the Kanaka (Hawaiian) John Coxe

who had boarded the ship in London and had returned to Astoria

because he was familiar with the Columbia River bar he acted as pilot

About 9:30 that night, the air was filled with songs, shouts and the splash of canoe paddles

John Halsey and several of the Astorians returned -- all were too drunk on wine to give details

but they did identify the ship as the British sloop-of-war HMS *Raccoon*

with twenty-six guns and 120 men commanded by Captain William Black

and carrying North West Company partner John McDonald of Garth

and John Coxe an old friend of the Astorians

*Raccoon*’s mission and the location of the *Isaac Todd* remained unknown at the post

SAILORS ON THE *RACCOON* ANCHOREDIN BAKER BAY WERE IN HIGH SPIRITS

North West Company agents had talked to the British sailors about vast amounts of contraband

that would become theirs with the capture of Astoria

Nor’Wester John McDonald of Garth had kept up the excitement during the voyage

When they learned a war-like attack was impossible because Astoria was already British property

by right of purchase their deep disappointment was obvious

Duncan McDougall who had sold Astoria to the North West Company

became so uncomfortable aboard the *Raccoon* that he was very happy to go ashore

CHINOOK INDIANS ARE PREPARED TO STAND BY THEIR ASTORIA ALLIES

Chinook Chief Comcomly had seen the arrival of the “big war canoe” flying the British flag

he knew of the war between the United State and Britain but did not know Astoria had been sold

he thought the Astorians remained trading partners with the Chinooks because

of the arrangement cemented by Duncan McDougall’s marriage to the chief’s daughter

BAD WEATHER KEEPS THE *RACOON* AWAY FROM ASTORIA’S WHARF

However, a longboat reached Astoria -- December 1, 1813

in the longboat was North West Company Partner John McDonald of Garth

and the first mate of the *Raccoon*

both men were suffering from serious burns received in a cannon mishap

John McDonald of Garth explained how the *Raccoon* had arrived at Astoria before the *Isaac Todd*

CHINOOK CHIEF COMCOMLY COMES TO THE AID OF HIS FRIENDS

Duncan McDougall was busy making preparations for the arrival of Captain William Black

this flurry of activity at Astoria which was not missed by Comcomly

McDougall’s father-in-law, one-eyed Chinook Chief Comcomly, appeared in a canoe in full war dress

accompanied by Chinook warriors painted and equipped in a warlike style -- December 5, 1813

Comcomly was prepared to defend the Astorians from the British invaders

in a long speech he professed great fondness for the Americans and he declared his intentions

he offered 800 warriors to fight any British ship to come along

Comcomly noted: **“King George has sent his great canoe to destroy the fort, and make slaves of all the inhabitants. Shall we suffer it? The Americans are the first white men that have fixed themselves in the land. They have treated us like brothers. Their great chief has taken my daughter to be his** [wife]**: we are, therefore, as one people.”[[133]](#footnote-133)**

Comcomly offered to kill every one of King George’s men if they attempted to land

he suggested the best approach was the ambush the new ship

Comcomly’s son-in-law Duncan McDougall assured the Chinook chief

that wholesale slaughter would not be necessary much to Comcomly’s shock and dismay

he told the chief to lay down their weapons and wash off their war paint

King George’s men would not harm the Americans or their Indian friends

Comcomly was confused by the situation and it was only after repeated assurances

that he said something to his warriors who shrugged and returned to their village

to lay down their weapons -- at least for the present

CHIEF COMCOMLY CHANGES ALLIES

Rough weather continued to keep Captain William Black and his crew aboard the *Raccoon*

Chief Comcomly was cagey enough to be aware of the new inferior position

his son-in-law Duncan McDougall and his daughter shared

Comcomly visited the ship and talked with Captain Black expressing his admiration

for British ships and speaking contemptuously of the Americans

Captain Black gave the chief an old British flag, a laced coat, a cocked hat and a sword

as a token of friendship

ASTORIA PASSES INTO THE HANDS OF THE BRITISH

Rough weather had kept the British sailors aboard the *Raccoon*

finally, Astoria’s little boat *Dolly* was able to ferry Captain William Black

across the Columbia River with an escort of officers, sailors and marines

Captain Black landed with a military flare at dusk -- December 12, 1813

landing in the dark spared Captain Black the knowledge that Astoria

was not a well armed post protecting the Columbia River

which he had been prepared to destroy by bombardment if necessary

he and his men stumbled profanely over rocks and driftwood

and through puddles of rain water before they entered Astoria

Although Captain William Black knew Astoria now belonged to the North West Company

he insisted on taking formal possession of the post -- December 12, 1813

he entered Astoria and organized a proper ceremony

traders, military men, voyageurs and Kanakas assembled with their weapons

around a newly constructed flagstaff in the square

Captain Black took possession of Astoria in his Britannic Majesty King George III’s name

he lowered the Stars and Stripes and ran the British Union Jack up the flagpole

in a dramatic gesture, Black smashed a bottle of Madeira (dessert wine) against the pole

he changed the name of the post from Astoria to “Fort George” to show British ownership

Black claimed the post and the surrounding country by right of wartime conquest

three rounds of artillery and musket fire punctuated three cheers

Indians who had offered to fight the British were present to witness

cheers, toasts and artillery salutes by Nor’Westers and Astorians alike

it was explained to them that this was a friendly transfer of ownership

but they shook their heads grimly and considered their American friends defeated

Comcomly was heard to mutter the Americans had sold themselves into slavery without a fight

the chief no longer took pride in being Duncan McDugall’s father-in-law

whenever he was asked about his son-in-law

he replied that his daughter had made a mistake

Kanaka John Coxe only recently returned from London stayed on at the now renamed Fort George

with what remained of the original group of Astorians

NEXT MORNING REVEALED THE TRUTH ABOUT THE POST ON THE COLUMBIA RIVER

New arrivals looked at Astoria, now Fort George, in the light of day -- December 13, 1813

North West Company Governor John McDonald of Garth was disappointed

he saw **“only a few stores and barracks surrounded by a few imperfect stockades with two or three swivels mounted near the gate.”[[134]](#footnote-134)**

Captain William Black was extremely shocked and unhappy with his prize

after hearing descriptions of the weapons he would have to employ to destroy Astoria

he had expected to find a place of importance

when he saw only stockades and bastions designed to defend against natives

he turned to Duncan McDougall and asked if this was the “real”fort

when told it was, he nearly doubled over with laughter: **“What, is this the fort I have heard so much of? Great God, I could batter it down with a four-pounder in two hours!”[[135]](#footnote-135)**

When Captain Black learned the value of the furs that had passed from the Pacific Fur Company

to the North West Company he was outraged and insisted on an inventory

he viewed the sale of the property as a clever act on the part of the Americans

since no prize remained for him to take

anger raged among the crew members -- all had been denied the spoils of war

they had hoped to confiscate the post’s stores and furs as plunder

However, the mood lightened considerably when Comcomly sailed across the Columbia River

to the trading post in full uniform flying the Union Jack

WILSON PRICE HUNT REACHES THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

Wilson Price Hunt had sailed on the *Albatross* from the Marquesas Islands

he arrived in the Hawaiian Islands -- December 20, 1813

where he expected to find a supply ship sent by John Jacob Astor

instead, he learned of the wreck of the *Lark* commanded by Captain Samuel Northrup

rushing to the island of Maui he picked up the survivors

Wilson Price Hunt purchased the merchant brig *Pedler* for $10,000 using John Jacob Astor’s money

Hunt placed Captain Northrup formerly of the *Lark* in command of the ship

DUNCAN McDOUGALL BECOMES A NORTH WEST COMPANY PARTNER

McDougall signed a secret agreement with John George McTavish making the former Astorian

a partner in the North West Company -- December 23, 1813

McDougall told his new associates all he knew of John Jacob Astor’s plans

he even made copies of Astor’s business letters for them to read

SEVERAL EMPLOYEES OF BOTH COMPANIES BECAME FREE TRAPPERS

Former Astorians John Day, William Canning (or Cannon), and Alexander Carson

worked together as free trappers along the Willamette River

as did former North West Company employee Registre Bellaire

they had ended their relationship with their former employers -- winter of 1813-1814

LORD SELKIRK’S COLONISTS RETURN ONCE AGAIN TO FORT DAER

(An inadequate harvest forced Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk’s Red River colonists

to travel back to Fort Daer [located near today’s Pembina, North Dakota -- autumn 1813])

Snow fell thickly and lay in heavy drifts and buffalo migrated to better grazing regions

North West Company sold the Hudson’s Bay Company colonists a few provisions

at the same time Nor’Westers encouraged local Indians to harass the colonists

Fort Daer provided only extreme poverty -- many cases of frostbite were recorded

starving bodies were wrapped only in rags before (spring 1814) arrived

Red River Colony Governor Miles Macdonell had led his colonists well in spite of the harsh winter

he was determined to assert his authority under Lord Selkirk’s grant to establish a colony

he was inclined to be stubborn and arrogant in his dealings with the North West Company

HMS *RACCOON* SAILS AWAY FROM FORT GEORGE (ASTORIA)

As the rainy month of December 1813 wore away with no sign

of the North West Company supply ship *Isaac Todd*, Captain William Black lost patience

satisfied his duty was completed he sailed out of the Columbia River -- January 1, 1814

(actually, he had done his country a great disservice) by capturing a property

that was already British

Fort George was left in the possession of North West Company

which already owned the post, furs, supplies and trade goods

NORTH WEST COMPANY RELATIONS WITH THE COLUMBIA RIVER NATIVES IS TENUOUS

North West Company had not developed any relationships with the Columbia River Indians

because the company’s employees were focused on acquiring the Pacific Fur Company’s posts

supplies, trade goods and employees

Indians along the Columbia River were aware their native enemies in the interior

were being armed and equipped by Nor’Westers while they were being passed by

as trade brigades traveled up and down the river

Indians living along the rapids and falls of the Columbia Cascades had long charged a toll

to pass through their country -- North West Company felt no need to pay

theft of trade goods along the portage routes was a well-developed source of Indian income

REMNANTS OF THE NORTH WEST COMPANY SUPPLY BRIGADE LEAVES FORT GEORGE

Two canoes loaded with fifteen people led by Alexander Stuart and James Keith

set out from Fort George -- January 3, 1814

they carried seventeen packs of pelt each, dispatches, fifty guns, ammunition

and other trade goods to the interior posts up the Columbia River

Stuart was to remain at Spokane House

Keith was to continue on to Kootanae House

MORALE IS LOW AT FORT GEORGE

Victory over the Astorians brought no satisfaction to those Nor’Westers

who remained in the Columbia Department -- morale collapsed completely

After watching the overland brigade paddle up the Columbia River

Alexander Henry the Younger, the North West Company partner left in charge of Fort George,

lamented to his journal. **“Here we are at the mercy of chance on a barbarous coast, among natives more inclined to murder us for our property than to assist us.”[[136]](#footnote-136)**

Henry, like his men, hated everything about Fort George

ODD DISCOVERY ALONG AN OREGON BEACH

From earliest remembrance beeswax has been found buried deep in the sand on Nehalem Beach

much of the wax was originally in blocks weighing about twenty pounds

each block was stamped with initials *I.H.S.* and *I.H.N.*

suggesting it was bound for West coast Catholic missions in California

in fact, the Spanish ship *San Jose* had disappeared [June 1769]

When Alexander Henry the Younger arrived as a leader of the North West Company Spring Brigade

he first saw the beeswax and recorded the event in his journal -- 1814

he wrote thatIndians said it was from a Spanish ship whose crew had been killed by natives

GOVERNOR MILES MACDONELL EXERTS HIS AUTHORITY OVER RED RIVER COLONISTS

Red River Colony Governor Macdonell generated intense hostility among the traders and Metis

he issued a proclamation announcing it was unlawful for any person who dealt in furs

to remove from the Red River Colony supplies of meat, fish, grain, or vegetables

unless a special license had been granted to the supplying agent -- January 8, 1814

punishment would be meted out to those who offended this official order

Governor Macdonell’s goal was to keep a supply of food in the colony for use by the settlers

he was, however, issuing a challenge to the fur traders and Metis

since his policy meant they had no right to conduct business with one another

Once Governor Macdonell published his edict he did not hesitate to enforce it

information was received at Red River Colony that North West Company

had stored a quantity of provisions in their trading post at the mouth of the Souris River

it was clear they meant to send food supplies to trappers elsewhere in defiance of the decree

Governor Miles Macdonell decided on strong action

his secretary, John Spencer, was ordered to go to the Souris River in the capacity of sheriff

accompanied by a strong guard to deliver a warrant

when Spencer drew near the North West Company fort he found the gate closed

he ordered his men to batter the gate in with their hatchets

they obeyed and entered the fort taking charge of the contents of the storehouse

six hundred bags of pemmican were seized and carried away

NORTH WEST COMPANY BRIGADE STOPS AT THE COLUMBIA RIVER CASCADES

Nor’Westers’ supply brigade led by Alexander Stuart and James Keith

camped at the Columbia River Cascades between the Long Narrows and the Short Narrows

they were attacked by Wishram Indians at the Short Narrows

who attempted to seize some of the property being carried along the portage route as tribute

when the members of the supply brigade fled from the Cascades they left behind

everything they were transporting including fifty guns and ammunition

Nor’Westers’ brigade returned to Fort George where they arrived -- January 9, 1814

they reported they had gone as far as the Short Narrows

there they were ambushed by Indians on the north side of the Columbia River

during the skirmish shots and arrows were exchanged

before both sides retreated two Indians were dead and one Nor’Wester badly wounded

MARIE DORION REMAINS ALONE AT THE WINTER HUT KNOWN AS REED’S POST

Twenty-one year old Marie Dorion who with her sons Baptiste and Paul

were members of John Reed’s trapping expedition

They remained at the winter hunt (in the vicinity of present-day Caldwell, Idaho)

while expedition leader John Reed, Marie’s husband Pierre, Francis Landry,

Jean-Baptiste Turcotte, Andre La Chapelle, Gilles Le Clerc

and Kentuckians Edward Robinson, John Hoback and Jacob Reznor

were out tending trap lines in the vicinity of the Snake River

One evening a friendly Shoshone Indian stopped by the hut -- around January 10, 1814

excitedly he told Marie that bad Indians called Dog-Ribs

had burned the abandoned the Oregon house built on the Weiser River

they were now approaching the rude camp up the Boise River where her husband,

Gilles Le Clerc and Jacob Reznor had established a trap line

these bad Indians were dancing and singing war songs with murderous intent

Marie knew the Astorians had to be warned of the impending danger

she took a horse and her children ages five and two

and set off for her husband’s camp to warn them of the impending danger

because the poor trail was covered with snow she lost her way in the night

but found cover before they all froze to death

(since the date of January 10 is only approximate it is possible only to estimate the other dates

of the adventures of Marie Dorion and her two sons)

MARIE DORION CONTINES TO SEARCH FOR THE TRAPPING CAMP OF HER HUSBAND

Marie set out once again with her two sons -- early in the morning January 11, 1814

on the second day of her search for the trapping camp she saw heavy smoke ahead

thinking it might be an Indian village, she again took cover before they all froze to death

there they spent that night and all of the next day

MARIE DORION REACHES THE REMOTE TRAPPING CAMP

After fighting through mountainous snow for two bone-chilling nights

she came within view of the trappers’ hut -- late evening January 12, 1814

she observed a lone man a short distance from the small building staggering as though deathly ill

this man turned out to be Giles Le Clerc scalped and weak from the loss of blood

he told Marie all three trappers had been attacked while working their traps that morning

Pierre Dorion and Jacob Reznor did not survive

Le Clerc barely had the strength to deliver this information before he collapsed on the ground

Although the trappers’ hut was still standing Marie did not go into it

because a noise nearby startled her

she thought it had been made by the hostile Indians

however, what appeared to be bad luck actually turned out to be good luck

because the noise that she herd was made by horses once owned by the Dog-Rib Indians

Marie Dorion knew with a war party in the area her only chance to survive was to flee immediately

with great difficulty she caught two of the Indians’ horses and put them to use

being as strong as most men she hoisted Giles Le Clerc onto one of the captured horses

after putting her boys on the other horse she told her older son Baptiste

to hold the reins of the horse carrying Le Clerc

mounting the horse ridden by her sons

she led the “string” into the woods so they would not be readily seen

under the cover of the brush she set out for John Reed’s post

NORTH WEST COMPANY SENDS AN EXPEDITION TO RETRIEVE THEIR LOST GOODS

Immediately all of the North West Company men as well as Astorians at Fort George

who could be spared were assembled

sixty-nine men led by Alexander Henry the Younger laboriously paddled up the Columbia

in an armada of seven canoes to collect trade goods stolen at the Short Narrows

Alexander Henry the Younger led his expedition up the Columbia River in a violent storm

howling wind and rain held up their departure until 11:00 a.m., January 13, 1814

Before arriving at the site of the attack Alexander Henry sought the advice

of various friendly Indian village leaders living along the Columbia River

Chinook Chief Comcomly suggested the Nor’Westers kill all of the offending Indians

(probably with an eye toward acquiring their prime location at the Cascades)

Coalpo, headman of the Clatsop people, offered much the same advice

however, his wife, a woman of high birth and of some importance, was more helpful

she pointed out the Wishram Indians usually demanded blood vengeance

for the murder of any of their villagers

but they might accept compensation

for the death of the two Indians killed at the portage skirmish instead

next chief to be consulted was Casino the leader of the Willamette people

he knew about the attack on Stuart’s party as Alexander Henry the Younger reported: **“He informed us that the principal instigator of that affair was a** [Wishram Indian] **chief called Canook, of the Cathlathlaly village** [located on the north side of the Columbia River] **…. This fellow, it seems on seeing our party of two canoes only passing up river, formed a plan to pillage them. He assembled the warriors of the two villages below and made a long speech, telling them that we never traded anything of consequence with them, but took our property further up, to our enemies, the Nez Perces, and that here was a favorable opportunity to better themselves. They agreed, and all went armed up to the** [Wishram] **Cathlayackty village [**on the south side of the Columbia River] **where the harangue was repeated. That village also joined the party and…they all came down to meet our people at the portage on the S**[outh]**, with Canook as their war chief.”[[137]](#footnote-137)**

Casino had more advice for the Nor’Westers

he pointed out that he had relatives living in the village that had attacked the brigade

thus he also could demand blood vengeance for the killings of the two natives

instead, he agreed to join the expedition and negotiate with the Wishram village chiefs

Alexander Henry the Younger was now aware of how closely knit the family relations of villagers

living along the Columbia River really were

it would be necessary to use peaceful steps to avoid making the Willamettes and other Indians

hostile toward the North West Company

Casino and his sister-in-law Coalpo’s wife both were hired to act as mediators

After several hours of hard labor the expedition put ashore on the north side of the Columbia River

preparations for any encounter were made

PROGRESS IS SLOW UP THE COLUMBIA RIVER FOR THE NOR’WESTERS EXPEDITION

Alexander Henry the Younger reported in his journal -- January 14, 1814

**“…gale all night. At 6 A.M. we embarked. Our progress was slow….”**

cold weather impeded their progress up the Columbia River

twice the Nor’Westers were driven to the river bank to build fires for warmth

they crossed to the south side of the Columbia and used a line to tow their canoes upriver

Alexander Henry reported that he saw a village of seven houses across the river **--** January 14

**“At ten we came nearly abreast of the Loto** [Wishram Indian] **village, where we saw the natives running into a low point of wood at the upper end of their village. They seemed to be in a great hurry and confusion…. We did not land, but desired Casino to assure them of our pacific** [peaceful] **disposition. After some time a chief came to the edge of the woods and made a long speech with many gestures, as if violently agitated.”**

An old womanwas the first person who venture down to the canoes shortly followed by a man

Alexander Henry purchased sixteen dogs for food

his expedition returned to the south side of the Columbia and built fires to warm themselves

Returning to the Loto village Henry continued in his journal: **“…** [We] **demanded the guns and kettles** [be returned]. **…A long parley was held…. They delivered to us nine loaded guns.”[[138]](#footnote-138)**

it was hoped the peaceful nature of this encounter would convince the hostile villagers

that the Nor’Westers were not seeking revenge

Alexander Henry noted: **“At 1 P.M. we continued our voyage… and soon came in sight of the second village, which is that of the Cathlathlaly tribe”** [on the north side of the Columbia River]

women, children and old men, it could be seen, were scattered in the woods

this was a sure sign the warriors were ready to fight

warriors were seen stationed on the hill and behind the trees and rocks

from the upper end of the village along the portage route as far as could be seen

Nor’Westers landed their canoes and watched as six Indians in a canoe arrived at the village

they were singing their war songs and were met by an old woman on the river bank

she was singing and dancing a war song

Coalpo’s wife reported she was relative of one of the Indians shot in the skirmish

these gestures proved the natives did not believe the Nor’Westers’ expedition was peaceful

Alexander Henry was very concerned about confronting the Indians but he felt he had no other choice

Nor’Westers crossed to the south side of the Columbia River leaving Casino to negotiate

Indians left the woods and assembled at a large house where a long parley was held

Henry noted: **“…Casino had made a short speech to them. The natives … assemble**[d] **at Canook’s house, where a long parley was held, with the result that Casino came back to us with four loaded guns, and thirty armed men accompanied him.”[[139]](#footnote-139)**

Casino and thirty villagers, including Canook the war chief, warily crossed the Columbia River

Nor’Westers remained in their canoes and invited the Indians to sit on the beach

Indians remained very suspicious -- they all had their bows bent and arrows at the ready

a pipe was filled for them and the Nor’Westers demonstrated friendship

Canook smoked and came down to the waters edge but he was very wary

Nor’Westers crossed to Strawberry Island where a defensive position was built and guards posted

Henry recorded: **“We loaded our guns and put everything in order to pass up the rapids along Strawberry Island. …We feared that, on our pushing over to the village, they would shoot at us in desperation, and thus oblige us to fire upon them -- a thing we ardently wished to avoid.”[[140]](#footnote-140)**

Casino, who returned from the village, arrived on the island with two more guns

MAURADING INDIANS REMAIN IN THE AREA WITH MARIE DORION

After three days of cold terrifying travel Marie saw a number of Indians on horseback

traveling in an easterly direction -- January 14, 1814

she immediately dismounted with her children and helped Giles Le Clerc dismount

they all concealed themselves

Fortunately they avoided being seen by the Indians

when she was sure they were once again safe they again set out

but had to proceed using the utmost caution

jolting of Giles Le Clerc’s horse dislodged him from the animal’s back

Le Clerc fell heavily on the ground and the impact opened his wounds

this fall, coupled with his injuries, made it impossible for him to travel further

that night they slept without a fire or water -- Marie kept her children warm in her arms

before morning Giles La Clerc died -- January 14

Marie covered his body with brush and snow

following this crude burial she put her children on the horses

Marie and her two boys set out for John Reed’s post once again

MARIE DORION REACHES JOHN REED’S POST

Marie Dorion and her two sons set out once again with the dawn -- January 15, 1814

after hours of travel they reached John Reed’s post which was deserted

all around was the blood of a furious massacre

old Edward Robinson and his inseparable companion John Hoback lay dismembered

further up the Boise River lay John Reed in like condition

all had been murdered, scalped and cut to pieces

they had suffered every type of mutilation and indignity that could be conjured up

Marie, concerned for the safety of her two boys, hurried into the sheltering woods

where they spent a lonely, frightened, cold and hungry night with fresh terrors gripping her

NOR’WESTERS PORTAGE THROUGH THE LONG NARROWS

Alexander Henry the Younger led his expedition to the Cathlathlaly village

on the north side of the Columbia River through an incessant rain -- 8:00 a.m., January 15, 1814

there they traded for nine dogs and a horse to be used as food

they remained for about three hours before beginning the portage along the Long Narrows

two of the three canoes filled with their provisions were almost lost in the effort

Nor’Westers next crossed to the south side of the Columbia River to portage the Short Narrows

this was where the skirmish had taken place

several armed Indians were seen on the river bank and in the woods

this portage is only 600 paces long but over very huge rough rocks

only one canoe remained to be carried across the portage but it was very weak and could break

Casino requested permission to go to Cathlayackty village on the south side of the Columbia

his relatives lived there and he could demand the stolen property be returned

this plan was agreed to and Casino set off across the Columbia River

When the Nor’Westers reached the east end of the portage they found kettles, hoops and staves

and a quantity of gunpowder laying in the sand

Alexander Henry walked to the village which stood in the woods some distance from the river

he noted: **“At 2 P.M. we went up to the Cathlayackty** **village** [on the south side of the Columbia River] **by land… we found on the beach Casino with seven natives who delivered to us one gun, a few kettles and two cotton shirts…. Nothing more being expected by fair means, we crossed the river to the other Cathlayackty village, consisting of eight houses….”[[141]](#footnote-141)**

all of the Indians at Cathlayaokg village were inside with the exception of an old woman

she was singing, dancing and crying on the river bank

Henry reported in his journal: **“We landed Casino who parleyed with them while we went in search of a camp on an** [Strawberry] **island about half a mile above the village, telling him to bring to the kettles and guns to us there.”[[142]](#footnote-142)**

During this conference between Casino and the villagers the Nor’Wester continued upriver

to an island about half a mile above the village where Casino informed the villagers

they were to bring the guns, kettles and other stolen goods

Nor’Westers made camp for the night

Indians, probably slaves, came into the Nor’Westers’ camp

they delivered a small cotton cloth torn into pieces

this was to say the Indians had returned some of the property

the rest would be delivered when the murderers were surrendered to be killed

In the North West Company camp this gesture led to confusion as to how to proceed

whenever the Wishram Indians brought a few items into the camp

they put themselves in the control of the Nor’Westers

some of the Nor’Westers wanted to hang the Indians at once

others wanted to continue negotiating

Clatsop Chief Coalpo was opposed to hanging the envoys

but instead proposed inviting the Wishrams to parley

and then seize them as hostages to exchange for the property

this was the plan finally adopted

Nor’Westers remained in their camp and watched as four canoes loaded with baggage

crossed over from the village on the north to the village on the south side of the Columbia River

they began to believe Casino was playing a double role by serving both sides

however, he arrived in camp bringing sixteen Indians, five guns, a few kettles, rifle balls

some dried salmon and a other odds and ends with him

Heavy rain hit again that night as guards remained vigilant

MARIE DORION PREPARES TO FLEE FROM THE THREAT OF THE MAURADING INDIANS

Marie Dorion remembered a large store of fish had been cached nearby -- morning January 16, 1814

she left her boys behind wrapped warmly in her buffalo robe and set out alone

she scouted the area for unfriendly Indians and decided to delay her search until night

she returned to her boys and lit a fire despite the risk of being seen

because she and her children were freezing

After darkness, she put out the fire and rolled her boys in the buffalo robe

then she went to the trappers’ hut and ransacked it for food, coverings and weapons

she found some deer hides and a great deal of fish scattered about

she soon gathered up the hides and as much of the fish as she could carry

she returned to her children who were nearly frozen and were weak from hunger

despite the danger of discovery, she made a fire and cooked some of the fish

they had their first meal in three days -- January 16

That night she went back to the hut and gathered another load of fish

her exertions caused her to collapse from exhaustion and she was unable to move for three days

ALEXANDER HENRY’S EXPEDITION ARRIVES AT THE NEXT CASCADES VILLAGE

Morning was bright and clear with a hard frost and ice on the ponds -- January 16, 1814

Nor’Westers proceeded to the Cathlayaokg village(on the north side of the Columbia River)

where everything was quiet with the exception of the old woman lamenting her relative’s death

Alexander Henry the Younger walked into the village where there were only a few men -- well-armed

an arrangement to buy horses was made

Canook, the war chief of the Cathlathlaly village, arrived in Cathlayaokg on horseback

he was accompanied by seven men from below the Short Narrows

other armed men were seen behind the houses of the village

by the time the horses arrived twenty armed men could be seen

when the first horse was shot fifty armed men came into view and took up defensive positions

Nor’Westers learned the Wishram Indians had not been intimidated

in fact, Canook proposed a counter demand:

when the whites had surrendered the killers of the two villagers

all of the stolen property would be returned

Alexander Henry intended to seize Canook

but the chief remained out of reach among his companions

three horse were butchered and the Nor’Westers paddled to the south side of the Columbia River

landing Alexander Henry walked to Cathlayackty in the woods some distance from the river

he walked into the home of the old, very respectable looking portly chief

Cathlayackty received the Nor’Westers with great civility -- but no stolen goods were collected

After leaving the chief, Henry made camp at the Short Narrows where the scuffle had taken place

Casino arrived with a few more kettles and requested to sleep in the village that night

to enable him to find more of the stolen goods -- his request was granted

Coalpo’s wife provided Alexander Henry information regarding Casino’s treachery

he had offered her a bribe to join him in his efforts to deceive the Nor’Westers

she startled the Nor’Westers by declaring she also was a blood relative

of one of the Indians who had been killed at the portage

now the Clatsops like the Willamettes could demand payment for the dead natives

or extract vengeance for the killings

Indians long the Columbia River were obviously more interrelated than could have been imagined

revenge taken on the villagers who stole the goods could result in reprisals by united natives

North West Company employees at Fort George could not risk this possibility

as they were dependent on the Columbia River Indians for trade and provisions

ALEXANDER HENRY THE YOUNGER TAKES A HOSTAGE

Alexander Henry began to move his Nor’Westers and their baggage over the Short Narrows portage

as a few Indians watched but remained at a distance and unarmed -- 7:00 a.m., January 17, 1814

two horses and a dog were purchased

Casino was put on shore as the Nor’Westers crossed to Strawberry Island and their old camp

two old women stood on the river bank near the village

each holding a stick about five feet long singing, crying and dancing

Nor’Westers received several visitors at their camp

Alexander Henry reported: “**At noon Casio came over in a canoe accompanied by a** [Wishram] **chief, a boy, and a woman…. Three men … were ordered to seize** [the chief]**. Casino explain**[ed] **to the prisoner our intention of keeping him until our property was returned; that not only the guns and kettles were wanted, but every article they had taken from us; …and** [we] **were ready to fight if necessary. We then called out to the Indians that we were ready for peace or war, as they thought fit….”[[143]](#footnote-143)**

Nor’Westers prepared for battle by buying old horses and eighteen dogs for use as food

when they were supplied for several days the Nor’Westers announced their intention

to punish the offending Indians with death and burning their villages

if the warriors did not return the guns and kettles -

no mention of the other goods stolen was made

because the guns were the most significant items lost

Changing strategy Alexander Henry the Younger decided to try to frighten the Wishram Indians

he made a great show of the number of traders present and they fired their guns across the river

to demonstrate it was possible to reach the Indians even across the river

however they were very careful not to hit anyone

he then called out to the Indians that he were ready for either peace or war

it was up to the Indians to decide

horsemen could be seen riding at full speed to the villages above and below the rapids

This ploy appeared to work as two of the wives of the hostage arrived with three guns

and thirteen kettles while the village remained quiet

Twelve armed Indians arrived in the village from below the narrows

and two canoes with armed men -- about 5:00

Prisoner’s two wives again came over with nine more guns and a few additional articles

they held a long conference with the prisoner during which they all sobbed and cried

Nor’Westers gave the Indians two days to deliver the remainder of the stolen goods

before they would take the hostage with them out to sea

ALEXANDER HENRY THE YOUNGER WAITS FOR THE STOLEN GOOD TO BE RETURNED

Both the prisoner and Casino scolded the villagers for not delivering the stolen articles fast enough

the same two women continued to deliver a few trifling goods -- January 18, 1814

it was reported that all of the stolen goods in the village had been surrendered

it would be necessary to convince the surrounding villagers to cooperate

After about three days at the Cascades supplies were running low for the Nor’Westers

but the Indians stopped selling horses and dogs to them

now food became a problem for Alexander Henry the Younger

During a long conference it became obvious no further deliveries of goods would be forthcoming

Indian riders were seen traveling to the neighboring villages

Winter storms accompanied by a driving rain hit in the evening

NOR’WESTERS REMAIN IN THEIR CAMP ON STRAWBERRY ISLAND

A few more articles were delivered to Alexander Henry the Younger -- morning January 19, 1814

but nothing more appeared to be coming

Nor’Westers loaded their canoes and prepared to depart much to the concern of their prisoner

his wives delivered a few more items and begged the Nor’Westers to wait one more day

this was agreed to with the understanding that all of the stolen goods must be returned

Casino was sent to the Cathlayackty village to ask his relatives to deliver what they could

as was Coalpo’s wife **--** both were offered a bale of trade goods if everything was returned

Camp was broken and the Nor’Westers drifted to the lower end of Strawberry Island

where a new camp was made at a pleasant spot as the Nor’Westers waited to see what resulted

When Casnio arrived at the village was immediately surrounded by armed Indians

he made a long speech and began walking upstream along the river bank followed by sixteen men

Indians conducted a series of meeting in their village

Alexander Henry fired a brass cannon and several sky rockets to harass them

MARIE DORION AND HER CHILDREN FLEE FOR THEIR LIVES

After she had recovered from her three days of exhaustion Marie packed the fish

and a small quantity of beaver meat on the two horses

she placed her sons Baptiste and Paul each atop load -- January 19, 1814

Taking the reins of one horse she led the two horses toward distant Astoria and safety

she would have to cross the Snake River which she most likely swam despite the intense cold

NOR’WESTS REMAIN IN CAMP

Both of the prisoner’s wives again came into camp with a few trifling articles

they said there was nothing more to be found -- January 20, 1814

they had even sold a slave to Canook to purchase the stolen beads he possessed

there was no hope of receiving more

During a meeting the Wishram Indians asked if the Nor’Westers

were going to provide any compensation for the two natives killed in the skirmish at the rapids

Alexander Henry decided to present the remainder of the stolen goods as compensation

even though the Indians had been the aggressors

in this way the family members of the slain men were compensated, war was avoided

and efforts could be undertaken to enhance interracial relationships

ALEXANDER HENRY THE YOUNGER RETURNS TO FORT GEORGE

Henry concluded his journal entries regarding this incident -- January 21, 1814

“**There being no hope of recovering anything more, we prepared to depart.”[[144]](#footnote-144)**

Nor’Westers embarked from Strawberry Island -- 9:00 a.m.

they dropped down to the Loto Village with the prisoner

the Nor’Westers were accompanied by a canoe carrying his two wives, children and relatives

When the Loto Village was reached no one was to be seen

only two houses had smoke rising from them and the others appeared abandoned

with their doors were barricaded

Casino and Coalpo’s wife went up to the houses

soon armed men were seen coming from the woods in every direction

Alexander Henry and his men stood on the beach and attempted to convince the Indians

to give up more of the stolen goods -- with very limited success

Alexander Henry berated the prisoner and this message was loudly repeated by Casino to the villagers

Henry gave the prisoner two blankets and other articles including a North West Company flag

and placed him on the beach much to the joy of his family and relatives

he was instantly taken to the houses and the Nor’Westers pushed off

as pleased to be on their way home

as the Indians were to be rid their troublesome visitors

WILSON PRICE HUNT SAILS FROM THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

Captain Samuel Northrup, formerly of the ill-fate *Lark,* was still in the Sandwich Islands

when Wilson Price Hunt arrived from the Marquesas Islands [December 20, 1813]

Hunt purchased the ship *Pedler* and put Captain Northrup in command

*Pedler* set sail from Oahu bound for Astoria -- January 22, 1814

with the intention of removing all of the Pacific Fur Company property as quickly as possible

to be taken to the Russian-America Company’s New Archangel (Alaska)

to prevent it from being captured by the British Navy

then he would take the Pacific Fur Company Kanakas back to the Sandwich Islands

and the other employees on to New York

MARIE DORION MAKES CAMP TO WAIT OUT THE WINTER

Marie and sons Baptiste and Paul traveled away from the death and desolation that was Reed’s post

for a week they traveled only at night as she led the two animals through the snow

more concerned for her children than for herself she occasionally built a fire to warm them

At length they reached the Blue Mountains near the upper Walla Walla River

she pushed on following the river in a northwesterly direction

until one of the horses could no longer continue

faced with this serious dilemma Marie stopped and made camp in a wild lonely ravine

beside a spring in the Blue Mountains -- January 26, 1814

this became her place of winter refuge (near present-day La Grande, Oregon)

Marie proceeded to kill both animals

she lit a fire and smoked the meat so there would be no waste

she hung the meat in a tree for use as their winter food

Marie constructed a tepee from a buffalo robe and three deer skins, pine bark and cedar branches

she added the horse hides to the hut

she then packed snow around the crude habitation for additional warmth

her only tool was a knife whose blade was used to butcher animals, scrape the hides, cut poles,

peel bark and cut all of the fuel she used during her nearly two month stay with her two sons

(best estimate is from approximately January 26 to March 23, 1814)

UNKNOWN SHIP IS SITED AT FORT GEORGE

Alexander Henry the Younger, the North West Company partner in charge of Fort George,

was standing at on post’s stockade platform -- February 28, 1814

he spotted two Indians waving at a distant object

moments later an Indian women at the gate of the post told Henry

that a ship had been seen outside the Columbia River bar

This news raced through Fort George

soon dozens of traders ran down to the shore for a closer look

Alexander Henry the Younger walked down to Point George hoping to identify the ship

three shots were fired by the post’s cannon

but no response came from the ship and her colors remained unknown

they even set signal fires to get the ship’s attention but to no avail

As darkness came on everyone at the fort wondered about the ship’s origin

she was a brig with black sides and a white bottom but she displayed no flag

however her lines convinced some at the post that she was an American privateer

some of the traders even bet hats and furs on her nationality

Nor’Westers feared an attack and made preparations to defend their post

MYSTERY SHIP IS IDENTIFIED AS THE *PEDLER*

Chinook Indians brought positive identification of the ship as the chartered American brig *Pedler*

they reported she was carrying Wilson Price Hunt

Hunt sent a letter from the ship to his fellow Pacific Fur Company employees

at Fort George (which Hunt believed was still Astoria) -- evening of March 1, 1814

he noted that while searching for a ship in Owyhee (Oahu)

he had learned of the wreck of John Jacob Astor’s supply ship *Lark*

rushing to Maui he had picked up the survivors

WILSON PRICE HUNT ARRIVES AT FORT GEORGE (ASTORIA)

Wilson Price Hunt learned that instead of abandoning Astoria as had been planned

Astor’s remaining partners had sold the post and its contents to the North West Company

Hunt was surprised to learn that Astoria was now under the British flag

worried about his own safety, Hunt asked for a meeting aboard the *Pedler*

Duncan McDougall, who was already making arrangements to join the North West Company, refused to meet with Wilson Price Hunt aboard the *Pedler* but a delegation was sent

John McDonald of Garth, Thomas McKay and Donald Stuart

visited with Hunt aboard the *Pedler* -- March 2, 1814

details of the sale of the post were explained to John Jacob Astor’s partner

WILSON PRICE HUNT GOES ASHORE TO FORT GEORGE

Talks began between Hunt and the Nor’Westers at the post -- March 4, 1814

Hunt challenged the values placed on various goods and provisions

but his real effort was to lure as many Pacific Fur Company employees as possible

away from North West Company employment

Nor’Westers worked equally hard to maintain their expanded work force

by the end of the day, four of Astor’s former clerks had agreed to rejoin with Hunt

Wilson Price Hunt returned to the *Pedler* where he remained for several days

Discussions resumed at Fort George -- March 8

Hunt insisted the trade goods had been sold too cheaply

heated talks and broken agreements were exchanged day after day

finally both sides confirmed the agreed-to terms -- March 20, 1814

ASTOR’S EMPLOYEES DECIDE WHETHER TO STAY OR LEAVE THE REGION

John Jacob Astor’s employees who wished to go home were allowed passage to Canada

with the North West Company to be reimbursed from the proceeds of the sale of Astoria

others were taken into the service of the North West Company

Most of Astor’s old partners accepted positions with the North West Company

Duncan McDougall was the key man in the transaction to sell Astoria

he soon became North West Company partner

he remained at Fort George and served the Canadian company as Chief Trader

although this was a demotion from the position with which Astor had honored him

this situation aroused suspicions he may have been disloyal to Astor all along

two of Astor’s partners remained in his service

(Robert Stuart and Ramsay Crooks were already in St. Louis

both served Astor in the Great Lakes region after their return from the Pacific coast)

Many of Astor’s clerks and laborers went with the new owner and became Nor’Westers

twenty former Astorians remained in the Columbia Department to impact the history of the region

Duncan McDougall, Ross Cox, Alexander Ross, John Day and Donald McClennan

were among those who entered North West Company’s service

twelve former Astorians retired and settled in the middle of the Willamette Valley

William Canning (Cannon), Alexander Carson, Marie Dorion, Joseph Gervais,

Thomas McKay, Louis I. LeBonte, Michel Laframbose, Etienne Lucier, Sailor Jack, Baptiste Dorion, Jean Baptiste Dubrieul and Jean Baptiste Desportes McKay

all married Indian women and lived by hunting, fishing and trapping

three other Astorians stayed on at Fort George but did not settle in the Willamette Valley

John Coxe, Francois Payette and George Ramsay

three of the Astorians died soon after the sale of the post

JOHN REED’S PARTY HAD TO BE BROUGHT BACK TO ASTORIA

(It was not known at Fort George that John Reed’s expedition into the Snake River region

no longer existed)

Since John Jacob Astor’s Pacific Fur Company had been sold to the North West Company

it was not necessary for Astorians to hike across the continent to return to the East

as had been planned the year before

Astor’s former partners decided to send out messengers to announce the situation

to John Reed and his trappers who had been preparing to supply those trekking East

MARIE DORION SETS OUT ONCE AGAIN FOR ASTORIA

Marie Dorion and her sons six years old Baptiste and three year old Paul had remained safely hidden

in an encampment (since the end of January)

because by this time the food was nearly all gone -- around March 23, 1814

her decision to move may have hinged on the lack of provisions

another decisive factor may have been a break in the weather

Marie packed the remainder of her provisions and carried them on her back -- March 1814

as she led her helpless three and five year old children across a ridge of the Blue Mountains

but she became snow blind the second day out and was incapacitated for three days

When she regained her sight Marie set out once again

she and her two children reached the Walla Walla River and she spent the remainder of the month

following downriver toward the mouth -- the confluence with the Columbia River

they must have walked a pitifully few number of miles because of their weary condition

she had to carry the children much of the way

BRIG *PEDLER* LEAVES FORT GEORGE WITH SEVERAL ASTORIANS ABOARD

John Jacob Astor’s leased ship was loaded with supplies and Wilson Price Hunt -- April 1, 1814

Hunt left Fort George bound first to New Archangel, Russian-America (Sitka, Alaska)

then back down the coast to California, Mexico

and on to the Eastern Seaboard and New York

Hunt took several Pacific Fur Company clerks and employees who had elected to go home by sea

Bad weather forced the *Pedler* to remain inside the Columbia River bar overnight

*Pedler* cleared the bar of the Columbia River -- April 2, 1814

ALEXANDER ROSS LEADS THE NOR’WESTERS’ BRIGADE FROM FORT GEORGE

Former Astorian Alexander Ross now with North West Company led ten canoes

up the Columbia River to Athabasca Pass on their way to Montreal -- April 4, 1814

Ross escorted the Pacific Fur Company partners, clerks and laborers who wished to return to the East

John George McTavish traveled to Montreal to make his report to company headquarters

Donald “Fats” McKenzie, David Stuart, John Clarke, Gabriel Franchere and others accompanied

in all ninety men in ten canoes began the journey to Montreal

Alexander Ross also carried orders to pick up the John Reed’s trapping party

somewhere on the Snake River plains

NORTH WEST COMPANY MEN REMAINING AT FORT GEORGE SETTLE IN

Alexander Henry the Younger remained the partner in charge of Fort George

he stood with his remaining men and watched the brigade paddle up the Columbia River

Henry authorized two chief traders who took up their duties

Duncan McDougall, the former Astorian who had been a leader in the transaction to sell Astoria,

became a North West Company partner and was named chief trader

although this was a demotion from the position with which Astor had honored him

McDougall’s acceptance of any position with the North West Company

aroused suspicions that he may have been disloyal to Astor all along

McDougall’s father-in-law, Chief Comcomly also was not especially happy

with his change to a lower in status

James Keith also was made a chief trader at Fort George -- 1814-[1818]

MARIE DORION AND HER CHILDREN CONTINUE THEIR INCREDIBLE JOURNEY

Marie Dorion and her sons Baptiste and Paul had little to eat as the descended the Walla Walla River

in an effort to reach the Columbia River and possible help from trappers traveling that river

After fifteen days of walking through the Blue Mountains they reached the plains -- April 7, 1814

they suffered intense hardships due to lack of food

there had been little to eat for the past week and nothing at all to eat for the last two days

Marie saw smoke in the distance

she left her children wrapped in a buffalo robe and set out in an effort to reach a friendly village

she was too exhausted to walk and was only scarcely able to crawl

occasionally she slept -- which was nature’s way of recouping her strength

WALLA WALLA INDIANS CARE FOR MARIE DORION AND HER CHILDREN

Marie Dorion dragged herself into a camp of Walla Walla Indians -- noon April 8, 1814

these Indians proved to be friendly and she was treated kindly by them

she told them where her children could be found and immediately a search party went out

they found it easy to follow the trail made by her body as she had dragged herself along

Marie’s two sons, Baptiste and Paul, were brought into the village that night

Marie was overjoyed to learn they were still alive

NORTH WEST COMPANY’S *ISAAC TODD* FINALLY ARRIVES AT FORT GEORGE (ASTORIA)

*Isaac Todd* wasthe slow-moving North West Company merchant vessel armed with twenty cannons

under the command of Captain Fraser Smith

she arrived at Fort George and anchored at Baker Bay -- April 17, 1814

she found the Union Jack flying over the former Fort Astoria now rechristened Fort George

*Isaac Todd* carried everything necessary for trade throughout the entire Columbia Department

in addition to trade goods and supplies, she brought additional men

who were added to those already employed by North West Company

this provided a force sufficient to occupy the entire region

*Isaac Todd* also brought four head Spanish cattle from California -- two bulls and two heifers

Most significantly aboard the *Isaac Todd* was the new head of the Columbia Department

irascible old Donald McTavish -- a poorer choice could hardly have been made

(he is not to be confused with John George McTavish who was then returning to Montreal)

Governor Donald McTavish was a partner in the North West Company

he had been lured from retirement in England with the offer of this choice position

NORTH WEST COMPANY GOVERNOR DONALD McTAVISH BRINGS A COMPANION

Governor Donald McTavish was determined to bring with him aboard the *Isaac Todd*

what he considered the to be the comforts of civilization

among them an ample supply of hard liquor

and a white mistress -- Jane Barns[[145]](#footnote-145)

she was a lively, flaxen-hair, blue-eyed, rosy cheeked barmaid from Portsmouth, England

she was the first white woman to arrive in the Pacific Northwest

she had taken passage to see the world -- under the protection of Donald McTavish

McTavish made every effort to save her from the boredom of a long ocean voyage

JANES BARNES IS AN IMMEDIATE ATTRACTION AT FORT GEORGE

Jane Barnes brought an extravagant wardrobe with her to the Pacific coast

one day her hair would be decorated with feathers and flowers

the next day her hair would be placed in braids with no enhancements

each costume she donned excited wonder and admiration

Indians flocked to the white woman -- the first they had ever seen

she and her wardrobe were a constant wonder to them

Jane appears to have relished the attention of the trappers and traders

she ruled Fort George as a “First Lady” might, commanding attention wherever she went

she was known to stroll through the fort in her finery

dinnertime usually found her promenading along the sandy banks of the Columbia River

because of the attention she drew from whites and Indians alike

Governor Donald McTavish could be found walking with her to provide protection

Astorians’ little schooner *Dolly* named originally for John Jacob Astor’s wife,

was promptly rechristened by Governor Donald McTavish as the *Jane*

MARIE DORION AND HE CHILDREN CONTINUE THEIR JOURNEY TO ASTORIA

Marie, her sons Baptiste and Paul gratefully rested in the Walla Walla camp for nearly two weeks

after which time she insisted on going to the Columbia River

where she hoped to meet white traders traveling down the river

friendly Walla Walla Indians who had rescued the family

took them to the Columbia -- about April 22, 1814

NOR’WESTER’S EASTERN BRIGADE REACHS THE WALLA WALLA RIVER

Nor’Wester Alexander Ross and his brigade accompanied by Astorians returning East

reached the mouth of the Walla Walla River three hundred miles upriver from Fort George,

members of the North West Company’s brigade saw three canoes putting out from shore

they were surprised to hear a child calling out Arretez donc, Arretez donc!

French for stop, stop!

Alexander Ross stopped his flotilla of canoes until the strangers could reach them

to their surprise they recognized who had hailed them

Marie Dorion, the wife of Pierre Dorion, and their two children, Baptiste and Paul

they had been brought here by friendly Walla Walla Indians only a few days before

in fact, Ross had been assigned the responsibility of finding Clerk John Reed

and his trapping party which included Marie and her children

MARIE DORION IS REUNITED WITH WHITE TRADERS ON THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Nor’Westers and Astorians listened in awe to the tale Marie told using French and sign language

of the loss of her husband, Pierre Dorion, and the rest of the John Reed party

Marie’s listeners were horrified to learn that all of the trapping party

except herself and two sons had been cruelly slaughtered

this attack appeared to be entirely unprovoked

some Astorians believed it was the act of a roving band of Blackfoot Indians

others ascribed the attack, perhaps more accurately, to the tribe of Nez Perce Indians

acting in revenge for the hanging of one of their people by John Clarke

Alexander Ross and Gabriel Franchere were both present while Marie told her story they wrote what she told them in their journals

both reported their amazement that Marie and her children had survived

Ross invited Marie to join North West Company’s brigade

and return to her own people in the East but Madame Dorion declined

no augment would deter her from her plan to return to Astoria (Fort George)

so the members of the North West Company brigade boarded their canoes

and continued on their way as she bade them good-bye

Marie Dorion eventually made her return to Fort George with her tale of terror

officials there did not offer any special reward to her for the survival skills she demonstrated

under conditions that killed nine men

“MADAM” MARIE ALOE (IOWA) DORION BECAME A DEEPLY RESPECTED WOMAN

Marie Dorion settled on French Prairie in Oregon’s fertile Willamette Valley with her children

where her white neighbors called her **“an impressive and admirable woman”[[146]](#footnote-146)**

she was often referred to by the title “Madam”

Madam Marie Dorion moved north to Fort Okanogan and married again

this time to Louis Joseph Vagnier (or Vanier) probably in a tribal ceremony [1818]

her first daughter, Marguerite, was born [1820 or 1821]

before her husband was killed by natives

Marie’s third marriage was to Jean Baptiste Toupin [about 1824]

who was an interpreter at Fort Nez Perces at the time

she bore two more children, Francois and Marianne, before this marriage was solemnized

by Father Francis Norbert Blanchet [July 19, 1841]

he gave her the tile “Marie Aloe” (Iowa -- in honor of her tribe)

(Francois Toupin’s descendants are still living in Oregon)

Madam Marie Aloe (Iowa) died at French Prairie [September 5, 1850]

she was the only woman member of the Astor Expedition that had traveled overland

from St. Louis, Missouri to what became Astoria, Oregon [1811–1812]

caring for two babies and giving birth to a third who died during the journey

several historical sites along the Walla Walla River commemorate Marie Dorian

as the “Madonna of the old Oregon Trail”

according to an article written by Harriet D. Munnick for *The Mountain Series:* **“She is buried ‘under the steeple’ of the original log church at St. Louis** [Oregon]**. When a frame church was built a few rods further to the west some years later, the exact site of her grave was lost; a nearby marker indicated only the general area where she lies.”**

being buried “under the steeple”in the Catholic cemetery was an honor and sign of reverence

given to this Indian woman by her community and church

When the original church burned down [1880] and the current church was built,

the location of Marie Dorion’s grave was forgotten (and remains unknown to this day)

it was only when the church register was translated from French into English,

many years after the original church had burned down

that it was learned Madam Marie Aloe (Iowa) was buried there

JANE BARNES CAUSES A DIPLOMATIC RIFT AT FORT GEORGE

Jane Barnes, left to her own devices, caused a great deal of controversy at Fort George

which led to a diplomatic rift -- this made her presence at the post a liability

Chief Comcomly’s son Cassakas visited Fort George one day dressed in his finest costume

with his face painted red and body reeking of whale oil

he told Ms. Barnes if she would become his wife

he would send a hundred choice sea otter skins to her relatives

he would never ask her to carry wood, dig roots, or do other manual labor

she would rule over his other four wives

she could wear her own clothes

he would allow her as many pipes of tobacco a day as she wished

when he was rejected Cassakas plotted to abduct Jane Barnes during one of her riverside strolls

it became necessary to restrict her walks to the neighborhood of the Fort George

and always with a protector

LORD SELKIRK’S COLONISTS ONCE AGAIN TRAVEL TO THE RED RIVER

After spending their second harsh (winter) at Fort Daer (located near today’s Pembina, North Dakota)

Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk’s colonists traveled north to the Red River -- spring 1814

they resolved never again to set foot within the gates of Fort Daer

where hardships and suffering had been overwhelming

Lord Selkirk’s Hudson’s Bay Company Red River Colony (later Winnipeg, Manitoba) was located

directly across the main North West Company supply route

North West Company voyageurs could be cut off from their Montreal supplies

NORTHWEST COMPANY GOVERNER DONALD McTAVISH MUST VISIT OTHER POSTS

Governor Donald McTavish was required to visit outposts as part of his duties

McTavish was forced to ask Alexander Henry the Younger to serve as “associate protector”

for Jane Barnes while the governor traveled throughout the region

Jane, accepting Alexander Henry’s offer for protection

while Governor McTavish was away she made herself at home in Henry’s living quarters

Irritable and grouchy old Governor McTavish returned from a trip to the outlaying posts

to discover Jane Barnes preferred to be protected by Alexander Henry

a natural amount of jealously ensued

after a few sharp words Governor McTavish contented himself

with a Chinook consort incongruously known as “Mrs. Clapp”

DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN RISES IN THE NORTH WEST COMPANY

(Dr. McLoughlin’s success as a trader and leader of men were recognized by his superiors

which allowed him to successfully rise in the ranks of the North West Company [1811]

his first son, Joseph, was born to a Chipewyan Indian woman that year

whether they had been legally married is still unknown

John McLoughlin married Marguerite Wadon McKay [1812]

she was the Metis daughter of a Swiss trader and Cree Indian mother

and the widow of Alexander McKay who had been lost with the *Tonquin*

Marguerite was thirty-five, eight years older than he was, when McLoughlin met her

she was the mother of Thomas McKay

who was fourteen when the *Tonquin* disaster took his father

Dr. McLoughlin next was given the title Chief Trader at Fort William on Lake Superior

North West Company’s headquarters at Thunder Bay)

Dr. John McLoughlin was granted a full partnership in the North West Company -- 1814

after eighteen years in the fur trade he was placed in charge of one of four company departments

(fur trading regions)

FORT WILLIAM ON LAKE SUPERIOR WAS THE NOR’WESTERS’ INTERIOR HEADQUARTERS

Fort William was a good sized village and the heart and soul of the North West Company

located on Lake Superior’s Thunder Bay -- it had been named in honor of William McGillivray

the chief director of the North West Company

in addition to being the company’s headquarters the post served as supply depot,

starting point for supply brigades and fur depository

from [May to September] a flotilla of boats and canoes would arrive from Lachine, Quebec

carrying goods to be sent inland to barter for furs

these boats would then set out on their homeward journey to Fort William

carrying pelts collected from far and near

every summer North West Company partners-in-the field arrived to meet in Fort William

with two or three principal partners who arrived from Montreal

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY IS FORCED TO CHANGES ITS BUSINESS OPERATION

Over the years Hudson’s Bay Company has succumbed to the ills of old age

it had grown overconfidence in its own power and prestige

it suffered from indolence and a loss of vitality

By contrast North West Company had youth, vigor, aggression and an obvious competitive spirit

competition with North West Company forced Hudson’s Bay Company to change

its system of trade and establish posts in the interior

rather than waiting for the Indians to come to them

WILSON PRICE HUNT ARRIVES AT NEW ARCHANGEL ABOARD THE *PEDLER*

Wilson Price Hunt arrived at New Archangel (Sitka) Russian-America (Alaska)

aboard the brig *Pedler* under the command of Captain Samuel Northrup

Astorian clerk Russell Farnham had been assigned to carry Pacific Fur Company records

and the proceeds of the sale of Astoria to John Jacob Astor’s New York office

Farnham was dropped off at New Archangel

(Farnham took the ship *Forester* to Kamchatka, Russia and traveled across Siberia on foot

to St. Petersburg, Russia and Copenhagen, Denmark before sailing on to New York City

this journey took almost three years to complete)

(*Pedler* carrying Wilson Price Hunt and the other Astorians sailed for California, Mexico

and on to New York City)

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT NEGOTIATES WITH GREAT BRITAIN TO END THE WAR

Negotiations continued in Ghent, Belgium to conclude United States and British hostilities

Congress was unaware of events on the Columbia River

federal administration officials instructed its peace commissioners

to keep Astoria in mind when discussing term of peace with Great Britain

John Jacob Astor had his own representative present in Ghent

he was eager to learn what could be, and finally what was, to be done about Astoria

Secretary of State James Monroe wrote instructions expressing that the British

had no right to any territory whatever on the Pacific coast

he asserted: **“On no pretext can the British Government set up a claim to territory south of the northern boundary of the United States.”[[147]](#footnote-147)**

U.S. Congress also passed a law that forbid any British or Canadian business interests

to trade with the Native Americans of the Missouri River Basin -- 1814

DOUBLE TRAGEDY ON THE COLUMBIA RIVER

North West Company Governor Donald McTavish and Alexander Henry the Younger

were intent on transporting goods from the *Isaac Todd* to Fort George

together they put out from the fort with a crew of six

in a small single-sailed, split-cedar boat from the *Isaac Todd* ballasted with stones

heavy surf was running -- legend adds, perhaps unjustifiably, that both men were inebriated

*Isaac Todd’s* boat swamped and capsized at five o’clock on the windy afternoon -- May 22, 1814

only one of the hands managed to swim to shore

loss of Governor Donald McTavish and Alexander Henry the Younger

was a double tragedy for Jane Barnes

Alexander Henry left a narrative of his exploits: *The Journal of Alexander Henry, Jr.*

which covered his wanderings as a fur trader from [1799] to the closing of Astor’s outpost

(this is one of the most important documents in Pacific Northwest history today)

Doctor Swan, who had arrived at Fort George aboard the *Isaac Todd*, offered his services as protector

as did almost all of the men at the post -- but Jane Barnes showed little interest

NORTH WEST COMPANY’S FORT GEORGE IS DESCRIBED

Fort George was visited by free-lance shipper Captain Peter Corney -- July 7, 1814

he noted: **“The North West Company’s Establishment lies about seven miles from Point Adams, on the south side of the river, above a small bay, where ships are in great safety out of the strength of the tide. There is a very good wharf with a crane for landing or shipping goods. The settlement is a square of about two hundred yards, surrounded by pickets about fifteen feet high, and protected by two bastions, one on the southwest and the other on the northeast corner. Each of these bastions mounts eight guns, four and six pounders; and three are loopholes for musketry. The grand entrance is through a large double gate on the north side above which there is a platform for the sentry to walk; on this are several swivels** [guns] **mounted.**

**“As you enter the fort, or square, there is a two-story house, with two long eighteen-pounders in front of it on the south side; on the east is a range of low buildings where the clerks have their apartments, and in the same row stands the grand hall where the gentlemen assemble to dinner, etc. The houses for the men are on the same side and behind the two-story or governor’s house. In the southwest corner is the magazine well secured; along the west side stands a range of stores, tailor’s shop and Indian trading shop; in the southeast corner the blacksmith’s and cooper’s shops, and on the northeast corner a granary for the corn. In the northwest corner stands a very high flagstaff, erected by the crew of the *Columbia*. The whole of the settlers here do not exceed 150 men, most of whom keep Indian women, who live inside of the fort with them. Nearly all the settlers are Canadians. The clerks and partners are Scotch….**

**“The Company have a train of posts from the Columbia River to the Rocky or Stony Mountains, and from thence to Montreal. All the furs that are collected on the west side of these mountains are brought to the Columbia, and sent from thence to China; and all that are collected on the east side are sent to Montreal and from thence to England….”[[148]](#footnote-148)**

NORTH WEST COMPANY PARTNERS MEET AT FORT WILLIAM

North West Company partners-in-the-field met for their annual western rendezvous

held at the Nor’Westers’ Fort William headquarters on Lake Superior -- July 11, 1814

Company partners debated several issues of primary concern to the company:

•removal of the Pacific Fur Company from the Columbia Department was discussed

minutes of this meeting read: **“…the first Business introduced was the transactions in the Columbia last Winter & Fall,… no material objection was made to the terms on which the Purchase from the Pacific Fur Company had been made, except as to the Payments, the near period at which they are fixed being considered highly advantageous to the concern…. The Advantages derived from the Arrangement were deemed considerable, by means of it the Posts were supplied for the Winter…and it greatly facilitated the getting out of the Country our Competitors the American Fur Company.”[[149]](#footnote-149)**

**•**plans were made to develop a much desired sea approach to the Pacific coast: **“If a favourable connection could be made with an American House -- it was the general opinion -- it should be adopted for facilitating the Business in China”[[150]](#footnote-150)**

•Hudson’s Bay Company’s Red River Colony had reached a critical juncture

Nor’Westers’ their hope that Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk’s colony

would languish and die failed -- instead, the Red River Colony was flourishing

and with strength the colonists were becoming aggressive

bitter animosity was expressed against Lord Selkirk and the Hudson’s Bay Company

something must be done to crush this troublesome settlement

partners decided to persuade as many Red River Colony settlers as possible

to desert the colony -- then arouse the Indians against those who remained

notice was sent to the Hudson’s Bay Company to leave the area of the Red River;

Two North West Company partners-in-the-field were sent to deal with the Red River Colony settlers

Duncan Cameron was a sinister character and the more resourceful of the two Nor’Wester agents

he was a born actor -- he decided to visit the settlers to deceive them

Alexander Macdonell, a very crafty character, exerted some influence over the local Indians

he decided to attract a band of natives to the colony to create panic among the settlers

Shortly after the meeting at Fort William Cameron and Macdonell started for the Red River

when they arrived at North West Company’s Fort Gibraltar half a mile from Red River Colony

they split up

Duncan Cameron made his appearance at North West Company’s Fort Gibraltar

with extensive pomp he presented himself

as Captain Duncan Cameron of the Voyageur Corps

(although the Voyageur Corps had been disbanded the year before)

Alexander Macdonell set out to stir up the Indians against the colony

JOHN JACOB ASTOR LEARNS OF THE LOSS OF HIS PACIFIC ENTERPRISE

North West Company’s ten canoe brigade led by former Astorian Alexander Ross

arrived at Montreal -- late August 1814

delivering Nor’Wester John George McTavish and Astorians Donald “Fats” McKenzie,

David Stuart, John Clarke, Gabriel Franchere and others

John Jacob Astor learned the worst -- he had lost Astoria and the Pacific Fur Company ceased to exist

Astor blamed Duncan McDougall and Donald McKenzie for the loss of his property

he refused to give up the Pacific Fur Company as lost to the North West Company

most of North West posts were actually on American soil

as represented by the claims of the Louisiana Purchase and Lewis and Clark Expedition

Astor was determined to resume the enterprise at the first opportunity

NORTH WEST COMPANY HAS A MONOPOLY IN THE COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT

North West Company owned a chain of posts across Canada from Montreal to Fort George

Fort George served as the company’s Columbia Department headquarters

annual meetings of the Columbia Department partners-in-the-field were held at Fort George

to plan trapping and trading operations and to make assignments

North West Company overland express brigades imported supplies and exported furs annually

Interior posts in the Columbia Department belonging to the North West Company included:

•Fort Alexander on the south bank of the Winnipeg River;

•Fort Okanogan on the Okanogan River;

Alexander Ross at Fort Okanogan worked the area to the north as far as 300 miles;

•Fort Thompson at the confluence of the North and South Thompson River (Kamloops, B.C.);

•Kootanae House on the Kootenai River;

•Spokane House on the Spokane River;

trapping and trading expeditions also ventured into the Snake River Country

Nor’Westers and former Pacific Fur Company employees both

encouraged the natives to be unfriendly with the other

because of this competition prices for furs elevated which served the Indians well

for the next three years trade was poor for the North West Company along the Columbia River

due in no small way to the harsh treatment the Indians had received at their hands

WILSON PRICE HUNT IS DETAINED IN CALIFORNIA BY SPANISH AUTHORITIES

Wilson Price Hunt sailed with Captain Samuel Northrup on the merchant ship *Pedler*

they arrived in Spanish California from New Archangel (Sitka) Russia-America (Alaska)

Hunt was detained by the Spanish authorities in California for illegal trading

and was forced to remain in California -- August-September 1814

JANE BARNES APPEARS TO HAVE BECOME SOEMTHING OF A PROBLEM

Death of her two “protectors,” Governor Donald McTavish and Alexander Henry the Younger,

complicated Jane Barnes’ life at Fort George

Governor Donald McTavish was replaced as Governor for North West Company

by Chief Trader James Keith who concluded that Jane Barnes’ continued presence at Fort George

would hinder operations -- she was asked to leave by James Keith

Jane Barnes she took passage to Canton, China on the *Isaac Todd* -- September 1814

DONALD “FATS”McKENZIE MEETS WITH JOHN JACOB ASTOR

Donald McKenzie traveled from Montreal to meet with John Jacob Astor in New York

to convey papers connected with the negotiations to sell Astoria -- September 27, 1814

McKenzie also sought employment -- this time with the Astor’s American Fur Company

operating in the Great Lakes region of the United States

Astor declined to reemploy McKenzie as the businessman believed Mackenzie and his associates

had accepted too low a price for the Astoria post

Having failed to secure reemployment the former Nor’Wester and Astorian went to Canada

where both North West Company and Hudson’s Bay Company attempted to lure him into service

WILSON PRICE HUNT CONTINUES HIS WORK FOR JOHN JACOB ASTOR

After being released by the Spanish authorities in California

Wilson Price Hunt accompanied Captain Samuel Northrup and the *Pedler*

back to Russian-America (Alaska) where they arrived -- October 1814

JANE BARNES ARRIVES IN CANTON, CHINA

While in Canton Jane Barnes found Captain Anthony Robson of the merchant brig *Columbia*

more to her liking than Captain Fraser Smith of the *Isaac Todd*

she lived magnificently in Canton at expense of the East India Company and Captain Robson

(Jane traveled with the *Columbia* from Canton, China back to Portsmouth, England

in England she married Captain Anthony Robson

as a captain’s wife she visited the Columbia River on a trade mission again [1818]

with their two children

she continued to sail with her husband as he ran trade routes between Britain and South America

she appeared in Montreal several years later where she attempted to collect

an annuity promised to North West Company Governor Donald McTavish

instead, North West Company billed the East India Company

for the expenses she incurred while she traveled about the world

Jane Barnes was far more liberated, discriminating and independent than was usual for her time,

she entered the completely male-dominated world of the fur traders

and earned the titles: “Oregon’s First Lady” and “First White Woman in Oregon”)

DAVID THOMPSON DRAWS A PRELIMINARY MAP OF HIS EXPLORATIONS

North West Company geographer David Thompson completed his preliminary map of the region

from Sault Ste. Marie to the Pacific Ocean between the 45th and the 60th parallels

Thompson gathered together the data he had collected during his thousands of miles of surveys

he was the first person to map many of the features of present-day southern Manitoba

and the region near the headwaters of the Mississippi River

this collection of primary source material surpassed that of any other scientific explorer

and he combined his own findings with information from other sources

including other sources inevitably led to errors on the map

Thompson, based on native accounts, included the fictitious Caledonia River

supposedly located south of the Fraser River and flowing into Puget Sound

Thompson’s original effort does not appear to have survived

(but there is a similar map by him in the possession of the Public Archives of Ontario)

David Thompson regarded his map or maps drawn in [181])-1814 as preliminary drafts

most of the names were handwritten, not printed

(he later corrected the Caledonia River and other errors

when he drew another, more accurate map of the west for the North West Company)

TREATY OF GHENT IS SIGNED BY THE UNITED STATES AND GREAT BRITAIN

Treaty of Ghent which ended the War of 1812

was signed at Ghent, Belgium -- December 24, 1814

In this treaty American expansionist’s interests were well-served in the treaty

some of the results achieved on the battlefield were reversed: **“All territory, places, and possessions whatsoever, taken by either party from the other during the war, ..**.[should] **be restored** [to the original owner] **without delay....”**

When the Treaty of Ghent was signed Fort George (Astoria) and the adjacent country

was to be returned the United States and John Jacob Astor

Less well defined was the relationship of Indians with the government of the United States

(several treaties of allegiance and land transfer between the Indians and the United States

were imposed on the natives to open the way to American expansion and settlement)

Some significant issues failed to be addressed at all by the Treaty of Ghent:

•certain boundary disputes between Canada and the United States

would later be referred to arbitration commissions;

•both United States and British governments agreed to use their best efforts

to abolish the international slave trade -- but slavery itself in America was not considered

LORD SELKIRK BECOMES CONCERNED ABOUT THE SAFETY OF HIS COLONY

Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk received news that North West Company

was plotting against the settlers of Red River Colony -- early in 1815

Filled with anxiety Lord Selkirk petitioned the British secretary for war asking for protection

his request was granted and Canadian Lieutenant-Governor Sir Gordon Drummond

was ordered to look into the matter

Drummond decided not to grant protection to Lord Selkirk’s Red River Colony

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IMPOSES NEW POLICIES ON THE INDIANS

War of 1812 had caused violent disturbances and frequent dislocations of Native Americans

in both the Northwest and Southwest

Indian troubles in Ohio Valley ended as the United States imposed its dominance over the tribes

newly opened land offices sold public land at $1.25 an acre

“Ohio fever” spread through New England as people streamed over mountains to a land of rich soil, mild climate and the promise of opportunity

across the Atlantic Ocean, especially in England, Ireland and Germany,

thousands of immigrants boarded ship for America

forest became fields, fields became villages and towns and towns became cities

CHRISTIANITY REACHES THE SHOSHONE INDIANS

Many of the Hudson’s Bay Company employees were eastern Indians

descended from converts made by Catholic priests in French Canada

two Christian Iroquois, for example, settled among Shoshone people of (western Montana)

they conducted missionary work among the uninstructed Indians

Sometime between [1812] and [1820] a band of twenty-four Iroquois Indians l

ed by Ignace La Mousse went among the Shoshone Indians of (Montana) -- 1815

Ignace La Mousse (“Big Ignace” or “Old Ignace”) was in the employ of Hudson’s Bay Company

he had been education at the Jesuit Catholic Caughnawaga Mission near Montreal

Old Ignace was a zealous teacher of the Christian faith

Ignace La Mousse was held in great esteem by the Shoshone Indians

**“It was not long until Old Ignace acquired an ascendancy and great influence over the tribe, which he wielded for the temporal and spiritual welfare of his adopted brethren. Often would he speak to them of the Catholic religion, its teachings, its prayers, and its rites, the conclusions of his discourses being always the same; namely, the advantages and the necessity of having Black Robes or Catholic missionaries among them by whom they would be instructed and taught the way to heaven.”[[151]](#footnote-151)**

through intermarriage these Iroquois became members of the Shoshone band

Shoshone Indians developed a desire for Canadian Catholic priests, “black robes”

of whom they had been told

NORTH WEST COMPANY FAILS TO ESTABLISH A TRADE LINK WITH CHINA

North West Company’s effort to develop sea trade from the Northwest Coast to Asia

was blocked by the powerful East India Company and South Seas Company

both businesses enjoyed British monopolies on trade

East India Company in China

South Seas Company along the Pacific coast

even holding a port on the Pacific coast had brought the Nor’Westers little tangible gain

all efforts on the part of the North West Company to reach an agreement

with the British government to enter the China trade failed

North West Company was refused the opportunity to carry Chinese goods

NORTH WEST COMPANY CONTRACTS WITH AN AMERICAN COMPANY

In desperation the North West Company leaders finally were forced to resort to subterfuge

they made arrangements with J. and T.H. Perkins Company of Boston

to supply their Pacific coast posts and carry furs to China -- 1815

this Boston firm was free of restrictions placed on British trade

as an American company they could carry goods at will to all ports of the world

that had been approved by the United States’ government

J. and T.H. Perkins Company transported the annual North West Company supplies to Fort George

where the supplies were exchanged for Columbia Department pelts to be taken to Canton

in China the furs were traded for Chinese goods to be taken back to Massachusetts

for marketing or for transshipment to London

North West Company furs moved to the Asian market rather than to Europe

on their first voyage to Canton Fort George pelts sold for $101,000 on the Canton market

these were exchanged for teas and other Asian goods to be taken back to Boston

where they were sold at a great profit or were transported on to London for sale there

On the surface it appeared profits were high for the North West Company

but when Chinese, American and London port charges were figured in the balance sagged

JOHN JACOB ASTOR WANTED TO REVIVE HIS BUSINESS ON THE PACIFIC COAST

With the conclusion of War of 1812 and the signing of the Treaty of Ghent

that demanded the return of captured property to its original owner

John Jacob Astor saw a favorable opportunity for his trapping and trading enterprise

however, North West Company held the Columbia River, its tributaries and trading posts

and conducted trade throughout the region in defiance of the laws of Congress

to remove them would be very difficult as the Nor’Westers were well armed and skilled

company wars between North West Company and Hudson’s Bay Company

showed what could be expected in a commercial fight in the lawless wilderness

John Jacob Astor applied to the U.S. government to restore his property on the Columbia River

he stated that if possession was returned to him he would resume trapping operations

NORTH WEST COMPANY PLOT AGAINST THE RED RIVER COLONY HAS SOME SUCCESS

North West Company morale suffered from the life-and-death struggle being waged

east of the Rocky Mountains with Hudson’s Bay Company’s Red River Colony

owned by Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk

“Captain” Duncan Cameron of the (disbanded) Voyageur Corps left the Nor’Westers’ Fort Gibraltar

he crossed the Red River to the colony where he made an effort to befriend the colonists

he said he heard news from the interior that a body of Indians would raid them in the spring

he invited some of the colonists to dine with him several evenings -- he always fed them well

all the while sympathizing with their intolerable living conditions

he implied Lord Selkirk had abandoned them but he would gladly act as their deliverer

if they would throw themselves on the mercy of the North West Company

signs of wavering allegiance among the colonists were soon evident

Meanwhile Cameron’s colleague in the North West Company plot, Alexander Macdonell,

was not succeeding in his efforts to incite the local Indians against the colony -- May 1815

he could recruit only a handful of Plains Indians but they were brave only when they were drunk

when their chief visited the Red River Colony and informed Governor Miles Macdonell

they intended the colonists no ill -- Nor’Wester Alexander Macdonell gave up the plot

“CAPTAIN” DUNCAN CAMERON TRIES A NEW PLAN TO HARASS RED RIVER COLONY

Finding it impossible to arouse the Indians to raid the Red River settlement

North West Company agent “Captain” Duncan Cameron

adopted other methods to entice disloyalty

colonists deserting the colony increased in number every day

Nor’Westers joined by deserters made camp a short distance down the Red River

near the North West Company’s Fort Gibraltar

“Captain” Cameron’s recruits were drilled to instill some level of military discipline

they were furnished with loaded muskets and ammunition by the North West Company

Cameron’s men were marched toward the Red River Colony governor’s house -- June 11, 1815

James White, the surgeon of the colony, was walking by the governor’s house

as a puff of grey smoke came from where the Nor’Westers were hidden -- the shot went wide

then colony storekeeper John Bourke heard a bullet whiz past his head

Colonists grabbed their weapons and returned the Nor’Westers’ fire

they were at a disadvantage in the exchange of volleys however

as their adversaries remained hidden from view

when the Nor’Westers left, four colonists had been wounded

Captain Duncan Cameron, continuing his strategy to create disloyalty,

he now said that his main object was to capture Governor Miles Macdonell

for North West Company

if this were accomplished he would leave the Red River settlers in peace

to safeguard the colony Governor Macdonell voluntarily surrendered himself to the Nor’Westers

Cameron was jubilant -- with the loyal settlers almost defenseless and the governor his prisoner

Cameron could dictate his own terms

Duncan Cameron issued an explicit command that the settlers must leave the Red River without delay

most of the colonists decided to obey the order and their exodus began under Cameron’s direction

about one hundred forty colonists, including women and children, departed

they traveled in North West Company canoes 400 miles to the north to safety

at Hudson’s Bay Company’s Norway House at the northern end of Lake Winnipeg

Red River Colony Governor Miles Macdonell was arrest and taken to Montreal for trial

this was the location of North West Company’s headquarters and home of the managing partners

NORTH WEST COMPANY AGENT ALEXANDER MACDONELL RAIDS RED RIVER COLONY

Nor’Westers’ agent Alexander Macdonell dealt with the forty or fifty colonists who refused to leave

muskets were brought into play; horses and cattle belonging to the settlers were spirited away

several of the colonists were placed under arrest on trumped-up charges

Harassment of Red River Colony culminated in a raid led by Alexander Macdonell

and Metis leader Cuthbert Grant -- June 25, 1815

settlers, though barely one-half the strength of the raiders, resolved to make a stand

they placed themselves under the command of Hudson’s Bay Company’s John McLeod

colonists took what shelter they could find and prepared for battle

advancing Metis hesitated and halted in dismay when faced with the courage of the defenders

John McLeod remembered an unused cannon at a small Hudson’s Bay Company post

he sent two men to bring the weapon to the colonists’ position

this was soon done and heavy cart chains were cut into sections for use as shot

when a raking volley of chain shot was fired the attackers galloped out of range

but the colonists were at the end of their resources -- they decided to quit the colony

they followed the other colonists to Hudson’s Bay Company’s Norway House

Alexander Macdonell and the Metis under Cuthbert Grant burned Red River Colony to the ground

RED RIVER COLONY APPEARES TO BE AT AN END

After three years of self-sacrifice the effort seemed to have been wasted

Red River Colony was gone but Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk

had received the alarming news of events

Lord Selkirk’s recruiter Colin Robertson had met Hudson’s Bay Company leaders in London [1814]

(after recruiting colonists in Scotland for Lord Selkirk

Robertson had been employed by Hudson’s Bay Company

although he had previously worked for North West Company

he knew the value of voyageurs in traveling through the Canadian frontier)

Robertson was authorized to raise a large force to protect and expand the Red River Colony

160 voyagers and three former Nor’Westers in sixteen canoes left Montreal

and sped to the defense of the colony

en route Robertson met Red River colonists who were fleeting to Montreal for safety

Robertson inspired the settlers to return once again to the Red River

Colin Robertson led his party to Hudson’s Bay Company’s Norway House

where many of the colonists had sought refuge

When Robertson’s band of voyagers and returning colonists reached the Red River

they were surprised to see their crops had suffered little damage

ASTORIA’S OWNERSHIP REMAINS IN DISPUTE

Sale of Astoria to the North West Company and the and capture of Astoria by the British navy

did not mean in any sense that Americans were yielding their claim to Oregon to the British

British government replied that the Treaty of Ghent did not apply to Astoria

as that was a private business venture located on soil

to which the United States had no recognized claim of sovereignty

Astoria had been transferred to a Canadian Company by sale and purchase -- not by seizure

Secretary of State James Monroe retorted that the actions of Captain Black of the *Raccoon*

in running up the Union Jack and announcing that he was taking possession of the country

constituted seizure and the property must be returned

Astoria (or Fort George), itself, was a prize of questionable value

by hacking at the forest the inhabitants had managed to clear some two hundred acres

but only twenty acres were able to be farmed

however, seeing the prospect of victory, John Jacob Astor proposed that the United States

establish a military post on the Columbia, manned with fifty soldiers

and that Astor himself be given a commission as a lieutenant

this was a stronger step than Secretary of State James Monroe was prepared to take

nor was President Madison interested in protecting a commercial enterprise

in the wilderness using the American military

United States government asked the British government to restore Astoria under the Treaty of Ghent

since it had been captured by Captain William Black of the *Raccoon*

the postthus must be returned -- July 18, 1815

Article One of the treaty stated that **“all territory, places, and possessions, whatsoever, taken by either party from the other during the War, or which may be taken after the signing of the Treaty,…shall be restored without delay.”**

in fact, the unnecessary ceremony staged by British Captain William Black

technically placed Astoria under the authority of Article One

had the post simply changed hands as a result of a legitimate sale,

America would have had little or no grounds for the demanded return of the post

(even so, two years elapsed before any action was taken)

DAVID THOMPSON BECOMES A SURVEYOR FOR THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT

With an end to the War of 1812 and the signing of the Treaty of Ghent

it became necessary to establish an official international boundary

between the United States and Canada from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean -- 1815

David Thompson and his family moved from Terrebonne (near Montreal)

to Glengarry County, Ontario where he took a position with the British Boundary Commission which was established to define and map the international boundary

between Upper Canada and the United States from St. Regis, Quebec

to the Northwest angle of Lake of the Woods

(located in parts of today’s Canadian provinces of Ontario and Manitoba

and the U.S. state of Minnesota)

Retired Nor’Wester Thompson surveyed the Ontario section of the U.S.-Canadian boundary

a task he accomplished in ten months

Driving himself and his entourage through sub-zero blizzards by dog sled

covering 4,000 miles of mostly uncharted territory

and earning the respect of North West Company partner Alexander Mackenzie

who had previously forged routes to the Arctic and Pacific oceans [1789 and 1792]

Thompson’s trips “should have taken two years” Mackenzie marveled

David Thompson continued to work for the British representative to the Boundary Commission

for eleven years -- 1815-[1826]

NORTH WEST COMPANY BUSINESS ETHICS DECLINED TO A LEVEL OF SAVAGRY

Cooperation between North West Company and Hudson’s Bay Company traders

continued to decline as competition grew more intense

North West Company cheated Indians with an unmatched viciousness

Indians were generally outfitted a year in advance

they might be given a blanket, a cheap gun, a little powder and shot

for which they were charged with $40 or $50 debt to the North West Company

at the end of the season, the Indian’s catch was supposed to liquidate his debt

but seldom did

North West Company was more violent and ruthless than any other organization

which did business in North America

it lied, committed murder and starved its enemies

it cheated the Indians and their own men with an unmatched viciousness

North West Company not only charged outrageous prices but cheated in quality and quantity

liquor became the standard method for enticing natives to surrender their furs

rum, with proof as low as 4% would be diluted 50-75% with water

then measured out to Indians

(Indian quickly caught on to the trick of diluting the rum

an Indian would take a small amount in his mouth and spit it into the campfire

if it flared up it was “fire-water” and acceptable for trade)

North West Company even cheated its own men

once the interior was reached, rum which cost $1 a gallon in Montreal

was sold to employees at $8 a quart

“Company store” system of exploitation was practiced full scale

company prices were trebled and quadrupled

illiterate voyageurs were encouraged to buy finery

which were charged against his annual wages that averaged only £40 a year

North West Company used its own money system

company money corresponded in name to Canadian coins -- but were half the value

uneducated voyageurs could neither add nor subtract

the employee, thinking in Canadian money, became hopelessly confused

money itself represented a huge profit for the company

personal violence as well as general violence were common occurrences

duels, arrests, counter-arrests, kidnappings and ambushes were frequent

Hudson’s Bay Company trading posts were attacked and pillaged

at other times, Hudson’s Bay Company men were starved for a few days

until they became “reasonable” and joined the North West Company

these tactics caused the death of half the men engaged by Hudson’s Bay Company

in the Athabasca Region

MORE NEW RECRUITS ARRIVE TO REBUILD RED RIVER COLONY

About ninety new recruits enlisted by Lord Selkirk arrived from Scotland -- October 1815

with them was retired British army Captain Robert Semple

Hudson’s Bay Company had appointed him governor-in-chief not just of Red River Colony

but of all of the company’s interior trading posts as well

Semple was an honest and courageous man but he lacked patience and diplomacy

another important arrival was church elder James Sutherland

who had been authorized by the Church of Scotland to baptize and perform marriages

Colonists constructed their new houses on the plain known as Frog Plain

and reached toward an elevated plateau

a few homes appear to have been built on the plateau itself

Governor Robert Semple’s two-story house and the buildings near it

were surrounded by a strong palisade

this grouping became known as Fort Douglas (now Winnipeg’s Point Douglas)

RED RIVER COLONY AGAIN SUFFERS THE AFFECT OF COMPANY RIVALRY

North West Company employees at Fort Gibraltar were not pleased with the return of the colony

sinister “Captain” Duncan Cameron returned to Fort Gibraltar from Fort William

where he attended the headquarters meeting of North West Company partners-in-the-field Hudson’s Bay Company employee Colin Robertson was distressed by Cameron’s return

Robertson decided to take immediate and radical action -- the capture of Fort Gibraltar

Colin Robertson’s surprise raid was successful -- October 15, 1815

property belonging to the colonists during the Nor’Westers [June] raid was recovered

Hudson’s Bay Company’s trade goods were recovered

several of Fort Gibraltar’s cannons were removed

“Captain” Duncan Cameron was taken prisoner but being a smooth talker

he made promises of his future good behavior and was soon released

Robertson then traveled across the Red River to begin the rebuilding of the Red River Colony

there he spent the (autumn) fending off threats from the North West Company

In spite of their hard work and determination to acquire food, colonists were once again forced

to (winter) at Fort Daer on the Pembina River (North Dakota)

under the leadership of Governor Robert Semple

rumors abounded at Fort Daer

Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk’s settlers became disturbed when they heard

large numbers of Metis were gathering to attack the colony [in the spring]

LORD SELKIRK TRAVELS TO CANADA

Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk decided his Red River Colony needed his personal attention

he, his wife Lady Selkirk and their three children sailed from Scotland to New York

he learned of the overthrow of his colony

when they arrived in America -- November 15, 1815

Lord Selkirk quickly set out for Montreal where he acquired eye-witness accounts of the tragic events

that Nor’Westers Duncan Cameron and Alexander Macdonell had undertaken

one of Lord Selkirk’s eyewitnesses was Governor Miles Mcdonell who was being held prisoner

by North West Company officers as he awaited trial (these charges were later dropped)

Lord Selkirk pled for military assistance from the Canadian government to protect his colony

he requested judicial magistrates at Montreal and York (today’s Toronto)

gather information in support of his request

LORD SELKIRK ATTEMPTS TO ENCOURAGE HIS SETTLERS

Hudson’s Bay Company’s Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk wintered in Montreal -- 1815-1816

where he busily made preparations to travel to his Red River Colony [in the spring]

Lord Selkirk wrote several letters to his colonists

explaining he had recently arrived on North America and was gathering a force to assist them

these letters were dispatched by a courier to be delivered to the colonists

North West Company leaders learned of the courier and ordered him waylaid and his dispatches taken

this was done and the packet of letters were diverted

to North West Company headquarters at Fort William

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY CHANGES ITS METHOD OF OPERATION

Hudson’s Bay Company procedure called for establishing a trading post visited by Indians

who provided pelts to the trader in exchange for a large variety of trade goods

Because of attacks on its posts and employees Hudson’s Bay Company leaders

decided to send a trapping expedition into the Athabasca District -- winter 1815-1816

they hired Colin Robertson and John Clarke, a former Nor’Wester, to acquire men

and lead them to Lake Winnipeg where they would gather supplies for the venture

Robertson left the expedition at Lake Winnipeg to travel to Fort Daer

to lead the Red River colonists staying at the fort back to the Red River Colony

Former Astorian John Clarke led a large party of Hudson’s Bay Company trappers

into Athabasca District but they had a terrible winter -- 1815-1816

North West Company men attacked the party and robbed them of a large quantity of goods

Indians encouraged by Nor’Westers refused to supply the Hudson’s Bay Company trappers

when Hudson’s Bay Company men were caught and encircled by Nor’Westers in Athabasca

eighteen of them starved to death because their rivals would neither feed them

nor permit the Indians to sell to them

about fifty of the others were kept without food for two or three days

before they took an oath they would leave and not return

North West Company, by contrast, claimed the expedition had not been properly supplied

and the deaths were therefore the fault of the Hudson’s Bay Company

North West Company had stopped the spread of their rival

Hudson’s Bay Company did not have five full packs of pelts in the whole Athabasca Department

none of the four trading establishment lasted through the winter

as they were either seized or plundered

half of the party was dead or had left the district to avoid starvation -- winter 1815

RED RIVER COLONISTS ATTACK NORTH WEST COMPANY’S FORT GIBRALTAR

Hudson’s Bay Company Robert Semple led his colonists from Fort Daer back to the Red River

In response to the rumors of Metis preparing to attack the Red River Colony and its Fort Douglas

Semple again attacked Fort Gibraltar across the Red River from Fort Douglas -- March 17, 1816

sinister Duncan Cameron was again taken prisoner but this he was not released

Hudson’s Bay Company employee Colin Robertson escorted “Captain” Cameron to England

(there a trial found it impossible to convict him of any crime and he was released

Cameron later sued Lord Selkirk for illegal detention and won £3,000 in damages)

VIOLENCE ERRUPTS IN THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY

North West Company trapping party of ten men killed a Multnomah chief

when he demanded tribute for safe passage around the Clackamas rapids on the Willamette River

in the skirmish that followed two of the trappers were wounded

North West Company Chief Trader James Keith dispatched twenty-five men to restore peace

but the natives refused the compensation offered for the loss of their chief

North West Company men departed by canoe downriver back to Fort George

during the voyage one of the men in the party was wounded in a night attack

RED RIVER COLONISTS DESTROY FORT GIBRALTAR

About one hundred settlers returned to Red River Colony from Norway House

more than 400 miles away -- April 1816

Robert Semple replaced the imprisoned Miles Macdonell as governor of Red River Colony

but he did not appear to assumed his duties at once

After Colin Robertson had departed with “Captain” Duncan Cameron as his prisoner

Hudson’s Bay Company’s Governor Semple decided to dismantle Fort Gibraltar

which was owned by the North West Company to eliminate the fort a rallying point

for Nor’Westers and Metis trappers

thirty Hudson’s Bay Company men were sent to tear down Fort Gibraltar -- end of May

they dismantled the encircling surrounding wall and built a raft to carry salvaged items

to Hudson’s Bay Company’s Fort Douglas in the Red River Colony for use there

When this was done Red River Colony Sheriff Alexander Macdonell

seized North West Company’s Pembina House (located in today’s North Dakota)

military stores were taken to Fort Douglas

prisoners from Pembina House were released on their promise of good behavior

and the post was returned to North West Company

NORTH WEST COMPANY MEN RETALIATE FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF FORT GIBRALTAR

Matters along the Red River were now ripe for a collision

hotheaded North West Company Metis free trappers struck first

Hudson’s Bay Company employee Pierre Pambrun was authorized to lead a party of men

in five boats to carry twenty-two bales of furs and six hundred bags of pemmican

to a safer location

They were attacked by an armed force of forty-nine Nor’Westers led by Metis Cuthbert Grant all of the Hudson’s Bay Company men were taken captive -- May 12, 1816

Events rapidly escalated into an inevitable battle

NOR’WESTERS GATHER METIS TRAPPERS TO ATTACK BRANDON HOUSE

Pierre Pambrun and his captured men, boats, furs and pemmican were taken down the Red River

toward Red River Colony by North West Company agent Alexander Macdonell

they were accompanied by Metis on horseback led by Cuthbert Grant -- end of May additional Metis were recruited as they proceeded in the direction of the settlement

until there was a force of about seventy Nor’Westers and Metis

Cuthbert Grant captured Hudson’s Bay Company’s Brandon House

located along the Assiniboine River (in today’s Winnipeg, Manitoba)

Grant stripped the post of all of its stores

LORD SELKIRK COMPLETES PREPARATIONS TO COME TO THE AID OF HIS COLONY

Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk staying in Montreal hoped to reach his colony in time

he had been appointed justice of the peace for Upper Canada and the Indian Territories

by the Canadian government

he was provided one non-commissioned officer and six men to assure his personal protection

Although Lord Selkirk had been denied military troops by the Canadian authorities

he had recruited a new contingent of settlers for his Red River Colony

these were trained Swiss mercenaries, disciplined and experienced on many battlefields

whose units had been disbanded at the close of the War of 1812

four officers and eighty professional soldiers entered the service of Lord Selkirk

LORD SELKIRK LEADS HIS SETTLER/SOLDIERS OUT OF MONTREAL

Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk set out up the St. Lawrence River

for his Red River Colony -- June 4, 1816

He led about one hundred discharged soldiers and Hudson’s Bay Company colonists as they set out to stiffen the defense of his settlement

they stopped en route to recruit at least twenty additional military veterans

Lord Selkirk reached Lake Ontario and skirted the north shore

until they reached York, the capital of Upper Canada (Ontario)

It was common knowledge among the Nor’Westers that Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk

was on his way to his Red River Colony with a body of armed men

and that his route would pass near North West Company headquarters at Fort William

there was evidence that a plot to seize or kill Lord Selkirk was considered some weeks before

Lord Selkirk and his party arrived at the Canadian military post on Drummond Island (Michigan)

where he learned of efforts by the North West Company arouse the Indians against his colony

and also of efforts by a trapper named Grant to intercept a messenger

carrying Lord Selkirk’s dispatches to his colony

NOR’WESTERS PREPARE FOR WAR

Competition between North West Company and Hudson’s Bay Company exploded beyond all sanity

bloodshed, debauchery of the Indians, and frantic stripping of the country

of every possible fur-bearing animal became an integral parts of the struggle for supremacy

North West Company partners had resolved to finally uproot

Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk’s colony from the banks of the Red River

After his successful attack on Hudson’s Bay Company’s Brandon House

Cuthbert Grant continued to lead his force of about seventy Nor’Westers and Metis

toward Red River Colony

when they arrived at the southern tip of Lake Winnipeg

Grant set up a crude fort and placed two swivel guns inside -- June 16, 1816

RED RIVER COLONY’S FORT DOUGLAS IS ATTACKED BY NOR’WESTERS

Nor’Wester agent Alexander Macdonell continued his preparations to attack Red River Colony

he had accumulated about 120 Nor’Westers, Metis and Indians all well-armed and mounted

when this force was ready to march Macdonell turned them over to Metis Cuthbert Grant

Macdonell did not wish to take part in the upcoming raid himself

Settlers at Red River Colony had prepared for the obvious danger they faced

Fort Douglas was strengthened and guards were posted around the clock

however, Governor Robert Semple did not seem to take the situation very seriously

he finished preparations to depart for Hudson’s Bay Company’s York Factory on business

Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk’s colonists were warned by two Cree Indians -- June 17, 1816

who announced there would be an attack on the Red River Colony in two days

RED RIVER COLONISTS COME UNDER ATTACK

Cuthbert Grant led a party of about sixty Metis on horseback

as they attempted to carry provisions past the Red River colony -- 5:00 p.m., June 19, 1816

they plundered some outlying posts on the Assiniboine River then stopped at a place

called Seven Oaks near the Hudson’s Bay Company’s Fort Douglas

Red River Colony Governor Robert Semple gathered twenty men and rode out to meet them

en route he was met by a number of colonists running toward Fort Douglas shouting in fear

after an attempt to discuss concerns with the Nor’Westers failed

one of Semple’s colonists was sent back to bring up a cannon

and any men who could be spared from Fort Douglas

Governor Semple waited for reinforcements and the cannon -- but he became impatient

he ordered his men to advance on the Nor’Westers who were concealed behind a stand of trees

as the colonists advanced the Nor’Westers dressed as Indians galloped out

they were well equipped with guns, knives, bows and arrows and spears

In the skirmish Governor Semple was wounded in the thigh and his men gathered around him

Nor’Westers surrounded the now helpless colonists and opened fire

most of Semple’s men fell at the first volley as those remaining cried out for mercy

all but six of Governor Semple’s men were killed by Cuthbert Grant’s Nor’Westers

who suffered only man killed and one wounded

this became known as the Seven Oaks Massacre

COLONISTS REMAINING AT RED RIVER COLONY ARE ALLOWED TO DEPART

North West Company employee Metis Cuthbert Grant and twenty men entered Fort Douglas

what followed became a reign of terror as arson was committed and barns were destroyed

Grant agreed to allow the women, children and surviving colonists to evacuate -- June 20, 1816

however, they were forced to surrender all public property and most of their private property

two hundred evicted colonists set out in canoes down the Red River

once again disaster had overtaken Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk’s colonists

COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT IS IMPACTED BY THE COMPANY WAR

North West Company’s Columbia Department (Oregon) lay far from the actual conflict

between the Nor’Westers and Hudson’s Bay Company

but repercussions inevitably reached across the mountains

fur trappers and traders who were displaced from their assignments by conflicts

or who were in trouble with the law for their part in the battles

often found their way to the Columbia Department to escape arrest and punishment

company warfare kept the best of the voyageurs east of the Continental Divide

in their place the Northwest Company’s Columbia Department

received more and more undesirables

Discipline crumbled in the Columbia Department and extravagance became endemic

Iroquois and Abenaki Indians from the St. Lawrence River region arrived

undependable at best, these trigger-happy Eastern Indians perceived

the lack of discipline and control and responded in kind

their wanton horse stealing and raping so inflamed the local natives

of the Willamette region to the south and the Cowlitz Indians to the north

that both rich valleys had to be abandoned for the next few seasons

NORTH WEST COMPANY POLICY REGARDING COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT CHANGES

Although battles were raging between the North West Company and Hudson’s Bay Company

Nor’Wester headquarters post at Fort William on Lake Superior,

continued to demand results from the Columbia Department

North West Company changed its policy -- 1816

partners in Montreal believed coastal trade was only marking time as retired trappers

in the Columbia Department were absorbing all of the profits with their leisurely life style

Columbia Department was divided into two administrative districts

region West of Rockies became known as “New Caledonia”

(north-central portions of present-day British Columbia)

this division was to get supplies from Fort George instead of from the East

“Western Division” was instructed to extend to the south toward California

strong trapping parties were to range through the country rather than living at the posts

DONALD “FATS” MCKENZIE IS HIRED BY THE NORTH WEST COMPANY

North West Company startled the former Astorian Donald McKenzie

by offering the then princely salary of five hundred pounds a year

to see what he could do about increasing the Columbia Department’s inland trade

this price was more than he could turn down

he was again going to Fort George (Astoria) -- this time as governor

LORD SELKIRK LEARNS OF THE DISASTER THAT BESET HIS COLONY

Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk led his colonist/soldiers from Drummond Island

to the town of Sault Ste. Marie (Ontario)

only a few miles out of town he encountered two canoes

in one of these was Red River Colony Governor Miles Macdonell

who had been released from arrest in Montreal

for the first time Lord Selkirk learned of the massacre of Governor Robert Semple

and his men at Seven Oaks

and of the eviction of his settlers from his colony by North West Company employees

Lord Selkirk wrote a letter to recently-appointed Governor of Canada Sir John Sherbrook to explain

that he was forced to act -- or allow a daring and vicious crime to go unpunished -- July 29, 1816

LORD SELKIRK LEADS HIS SOLDIER-SETTLERS TO FORT WILLIAM

Lord Selkirk acted on his own authority

he had a force of military veterans large enough to enter Nor’Westers’ Fort William headquarters

but he was in a difficult position

he had been appointed justice of the peace for Upper Canada and the Indian Territories

but it did not seem proper to try lawbreakers who were attacking his personal interests

Lord Selkirk requested two Canadian magistrates to accompany him to Fort William

both declined as Fort William was a North West Company town in every regard

Selkirk reported his request in writing to Governor-General of Canada John Sherbrooke

Lord Selkirk diverted is private army to North West Company headquarters at Fort William

he divided his contingent into two forces

he led one division speedily toward Fort William

his second division of soldier-settlers advanced more slowly

Lord Selkirk reached the islands that block the approach to Lake Superior’s Thunder Bay

he entered the bay and ascended the Kaministikwia River

for about half a mile -- early August 1816

there he built a temporary camp across the river from Fort William

most of the wintering partners had departed except those bound for Red River, Winnipeg River

and Lake Superior who were there with their outfits

LORD SELKIRK CATCHES THE NOR’WESTERS OFF GUARD

Lord Selkirk was reinforced by his slower moving second contingent of men -- August 12, 1816

Lord Selkirk wrote a letter to North West Company Chief Director William McGillivray

to ask why Hudson’s Bay Company men were being held prisoner

he demanded their immediate release

several of the prisoners were released and allowed to go to Lord Selkirk’s camp

Acting as a justice of the peace for Upper Canada and the Indian Territories

Lord Selkirk held court and heard evidence from the released prisoners

he quickly acquired enough information that he felt justified to bring legal action

against some of the Nor’Westers at Fort William

LORD SELKIRK ORDERS WILLIAM McGILLIVRAY ARRESTED

Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk sent two men as constables with a warrant

to arrest North West Company Chief Director William McGillivray -- August 13, 1816

these constables were accompanied by nine fully armed soldier-settlers

McGillivray was found writing a letter in his room

he read the warrant and commented that he was prepared to accompany them

he only requested that two North West Company partner Kenneth McKenzie

and Fort William Chief Trader Dr. John McLoughlin be allowed to go along to post bail

all three Nor’Westers were taken to Lord Selkirk’s camp

When Lord Selkirk was informed the prisoners were in his power he acted imprudently:

•he seized Fort William and confiscated North West Company furs for his own benefit

(North West Company later claimed that there were goods worth £8,000

and six hundred packs of furs valued at £60,000 which Selkirk held at Fort William);

•he released the prisoners being held in custody by the North West Company;

•he investigated the events along the Red River and took depositions from witnesses;

•he refused bail for William McGillivray

and wrote indictments against McKenzie and McLoughlin

he ordered the two North West Company partners also be held;

•Lord Selkirk next wrote orders to arrest all of the other partners remaining in Fort William

both constables were dispatched accompanied by twenty-five soldiers who served as escorts

ALL OF THE NORTH WEST COMPANY PARTNERS AT FORT WILLIAM ARE ARRESTED

Siding with Lord Selkirk, arrest warrants were issued by the Canadian government

for all North West Company partners for their part in what became known as the Pemmican War

When constables arrived at Fort William they faced many French-Canadians, Metis and Indians

who had gathered at the entrance to the post

Lord Selkirk’s constables saw two North West Company partners and apprehended them

John McDonald, a third partner, was found but he put up a strong show of resistance

some Nor’Westers attempted to close the gate to Fort William as the constables struggled to enter

when a shout for support went up from one of the constables twenty-five soldiers advanced

in spite of the angry crowd, Lord Selkirk’s men entered the gates of Fort William

six North West Company partners were arrested: Alexander Mackenzie, Simon Fraser,

John McDonald, Kenneth McKenzie, Allan McDonald and Hugh McGillis

when they were marched away two soldiers remained

to search the papers of those who had been arrested

Lord Selkirk’s actions probably did not cause more bloodshed because North West Company

was reluctant to clash with the professional soldiers he had employed

HOLDING THE PRISONERS WAS A PROBLEM FOR LORD SELKIRK

When Lord Selkirk finished his examination of the new prisoners it was late -- August 13, 1816

he arranged that they should return to their quarters at Fort William for the night

with the understanding they would behave properly

and do nothing hostile toward their captors

In the morning a search of Fort William showed that many papers had been burned

word was delivered to Lord Selkirk that guns and ammunition had been removed during the night

Lord Selkirk issued another warrant authorizing a search for weapons

fifty or more guns were found hidden in a barn under a pile of hay

eight barrels of gunpowder were found recently hidden in a swamp not far from the fort

nine North West Company partners were again taken as prisoners

Lord Selkirk moved his tents to the ground near Fort William

he ordered Fort William occupied by his soldiers

most of the French-Canadians, Metis and Indians employed by the North West Company

were ordered to leave the fort and cross to the other side of the river

their canoes were confiscated

Lord Selkirk conducted a hearing

he decided all nine company officials should be taken to York (today’s Toronto) for trial

North West Company Chief Director William McGillivray, Alexander Mackenzie,

Simon Fraser, John McDonald, Kenneth McKenzie, Allan McDonald and Hugh McGillis,

Kenneth McKenzie and Fort William Chef Trader Dr. John McLoughlin

BRINGING THE NORTH WEST COMPANY OFFICIALS TO TRIAL IS DIFFICULT

Three canoes were provisioned to deliver the nine Nor’Westers across Lake Superior

to York (today’s Toronto) for trial -- August 18, 1816

they were guarded by a contingent of Lord Selkirk’s soldiers

Indians regularly employed by North West Company were hired as voyagers and guides

LORD SELKIRK PUNISHES NORTH WEST COMPANY

Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk held Fort William in his power

he sent his soldiers out to capture four nearby North West Company trading posts

he sent other soldiers to the Red River area to restore order and assist the return of his colonists

Fort Douglas was retaken from the North West Company

TRADGEDY STRIKES THOSE DELIVERING NORTH WEST COMPANY PARTNERS TO TRIAL

Three canoes carrying the nine company partners under guard to York (Toronto)

stopped for dinner -- 1:00 p.m., August 26, 1816

while they were eating a heavy westerly breeze sprang up

but they were on the leeward side of an island and did not notice its full strength

even so, the lieutenant in charge of the guards had misgivings

he asked North West Company partner and expert canoeman William McGillivray’s advice

McGillivray believed they could continue if the voyageurs were careful

voyageurs disagreed and advised staying on the island -- this advice was ignored

Soon after setting out on the river a heavy squall hit the canoes which began taking on water

when the lead canoe turned toward an island the other two followed

quickly the lead canoe became swamped and capsized in rough water near the island

other canoes were too heavily laden to be of assistance

they paddled to shore, partially unloaded and returned to help their struggling friends

in spite of the most heroic efforts nine of the twenty-one people in the canoe drowned

including North West Company partner Kenneth McKenzie

Chief Trader Dr. John McLoughlin was dragged ashore unconscious

fable says the experience turned his great halo of silken hair snow white

(probably the change came more naturally)

but whatever the cause, the premature graying contributed no little bit

to the patriarchal reputation that gradually began to grow up around the man

For their part in the Pemmican War none of the north West Company partners were found guilty

FORT OKANOGAN IS REBUILT

Ross Cox replaced the original driftwood buildings of Fort Okanogan with a strong fort

he stated in his book *Adventures On The Columbia River, Including The Narrative Of A Residence Of Six Years On The Western Side Of The Rocky Mountains, Among Various Tribes Of Indians Hitherto Unknown*: **“Before the month of September we had erected a new dwelling-house for the person in charge, containing four excellent rooms and a large dining hall, two good houses for the men and a spacious store for the furs and merchandise, to which was attached a shop for trading with the natives. The whole was surrounded by strong palisades fifteen feet high and flanked by two bastions. Each bastion had, in its lower story, a light brass four-pounder; and in the upper, loopholes were left for the use of musketry.... The point of land on which the fort is built is formed by the junction of the Oakinagan** [sic] **river with the Columbia.”[[152]](#footnote-152)**

Fort Okanogan was an important storage depot and horse rendezvous

that served as the gateway to Fort Thompson (Kamloops) and New Caledonia -- August 26, 1816

EIGHT NORTH WEST COMPANY OFFICIALS FACE A JUDGE IN YORK

After the tragic accident another canoe was procured at Sault Ste Marie

to deliver the now eight North West Company officials to trial

they arrive in York (Toronto) -- September 3, 1816

Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk’s lieutenant charged with guarding the partners

sought out the attorney-general to take the proper legal steps,

but found that he was absent

Meanwhile in an effort to go before a judge and prove they were being detained illegally

his eight prisoners applied for a writ of habeas corpus

when they appeared in court Lord Selkirk’s soldiers

were ordered to take the prisoners to Montreal

that is, to take them to the home of the North West Company

where they would be supported by powerful influences

EIGHT NORTH WEST COMPANY OFFICIALS ARE DELIVERED TO MONTREAL FOR TRIAL

Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk’s soldiers delivered eight North West Company officials

to the North West Company headquarters town of Montreal where the company was all-powerful

Trials of the Nor’Westers began in an Upper Canada courtroom -- September 10, 1816

North West Company principal partner William McGillivray was acquitted in court

(perhaps because Judge Reid was married to McGillivray’s sister)

seven other North West Company officials delivered by Lord Selkirk’s soldiers

were immediately tried and acquitted in less than an hour

however, North West Company Chief Trader Dr. John McLoughlin

was disheartened by the experience and by the mutually ruinous violence

which brought his employers to the edge of bankruptcy

RESULTS OF THE CONTINUING COMPANY WARS

So many people died in the encounters between the rival fur trading companies

that British political leaders became aroused

British Government virtually ordered an end to hostilities and threatened official intervention

including the possibility of revoking of the charters of both North West Company

and Hudson’s Bay Company -- this forced the rival companies to meet

to unite the two rivals into a single company

NORTH WEST COMPANY CHIEF TRADER DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN SEEKS PEACE

Nor’Wester Dr. John McLoughlin spearheaded a drive to talk peace with the Hudson’s Bay Company

North West Company wintering partners listened to him

they gave him their proxy votes to carry to London

Fort William Chief Trader Dr. McLoughlin traveled to London to represent the North West Company

in negotiations with Hudson’s Bay Company

according to legend, in London he was a dominant figure in working out details of a merger

actually his voice was seldom heard but his leadership talents were recognized

Officers of Hudson’s Bay Company also quickly recognized Dr. McLouglin’s merits

DONALD MCKENZIE RETURNS TO FORT GEORGE (ASTORIA)

Chief Trader James Keith remained the senior North West Company partner in charge of Fort George

he was placed in charge of New Caledonia -- fall 1816

he also managed shipping to China and general outfitting of trapping brigades into the interior

Donald McKenzie was placed in charge of New Caledonia’s interior trade

it was strange reunion when McKenzie arrived at Fort George (Astoria) -- 1816

he met with jealousy and suspicion from resident traders

especially Chief Trade James Keith who placed every obstacle in his way

DONALD “FATS” McKENZIE DEVELOPS TRADING IN THE SNAKE RIVER REGION

Exploitation of the Snake River Country was an assignment specifically given to Donald McKenzie

McKenzie developed a plan of splitting the Columbia Department into inland and coastal districts

this idea would water down the prestige of Chief Trader James Keith

and would drain manpower and goods from Fort George

However McKenzie was a proven and able leader in every respect

patiently he listened to the objections of James Keith and the other Nor’Westers

then he organized groups of trappers into brigades

(whom McKenzie believed would work harder than the natives to secure more furs)

McKenzie took the men from Fort George that Chief Trader James Keith gave him

this was, in fact, a dismaying gang of Iroquois, Sandwich Islanders and castoff voyageurs

McKenzie spent two years -- 1816-[1818]

reassessing the country he had once considered to be profitless

Donald McKenzie was firm and just in his treatment of the Indians, but at the same time, friendly

since he was the chief of the white traders he acted toward the Indians as a chief

he did not treat the natives as inferior people -- he would not bully or cheat them

along the way he sought the good will of the thieving natives of the portages

and carefully appeased the hostility of the more distant Nez Perce and Shoshones

he followed their customs in many ways so the Indians came to trust him

he was so respected that he could go among the natives unarmed

but he kept his traders well-armed and disciplined -- just in case

McKenzie spent his time at Fort George, Spokane House

and the North West Company headquarters at Fort William on Lake Superior

Donald McKenzie ruled the interior country and built up a large trade with the Indians

he provided valuable service to the North West Company

by developing a rich trade in (today’s southern Idaho)

WILSON PRICE HUNT RETURNS TO NEW YORK CITY

(After trading with the natives in Russian-America, *Pedler* was impounded by Russian authorities

for illegally trading with the Indians [July 1815]

Wilson Price Hunt left New Archangel [Sitka] Russian-America [Alaska]

on the *Pedler ­*[November 1815]

he arrived in the Hawaiian Islands [on December 12, 1815]

after a short visit he continued on the Canton, China

Wilson Price Hunt accompanied Captain Samuel Northrup and the ship *Pedler* left Canton

they around Africa’s Cape Horn to return to John Jacob Astor

*Pedler* sailed into New York City after circling the globe -- October 16, 1816

Hunt’s story would make the front page of the New York City newspapers

Americans displayed a remarkable amount of interest in the exploits of men like Wilson Price Hunt

and the members of the Pacific Fur Company

NORTH WEST COMPANY PUBLISHES DAVID THOMPSON’S ORIGINAL MAP

This map, which showed the fictitious Caledonia River south of the Fraser River, was published

in a North West Company pamphlet without David Thompson’s permission -- 1816

although a more accurate map had been produced by Thompson

This map became a prime source of other maps for about twenty years after that

all of them showing the same error

(It was unfortunate that David Thompson was not successful in his many attempts

to get his more accurate map published during his lifetime

his incorrect maps later formed the basis for a map of western Canada

that was published for settlers’ use in [1857]

it became the basic map of the West for almost another fifty years)

NORTH WEST COMPANY’S DONALD McKENZIE JOURNEYS TO FORT WILLIAM

Donald McKenzie started from Fort George bound for Fort William on Lake Superior -- late fall 1816

at the Cascades of the Columbia River he found the river choked with ice

he was compelled to stay in the villages of natives until the ice broke up

during this time he was treated as a chief

when the ice broke he continued his journey up the Columbia River

LORD SELKIRK TRAVELS FROM FORT WILLIAM TO HIS RED RIVER COLONY

Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk in the Red River Colony

spoke to a large gathering of his settlers at the Red River Colony -- 1817

in view of the hardships they had endured he provided additional land free of dues

to reward his soldiers he gave them land on both sides of the Red River

not far from Fort Douglas in case they were needed to put down trouble

he encouraged the settlers to build roads, construct bridges and build flour mills

he began a parish of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland for the Red River Colony

Lord Selkirk’s religion was deep-seated

and he was resolved to make provisions for worship

NORTH WEST COMPANY’S DONALD “FATS” McKENZIE ARRIVES AT FORT WILLIAM

Donald McKenzie arrived at the North West Company headquarters

at Fort William at Thunder Bay on Lake Superior -- 1817

During his first year as leader of the New Caledonia interior trade

he reported out a larger catch of furs of better quality than ever before but competition

between the North West Company and Hudson’s Bay Company dramatically increased

BRITISH GOVERNMENT BECOMES INVOLVED IN THE COMPANY WARS IN CANADA

Hostilities in the fur country were being considered in England

Secretary of State Lord Bathhurst thought the home government should take action

he sent an official notice to Governor of Canada Sir John Sherbrooke

instructing him to deal with the situation

all forts, building and property involved in the conflict

should be restored to their rightful owners

When Sherbrooke received this dispatch -- February 1817

he selected two military officers, Lieutenant-Colonel Bachellor Coltman and Major John Fletcher

to go to the Indian Territories to arbitrate the issues causing dissension

MANUEL LISA’S BAD REPUTATION FORCES HIS RESIGNATION AS INDIAN AGENT

Manuel Lisa had acted as Indian Agent for the United State since the end of the War of 1812

he resigned his commission in a letter to Louisiana Territorial Governor General William Clark

in his letter Lisa analyzed his strengths: **“But I have had some success as a trader; and this gives rise to many reports. Manuel must cheat the government, and Manuel must cheat the Indians, otherwise Manuel could not bring down every summer so many boats loaded with rich furs.**

**“Good, My accounts with the government will show whether I receive anything out of which to cheat it. A poor five hundred dollars, as sub-agent salary, does not buy the tobacco which I annually give to those who call me father.**

**“Cheat the Indians! The respect and friendship which they have for me, the security of my possessions in the heart of their country respond to this charge, and declare with voices louder than the tongues of men that it cannot be true.**

**“But Manuel gets so much rich fur!**

**“Well, I will explain how I get it. First, I put into my operations great activity; I go a great distance, while some are considering whether they will start today or tomorrow. I impose upon myself great privations; then months in a year I am buried in the forest; at a vast distance from my own house. I appear as the benefactor, and not as the pillager, of the Indians. I carried among them the seed of the large pompion** [pumpkin]**, from which I have seen in their possession the fruit weighing 160 pounds. Also the large bean, the potato, the turnip; and these vegetables now make a comfortable part of their subsistence, and this year I have promised to carry the plough. Besides, my blacksmiths work incessantly for them, charging nothing. I lend them traps, only demanding preference in their trade. My establishments are the refuge of the weak and of the old men no longer able to follow their lodges; and by these means I have acquired the confidence and friendship of these nations, and the consequent choice of their trade.”[[153]](#footnote-153)**

Manuel Lisa returned to the fur trade-- 1817

he journeyed up and down the Missouri River running his fur trapping and trading operation

each of Manuel Lisa’s seasonal trips carried supplies into the wilderness, brought out furs

and drove another wedge in the process of opening the wilderness

(after many years of controversial fur trade life

Manuel Lisa died near St. Louis, Missouri [August 1820])

EFFORT TO REESTABLISH PEACE WITH THE NATIVES IN THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY

Former Astorian now Nor’Wester Alexander Ross led a force of forty-five North West Company men

in an attempt to pacify the Multnomah Indians

Ross brought with him a large quantity of tobacco -- a precious commodity

Camps were established along the Willamette River

Multnomahs camped along the east bank of the river just below Willamette Falls

North West Company men supported by two field pieces camped on the west bank

After three days of peaceful attempts, Ross met with Chief Kesno

calumet (peace pipe) was smoked, a flag offered, tributes and restitutions were given and received

an Indian slave was given to Ross but was returned

although Ross appreciated the meaning of the gesture

North West Company was given permission to travel on the Willamette River

and portage around the falls -- however, they were forbidden to take salmon at the falls

After his return to Fort George Alexander Ross was sent

to the post on the Thompson River (Kamloops) for a year

CANADIAN MILITARY OFFICERS ARRIVE AT RED RIVER COLONY

Canadian Commissioners Lieutenant-Colonel Bachellor Coltman and Major John Fletcher

led forty men of the 37th Regiment from Sault Ste Marie [May 1817]

Coltman arrived at Red River Colony first -- July 5, 1817

he met with Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk

while in Montreal Coltman had formed the opinion that Lord Selkirk was a domineering autocrat

after meet his lordship and evaluating the situation

he believed Selkirk was neither irrational nor self-seeking

Coltman was impressed with Lord Selkirk’s evident attempt to avoid violation of the laws

he advised the accusations against Lord Selkirk should not be brought into the courts

at the same time he imposed bail of £10,000

to appear in Upper Canada (Ontario) for trial

Commissioners Coltman’s and Fletcher’s report to the Canadian governor-general

was a carefully prepared impartial statement of events

as a result, both Hudson’s Bay Company and North West Company blamed the report

for not giving the full facts of the case

LORD SELKIRK PURCHASES THE TITLE TO SOME INDIAN LAND

Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk had gained the respect of the Indians

who gave him the unusual name of the “Silver Chief”

To avoid future disputes Lord Selkirk was anxious to buy

their ancient title to the land along the Red and Assiniboine rivers

he gathered the local Cree and Saulteaux chiefs together at Fort Douglas

natives leaders gave eloquent speeches and stated they would give up a portion of their land

on either side of the Red River upstream from its mouth as far as the Red Lake River

(now Grand Forks, North Dakota) and on either side of the Assiniboine River

to its junction with the Muskrat River

Lord Selkirk concluded a treaty after distributing presents -- July 18, 1817

it was stipulated that one hundred pounds of good tobacco

should be given annually to each nation

LORD SELKIRK LEAVES THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT

Having firmly established his colony, Lord Selkirk left his settlement and journeyed south

he traveled through the unorganized lands of the Louisiana Purchase

belonging to the United States and reached St. Louis on the Mississippi River

before continuing on to Washington City, Albany, New York and the New England states

he arrived at the Canadian province of Upper Canada (Ontario) where he discovered

agents of the North West Company had laid plans to attack him in the courts

four charges were filed against him regarding his activities at Fort William

he was ordered to appear at Sandwich, a judicial center on the Detroit River

When Lord Selkirk arrived at Sandwich one of the charges was quickly dropped

all of the other three charges were held over until witnesses could arrive

Lord Selkirk was released on £350 bail and the case was moved to Montreal

headquarters city for the North West Company

DONALD McKENZIE RETURNS TO FORT GEORGE

Nor’Wester Donald “Fats” McKenzie traveled with the returning supply brigade

going from Fort William on Lake Superior back to Fort George -- 1817

McKenzie had administered North West Company’s New Caledonia interior trade for year

without any casualties or bloodshed and had increased the amount and value of pelts delivered

but a lot of manual labor was needed at Fort George

also the fort could not rely entirely on food supplies brought in by ship

crops had to be planted to feed the employees there

two hundred acres of land had been cleared but only a fraction of that planted -- 1817

OWNERSHIP OF THE PACIFIC COAST REMAINS UNDER DISPUTE

At one time or another five nations claimed the Pacific Northwest:

•Spain had claimed the Pacific coast from California to Russian-America but she relinquished

her claim under the Nootka Treaty as part of the Nootka Agreement [January 11, 1794];

•France had claimed all land west of the Mississippi River

she was eliminated by the Louisiana Purchase [April 30, 1803];

•Russia maintained a claim to the same area once claimed by Spain

from Russian-American in the north to Spanish-America (California) to the south

Fort Ross on the Russian River (Sacramento, California) had been constructed

to demonstrate their claim;

•United States continued to claim the West by right of discovery, exploration and settlement;

•Britain continued to claim the West by rights of discovery, exploration, settlement and treaty

United States and Great Britain attempted to establish a boundary in the Pacific Northwest

but no agreement could be reached

both nations claimed the land from the California boundary (42º north latitude)

to the Alaska boundary claimed by Russia (54º-40’ north latitude)

STEPS ARE TAKEN TO RESOLVE THE OWNERSHIP OF FORT GEORGE (ASTORIA)

Representatives of the United States and Great Britain were again at the conference table

attempting to compromise issues not addressed in the [1814] Treaty of Ghent

specifically the ownership of the major trading post at the mouth of the Columbia River

operated by the Canadian North West Company

but claimed by American John Jacob Astor

John Jacob Astor managed after four years to get the United States government

to send a man-of-war to Astoria to retrieve his property

United States government notified the British government of its intent to reoccupy the fort

United States government notified the British government of its intent to reoccupy the fort

AMERICAN TAKES ACTION TO RE-ACQUIRE ASTORIA

American sloop-of-war *Ontario* under Captain James Biddle was dispatched

by the United States government to sail around Cape Horn to the Columbia River

*Ontario* carried American Commissioner J.B. Prevost

who was sent to Fort George as a special agent by Secretary of State John Quincy Adams

Prevost was ordered to the Columbia River **“…to assert there the claim of sovereignty in the name and on behalf of the United States by some symbolical or other appropriate mode of setting up a claim to national authority and dominion”**

Commissioner Prevost left the *Ontario* at Valparaiso, Chile -- 1817

where he awaited transportation to the mouth of the Columbia River

BRITISH RESPONSE TO CAPTAIN BIDDLE’S ORDERS

Charles Bagot, British Minister at Washington, learned about orders given to Captain James Biddle

instructing him to repossess Astoria

Bagot protested to Secretary of State John Quincy Adams

Astoria was not one of the **“places and possessions”** referred to in the Treaty of Ghent

the fort had been purchased by British subjects before the arrival of HMS *Raccoon*

nor was the Columbia valley **“territory...taken...during the war”**

it was rather a region that had **“early taken possession of in His Majesty’s name,** [by Lieutenant Broughton of the George Vancouver expedition] **and that it had long since been considered to form a part of His Majesty’s dominions.”[[154]](#footnote-154)**

BRITISH GOVERNMENT DID NOT AGREE WITH FOREIGN MINISTER CHARLES BAGOT

British Foreign Secretary Lord Castlereagh disagreed with his British Minister at Washington City

as the British secretary found reasons of policy under the Treaty of Ghent

for conceding Astoria to the United States

however, the British Foreign Secretary refused to concede the American claim

to the whole region

British Foreign Secretary Castlereagh offered to restore the Columbia River post to the United States

and submit the question of title to the country as a whole to arbitration

UNITED STATES RESPONDS TO THE CLAIMS OF THE BRITISH FOREIGN MINISTERY

Secretary of State John Quincy Adams accepted the offer to restore Astoria to John Jacob Astor

but refused the offer to arbitrate the boundary between Canada and the United States

however, America was obviously in a weak position to push the boundary line to the north

thus the question of international boundary for Oregon remained unresolved

NOR’WESTER DAVID THOMPSON IS HIRED TO DRAW THE INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY

Retired Nor’Wester David Thompson was appointed to the British commission that was established

to define and map the boundary between Canada and the United States

he surveyed the region from St. Regis, Quebec to the Northwest angle of Lake of the Woods

which is a lake that occupies parts of Canada’s provinces of Ontario and Manitoba

and the state of Minnesota

North West Company hurried him off to identify the location of the new boundary

he accomplished the task in ten months

driving himself and his entourage through sub-zero blizzards by dog sled

covering 4,000 miles of mostly uncharted territory

and earning the respect of even North West Company partner Alexander Mackenzie

who had previously forged routes from Lake Athabasca to the Pacific and Arctic oceans

Thompson’s efforts **“should have taken two years”[[155]](#footnote-155)** Mackenzie marveled

David Thompson spent nine years as the British representative to the commission -- 1817-[1826]

(tragically David Thompson and his work was almost completely ignored by history

interest did spark for a brief period during the Oregon dispute of the [mid-1840s]

but waned quickly when ownership of Oregon once again came under dispute)

AMERICA’S EXPANSION WEST WAS OF LITTLE POLITICAL INTEREST

United States government demonstrated little real interest in the Pacific Northwest

presidents of the United States during that time were from the South or the Atlantic seaboard

they were not especially concerned with the Far West

Congress was dominated by Southerners who were focused on slavery

South Carolina U.S. Senator John C. Calhoun usually led the South’s senators

he was single-minded on the issue of slavery -- especially in expanding westward

Massachusetts Congressman Daniel Webster spoke for New England manufacturers

who dominated political power in the Northeastern states

they were focused on protecting business interests through protective tariffs

expansion of the nation to the West was not on their political agenda

Kentucky Congressman Henry Clay was interested in nationalism and expansion

but even he did not apply those ideals to the “Westmost West”

Secretary of War Southerner John C. Calhoun had an ambitious defense plan in mind -- 1818

he called for military posts extending from the Great Lakes to the upper Missouri River

his underlying idea was to control the Indians in the region

and to provide protection to the American fur trade there from British incursions

but he had no interest in the West coast of North America

or even beyond the Rocky Mountains

PRESIDENT JAMES MONORE WANTS BETTER RELATIONS WITH GREAT BRITAIN

President James Monroe had served as Secretary of State during the War before his [1816] election

in an effort to improve American-British relations he had negotiated the Rush-Bagot Treaty that resolved one of the border disputes held over from the War of 1812

Rush-Bagot Treaty was named after acting-Secretary of State Richard Rush

and British Minister to the United States Charles Bagot

when ratified by the United States Senate -- April 16, 1818

it demilitarized the Great Lakes by limiting the number of ships and cannons

either nation could have on Lake Chaplain and Lake Ontario

LORD SELKIRK’S MEN ARE BROUGHT TO TRIAL IN MONTREAL

North West Company agents had filed charges against Hudson’s Bay Company employees

including Lord Selkirk’s colonial recruiter Colin Robertson

who were charged with willful destruction of North West Company’s Fort Gibraltar [1815]

trials began Montreal but the jury refused to convict the defendants -- May 1818

PETER SKENE OGDEN ARRIVES IN COLUMBIA DISTRICT

Peter Skene (sometimes Skeene, Skein or Skeen) Ogden was a modest, courageous

and durable employee of North West Company -- 1818

Peter Skene Ogden was born in [1794] the son of Sarah (Hanson) Ogden

and her husband Canadian Chief Justice Isaac Ogden of Quebec

little was recorded regarding his education other than the fact he was well-schooled

he was tutored in law by a local ministers but showed little interest

he signed a seven year apprenticeship as a clerk with the North West Company [1809]

Ogden was assigned to a trading post on the prairies north of the Saskatchewan River

where he systematically harassed rival traders from the Hudson’s Bay Company

his bullying tactics included slashing his rivals’ clothes, smashing their fingers with sticks

and slapping their faces -- always in an ever-expanding pattern of intimidation

he took a Cree Indian woman as his common-law wife and they had a son

Ogden crossed the line between physical assaults which had become a commonplace in the trade war,

and killing which was not, when he became involved in the well-documented murder

of an Indian who insisted on trading with the Hudson's Bay Company house

rather than with Ogden [1816]

Ogden was charged with murder and the North West Company

moved him the Columbia District in an attempt to avoid any further confrontations

with the Hudson’s Bay Company

When Peter Skene Ogden arrived at Fort George many Nor’Westers remarked on his intelligence

and keen sense of humor while others noted his profanity, difficult disposition and brawling ways

TROUBLE FOLLOWS PETER SKENE OGDEN TO THE COLUMBIA DISTRICT

Peter Skene Ogden began work for the North West Company at Astoria

He was asked to negotiate a solution to a dispute between a group of Iroquois Indian trappers

and a band of Cowlitz Indians accompanied by the Iroquois,

Ogden traveled up the Columbia River to the Cowlitz village

but the Iroquois were not interested in mediation

they massacred a dozen men, women and children as Ogden helplessly watched

when he finally got the situation under control Ogden convinced the Cowlitz chief

that Astoria would provide safety for the villagers

but when he escorted the refugees downstream to the fort,

Nor’Westers inside the post mistakenly opened fire on the new arrivals

relations between the Cowlitz people and the fur company became hostile

and Peter Skene Ogden learned a hard lesson about leadership

DONALD McKENZIE EXPANDS NORTH WEST COMPANY OPERATIONS IN NEW CALIDONIA

After two years of trapping in the wilderness, McKenzie returned down the Columbia River

with a plan that brought howls of outrage

from tradition bound Chief Trader James Keith at Fort George -- June 5, 1818

since the inland natives could not be persuaded to trap

Donald “Fats” McKenzie had determined to take his own hunters into the field,

this was a revolutionary procedure which although sporadically tried

had never become standard policy for any responsible fur company

furthermore, McKenzie proposed to establish as a base of operations a new post

at the mouth of the Walla Walla River surrounded by very unfriendly inland natives

CHIEF TRADER JAMES KEITH REACTS TO DONALD McKENZIE’S PLAN

Chief Trader James Keith believed the plan to place white trappers in the field

and to build a post among hostile Pacific natives seemed impossible or insane

yet Donald McKenzie had the authority to carry out his idea

in fact, new orders to that effect had just arrived

from North West Company headquarters at Fort William

North West Company leaders demanded a new central depot for their interior trading posts

be built among the Nez Perce Indians in the interior

With monumental bad form, Keith reluctantly handed over forty men to McKenzie

SITE FOR NORTH WEST COMPANY’S FORT NEZ PERCES SELECTED

North West Company employees spent a good deal of time searching for a location in the interior that would combine efficient transportation facilities, friendly Indians

and a reliable supply of beaver

Fort Okanogan had not proven to be up to the task

Donald McKenzie declared Spokane House to be an expensive luxury

McKenzie and forty men journeyed up the Columbia River from Fort George

they camped beside the river near the mouth of the Walla Walla River

McKenzie selected this site for Fort Nez Perces -- July 11, 1818

it was to be located to be on a treeless plain overlooking a broad curve

of the sun-struck green-shimmering Columbia River near the junction of Walla Walla River

(near the location of today’s Wallula, Washington)

essentially all company exports and supplies passed through the Columbia Gorge

this location protected the route -- Fort Nez Perces was the most important post in the interior

fur trade headquartered here focused on the Snake River watershed and central Rocky Mountains,

it provided the opportunity to trap in the territories of Shoshone and Nez Perce Indians,

and enabled the North West Company to reduce the fighting among the natives

this was a gathering place for natives and proved to be a favorable location

however, where McKenzie was to build was, in fact,

located among the Walla Wallas and Cayuse natives -- not the Nez Perce

(later the name of the post was changed to Fort Walla Walla)

ALEXANDER ROSS SERVES AS CHIEF TRADER AT FORT NEZ PERCES

Fort Nez Perces was established by the North West Company as outfitting and trading post

Alexander Ross was assigned to the position of Chief Trader of Fort Nez Perces

among his employees were twenty-five French-Canadians, thirty-eight Iroquois Indians

and thirty-two Kanakas (Hawaiians)

(Ross was very successful at his new assignment

he met and traded with as many as 10,000 Indians in [1819] alone)

Alexander Ross arrived at the site for the new post from Fort Kamloops on the Thompson River

he wrote of the difficulties involved with construction: **“We were in an unfriendly land with a gigantic task on our hands. In the whole country, this spot was the hardest! Nevertheless the region had to be made safe for the fur trade, the friendship of the natives secured, buildings made, furs collected, and new territories added. This was a big program, and we did not dare see obstacles ahead. Our orders were to occupy the position, so on the dreaded spot we took our stand to run every risk, and brave every danger.”[[156]](#footnote-156)**

FORT NEZ PERCES IS CONSTRUCTED AT THE MOUTH OF THE WALLA WALLA RIVER

Nor’Westers cut trees growing upstream, these were tied together

and floated them down to the building site

this was some of the earliest “boom” logging (where log rafts are floated) in the Northwest

Fort Nez Perces was a most strongly fortified post when it was constructed -- July 1818

it was built with a double palisade unique among North West Company posts

it had a 200-feet-square wall twenty feet high and six inches thick

blockhouses were placed at each of the corners in which cannon were mounted

a water tower for use against a fire attack was located in each blockhouse

a second defensive inner wall twelve feet high made of sawed timbers

surrounded a storehouse and dwellings

Indians admitted for trade were required to carry on negotiations

through a wicker window in an inside wall

except for special councils Indians were not allowed inside

Completed post was described by Alexander Ross: **“The whole establishment was surrounded by a palisade made of ponderous planks of timber twenty feet long, two and half feet broad, and six inches thick. The outside of this wall was made very smooth to keep the enemy from climbing it. Built on the top of the palisade was a range of balustrades,** [a protecting wall made of planks put close together in the form of a railing] **four feet high which served the double purpose of ramparts** [walls] **and loopholes** [used to fire rifles through]**. On the inside, a strong gallery five feet wide, extended all around. Sentinels on guard paced back and forth along this gallery…. At each corner, where a strong bastion or blockhouse was built, was a reservoir that held two hundred gallons of water as a security against fire, the thing we dreaded most in the plots of natives. Inside the wall were built ranges of storehouses, and cabins for the hands. In front of these buildings was another wall twelve feet high, with portholes and slip doors, which separated the buildings from the open square inside…. The outer gate was cleverly made to open and shut by pulley, and two double doors secured the entrance.”[[157]](#footnote-157)**

Weapons were formidable

four cannons, ten swivel guns, sixty muskets, twenty pikes, and a box of hand grenades

for added precaution Ross recalled, **“all trading was done through a hole in the wall of the trading shop, we standing on the inside, and the natives on the outside.”[[158]](#footnote-158)**

Even at that, Iroquois Indians plotted against Donald Mackenzie

they attacked him one night but he was saved

by **“…some of the Canadians and faithful Owhyhees [Hawaiians] ….”**

NORTH WEST COMPANY MAINTAINS A CHAIN OF TRADING POSTS

Despite efforts by the U.S. Congress to prohibit trading an American soil

British and Canadian trading efforts continued to conduct trade without interference

North West Company’s Columbia District posts included Fort George on the Columbia River,

Spokane House on the Spokane River,

Fort Okanogan on the Okanogan River,

Fort Thompson at the confluence of the North and South Thompson rivers (Kamloops, B.C.)

Fort Alexander on the south bank of the Winnipeg River,

Fort Nez Perces on the Columbia River near the mouth of the Walla Walla River

also trapping and trading expeditions ventured into Snake River country

U.S. COMMISSIONER J.B. PREVOST RESUMES HIS JOURNEY TO FORT GEORGE

Vice-Admiral Sir Richard King commanded the British fleet assigned to the East Indies Station

Admiral King was assigned the task of providing transportation to Fort George

for United States Commissioner J.B. Prevost so a ceremony could be held

to deliver North West Company’s Fort George

back to its ordinal owner, John Jacob Astor

Captain Sheriff, the senior officer of the British ships in the Pacific Ocean

was ordered to provide a witness to the surrender of Fort George on the Columbia River

Captain Sheriff learned of U.S. Commissioner J.B. Prevost’s presence in Valparaiso, Chile

Captain Sheriff extended the courtesy of providing Prevost transportation to the Columbia River

aboard H.M.S. frigate *Blossom* underCaptain F. Hickey -- Prevost accepted the offer

*Blossom* sailed from Valparaiso, Chile -- July 12, 1818

Commissioner Prevost was fully empowered to receive possession of Fort George

to be returned to John Jacob Astor as Astoria

LORD SELKIRK ASKS FOR CATHOLIC PRIESTS TO SERVE HIS RED RIVER COLONISTS

Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk was interested in bringing Catholic priests to his colony

to address the ongoing war between the North West Company and Hudson’s Bay Company

Lord Selkirk requested Joseph-Octave Plessis, Bishop of Quebec, send missionaries

Bishop Plessis created the Catholic District of the North West

permission for Catholic priests to travel to the Red River Colony

had to be secured from earnest Anglican (Church of England) North West Company

however, permission was granted

Father Joseph-Norbert Provencher together with Father Severe Dumolin

and seminarian Guilaume Etienne Edge arrived at Fort Douglas to establish a mission

east of the junction of the Red and Assiniboine rivers

when the priests arrived in Red River Colony they made quite an impression -- July 16 1818

Father Provencher stood six foot four inches in his flowing robes and weighed 300 pounds

their mission was to convert the Indians to Christianity

and to “morally improve” delinquent French-Canadians

they were to also to educate the young, and assist in colonization

but any involvement in the company wars was to be strictly avoided

in the first two weeks the clerics performed seventy-two baptisms

many of these were the Indian women French-Canadians had taken as wives

LORD SELKIRK APPEARS IN AN UPPER CANADA COURT TO ANSWER TO CHARGES

Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk appeared in York (Toronto), Upper Canada to face charges

regarding his actions at North West Company headquarters at Fort William -- September 1818

Chief Justice Dummer Powel presided

During the investigation by the grand jury no witnesses appeared

members of the grand jury complained that Provincial Attorney General John Beverley Robinson

was interfering with their deliberations -- they refused to present an indictment

Chief Justice Powell waited two days for the grand jury to complete its work

when no verdict was forthcoming he imposed bail and adjourned the case

Lord Selkirk’s case was never reopened

FUR TRADING COMPANY WARS CONTINUE

Red River colony was not the only scene of violence between North West Company

and Hudson’s Bay Company as their rivalry spread

Hudson’s Bay Company made a persistent effort to expand its area of influence

to the Athabasca region which was beyond the company’s charter

they asserted that being British subjects they had as much right as anyone

to trade in that region

North West Company had no charter rights at all but was determined

they would not tamely submit to the loss of their virtual monopoly in the Athabasca trade

North West Company’s harassment of Hudson’s Bay Company resulted in vast profits

Nor’Westers brought nearly four hundred and thirty packs out of Athabasca -- 1818

while the Hudson’s Bay Company’s men under did not take out a single pack

Both Hudson’s Bay Company and North West Company conducted raids and clashes on their rival

Fort Weddeerburn (first built by Hudson’s Bay Company in 1815) was rebuilt

to provide competition to the Nor’Westers’ Fort Chipewyan -- 1818

men under Colin Robertson appeared in force at North West Company’s Fort Chipewyan

Great Slave Lake region was the scene of fighting as was the Mackenzie River Department

and the region around the Peace River

NORTH WEST COMPANY’S DONALD McKENZIE RESHAPES THE FUR INDUSTRY

Donald McKenzie’s great contribution to trapping was the invention of the brigade system

which revolutionized the western fur trade

Before McKenzie the fur trade had been based on the trading post

to which the Indian trappers brought their pelts for exchange

because Nez Perce Indians were reluctant to do this work,

McKenzie decided to form parties of company employees to go into the field to trap

rather than establish posts and trapping camps

these trapping brigades would carry their own supplies and equipment on pack horses,

trappers would be accompanied by their women and children

and be free to follow the beaver wherever supplies were greatest

brigades provided mobility and flexibility

they removed from Indian Country the tempting target of a well-stocked trading post

it also removed a symbol of the advancing white civilization from the view

of increasingly concerned Indians

NORTH WEST COMPANY’S DONALD McKENZIE LEADS HIS TRAPPING BRIGADE

After putting Alexander Ross in charge of Fort Nez Perces

Donald McKenzie moved his trapping operation deep into the Snake River country -- fall 1818

He pushed his brigade of fifty-five men equipped with 300 beaver traps and 195 horses

across the Blue Mountains, down the Snake River to the Bear River

as far as the hairpin bend in southern Idaho

and on to the headwaters of the Snake River

To help maintain discipline and to convince suspicious local Indians of his peaceful intent,

McKenzie took along with the brigade the families of many of his men

this meant more mouths to feed and more horses to worry about

children had to be provided for -- many were even born on the long marches

but in compensation the wives set up the lodges, attended to the domestic chores

and dressed the furs leaving the men free to fan out along the streams,

each armed with six beaver traps

as long as the majority of the hunters produced beaver, the camp remained stationary otherwise down came the lodges and on went the cavalcade to the next valley

if the Indians they met chose to trade that was fine -- there were goods for that

but now the main dependence for the company was on the trapping brigade itself

After settling the main party along the Snake River under the charge of Michael Bourbon

McKenzie led half a dozen scouts northward to the sources of the Snake River

they carried a large stock of merchandise, but no provisions as they lived off the land

traveling often on snowshoes, they reexamined the Jackson Hole and Teton country

McKenzie had first seen [in 1811] after leaving Wilson Price Hunt’s Overland Expedition

Using the brigade system from 1818 to [1821]

Donald McKenzie probed for furs deep in the Snake Country

reaching almost as far south as the Great Salt Lake

BRITISH AND AMERICAN WAR SHIPS REACH THE COLUMBIA RIVER

After picking up United States Commissioner J.B. Prevost in Valparaiso, Chile

British Royal Navy frigate *Blossom* under Captain F. Hickey

arrived at Fort George -- October 1, 1818

Commissioner J.B. Prevost, unlike British Captain William Black before him, found

a strongly fortified post that served North West Company as the headquarters of New Caledonia

Nor’Westers had managed to clear some two hundred acres, **“20 of which is planted to potatoes for use of the gentlemen. They have twelve head of cattle, with some pigs and goats imported from California. The stock does not increase for want of proper care. Wolves often carry off goats and pigs.”[[159]](#footnote-159)**

U.S. Commissioner J.B. Prevost was graciously received

by North West Company Chief Trader James Keith

Commissioner Prevost assured James Keith North West Company would retain actual possession

and could continue to occupy and protect the post -- if the post was returned to the United States

CEREMONY TO RETURN FORT GEORGE TO THE UNITED STATES AS ASTORIA

American Captain James Biddle had sailed his sloop-of-war *Ontario* from Valparaiso, Chile

up the West coast of the Americas under orders to reoccupy Astoria or Fort George

*Ontario* arrived at Fort George -- October 6, 1818

she was the first United States naval vessel to enter the Columbia River

An appropriate ceremony to retake possession of the post for America was held -- October 6, 1818

Commissioner for the United States J.B. Prevost

signed an act restoring Astoria (Fort George) to the United States

representing Great Britain’s government was Captain F. Hickey of H.M.S. *Blossom*

and James Keith of the North West Company

both signed the act of acceptance

U.S. Captain James Biddle enacted the order to repossess Astoria

it seems to have been a good natured affair

Commissioner Prevost, Captain F. Hickey and Chief Trader Keith

watched as Captain Biddle lowered the British Union Jack down the flagpole

and watched the United States stars and stripes to up

Captain Biddle for good measure also claimed both sides of the Columbia River

in the name of the United States

these were the first official acts of the United States government

to assert title to the Northwest

Americans believed the act was in conformity to the Treaty of Ghent

in restoring ownership of the property to John Jacob Astor

Placards declaring the surrender of Fort George to the Americans

were placed on either side of the entrance to the Columbia River on Cape Disappointment (north)

and on Point Adams (south) -- these were soon removed by the Indians

FORT GEORGE IS NOW ONCE AGAIN ASTORIA

Canadian North West Company continued as the sole operators of the fort, now once again trading under the name Astoria

This post was now quite powerfully built

it consisted of a strong stockade of fir logs twelve feet high

that enclosed a parallelogram 150 feet by 250 feet

within it were shops, store houses and powder magazines

on the walls were two eighteen-pound cannon, two six-pound cannon and seven swivel guns

JOHN JACOB ASTOR ABANDONS THE PACIFIC TRADE

Astoria had been returned to John Jacob Astor -- if only as a formality

by this time North West Company trappers were too firmly established for Americans to compete

Great Britain controlled all of the Pacific coast trade for the next twenty years

and virtually ruled New Caledonia

Astor made no move to reoccupy the post

he abandoned his Pacific Fur Company and leased Astoria to the North West Company

commercially Astoria was a failure -- but politically it was a great success

Astor had kept alive United States’ claim to the Northwest

Although Astor’s Pacific Fur Company had dissolved his American Fur Company had expanded

it now included the upper Missouri River area, upper Mississippi Valley

and the Rocky Mountains

several former Pacific Fur Company employees were involved in the American Fur Company

Wilson Price Hunt, Robert Stuart, and Ramsay Crooks

were employed in highly responsible positions

LORD SELKIRK BRINGS CHARGES IN THE ONGOING COMPANY WARS

Montreal was the location of courts empowered to deal with offences in the Indian Territories

Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk stood before a Montreal judge

to charge six North West Company partners including Alexander Mackenzie and Simon Fraser

for various crimes against the settlers of the Red River Colony [1815 and 1816]

including being principals or accessories in the murder of

Red River Colony Governor Robert Semple

evidence given regarding the Seven Oaks Massacre [June 19, 1816]

was especially compelling

Results of these trials were disheartening for Lord Selkirk

of the various people who were accused not one was found guilty

this may not have been surprising given the importance of the North West Company

to the Canadian economy and livelihoods of Canadian citizens

(after the trial Lord Selkirk returned to England where he enticed a friend

to bring the matter of the company wars before the House of Commons

all papers regarding the company wars were gathered and published as the *Blue Book of 1819*

this was a valuable official source of information regarding the disturbances

that had centered around Lord Selkirk’s Red River Colony)

(Thomas Douglas, Fifth Earl of Selkirk remained vitally interested in the Red River Colony

for the remainder of his life

but poor health caused him to seek a temperate climate in the south of France

where he died [April 8, 1820] at Pau, France in the Pyrenees Mountains foothills

Lord Selkirk’s character has been both lauded and vilified

while he was a man of dreams, his vision was born out by history

he demonstrated the Canadian prairie was valuable far beyond its furbearing animals

his worst fault was his unfailing belief that Hudson’s Bay Company was completely virtuous

and that North West Company was perpetually cast in the role of villain

had his Hudson’s Bay Company Red River Colony settlers met the Nor’Westers halfway

suffering and hardships might have been avoided entirely

Lord Selkirk’s only son, Dunbar James Douglas, inherited the family title

when he died [1885] the line of Selkirk became extinct)

BOUNDARY BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA REMAINS UNCLEAR

British claims were based on:

**•**voyage of Captain James Cook [1778];

**•**Nootka Sound Treaty where Spain gave up exclusive right to the area [1790];

**•**explorations of Captain George Vancouver 1792]; and Sir Alexander Mackenzie [1793]

who ascended part of the Fraser River;

**•**establishment of Fort McLeod by North West Company [1805];

**•**first settlement in the Oregon interior (Spokane House);

**•**fur-trading activities of the Hudson’s Bay Company

which amalgamated all British and Canadian fur-trading operations 1821

America’s claims were based on:

**•**explorations of Captain Robert Gray [1792];

**•**Lewis and Clark expedition [1804-06];

**•**fur-trading post at Astoria [1811];

**•**rights to the Pacific coast north of the 42nd parallel under treaty with Spain

and to the coast south of 54º40’, under treaty with Russia;

**•**actual occupation by American settlers at Astoria and other trading posts

UNITED STATES AND GREAT BRITAIN SIGN THE TREATY OF 1818

President James Monroe’s efforts to better relations with Britain resulted in a second agreement

(after the Rush-Bagot Agreement to become effective [April 1818])

Treaty of 1818 (Anglo-American Convention in London) was signed -- October 20, 1818

it identified the international boundary between the U.S. and Canada along the 49th parallel

from the Lake of the Woods (Minnesota) to the Rocky Mountains (Montana)

this important issue had remained unresolved since the [1814] Treaty of Ghent

Treaty of 1818 marked the last loss of territory by Britain in what is the Continental United States

Great Britain gave up all of Rupert’s Land south of 49° North latitude

including all of the Red river Colony south of that latitude

United States ceded the northernmost edge of the Missouri Territory north of the 49°

Neither Great Britain nor the United States admitted the other nation

owned the Pacific coast nor could they agree on a boundary in that region

Convention of 1818, however, was an admission by Great Britain that the United States

had some claim to the region although neither country accepted responsibility

for providing law and order

TREATY OF 1818 CALLS FOR JOINT OCCUPATION OF “OREGON COUNTRY”

Treaty of 1818’s Joint Occupation agreement professed to safeguard the rights of other nations

but neither Spain or Russia had formally yielded their respective claims to the Pacific coast

and the claims of Native Americans were completely ignored

Article III of the Treaty of 1818 provided for Joint Occupation West of the Rocky Mountains

for the next ten years in the region that was known to Americans as “Oregon Country”

and to the British and Canadians as the “Columbia District” which included the southern portion of New Caledonia

(Oregon Country included present-day Washington, Oregon, Idaho

and portions of Montana, Wyoming and British Columbia

Article III stated in part: **“...any country that may be claimed by either party on the northwest coast of America, westward of the Stony** [Rocky] **Mountains, shall, together with its harbors, bays, and creeks, and the navigation of all rivers within the same, be free and open, for the terms of ten years...to the vessels, citizens, and subjects of the two Powers....this agreement is not to be construed to the prejudice of any claim, which either of the two high contracting parties may have to any part of the said country....”**

Article III was, in fact, an agreement to disagree

no provision was made by either country to form a government in the Pacific Northwest

this agreement’s logic was clear in Great Britain, but was less well accepted in the U.S.

Treaty of 1818 was all that was needed to activate anew burst of public spirit

for American occupation of the West

UNITED STATES IS ALSO HOLDS TALKS WITH SPAIN

Secretary of State John Quincy Adams and Spanish diplomat Luis de Onis y Gonzalez-Vara

met to resolve the questions of boundaries between the United States and Mexico

purchase of East and West Florida by America was one of the topics discussed

also an international boundary needed to be drawn for the Louisiana Purchase

which was broadly the land between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains

Adams demanded Spain agree to withdraw her claim of land from the Rockies to the Pacific

Americans insisted they held Spain’s right to first exploration north of 42º north

since the Columbia River with its source in the high latitudes

was discovered, explored and first occupied by Americans

ALEXANDER ANDREYEVICH BARANOV OF THE RUSSIAN AMERICAN COMPANY IS FIRED

Alexander Baranov had been the head of the Russian-America Company for twenty-eight years

he overcame tremendous obstacles to become successful in the (Alaskan) frontier

he was faced with serious problems of hostile Native Americans

who were able to purchase firearms from other traders

his base colony was made up of criminals from Siberia

and natives who were little more than slaves

his colony was short on manpower and food and racked with disease

In addition to establishing trading centers and presiding over vast expanses of territory,

Baranov was credited with organizing native Alaskan hunters to expand their range

to include even the coast of California

he also advocated more educational opportunities for native Alaskans

under his leadership schools were created and frontier communities became less isolated

Baranov began to rely more and more on American traders, including John Jacob Astor,

who sent in food and items to trade with the Indians and took out cargoes of fur

rumors sprang up that Baranov had secretly siphoned money to American banks in his own name

but a subsequent financial audit disproved the rumors

he had been scrupulously honest regarding his personal wealth

not one penny was misappropriated

not one scrap of evidence of graft or corruption was ever presented

After nineteen years in Russian-America, Baranov requested a replacement

Baranov was arbitrarily removed from office by the Russian-America

he was cast off without reward or consideration when he was no longer useful to the company

he was forced to beg his passage home -- November 1818

Baranov sailed back to Russia by heading south and then sailing around Africa’s Cape of Good Hope

(unfortunately, Alexander Baranov became very ill on the journey

he died in Java [today’s Indonesia on April 28, 1819]

he was buried at sea far from both his native and his adopted lands)

PETER SKENE OGDEN IS PLACED IN CHARGE OF SPOKANE HOUSE

Possibly to remove Ogden from the volatile situation he had created at Astoria

he was assigned to take charge of Spokane House -- winter of 1818-1819

at about this time he took as his wife a Spokane Indian-Metis Julia Rivet

having left his Cree wife and his first child along the Saskatchewan River

Peter Skene Ogden led fur brigades from Fort Spokane

and opened to the public much of Idaho, Utah and Northern California

Julia traveled throughout the West with Ogden and their children

DONALD McKENZIE CONTINUES TO TRAP THROUGH THE WINTER

Donald “Fats” McKenzie shifted camps and trapped throughout a large region -- winter 1818-1819

this was a vast departure from the usual practice of establish trading post and trapping camps

Alexander Ross and Daniel Potts led a trading party to within sight of the Teton Range (Wyoming)

they apparent saw some of the thermal geysers (in what is today Yellowstone National Park)

Once, when the huge McKenzie and three of his men were alone in one of the camps,

a band of Shoshone Indians started to swarm across the whites’ inadequate defenses

McKenzie rolled out a keg of gunpowder and lit a spill as a demonstration

he then threatened to blow them all up, himself included -- he bluffed the Indians off

on another occasion two Sandwich Islanders were killed by Indians beside a steam

(near what is now the southern part of Idaho-Oregon boundary)

McKenzie gave the river the name it still bears, Owyhee (an early spelling of Hawaii)

As winter pressed on, one of McKenzie’s Iroquois Indians, Oskonoton, returned to Fort Nez Perces

when he arrived alone and exhausted Oskonoton said twenty-five men were given permission

to hunt and trap a small river where a band of Shoshone Indians appeared

McKenzie’s trappers joined the natives -- all except Oskonoton

Oskonoton carried no news of the main party since he had lost contact

but he described how rich the region was in furs

ADAMS-ONIS TREATY IS SIGNED BY THE UNITED STATES AND SPAIN

Secretary of State John Quincy Adams and Spanish diplomat Luis de Onis y Gonzalez-Vara

signed the Adams-Onis Treaty -- February 22, 1819

Spain relinquished her claims to Oregon Country north of 42° north

United States acquired Florida at no cost to the U.S.

except the assumption of some $5 million in claims by U.S. citizens against Spain

in return for Florida the U.S. gave up all claims to Texas under the Louisiana Purchase

this treaty also defined the Western limits of Louisiana Purchase

Mexico would also keep the vast region of New Mexico

(all of present-day California and New Mexico, Nevada, Utah, Arizona

and sections of Wyoming and Colorado)

Russia’s concerns regarding her claim to the Pacific Northwest was not addressed at this time

(Russia will continue her claim on the Pacific Northwest into the [1820s])

Neither the United States Senate nor the Republic of Mexico

ratified the Adams-Onis Treaty until [1831]

leaving possession of the Pacific Northwest in grave doubt (for nine years)

CONGRESS ENACTS THE FIRST APPROPRIATION TO “CIVILIZE” THE INDIANS

Christian missionaries serving the Indians along the East coast and in the Mississippi River region

had long urged an expenditure of government money to “civilize” the Indians

Congress appropriated $10,000 to be made available through mission societies

to undertake the task of bringing Christianity to the Native Americans -- March 3, 1819

although a small amount of money it stimulated powerful interest in missionary activity

although most Americans were not motivated to contribute to solve Indian problems

this appropriation did serve as seed money for the more concerned activists

AMERICANS FEAR BRITISH CONTROL OF THE FUR TRAPPING INDUSTRY

To counter the British efforts to expand fur trapping into regions claimed by the United States

Secretary of War John C. Calhoun sought to establish army garrisons

on the upper Missouri and Mississippi rivers -- 1819

Colonel Henry Atkinson commanded one division of the US Army Western Department

on the Missouri River headquartered at St. Louis

Atkinson’s effort to establish a fort at the mouth of the Yellowstone River proved too ambitious

as steamboats and other logistical problems could not provide the scheduled serves

required to supply a post that far up the Missouri River

blunted by the breakdown of and other logistical failings

Colonel Atkinson settled for a post, Fort Atkinson, far down the Missouri River

at Council Bluffs forty miles above the mouth of the Platte River

even so, the presence of American troops facing the British from the edge of the Indian Country gave heart to St. Louis entrepreneurs

HAWAIIAN ISLANDS SEE A MAJOR CHANGE OCCUR

Hawaiian King Kamehameha (I) had unified the islands under his control

he developed a unifying legal systems for all of the islands in his domain

he took several steps to ensure the islands would remain united even after his death:

•he used products he collected in taxes to promote trade with Europe and the United States;

•under his law elderly people, woman, and children who were noncombatants in war

were provided safety -- this saved thousands of lives during Kamehameha’s battles;

•foreigners could not buy land in the Hawaiian Islands which assured independence

even as many of the other islands of the Pacific fell to the colonial powers

(Hawaii remained independent until annexed by the United States in 1898)

Kamehameha spent his time after [1812] at Kamakahonu -- a compound he built in Kailua-Kona

(now the site of the King Kamehameha Beach Hotel)

King Kamehameha (also known as Kamehameha the Great) died -- May 8, 1819

Liholiho (Kamehameha II) ascended the throne

NORTH WEST COMPANY’S DONALD McKENZIE REPORTS TO FORT NEZ PERCES

After a period of great anxiety regarding the safety of Donald “Fats” McKenzie’s expedition

he and six men returned to Fort Nez Perces -- July 1819

he confirmed Oskonoton’s story that nineteen of his men

had joined a band of Shoshone Indians and deserted

McKenzie had stayed in the Snake River area

after several adventures and narrow escapes he had succeeded

in uniting only a few of his the scattered hunting parties

McKenzie reported he had taken the opportunity to investigate the navigation possibilities

of the lower Snake River -- then cut restlessly southward to the Boise River

he and his men had traveled 600 miles on snowshoes in Blue Mountains

this had been a gigantic effort, but it was reported McKenzie was scarcely winded

McKenzie had delivered an unusually large and valuable catch

this confirmed the value of his decision to build Fort Nez Perces

for skeptical North West Company partners

Snake country expeditions from Fort Nez Perces became an annual affair

(they regularly produced a large portion of company’s entire fur export

west of the Rocky Mountains)

PROTESTANT MISSIONAIRES SAIL TO THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions sent their first missionaries

to the Hawaiian Islands to provide training in Christianity to the natives

Congregational minister Hiram Bingham and his new bride Sybil (Mosley) Bingham

accompanied by Asa and Lucy (Goodale) Thurston sailed out of Boston -- October 23, 1819

(they traveled aboard the brig *Thaddeus* for five months

before arriving at the heathen village of Kilua, Oahu where they were met

by almost naked villagers shouting and playing on the beach much to the disgust

of the righteous and proper intruders [April 2, 1820])

1820-1829

NATIONAL INTEREST IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

U.S. State Department in Washington City was aware

that the very dangerous Columbia River bar eliminated the river

as a dependable harbor for sailing vessels

thus America was eager

to secure the only other first-class Pacific anchorage available -- Puget Sound

(Mexico, of course, was still held possession of San Francisco and San Diego)

GEORGE SIMPSON -- YOUNG MAN ON THE WAY UP

He was an illegitimate child of an unknown mother

born in one of the most remote parts of Scotland [about 1787]

he was raised in the home of his Calvinist minister grandfather

by his schoolteacher aunt who was the sister of his father, Thomas Simpson

At a young age George was sent to London,

where an uncle employed him as clerk in a mercantile firm of West India merchants

one of the partners of this firm, Sir Andrew Colville,

(for whom Fort Colville and the city of Colville [as it is spelled] are named)

was in the rum and molasses business and never set foot in America

he was also a director of the Hudson’s Bay Company

George joined Hudson’s Bay Company where his rise was meteoric -- 1820

although his position as a young clerk in a London office provided no experience in the fur trade,

and he had not so much as ever seen a beaver

Hudson’s Bay Company noted in its records **“In him a clear orderly mind and a driving ambition were sustained by a physical vitality which carried him buoyantly through life.[[160]](#footnote-160)**

Hudson’s Bay Company’s Governor-in-Chief of Rupert’s Land blustery William Williams

was threatened with jail on charges brought by the North West Company

relating to the on-going battle between the two companies

resulting from the Battle at Seven Oaks [June 1816]

at Red River Colony (Winnipeg, Manitoba)

In order to have a replacement on hand in case of necessity,

Hudson’s Bay Company London directors took the recommendation of

Deputy Governor of Hudson’s Bay CompanySir Andrew Colville

who advanced Simpson to his position of leadership in the company

at about age twenty-eight George Simpson

inexperienced beyond his clerk stool in the London counting house

was sent to North America and stationed in Quebec

It may be Simpson was recommended because Colville knew the clerk to be

discreet, energetic, and personable -- excellent character references for temporary replacement

NATIVE AMERICAN RELIGIOUS ZEAL

Indians had heard of Christianity

Upper Columbia River tribes learned of the white man’s religion

from some members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition

natives also had learned of some Christian teachings from British traders

fur traders David Thompson and Jedediah Smith carried Bibles and observed daily devotions

Catholic Iroquois living with the Northwest Indians served as native lay missionaries

Indians were fascinated by white abundance of material goods whites possessed

if the secret lay in religion, Indians were determined to find the source

NATIONAL RELIGIOUS ZEAL

Americans had experienced two religious revivals

Great Awakening -- [1725-1740s]

Second Awakening -- [1820-1840]

First Great Awakening began in England, Scotland, and Germany

and spread throughout the American colonies

religious piety was revitalized at least in part

to counter the scientific pronouncements of the Age of Enlightenment

beginning among Presbyterians in Pennsylvania and New Jersey

whose leaders attended “the Log College” (known today as Princeton University)

being truly religious meant trusting the heart rather than the head,

prizing feeling more than thinking; relying on biblical revelation rather than reason religious enthusiasm quickly spread from the Presbyterians of the Middle Colonies

to the Congregationalists (Puritans) and Baptists of New England

revival meetings in the northern colonies inspired some converts to become missionaries

to the American South

sinful nature of humans and their complete inability to overcome this nature

placed salvation in God's hands alone

throughout the colonies, conservative and moderate clergymen

questioned the emotionalism of evangelicals

they stated disorder and discord were prevalent at revival meetings

First Great Awakening left colonists sharply divided along religious lines

Second Great Awakening consisted, in part, of another wave of religious piety sweeping the country

early America held a bewildering array of Protestant sects and denominations

each with different doctrines, practices and organizations

religious reformers held an unshakable belief in the ability of humans to act morally

emphasized the duty and ability of sinners to repent and stop sinning

conversion to the new faith was not simply something people believed,

although belief or faith was essential to it,

but rather something that happened to them -- and intensely emotional event they experienced

which left them with a fundamentally altered sense of self -- a new kind of Christian

converts once again became motivated to become missionaries

this time to the Native Americans about whom they were very concerned

REV. DR. JEDIDIAH MORSE FOCUSES ATTENTION ON NATIVE RELIGIUOUS TRAINING

Congregational minister and geographer prepared an elaborate report on religious condition of natives

printed by the United States government -- 1820

He proposed “Education Families” work among more promising Indian tribes

several workers cooperate to civilize the natives

example: school teacher, preacher, Indian Agent, farmer and blacksmiths all work together

AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF FOREIGN MISSIONS SENDS MISSIONARIES

Headquarters in Boston

Congregational Church joined in efforts by the Presbyterian and Dutch Reform churches

to provide religious training to the Indians

Sent a group of missionaries to the Hawaiian Islands -- 1820

Because of the numerous contacts with the Pacific Northwest

it was soon proposed to the headquarters in Boston

that an expansion of the missionary effort to Oregon would provide good results

DONALD McKENZIE RETURNED TO FORT NEZ PERCES

North West Company Chief Trader Donald “Fats” McKenzie had spent the winter of [1819-1820]

on the Bear River in southern Idaho

Results of this hunt were spectacular

he went out with seventy-five trappers and returned without the loss of a man

one hundred fifty-four horses had been rounded up for carrying the furs back to Fort Nez Perces

as the homeward-bound brigade crossed the Blue Mountains,

a band of Cayuse Indians five hundred horses strong, fell in with them

a chanting and beaded Indian column two miles long descending from the hills

must have been a remarkable vision even for the colorful Northwest

Fort Nez Perces was reached -- June 1820

DONALD McKENZIE PREPARES FOR ANOTHER EXPEDITION

For twelve days McKenzie stayed at Fort Nez Perces preparing the pelts for transport to Astoria

and, assuredly, partaking with the men in drinking the “regale”

as the mass intoxication activity before a brigade’s departure was called

Into the wilderness he journeyed again

this time as far as the Green River region (in present-day Wyoming)

DEATHS END AN ERA

Fur trader and explorer Sir Alexander Mackenzie died -- 1820

he had been the driving force behind the Northwest Company and X.Y. Company

Thomas Douglas, 5th Earl of Selkirk (Lord Selkirk) died -- 1820

he had awakened Hudson’s Bay Company to aggressive action

Manuel Lisa passed away suddenly -- August 12, 1820

in thirteen years of trapping he ascended the Missouri River twelve or thirteen times

each trip covered at least 650 miles by canoe and boat

his men penetrated to the upper Missouri

they explored and trapped large sections of Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming

and discovered Yellowstone park

Lisa sent out two or three unsuccessful parties along the route to Spanish Santa Fe

he also took the time to do more than his share in the War of 1812

On Lisa’s death, Joshua Pilcher became leader of the St. Louis Missouri Fur Company

but the old fire was gone

GEORGE SIMPSON IN ARRIVES IN CANADA

When Simpson arrived in Canada he learned Hudson’s Bay Company

Field Governor William Williams was not going to be arrested

as part of the company wars -- 1820

Simpson might have returned home but he was intensely ambitious

short in stature but physically strong

he volunteered to take over the remote, harshly difficult Athabasca District

which had been unexpectedly left without supervision

it was the opportunity of a lifetime

SNAKE RIVER REGION CAN BE DEADLY

Three Kanakas (Hawaiians) hunting with Donald “Fats” McKenzie and the Snake River Brigade

were murdered while hunting beaver among Snake Indians -- 1820

river where this happened was named the Owyhee River

FUR COMPANY MERGER PROPOSED

Company wars between the Canadian North West Company and British Hudson’s Bay Company

were extremely costly for both sides

British Government took a series of actions to end the inter-company conflict

negotiations to consolidate the companies were opened in London -- December 1820

CONGRESSMAN DR. JOHN FLOYD IS INTERESTED IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Congressman John Floyd had entered Congress representing Virginia -- [1817]

he received information regarding the Pacific Northwest from Astorians Ramsay Crooks

and Russell Farnham

Representative Floyd introduced the issue before Congress for the first time -- December 20, 1820

asked that Congress appoint a committee **“to inquire into the situation of the settlements on the Pacific Ocean, and the expediency of occupying the Columbia River.”[[161]](#footnote-161)**

U.S. House approved a committee of Congress and Dr. Floyd became its chairman

Congressman Floyd became a voice crying in the wilderness

demanding development of the Far West focused American interest on the Pacific Northwest

region’s value as a future acquisition was ignited

CONGRESSMAN JOHN FLOYD OF VIRGINIA PUSHES FOR OCCUPATION OF THE FAR WEST

His committee investigating development of the Far West

wrote the*Floyd Report* to U.S. House of Representatives -- January 25, 1821

which authorized occupation of the Columbia River Valley by the United States

based its claim of the Louisiana Purchase

Congressman Floyd believed the United States had good title to a large part of the Pacific coast

West of the Rockies

this country was rich and fertile

an American settlement should be established at mouth of the Columbia River

his report fixed the name “Oregon” on the country

Not one speech was given in support of the Bill and it died without action

CONGRESS REMAINS INDIFFERENT REGARDING AMERICAN EXPANSION

Regional differences within the United States kept Congress from introducing any national policy

regional demands to spread slavery across the continent -- or fear of this possibility

kept the national House of Representatives tied in knots

International tensions remained a major concern of the United States Senate also

AMERICAN STATE DEPARTMENT WAS INTERESTED IN EXPANSION

If Congress was indifferent, the U.S. State Department was not

State Department in Washington was aware of the Columbia River’s ever dangerous bar

thus it ruled out that river as a dependable harbor for sailing vessels

therefore the Americans were eager to secure Puget Sound,

the only other first-class Pacific anchorage available

Adams-Onis Treaty had defined the Western limits of Louisiana Purchase

and formalized the purchase of “East” and “West” Florida by the United States

this treaty had remained unsigned by the Spanish government

after pressure from Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, Spain accepted the treaty

U.S. Senate ratified the Adams-Onis Treaty for a second time -- February 22, 1821

Through the efforts of Secretary of State Adams, the United States received as a bonus

Spain’s ancient claims to the Northwest, **“the only European power who prior to the discovery of the (Columbia) River, had any pretensions to territorial right on the Northwest Coast of America”[[162]](#footnote-162)**said John Quincy Adams, conveniently forgetting both English and Russian assertions

ST. LOUIS BUSINESS

Mexico threw off the rule of Spain -- independence was declared February 24, 1821

wide ranging Missourians discovered a warm welcome in Santa Fe

Mexican authorities opened the New Mexican capitol to commerce

and Missourians pioneered the Santa Fe Trail

St. Louis was awash with entrepreneurs attempting to cash in on the trade

Well-financed and well-organized companies

prepared to exploit the furs of the upper Missouri River

ST. LOUIS MISSOURI FUR COMPANY

Was reorganized in St. Louis after the death of Manuel Lisa a year earlier

Now led by the dynamic Joshua Pilcher

who planted Cedar Fort (or Fort Recovery) on the Missouri River

above the mouth of the White River

and another, Fort Vanderburgh at the Mandan villages -- 1821

From these bases, a party under Robert Jones and Michael Immell

headed for the Yellowstone River and built Fort Benton in Crow Indian country

near the site of Lisa’s old fort at the mouth of the Bighorn River

DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN TRAVELED TO LONDON

Wintering North West Company partners in Canada listened to him -- 1821

and gave him their proxies to carry to London

According to another honored legend, he was a main figure in working out details of the merger

entered into with Hudson’s Bay Company

actually his voice was seldom heard, but his trading talents were recognized

COMPANY WARS COME TO AN END

Company wars were ended by King George IV -- March 26, 1821

Hudson’s Bay Company and North West Company were forced to merge into one company

new company was named Hudson’s Bay Company to maintain the same rent

one black beaver pelt whenever the king arrived in Canada to collect

BRITISH HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY AND CANADIAN NORTH WEST COMPANY MERGE

Parliament granted a Charter to the new Hudson’s Bay Company to last for twenty-one years

this assured a definite period of complete monopoly guaranteed by Parliament

formal deed was dated -- April 6, 1821

In London the Hudson’s Bay Company’s governor and committee faced two problems:

•first, a way had to be found to keep Americans away from the Columbia Department

for as long as possible

•secondly, preparations had to be made for abandoning the country

east and south of the Columbia River when and if that river

became the international boundary

to keep the stockholders happy both goals had to be achieved with maximum economy

RISE OF HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY

Merger brought peace among the trappers

and a stronger British monopoly than ever to the Canadian fur trade

Efficient business practices were adopted

Governors in London began paying close attention to company management

Company management focused on several purposes:

•to make a profit

•to strengthen British claim in the Columbia Department

Americans must be checkmated in the Pacific Northwest

•to act as a government for its employees in Columbia Department

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY CONTROLLED A VAST AREA

Hudson’s Bay Company administered an area equal in size to the continental United States

this area was organized into three main divisions:

•Montreal Department (including Upper and Lower Canada (and later Labrador)

•Southern Department (James Bay area south to Upper and Lower Canada)

•Northern Department of Rupert’s Land (Hudson Bay drainage basin) and New Caledonia

Great Britain entrusted the keeping of law and order among her subjects in the trapping regions

to Hudson’s Bay Company which was empowered with authority to arrest

and confine employees for minor offenses

persons charged with serious crimes sent to Canada for trial

retired servants of the Company who settled in Columbia Department

recognized the Company’s authority

(this was one of the few times in American history

that government services were provided by a company)

French-Canadians continued to play a prominent part i

n both the Canadian and American fur trade

but they were so peaceful and industrious no further legal protection was needed

United States, on the other hand, left its citizens in Oregon Country to their own resource

York Factory on Hudson Bay served as headquarters for Hudson’s Bay Company’s

new Northern Department and represented the company’s role as an imperial factor

in British North America

aside from administrative and financial functions York Factory also served as the entry point

for most Europeans bound for Rupert’s Land

Fort Nez Perces near where the Walla Walla River entered the Columbia River

now became Fort Walla Walla under the Hudson’s Bay Company

(this post’s location was to be shifted to serve as an outfitting point for Snake River Country)

ORGANIZATION OF HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY

Proprietors of Hudson' Bay Company were its officers in the London headquarters

Chief Officer was the Governor, assisted by a Deputy Governor

they were responsible to a board of directors of seven men

all of these nine officers were elected by the stockholders in an annual meeting

Actual operation of the company in North America

was the responsibility of lesser officials in the various geographic regions

at the top of the structure were three governors

one for the Montreal Department, one for the Southern Department

and for the Northern Department which included the Pacific Northwest

beneath the Governors were other officers, divided into two categories

Chief Factors and Chief Traders

Twenty-five Chief Factors supervised Districts within the three Departments

Twenty-eight Chief Traders had charge of single posts or were given special assignments

Chief Clerks, apprenticed clerks, postmasters, interpreters, voyageurs and laborers

saw to the daily operation of each trading post

traders were French-Canadians -- many were former North West Company employees

some trapped and others worked in trading posts

re-energized French-Canadians traders at posts on the Saskatchewan River

regularly dealt with the Blackfoot Indians

at great expense to American trappers and traders

Officers in America met once a year in the summer at various locations

to assess the past and to plan for the future

these gatherings became formalized as the Council for the Northern Department of Rupert’s Land

presided over by the two American Governors

Plans laid by the Council were executed by several hundred lesser employees

who were arranged according to a strict hierarchy

at the top of the order were the clerks who kept the records and did the correspondence

their task was one appealing to bright young men on the way up

who could look forward, after a fourteen-year apprenticeship,

to becoming a Chief Trader

then came the men without education

who did a whole host of tasks -- mostly physical labor

they too had different statuses and salaries

from post masters at the top to the voyageurs and laborers at the bottom

Company officers were mainly Scotsmen -- either by birth or descent

lower ranks were from anywhere and everywhere

including French Canadians, Indians of mixed blood (Metis),

and Indians from the East coast (mainly Abenakis and Iroquois)

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY PROFIT SHARING PLAN

All employees of the company also received regular annual salaries including board and keep

After London proprietors were paid, company profits each year were divided into one hundred shares

chief factors and chief traders in Canada received sixty shares

remaining forty shares in turn were divided into eighty-five shares

fifty went to the former North West Company men

and the remaining thirty-five went to Hudson’s Bay Company men

each factor received two shares and each trader one share

KANAKAS (HAWAIIANS) BECOME HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY EMPLOYEES

Kanakas who had worked for North West Company were transferred to Hudson’s Bay Company

North West Company had paid room, board, clothing, and merchandise

Hudson’s Bay Company improved inducements providing room, board

and wages of ten pounds per year -- usually for a three year stint

FREEMEN CAUSE UNTOLD DIFFICULTIES

Root of the financial trouble in Columbia Department lay in the so-called freemen

these were half-breeds, Iroquois and French-Canadian laborers

whose term of service with the company had expired

but who preferred to remain the wilderness with their native families

freemen were completely irresponsible

As long as Hudson’s Bay Company was the freemen’s only source of employment,

tolerable limits could be placed on their actions and enforced

trouble came with the approach of competing American trappers -- 1821

Hudson’s Bay Company compounded the difficulties when they shifted

the Snake River Brigade departure point from Fort Walla Walla on the Walla Walla River

to Flathead House on the Clark Fork River (in western Montana)

near David Thompson’s old Saleesh House

this shift in starting points was made for sound reasons as the relocated brigades

moved southward from Flathead House to the waters of the Snake River,

they could add to their harvest by trapping along the edges of the Rocky Mountains which bulged unevenly westward there

this change also brought the British near to American territory -- and sometimes they entered

freemen, who had no loyalty to their former employer, joined with the American trappers

this shift also brought the Hudson’s Bay Company brigade into Flathead country

and, inevitably, in contact with the murderous Blackfoot Indians

GEORGE SIMPSON BENEFITED FROM THE MERGE

While George Simpson was in the wilderness of the Athabasca District

he began toughening his soft London muscles

and learning some of the practical aspects of the fur trade

it was a masterly stroke of opportunism

Hudson’s Bay Company and North West Company worked out their peaceful merger

Hudson’s Bay Company's new board of directors dedicated themselves

to finding a manager for the business interests in the Northern Department

they sought a business-trained diplomat, unscarred by the hatreds of the recent competition,

who could reorganize the overlapping, demoralized units in the field

DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN RETURNED TO CANADA

After attending the rival company merger talks in London

Dr. McLoughlin assumed custody of the border post of Lacla Pluie

in this position he enjoyed great success in undercutting American competition

LEADERSHIP CHANGE AT FORT GEORGE (FORT ASTORIA)

North West Company partner and Acting Governor James Keith had taken command of the post

after the drowning of Governor Donald McTavish -- [May 22, 1814]

Keith had served as the solitary leader until Chief Trader Donald McKenzie

had returned to the Pacific Northwest for the North West Company -- [June 7, 1816]

With the merger of the two competing fur companies, Acting Governor James Keith was replaced by Hudson’s Bay Company Chief Factor James McMillan

and Junior Chief Factor John Dougald Cameron -- spring 1821

NATIVE REACTION TO THE TAKE OVER BY HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY

Hudson’s Bay Company’s arrival in the Columbia Department was a season of great gloom

Indians feared the days of the French-Canadian trappers were gone

they had always been a favorite with the Indians

DONALD “FATS” McKENZIE RETURNS AGAIN -- THIS TIME TO FORT WALLA WALLA

Brought the Snake River Brigade from the Green River region (Wyoming) back to Fort Perce

although, after the merger, he was now working for Hudson’s Bay Company

his five year contract was up -- July 1821

He had spent another, even more successful, year in Snake Country for Hudson’s Bay Company

however, in spite of Donald McKenzie’s extraordinary efforts,

Columbia Department still lost money for the company

Rather than start for Athabasca Pass at that late season, he spent the (coming winter -- [1821-1822])

with the former Astorian Alexander Ross at Fort Walla Walla

MISSOURI BECOMES A STATE

Admitted to the Union as a result of the Missouri Compromise -- August 10, 1821

Her new national senator, Thomas Hart Benton, championed the cause of the fur companies

he will serve as national senator for the next thirty years

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT CONTROLS LOUISIANA TERRITORY

Stores operated by the U.S. Government had been established in Louisiana Territory

among the natives

Businessman John Jacob Astor and U.S. Senator Thomas Hart Benton (Missouri)

fought these government posts persistently and savagely

as an encroachment of budding American capitalism

DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN BECOMES AN EMPLOYEE OF THE HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY

Dr. John McLoughlin was taken into the expanded Hudson’s Bay Company as a chief factor

this was a shareholding position comparable to his former status

as a wintering partner among the Nor’Westers

RUSSIAN CLAIM

Czar Alexander I claimed 50º North and Northward -- September 4, 1821

warned all ships must stay clear or risk being seized

United States protested and threatened war

CHANGE IN LEADERSHIP AT ASTORIA

John Dougald Cameron replaced James McMillan as chief factor at Fort George -- Fall 1821

McMillan returned to York Factory where he accepted a position as Chief Trader

Cameron was assisted by Alexander Kennedy who served as junior chief factor

CONGRESSMAN JOHN FLOYD (VIRGINIA)

Introduced a Bill -- January 18, 1822

proposed officially to designate the region the Pacific Northwest

authorized the President to occupy the Pacific Northwest and organize a government

He argued for the commercial potential of a colony on the Pacific coast

and for the importance of the Columbia River to America’s commerce

His proposal was also defended by Congressman Francis Baylies of Massachusetts

who had a vision of developing the lumber industry in the Pacific Northwest

Baylies noted in a speech: **“Some now within these walls may, before they die, witness scenes more wonderful than these; and in after times may cherish delightful recollections of this day, when America, almost shrinking from the ‘shadows of coming events’ first placed her feet upon untrodden ground, scarcely daring to anticipate the greatness which awaited her.”[[163]](#footnote-163)**

The opposition of practical men swayed the majority

with speeches such as Congressman Tracy of New York: **“Nature has fixed limits for our nation; she has kindly interposed as our western barrier mountains almost inaccessible, whose base she has skirted with irreclaimable deserts of sand.”[[164]](#footnote-164)**

American interest in the West once again failed to pass the Bill into law

Congressman Floyd’s bill lost by a vote of 61 for and 100 against

AMERICAN FUR COMPANY

John Jacob Astor’s lieutenant Ramsay Crooks

shrewdly established the Western Department of the American Fur Company -- 1822

it remained little more than a shell but revealed great potential value

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY ADMINISTRATION

Sir John Henry Pelly at age twenty-two had been appointed a director in the company -- [1806]

his primary responsibility was sending out exploring expeditions

Sir John was promoted to Governor of the company -- 1822

responsible only to the Committee in London

Two field governors were appointed to administer the four territories -- 1822

William Williams was appointed to the Southern and Montreal Departments

George Simpson became the Committee’s other choice

his rise in status and power were attributable to the guidance of

Sir Andrew Colville Deputy Governor of Hudson’s Bay Company

who advanced Simpson to his position of leadership in the company

Simpson was promoted to Governor “West of the Mountains”

was assigned to the Northern Department and Columbia Department

served as sole head of Hudson’s Bay Company in Canada in the Columbia Department

that is what the Americans called Oregon Country

a remarkable appointment as he had little experience in the fur trade

Field governors were responsible only to Governor Pelly and the Committee in London

GEORGE SIMPSON -- GOVERNOR WEST OF THE MOUNTAINS

Many wondered why he was chosen for this highest position

he was considered by his employees to be a “gentlemanly man”

who would not be a very formidable as an Indian trader

Simpson was, in fact, an ideal choice

he was short in stature, but physically strong and possessed boundless energy

man of intellectual superiority and had remarkable industry with tremendous driving power

charismatic, affable and sympathetic

economical, he demonstrated great efficiency using in man-power and provisions

objective in management, he was orderly, possessed good judgment

a superior business ability and he had a down-to-earth knowledge of men

within three years of his appointment many complained they were ruled by

a “rod of iron”

later still he was referred to as “dictator,” “viceroy,” “emperor”

Pompous, conceited, brilliant fireball of energy, he ruled by self-imposed responsibility

he was less interested in human relationships than most men

he could not abide men who asserted themselves

never hesitated to send friends or members of families to widely separated posts

if such moves pleased his fancy or notions of discipline

He also was inclined to sternness, but commanded wide respect

he was proud, overbearing and ruthless

and could be reactionary and money loving

He maintained his residence at York Factory on Hudson Bay

but frequently visited the fur posts of his domain via fur brigade packet boat

RISE OF HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY BUSINESS PLAN

Merger with North West Company brought peace among the trappers

and a stronger British monopoly than ever to the Columbia Department

Efficient business practices were adopted

Governors in London began paying close attention to company management

Company management focused on several purposes:

·to make a profit

·to strengthen British claim in the Columbia Department

Americans must be checkmated in the Pacific Northwest

·to act as a government for its employees in Columbia Department

George Simpson remained Hudson’s Bay Company’s chief officer for forty years

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY TRADING OPERATIONS

Officials were careful not to admit too many Indians at one time into the post -- 1822

usually only one or two

and once within the post, they were carefully guarded

Actual trade was preceded by an exchange of gifts

pieces of wood or bronze corresponding with the number of pelts delivered served as money

whose value was described in terms of a standard beaver skin

these were good for the purchase of articles from the company store

Most certain way to be assured of a supply of skins was to send traders and trappers to the real source streams, valleys, and hills of the hinterland

Hudson’s Bay Company organized bands of hunters, trappers, and traders

who went out in search of furs

Hudson Bay blankets became favorite items

other articles placed on store shelves included: awls, needles, scissors, thread, axes,

Canton beads, buttons, combs, highly colored yard goods, flashy feathers, files, looking glasses, silk handkerchiefs, fish hoods, pocket knives, scalping knives, and assorted groceries

TRADE GOODS ARRIVE AT ASTORIA FROM ENGLAND -- AFTER [1821]

Wearing apparel, felt hats, butter, cheese, pickles, sauces, suet, candles, gun flints, gunpowder, guns, military stores, saddlery, fishing tackle, playing cards, stationary, tobacco pipes, wrought brass, copper, iron,

Even musical instruments, sails, carts, and wagons eventually arrived

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY INVESTIGATES COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT

Governor George Simpson sent a fact-finding committee

of four men (three former Nor’Westers)

to go to the Columbia River and report back on the state of affairs there

DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN PROMOTED

Hudson’s Bay Company partners recognized his trading talents while serving at Lacla Pluie -- 1822

after eighteen years of service in the fur trade he was taken into the expanded company

he was given the title Chief Trader at Fort William on Lake Superior

the former North West Company’s principal post

a share-holding position similar to his former status as a wintering Nor’Wester partner

Dr. McLoughlin was placed in charge of one of four departments or fur trading regions

AMERICAN TRAPPERS HAD BEEN HELD OUT OF THE FAR WEST

After the demise of John Jacob Astor’s Pacific Fur Company, Yankee trappers ignored the Northwest:

•War of 1812 had limited access to the region

•Blackfoot Indians had stopped incursions into the West

•U.S. government had been unresponsive to the needs of western trappers

However, United States Government had relaxed its regulations on Westward expansion

and was extending military protection toward the frontier

U.S. GOVERNMENT EXPANDS TRAPPING OPPORTUNITIES

Under pressure from John Jacob Astor,

discontinued its policy of allowing only government appointed agents

to trade in Indian Country

(eventually approximately 3,000 trappers will go west between [1822] and [1840]

GENERAL WILLIAM HENRY ASHLEY LEADS THE MISSOURI MILITIA

Born in Powhatan County, Virginia -- [1778]

Migrated to Missouri -- [ca 1808]

was elected Lieutenant-Governor of Missouri

was named a Brigadier General in the Missouri Militia during the [War of 1812]

was described as a **“little man who always had a stomach ache”[[165]](#footnote-165)**

ASHLEY-HNRU COMBINE COMES INTO EXISTENCE

General William Henry Ashley entered into a partnership with the still active Major Andrew Henry

who had trained in the fur trapping business under the great Manuel Lisa

Major Henry had gained fame for having built two posts known as Henry’s Fort

(first on the Snake River:1809; second at the Three Forks of the Missouri River:[1810])

Together they organized the Ashley-Henry Combine in St. Louis -- 1822

bankrolling the operation, General William H. Ashley meant to remain in St. Louis

to handle the company’s business affairs

Major Andrew Henry was to serve as field captain

had to deal with the realities of discipline and insubordination

General Ashley and Major Henry together

outlined an expedition to the source of the Missouri River

to exploit the Three Forks country from which Henry had been driven

by Blackfoot Indians a decade earlier

ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR COMPANY ADVERTISES FOR EMPLOYEES

General William Henry Ashley and Major Andrew Henry placed an advertisement

in the *St. Louis, Missouri Republican* asking for **“one hundred enterprising young men to ascend the Missouri River to its source”[[166]](#footnote-166)** to engage in the lucrative fur trade -- March 20, 1822

Ashley-Henry Combine intended to send fur trapping/trading expeditions

up the Missouri River to the Yellowstone River

they would set out bands of trappers from camps in the best beaver districts

to trap out streams one after another

Ashley-Henry Combine employed only clerks and boatmen as fully salaried men

Ashley would supply each trapper with traps and powder, food, and supplies

trappers bound themselves to turn over to the company

half the yield from their rifles and traps

other half of their catch they could keep

as long as they sold it to Ashley at the prevailing price

trappers’ only other obligation was to help build and defend the company forts

ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR COMPANY BUSINESS PLAN

General William Henry Ashley remained in St. Louis to manage business interests,

Major Andrew Henry led an expedition of the first Americans since Lewis and Clark

to enter Rocky Mountains West of Great Divide and South of 49º North

their goal was the mouth of the Yellowstone River

Major Henry was to build a stockade at the Missouri River's Great Falls

to trade with the Blackfoot Indians

from this base Ashley-Henry Combine intended to reach up the Missouri River

to the Three Forks

while not averse to trading with the Indians for furs,

Ashley men set out primarily to hunt and trap for themselves

ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR COMPANY BEGINS OPERATION

Almost 200 young men answered the ad in the *St. Louis, Missouri Republican*

many were destined to become well-known names in the annals of history

these legendary “Mountain Men of the West” led exciting but lonely lives

and became the subject of many dime novels

in the process of trapping for a living, many Ashley-Henry men

were lost to Indians, grizzles, Arctic-like weather, and accidents

ORIGINAL ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR COMPANY MEN LEAVE THEIR NAMES IN HISTORY

Among the crew members hired for three year expedition [1822-1824] were:

Hiram Scott -- experienced trapper and guide

whose achievements were recognized when Scott’s Bluff was named in his honor

Etienne Provost (namesake of (Provo, Utah)

heavy, ruddy-faced muscular, hard-drinking, canny mountaineer

was probably the first trapper to be identified as a “Mountain Man”

he would eventually lead an Ashley-Henry Combine party to the West

and may have been first to cross South Pass (but this cannot been confirmed)

Thomas “Tom” Fitzpatrick

born in Ireland -- [1799]

since his parents were fairly well off, he received a good education

at seventeen, he ran away to sea and became a sailor

few years later, he jumped ship at New Orleans

worked his way up the Mississippi to St. Louis

unemployed and twenty-three -- 1822

he saw the advertisement in the paper looking for 100 men

to follow the Missouri River to its source

it did not say what the nature of the work was, but Fitzpatrick signed up anyway

he later rose in rank to become second in command of a trapping expedition

William “Billy”Sublette

more than six feet tall, with a lean face and Roman nose, sandy hair, and light complexion,

he was twenty-three when he signed on with General Ashley for the upper Missouri

served as laborer and in other lesser positions

William Sublette rose to a position of power in the fur trade,

becoming an able field captain and astute businessman

one additional contribution made to the fur industry by Billy Sublette

was the successful apprenticeship he had provided his younger brother Milton

an immense, powerful youth of twenty-five

who also was employed in the service of the Ashley-Henry Combine

James “Jim” Clyman

tall, rawboned Clyman was reticent, withdrawn and as decisive as any of Ashley’s men

brave, astute and trustworthy, he was a leader of men

of a literary bent, he read Shakespeare, Byron, and the Bible, and he wrote copiously

his diary, observations, and recollections -- all in a crude but expressive vocabulary

Mike Fink was a legendary keelboat man

who kept constant company with two inseparable companions: Jack Carpenter and Levi Talbot

he was about five feet nine inches tall and one hundred and eighty pounds

he possessed a broad round face with pleasant features, brown skin tanned by the sun and rain

had very expressive blue eyes which were inclined to gray and broad white teeth

his square brawny form was well proportioned

every muscle of the arms, thighs and legs were fully developed

indicating his great strength and constant physical activity

James “Jim” Bridger

eighteen years old scout when he got a fast start with the Ashley-Henry Combine

years later he was described as **“…a very companionable man. In person he was over six feet tall, spare, straight as an arrow, agile, rawboned and of powerful frame, eyes gray, hair brown and abundant even in old age, expression mild and manners agreeable. He was hospitable and generous, and was always trusted and respected.”[[167]](#footnote-167)**

David E. Jackson

at thirty-four he was older than most of the Ashley men and twice the age of Jim Bridger

he was a quiet man, stubborn in his convictions

Joseph Lafayette “Joe”Meek

born [February 9, 1810] in Washington County, Virginia,

Joe left home at the age of eighteen to seek his fortune in the West

he signed on to trap for William Sublette

Meek was described as bold and adventurous -- a first-class trapper

he was a tall, fun-loving, happy-go-lucky Virginian, and lover of tall tales

his humor was well known -- he loved practical jokes,

he had a reputation of being the wittiest, saltiest, most shameless wag and jester that ever wore moccasins in the Rockies

later in life he roamed the Rocky Mountains for over a decade

even later in life he became a pioneer, a peace officer, and successful frontier politician

his adventures were documented in *The River of the West* by Frances Fuller Victor

Jedediah Strong Smith

had been born in [January 6, 1799] in Bainbridge or Jericho, New York

he appeared in St. Louis

was hired by General William Ashley at age twenty-three

he was an intelligent young man and well educated

he was one of the greatest explorers of all the American trappers

he kept records and drew maps that clarified the geography of the West

most of his explorations were in the great basin of today’s Utah and Nevada

but he also explored California and in Oregon Country -- [1828]

he possessed few vices

held a high regard for cleanliness

almost never drank intoxicants, never used tobacco or boasted

he rarely indulged in humor or joined his companions in hilarious antics or pranks

deeply religious, “Praying Trapper” always carried his Bible and a gun

dominating this serious young man’s character was a stern Methodism

which kept him in meditation, prayer, and a constant study of the Bible,

and tormented him with an unwavering sense of unworthiness in the sight of God

to his death, he always remained a sincere and devoutly Christian gentleman

All of these men and others employed by the Ashley-Henry Combine

such as Robert Newell, Jim Beckwourth, and Christopher “Kit” Carson

were destined to become well-known names in the annals of history

they led exciting but lonely lives and became the subject of many dime novels

ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR COMPANY ROUTINE

Each employee of the Ashley-Henry Combine was assigned two mules and a saddle horse

all animals and equipment were charged against the man to whom they were assigned

If the party consisted of sixty men or more

four were made sub-commanders

other men were divided into “messes”(eating groups) of eight to ten men each

from each mess, one man acted as supply and disbursement officer

On the march, camps were formed in squares

with one side being a river or lake if possible

as soon as a halt was made, saddles and packs were used to made a breastworks

horses and mules were delivered to a special guard outside the square to graze

at sundown they were brought inside the camp

Regular night watches were set until sunrise

two or more mounted scouts were sent to search for hostile Indians

not until these men reported favorably were the horses taken outside to graze

as the men breakfasted

When the party was ready to move, they lined up, mess by mess

the mess ready to move first was allowed the front place in line

a choice position when dust was bad

messes retained that order throughout the day

After the train started, scouts were kept several miles ahead

also on the flank, and in the rear to protect the party against any sort of surprise

ASHLEY-HENRY ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR COMPANY EXPEDITION

Trading goods were brought from St. Louis on two fully loaded fifty-foot keel boats

that carried the first Americans since Lewis and Clark

to enter Rocky Mountains West of Great Divide and South of 49º North

they would travel by keelboat until it became necessary to travel by land

he would build a stockade at the mouth of Yellowstone River

Major Andrew Henry left St. Louis with the two keelboats and two keelboats -- April 3, 1822

riding the Spring floods, the first contingent of the expedition got under way

they were pulled upriver by fifteen to twenty boatmen trudging along the Missouri Riverbank

with Jedediah Smith ranging inland as a hunter

CONGRESS CLOSED GOVERNMENT FEDERAL POSTS IN THE ROCKIES

Refused to appropriate further money -- May 6, 1822

Provided an opportunity for private traders

to freely to rob natives by unfair weights and measures

and to corrupt Indians and employees with the sales of diluted liquor

MAJOR ANDREW HENRY KEELBOATS MEET WITH DISASTER

Below the frontier station of Fort Osage (Council Bluffs, Iowa)

Henry’s keelboat’s mast tangled in an overhanging tree branch

which spun the vessel broadside to the current

keelboat capsized and plunged to the bottom with $10,000 worth of cargo -- May 8, 1822

DEALING WITH DISASTER

Major Henry hurriedly dispatched a small party of men led by Daniel S. D. Moore back to St. Louis

to inform General William Ashley of the disaster

Leaving another twenty men behind to protect the salvaged supplies,

Major Henry, with the main party, took the remaining keelboat

continued the expedition up the Missouri River in the direction of the Mandan Villages

ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR COMPANY DISPATCHES THIRD KEELBOAT

In St. Louis General William H. Ashley received the distressing news

undaunted by the loss of the first keelboat, General Ashley had another vessel loaded

he recruited a new crew of forty-six men started up the Missouri River

General William Ashley took personal command of the boat

as they followed Major Henry up the Missouri River -- late June 1822

Among the members of Ashley's crew was Jedediah Smith

who went along, once again, ranging inland as a hunter

This fur trade expedition faced a disastrous journey

beginning with the accidental drowning of one man

and an explosion of ammunition that killed three more

MAJOR ANDREW HENRY HAS MORE TROUBLE

Continuing upriver after the loss of one of their keelboats

Andrew Henry and his men were attacked by Arikara Indians

at Fort Recovery (Cedar Fort) (near White River of South Dakota)

(near the mouth of the White River, South Dakota)

Arikara Chief Gray Eye's son was killed

Daniel T. Potts, along with other seven men, deserted Henry's party there

GENERAL WILLIAM H. ASHLEY’S KEELBOAT

Inched against the swift current of the Missouri River

as boatmen used large oars attached to the top of the cargo box,

or pushed poles seated in their arm pits as they walked the running boards

the length of both sides of the boat

or attached long cables from the mast which were run to shore

and pulled by fifteen to twenty men trudging along the muddy river bank

overgrown with trees and brush and swarming with insects

sometimes, when the wind blew favorably, the sail afforded respite though not speed

Keelboat moved past Council Bluffs and Camp Atkinson (Kansas),

GENERAL WILLIAM HENRY ASHLEY RECEIVES MORE BAD NEWS

At Joshua Pilcher’s St. Louis Missouri Fur Company Fort Recovery (Cedar Fort)

General Ashley heard about the attack carried out Arikara Indians on Major Andrew Henry’s men

after the attack an Arikara Chief, Gray Eye, vowed to avenge the death of his son

Ashley’s keelboat made its way up the Missouri River through the rolling plains country of the Sioux

CONGRESS OUTLAWS SALE OF ALCOHOL TO INDIANS

Prior to this law the fur trade relied on Indians to do the actual trapping and hunting for furs

their catch was brought to trading posts where, with ever-greater frequency,

Indians were given liquor both as a purchase medium and to make pliant and easily cheated

quickly it became difficult to conduct business without a substantial supply of alcohol

Congress’s new law made this practice illegal -- July 1822

MAJOR ANDREW HENRY RECEIVES HELP FROM THE MANDAN INDIANS

Major Henry and his remaining men

reached the Mandan Villages (present-day Bismarck, North Dakota) -- August 1822

where horses were acquired to assist in packing their trade goods overland

Within a few days, Assiniboine Indians in the upper Dakotas attacked the traders

and stole twenty-four horses

GENERAL WILLIAM H. ASHLEY’S KEELBOAT CONTINUES UP THE MISSOURI RIVER

Ashley-Henry Combine men made their way up the Missouri River through Sioux Country

Daniel T. Potts, wandering alone, luckily found his way to Ashley's encampment

At Fort Osage (about fifty miles below the Kansas River)

Ashley's keelboat picked up the twenty men who had been marooned

by the earlier sinking of Daniel S. D. Moore’s keelboat

Ashley and his men reached the earthen palisaded Arikara villages -- September 8, 1822

above the mouth of the Grand River (between South and North Dakota)

MAJOR HENRY REACHES BLACKFOOT COUNTRY

Continuing on as best they could, Andrew Henry and his men entered Blackfoot Country

because of Blackfoot hostility, Major Henry abandoned the original plans

to build a fort at the Missouri River's Great Falls

instead they pressed on to establish a post at the mouth of the Yellowstone River

Trade goods were transferred to “bull boats” -- buffalo hides stretched over wicker frame

American trappers continued up the Missouri River to the mouth of the Yellowstone River

HENRY’S FORT ON THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER

Where the Yellowstone River empties into the Missouri,

Andrew Henry’s trappers replaced an old fort with a better one

to trade with the Blackfoot Indians

eventually known as Henry’s Fort on the Yellowstone River

this post consisted of four structures connected by pickets to enclose an interior corral

stood on a tongue of land on the south bank of the Missouri River

with the mouth of the Yellowstone a quarter mile to the east

MAJOR HENRY SENDS OUT TRAPPERS

Although Joshua Pilcher’s St. Louis Missouri Fur Company still operated a post

at the mouth of the Big Horn River

two Ashley-Henry Combine brigades were set out from Henry’s Fort on the Yellowstone

to conduct a fall hunt and prepare for a spring thrust deeper into fur country

One group including Tom Fitzpatrick, was under John H. Weber (pronounced Weeber),

they ascended the Yellowstone and turned up the Powder River

(where they were stationed for the winter)

Henry himself led the other party higher up the Missouri River at the mouth of the Musselshell River

Major Henry planned to build yet another post in the Three Forks area

at the Musselshell River, Andrew Henry and twenty-one men including Jedediah Smith

built several huts and a wall around them

when Henry and eleven men left the Musselshell post to explore the region,

they were attacked by Blackfoot Indians

four trappers were killed and several others were wounded

Henry and the other survivors retreated to the Musselshell post

Jedediah Smith returned to Henry’s Fort from the Musselshell River outpost

with him he had Daniel Potts who had been injured by an accidental discharge of a rifle

which sent a ramrod through both of Pott’s knees

Major Henry gathered his remaining men together at the Musselshell post

before hastily continuing back to the relative safety of Henry’s Fort on the Yellowstone River

At Henry’s Fort Major Henry sent Jedediah Smith downriver to find fresh horses

GENERAL ASHLEY AND MAJOR HENRY UNITE ON THE YLLOWSTONE RIVER

When General Ashley and his party reached the Yellowstone River on horseback -- October 1, 1822

Major Andrew Henry and his men had already returned to their crude log fort

built with the idea of trading with Blackfoot Indians -- Henry’s Fort on the Yellowstone River

Major Henry very much appreciated the horses brought by General Ashley

as Assiniboines in the upper Dakotas had run off twenty-four of his own

By the time Ashley’s keelboat arrived two weeks later -- mid-October 1822

Ashley and Henry had mapped out a winter strategy for the fur country

and arranged for Ashley to return to St. Louis to acquire more men and supplies

(to conduct a hunt the next spring)

GENERAL ASHLEY RETURNED TO ST. LOUIS

With the boatmen and the few furs Major Henry’s men had accumulated,

Ashley headed his keelboat back down the Missouri River

leaving Major Henry and 150 trappers in the Yellowstone region

to pursue the fur trade along the Yellowstone River and to suffer through the cold winter

EWING YOUNG BEGINS HIS TRAPPING CAREER

Had been a member of the first expedition to take wagons

over what later became the Santa Fe Trail

twenty-eight year old Tennessean established himself in Taos, New Mexico

after his arrival there -- 1822

he pursued his craft as a carpenter

Young was a strapping man of six feet two inches and poorly educated

ordinarily he was quiet but he possessed a hot temper

he was a scrappy and fearless aggravation

to Mexican officials and bothersome Indians

shrewd and sometimes devious,

ambitious to prosper whether from trapping, trading, farming, milling, or droving, and endowed with a capacity to lead other men in any of these pursuits

He operated a trading post for trappers in partnerships with William Wolfskill

they also trapped the upper Pesos River in the Fall -- 1822

Young emerged as the most prominent, best leader, and a premier trapper

in the Southwest region

HALL JACKSON KELLEY -- MAN ON A MISSION

Kelley was born in New Hampshire [in 1790]

While he was talented and manually dexterous,

he preferred creating grandiose, lonely dreams to developing his personal or social skills

he suffered for poor eyesight weakened by studying the Greek philosopher Virgil by moonlight

or so he said

he was a humorless, self-centered, inflexible man who was cursed with the unfortunate talent

of quickly getting on their nerves of everyone with whom he came in contact

Kelley graduated fromMiddlebury College, Vermont, and became a schoolteacher in Boston

in the course of a few years he married the daughter of a minister, lost her,

and took a second wife -- 1822

He read the *Journal of Lewis and Clark* which generated in him a deep interest in Oregon

after studying maps of the region, he predicted a great port city would develop

at junction of the Willamette and Columbia rivers

a prediction which proved to be correct (Portland)

Kelley became obsessed with everything he learn about Oregon

he authored innumerable articles, pamphlets, tracts, and speeches on the subject

with these writings he promoted America’s claim to the region -- above all others

PETER SKENE OGDEN WAS WELL KNOWN TO HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY

Ogden was the son of a colonial jurist originally from New York who opposed the Revolutionary War

(during the Revolution he moved his family to Quebec

where he became an admiralty court judge)

Peter Ogden studied law under the tutelage of his father -- but soon quit the effort

Ogden joined the North West Company as a clerk at age sixteen or seventeen

he was assigned to the factory at Ile a la Crosse

where he and another clerk created an outrageous uproar

by assaulting a Hudson Bay trader inside his own post

and then swaggered away untouched by the victim’s own astonished voyageurs

When the clash between North West Company and Hudson’s Bay Company reached open warfare

Ogden captured the Hudson’s Bay Company fort at Ile a la Crosse which he used for imprisoning twenty men, more than a hundred women and children, and “dogs innumerable”

this act of defiance of the law was too much even for North West Company

Ogden was ordered to escape across the Continental Divide to Fort George

When the fur companies merged, Hudson’s Bay Company directors wanted nothing to do

with the violent clerk Peter Skene Ogden and he was fired -- 1822

DONALD “FATS” McKENZIE LEAVES THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST FOR THE LAST TIME

He was promoted to the role of Governor of the Red River Colony (Winnipeg, Manitoba)

second highest position in the service of Hudson’s Bay Company

he held this post for ten years before retiring

When McKenzie left the Pacific Northwest crossed the Rockies -- Autumn 1822

he had witnessed many changes since his first arrival in the Pacific Northwest

with the Wilson Price Hunt expedition [1810-1811]

and had implemented many of these innovations, including the brigade system, himself

he had prepared the ground for more complete control of the Northwest by the British

Sadly, Donald “Fats” McKenzie left no journal as he disliked writing

Alexander Ross, in charge of Fort Walla Walla, at least partially, indicated his worth: **“He had passed many years among the fascinating pleasures of the far-famed Spokane House, and the moment that** Mc**Kenzie had turned his back on the Columbia, old prejudices were revived.”[[168]](#footnote-168)**

FINAN McDONALD NEW LEADER OF THE SNAKE RIVER BRIGADE

McDonald replaced the departed Donald McKenzie

success of the brigade system was dependent

on maintaining vigorous management of the trappers

McKenzie took with him his superior management ability -- a skill that would be sorely missed

Finan McDonald a red-whiskered giant who had traveled with David Thompson

on the [180] exploration of the upper Columbia River)

McDonald led Hudson’s Bay Company’s annual brigade to Snake River -- 1822

Donald McKenzie’s dominate leadership style was no longer in place hold in check

those half-breeds, Iroquois, and French-Canadian laborers known as Freemen

SNAKE RIVER BRIGADE ATTACKED

Hudson’s Bay Company trappers under Finan McDonald were attacked by the Blackfoot Indians

one of his men was killed -- 1822-1823

Furiously McDonald struck back

seven others were killed in subsequent fighting

sixty-eight of the enemy were killed, or so McDonald reported after the battle

Finan McDonald was himself badly wounded

by the accidental discharge of a gun during a squabble with his own Iroquois

When McDonald returned from Snake Country, he took his men to Spokane House

this expedition was a financial success -- but unfortunate in other respects

FRENCH FUR COMPANY TRAPS THE (SOUTH DAKOTA) REGION

Pratte, Chouteau and Company was headquartered in St. Louis to trap (today’s South Dakota)

Bernard Pratte and Pierre Chouteau managed to get their base, Fort Kiowa (or Lookout) established near Cedar Fort -- Autumn 1822

ST. LOUIS MISSOURI FUR COMPANY WORKS THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER

Joshua Pilcher’s enterprise had Robert Jones and Michael Immell

on the Yellowstone River engaged in trapping rather than trading -- 1822

COLUMBIA FUR COMPANY TRAVELES TO THE MANDAN VILLAGES

Begun in St. Louis by Kenneth McKenzie and other former Nor’Westers

who had cut their British moorage and associated themselves with men of less vigor and vision

who possessed the requisite United States citizenship

Reached for the Mandan villages overland from the Missouri

SANDWICH ISLAND (HAWAIIAN) ROYALTY

Hawaiian Royal Party sailed to England to seek an alliance with the British -- 1823

John Coxe (Naukane) accompanied as part of the retinue

because of his high rank and familiarity with western ways

When the entourage reached England, most of the Royal Party came down with measles

though John Coxe survived, the king and queen both died

their bodies were returned to Honolulu in sealed, leaded coffins

Large sum of the late king’s money was missing

John Coxe and others in the king’s court were disgraced and even under suspicion

DEFEAT OF CONGRESSMAN JOHN FLOYD’S BILL

Representative Floyd of Virginia proposed another Bill

authorizing President Monroe to provide a government for the area

president would be authorized to place a military colony

at the mouth of the Columbia River

also to extinguish Indian title to the land and allot claims to settlers

Virginia Representative asked for a grant of land for each settler in Pacific Northwest

wanted a territory to be established

After long and vigorous debate, the Bill to organize Oregon Territory

passed the House of Representatives -- January 23, 1823

was tabled in the Senate

proposal was in violation of Joint Occupation agreement with Great Britain

HALL JACKSON KELLEY -- “PROPHET OF OREGON”

For undisclosed reasons, he was summarily fired from his Boston school position -- 1823

undismayed, though he had a growing family to support,

he flung himself into what had become to him a mania: Oregon

thirty-three year old Boston school teacher

determined in his mind that the Pacific Northwest belonged to the United States

Kelley endorsed the common American belief (incorrect as it was)

that the United States held indisputable claim to Oregon

and that the joint occupation treaty merely gave specific temporary privileges to Great Britain

Kelley gave up teaching and textbook writing

he penned wildly exaggerated accounts of the wonders of the West

although he personally had never been there

his writings took on strong religious overtones that had invaded his thinking

he was dubbed the “Prophet of Oregon” and talked the part

**“All nations who have planted colonies have been enriched by them…. The present period is propitious to the experiment. The free governments of the world are fast progressing to the consummation of moral excellence, and are embracing within the scope of their policies the benevolent and meliorating principles of humanity and reform.**

**“The most enlightened nation on earth will not be insensible to the best means of national prosperity. Convinced of the utility and happy consequences of establishing the Oregon colony, the American Republic will found, protect and cherish it… and extend the peculiar blessings of civil polity and of Christian religion to distant and destitute nations.”[[169]](#footnote-169)**

GENERAL WILLIAM H. ASHLEY IS AGAIN IN ST. LOUIS

Federal legislation outlawing the sale of alcohol to Indians [July 1822]

was a huge blow to the fur industry, however how to deal with the crisis was unknown

This year William Ashley sought one hundred men to go up the Missouri River

to venture into the Rocky Mountains as fur trappers

to be employed for one, two or three years

this year the men would be paid two hundred dollars a year

*St. Louis, Missouri Republican* advertisements ran during the first three months of 1823

James Clyman, Hugh Glass and Moses “Black” Harris

were added to the list of names who applied and later achieved fame

Moses “Black” Harris was named for his dark skin

which looked like gunpowder had been burnt into it

like the employees hired the year before these men were all young, slender, lithe,

physically strong, intelligent, courageous, accomplished outdoorsmen,

and conveyed a marked potential for leadership

Ashley-Henry Combine trappers became known as Mountain Men

MOUNTAIN MEN (AMERICAN TRAPPERS)

Stereotype dictated these trappers lived alone running trap lines in the Rocky Mountain region

this loner dressed in animal skins, sported bushy facial hair,

and carried a Hawken rifle and Bowie knife commonly referred to as a “scalpin’ knife”

they were expert hunters, trappers, bear fighters, and Indian killers

they roamed the mountain regions going west in the spring

returning east in the fall with the year’s take of pelts

While this may be a somewhat accurate description of a “free trapper”

Mountain Men were employed by a company -- most often the Ashley-Henry Combine

life of a Mountain Man was almost militarized

they traveled in “mess groups”

they hunted and trapped in brigades and always reported to the head of the trapping party

who was called a “boosway” -- a corruption of the French term *bourgeois*

included such men as Christopher “Kit” Carson, Joe Meek, Mike Fink, Jim Beckworth,

James Clyman, William “Billy” Sublette, Jedediah Smith, Jim Bridger, Hugh Glass

and Moses “Black” Harris

SECOND ASHLEY-HENRY EXPEDITION FROM ST. LOUIS

General William Ashley acquired two new keel boats, *Yellow Stone Packet* and *Rocky Mountains*

James Clyman had been commissioned by Ashley to recruit boatmen

*Yellow Stone Packet* and *Rocky Mountains*

wereloaded with thousands of dollars’ worth of goods

Ashley left St. Louis for the Yellowstone River with one hundred more men -- March 10, 1823

This fur trade expedition faced a disastrous journey

beginning with the accidental drowning of one man

and an explosion of ammunition that killed three more

ASHLEY- HENRY COMBINE TRAPS THE MUSSELSHELL REGION

Major Andrew Henry was in command at Henry’s Fort on the Yellowstone

he was responsible for conducting business in the region

Ice on the Missouri River broke up freeing the men at the Yellowstone base

John H. Weber turned up the Musselshell River for a spring hunt -- April 4, 1823

other Ashley-Henry Combine men, including Tom Fitzpatrick,

began trapping the headwaters of the Missouri River

Not all went well

as free trappers they were no longer under contract these men could do as they pleased

in their eagerness to get beaver pelts

they had not been watching the Blackfoot Indians very closely

Tom Fitzpatrick was the exception -- he was always on the lookout

Fitzpatrick encounters Indians

one day while out setting traps, he saw movement among the rocks

Fitzpatrick shot at the motion -- even though he wasn’t shooting at anything in particular

his gunfire threw off the rhythm of the attack and alerted his companions at the same time his quick thinking saved all but four of the men

GENERAL ASHLEY CONTINUES UP THE MISSOURI RIVER

Jedediah Smith met the Ashley expedition somewhere along the Missouri River

Fort Recovery (Cedar Fort near the White River on the Missouri) Ashley heard bad news

Arikara warriors had attacked Andrew Henry and his men

also, Arikara Chief Gray Eye's had vowed to avenge the death of his son in the battle

Ashley decided not to trade with the Arikara

but his route upriver still took them past the Arikara villages

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY SNAKE RIVER BRIGADE HUNT

Michael Bourdon, leader of the brigade, was killed by Blackfoot Indians on the Salmon River

along with three of his trappers -- Spring 1823

Finan McDonald took charge of the Snake River Brigade and killed seventy Piegan Blackfoot

after negotiations were held between the company men and the natives,

passage was allowed the trappers through Lemhi Pass down the Missouri River

Finan McDonald led the expedition back to Fort George after a successful hunt

GENERAL ASHLEY ARRIVED AT THE ARIKARA VILLAGES

Keelboats *Yellow Stone Packet* and *Rocky Mountains* reached the Arikara towns -- May 30, 1823

trade was conducted for horses

through interpreter Edward Rose -- of Manuel Lisa and Wilson Price Hunt fame

Arikara attitude toward the Americans was suspicious

but the purchase of over 200 buffalo robes and a score of horses was arranged

Trade talks were interrupted by a severe storm

about sixty Ashley-Henry Combine men remained on the two keelboats

about forty of Ashley’s men under the leadership of Jedediah Smith

made camp on a sandbar in the Missouri River to guard the stock and furs already received

some of these men ventured into the Arikara villages where an altercation broke out

General William Henry Ashley at 3 a.m. received a report from Edward Rose

that trouble was brewing -- June 1, 1823

one of Ashley’s men, Aaron Stevens, had been killed

for the remainder of the night, Ashley’s men remained armed and alert

ASHLEY’S EXPEDITION ATTACKED

At first light, the Arikaras opened fire on the shore party on a sandbar in the river -- June 1, 1823

outgunned and with no protection in the sand

Ashley’s boatmen refused his order to sail for shore and returned fire instead

many of the men refused to be rescued and preferred to fight

Before Ashley could do much more than realize what was happening

fifteen of his men were killed and nine others wounded -- one quarter of his entire crew

altercation had lasted fifteen minutes

Jedediah Smith demonstrated both courage and leadership during the attack

Ashley managed to lead seven or eight of his men downstream in small skiffs

WILLIAM ASHLEY BEAT A HASTY RETREAT

He picked up scattered survivors and withdrew twenty-five miles downriver to the first timbered area where he regrouped his party and waited

leaving behind on the sandbar a great deal of the Ashley-Henry Combine property

Ashley’s men refused to make another attempt to pass by the Arikara villages

and only about thirty were willing to remain where they were

ASHLEY’S PARTY CONTINUED DOWN THE MISSOURI RIVER

William Ashley guided the keelboats *Yellow Stone Packet* and *Rocky Mountains*

downriver to a location seventy-five miles below the Arikara villages

there they set up a new base near the mouth of the Cheyenne River

Reed Gibson and two other men died of their wounds

Jack Larrison, who was presumed lost, stumbled into camp

after wandering wounded and naked for four days

Mike Fink and his two companions, Jack Carpenter and Levi Talbot amused themselves

they had boated and caroused together long before they joined with Ashley

to their legendary antics they added a game in which they shot tin cups of whiskey

from one another’s heads at seventy paces

recently Fink and Carpenter had fallen to quarreling over a woman in their past

Fink challenged Carpenter to their favorite sport

Carpenter sensed what Fink intended

but he stepped forward anyway with a cup of whiskey on this head

Fink paced off the distance, raised his rifle, and fired

rifle ball smashed Carpenter in the center of his forehead

**“Carpenter,”** Fink chided**, “you have spilled the whiskey”**

enraged, Talbot drew his pistol and shot Fink in the heart[[170]](#footnote-170)

ASHEY CONTACTS HIS PARTNER MAJOR HENRY

Ashley selected Jedediah Smith and a French-Canadian to take a message upriver

past the Arikara villages to his partner Andrew Henry at Henry’s Fort on the Yellowstone River

to warn them of the hostilities

GENERAL HENRY ASHLEY RELEASED MOST OF HIS MEN

Ashley decided to send the larger of the keelboats, the *Yellow Stone Packet* -- June 4, 1823

down to Fort Atkinson with forty-three employees who refused to stay and five wounded men

and a letter he wrote as Missouri Lieutenant Governor and Brigadier General of the state militia requesting military assistance

He kept the keelboat *Rocky Mountains* with him

MILITARY ALERTED TO THE INCIDENT AT THE ARIKARA VILLAGES

Ashley’s keelboat, *Yellow Stone Packet,* arrived at Council Bluffs -- June 18, 1823

bringing the letter from General William Henry Ashley

to Fort Atkinson’s commander, Colonel Henry Leavenworth

and Indian Agent Benjamin O’Fallon

Outraged by the Arikara attack, these officers quickly prepared the Missouri Legions

to come to the aid of General Ashley

Colonel Leavenworth prepared six companies of soldiers for battle

Ashley’s letter also outraged St. Louis Missouri Fur Company leader Joshua Pilcher

who was looking for an excuse to send a message to all of the tribes up the Missouri River

and especially to the Blackfoot Indians

MILITARY BECOMES INVOLVED

Colonel Henry Leavenworth, commander of Fort Atkinson led 230 soldiers and artillery,

started overland and by keelboat against the Arikaras -- June 22, 1823

Indian Agent Benjamin O’Fallen and Major William S. Foster remained at the fort

JOSHUA PILCHER LEADS A COMPANY OF MEN TO BATTLE

Sixty of Pilcher’s St. Louis Missouri Fur Company men answered the call to arms

they set out from St. Louis to join Leavenworth in the fight -- June 27, 1823

Pilcher’s militia included some of Ashley’s men who had fled from the earlier Arikara battle

as well as Sergeant Joseph Perkins and Captain William Vanderburg

both of the St. Louis Missouri Fur Company

An additional 600 Sioux warriors turned out to help engage the Arikara Indians

JEDIDIAH SMITH DELIVERS GENERAL ASHLEY’S MESSAGE

Smith reached Henry’s Fort on the Yellowstone River

where he delivered William Ashley’s message of an Indians fight to Major Andrew Henry

Major Henry felt himself in trouble with the Blackfoot Indians where he was,

but leaving twenty men to defend the fort Henry loaded fifty men into dugout canoes

and launched them down the Missouri River to aid his partner

Henry passed the Arikara villages without drawing fire

before he joined his partner at the Cheyenne River mouth the first week in July 1823

ARMY SUFFERS A TRAGIC LOSS

Traveling up the Missouri River, the U.S. Army keelboat accidentally sank -- July 4, 1823

a sergeant and six privates were drowned

Colonel Leavenworth’s army stopped for repairs Fort Recovery (Cedar Fort near White River)

Joshua Pilcher and his St. Louis Missouri Fur Company troops caught up with the army at the fort

ASHLEY AND HENRY LEARNED OF COLONEL LEAVENWORTH’S ARMY

Henry and Ashley and their men met at the mouth of the Cheyenne River

they decided to move further downriver

Henry led his trappers to the Teton (or Bad) River

Ashley continued on to the French Fur Company’s Fort Kiowa

where he learned of the approach of the Colonel Leavenworth’s army from Fort Atkinson

accompanied by Joshua Pilcher’s St. Louis Missouri Fur Company trappers

General William Ashley decided to wait in the safety of Fort Kiowa

where they were joined by Major Henry and his men

RANALD McDONALD IS RAISED BY HIS AUNT

His father, Archibald McDonald, married Princess Raven -- daughter of Chief Comcomly

she died shortly after giving birth to a son -- Ranald McDonald, Jr.

his first two years were spent with the sister of his mother in an Indian lodge

HUDSON’S BAY DEVELOPS THE PACIFIC COAST

Governor Simpson aggressively lobbied the Directors in London to strengthen the fur business

he devoted three years of his life to the expansion of the fur trade east of the Rocky Mountains

Governor received several reports, including the fact-finding committee,

on conditions in the Columbia Department (roughly today’s Washington and Oregon)

Simpson created a master plan with respect to the development of these regions

reports he received from fact-finding committees were compiled into a master report

presented to the authorities of the Columbia Department

he noted that trade there could be profitable if strict economy and exertions were exercised

and there was not opposition to the Hudson’s Bay Company

this report was dated -- July 12, 1823

PETER SKENE OGDEN REHIRED BY HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY

Although not held in high esteem by the Hudson’s Bay Company

their former clerk was known as one of the most able fur traders in the Northwest

in addition he far better educated than was customary

since he had studied law before taking on a life of adventure

he was respected by the Indians who referred to him as the “fat trader”

Governor George Simpson reinstated Ogden as an employee

and elevated him to Chief Trader -- 1823

NORWAY HOUSE IS THE NEW HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY HEADQUARTERS

Was constructed North of Lake Winnipeg -- 1823

Replace Company headquarters at Fort William on Lake Superior

as the location of the annual meeting of the partners

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS

Secretary of State who challenged the Russian claim to the Northwest -- July 17, 1823

established the case for American ownership when he stated, **“...that we should contest the rights of Russia to any territorial establishment on this continent, and that we should assume distinctly the principle that the American continents are no longer subjects for any new European colonial establishments.”**

FORCES UNITE AGAINST THE ARIKARA INDIANS

General William Ashley and Major Andrew Henry decided to join the battle

they left Fort Kiowa with eighty trappers

Ashley and Henry established a camp on the Teton River near Fort Recovery (Cedar Fort)

trappers were divided into two divisions:

one group was captained by Jedediah Smith

other group led by Hiram Scott (Scott’s Bluff)

Edward Rose was designated ensign

Thomas Fitzpatrick was named quartermaster

William “Billy” Sublette served as sergeant-major

Colonel Henry Leavenworth arrived with 230 infantrymen of the Missouri Legions

bolstered with artillery -- July 30, 1823

In addition forty of Pilcher’s St. Louis Missouri For Company men joined

This force was augmented by 750 mounted Sioux warriors

Unfortunately, Colonel Leavenworth had not been in a fight before

ATTACK ON THE ARIKARA TOWNS

Colonel Henry Leavenworth’s expedition advanced on the Arikara towns

by both land and water -- August 9, 1823

in what is the first conflict West of the Mississippi

involving the U.S. Army with the Native Americans

Galloping to the front, 500 Sioux warriors drove the mounted Arikara back to their bulwark

Sioux lost two while the Arikara suffered fifteen filled

After the initial Sioux attack, Colonel Leavenworth

proved to be incapable of making a decision and carrying it out[[171]](#footnote-171)

artillery bombardment proved equally ineffective

for two days the militia and fur men maneuvered about

disgusted, the Sioux warriors plundered the Arikara cornfields before leaving the scene altogether

COLONEL HENRY LEAVENWORTH SEEKS PEACE

With the Sioux warriors gone as well as most of his round-shot, Leavenworth asked for talks

Captain B. Riley, complaining of his nearly ten years of duty at Fort Atkinson without any action,

was denied permission to attack the village

Joshua Pilcher and the St. Louis Missouri Fur Company strongly objected

(later they filed an official complaint)

Colonel Leavenworth met with the Arikara chiefs -- smoked the peace pipe and opened negotiations

talks were held -- August 11 and 12, 1823

Arikaras promised good behavior

token reparations were offered to Leavenworth,

but the chiefs could not find the Ashley-Henry Combine property

which had been left on the Missouri River sandbar [June 1]

TOM FITZPATRICK TOOK MATTERS INTO HIS OWN HANDS

He had grown impatient over Colonel Henry Leavenworth’s lackluster performance

Fitzpatrick gathered up ten trappers and sneaked into the Indian camp at night

trappers opened fire -- even though there was only eleven of them

to the Indians it seemed like a whole army was attacking

Fitzpatrick and the others helped themselves to the Indian’s horses

then reported to Colonel Leavenworth what they had done -- emphasizing how easy it had been

this stunt added to Tom Fitzpatrick’s already growing legend

LEAVENWORTH’S TROOPS ENTER THE ARIDARA VILLAGES

They were surprised to find the site totally deserted -- August 13, 1823

Arikara had quietly abandoned both of their towns and fled

goods taken from the Ashley-Henry Combine by the Arikara were located

and were transferred to Major Andrew Henry

After an unsuccessful attempt to find the Arikaras, the army prepared to leave

TROOPS SET OUT FOR FORT ATKINSON

Missouri Legions under Colonel Henry Leavenworth began a withdrawal -- August 15, 1823

Colonel Leavenworth specifically ordered the abandoned Arikara villages be left alone

most of Ashley’s company followed Leavenworth’s troops south on the Missouri River

two members of Pilcher’s St. Louis Missouri Fur Company,

Angus McDonald and William Gordon, stayed behind and torched the deserted villages

It was soon reported that homeless Arikara living with the Mandans were forming war parties

ASHLEY AND HENRY CHANGE PLANS AGAIN

Results of the Arikara Battle brought no decisive advantage to the trappers

while the Ashley-Henry Combine expedition had filled in the geographic details

of upper Missouri and Yellowstone rivers

trading trip itself had not been financially successful

because the Blackfoot Indians could not be pacified

Back at Fort Kiowa the Ashley-Henry Combine faced bankruptcy -- August 1823

enormous financial losses suffered at the Arikara towns had seriously hurt their credit

in addition to the loss of a number of experienced men

General William Ashley and Major Andrew Henry decided to abandon the Missouri River

rather, they would by-pass their competition and the Indians

by leading large groups of men out to trap the beaver streams themselves

rather than relying on trade with the natives

(soon most firms copied the lead of the Ashley-Henry Combine)

Horses were obtained from the Sioux Indians

Major Henry would seek beaver south of Blackfoot country

while General Ashley remained at Fort Kiowa making business arrangements

MAJOR HENRY’S EXPEDITION

Andrew Henry set out on a quick march overland with thirteen men along the Cheyenne River

toward Henry’s Fort on the Yellowstone

Along the way, Hugh Glass proceeded apart from the column

as his defiant independence usually dictated

Glass and Moses “Black” Harris entered a thicket and surprised a grizzly sow and her cubs

Bear reared up on her hind feet to attack as Glass sent a rifle ball into her chest

wound proved fatal, but not quickly enough

as Glass clambered up a tree, the bear grabbed him and threw him to the ground,

two swipes of her razor-like claws lacerated him from head to foot

Moses “Black” Harris, pursued by one of the yearling cubs, ran from the thicket

he turned and fired a shot which brought down the smaller cub

Major Henry’s men raced to the scene

where they found Hugh Glass with the bear sow sprawled dead on top of him

Henry and his men pulled off the carcass

Glass lay on his back bleeding

from gashes sliced into his scalp, face, chest, back, shoulder, arm, hand, and thigh

with each gasp of air, blood spurted from a puncture wound in his throat

he should have been dead

as Daniel Potts remarked, Hugh Glass had been **“tore nearly to pieces”[[172]](#footnote-172)**

men bandaged his wounds but could do little else for him

By the next morning Hugh Glass still was not dead

Major Henry decided to wait no longer

as Arikara Indians could be encountered at any moment

crude litter was fashioned and the men resumed their march carrying Glass on their shoulders

progress was agonizingly slow

After several days Henry decided he could no longer risk the entire party

for a man who was certain to die

he offered an enticing sum of money to anyone who would volunteer to stay behind

and care for Glass until he died

John S. Fitzgerald and seventeen-year-old Jim Bridger stepped forward

MAJOR HENRY REACHED HENRY’S FORT ON THE YELLOWSTONE

Leaving Hugh Glass to his fate, Henry and his men return to the mouth of the Yellowstone River

traveling overland and bypassing the Arikara Indians

they arrived at Henry’s Fort on the Yellowstone

there Henry discovered that Assiniboine or Blackfoot

had stolen more than twenty of his horses

soon afterwards he lost another seven

Shortly after Henry reached his fort, John S. Fitzgerald and Jim Bridger came in

they carried Hugh Glass’s rifle, knife and other possessions

they reported him dead and buried -- in fact, he was not

HUGH GLASS’S MIRACULOUS JOURNEY

After surviving his attack by a ferocious grizzly bear, Glass remained feverish and immobile

where John S. Fitzgerald and Jim Bridger had left him alone to die

Glass was kept alive by his great will to live

and his equally great desire to seek revenge on those who had abandoned him

While he was in no condition to walk, he could crawl

he found berries and bashed a rattlesnake with a rock

this provided him his first nourishment since the grizzly attack

water was provided by the Grand River

sharp rocks enabled him to dig edible roots

good luck turned up a dead buffalo with marrow still rich in its bones

later he was able to seize a buffalo calf killed by wolves

In a six-week demonstration of incredible strength, fortitude, luck, and determination, Hugh Glass crawled back to Fort Kiowa -- nearly two hundred miles[[173]](#footnote-173)

there he recovered and vowed vengeance on John S. Fitzgerald and Jim Bridger

(he eventually forgave Jim Bridger who was only seventeen at the time)

HENRY’S EXPEDITION SUFFERS ANOTHER ATTACK

Two more trappers were left dead at Henry’s Fort on the Yellowstone -- August 20, 1823

while another war party staged a horse-raid on the post

(later the attack was accurately reported to be by Mandans and not Blackfoot as suspected)

Henry dispatched Moses “Black” Harris and John Fitzgerald to the lower Missouri River

to report on the difficulties at his post to Colonel Leavenworth

Fitzgerald traveled on to St. Louis where he joined the Army

HENRY’S FORT ON THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER WAS ABANDONED

Major Henry and his company of trappers fled up the Yellowstone River to the Powder River

to exploit its southern tributaries in the less dangerous Crow country

there they met with Crow Indians and traded for horses

On the Powder River Henry and his men were barred from further travel by rapids

so, after acquiring forty-five horses from the Crow Indians, they took to the land

for the return trip to Henry’s Fort at the mouth of the Yellowstone River

Henry dispatched a party under John H. Weber to trap up the Powder River

JOHN H. WEBER TRAPPED THE UPPER MISSOURI RIVER REGION

John H. Weber and his party trapped from the mouth of the Powder River

over the Bighorn Mountains and up the Wind River (Wyoming)

before joining the growing assembly of trappers enjoying the hospitality of the Crows

HENRY’S FORT ON THE BIGHORN RIVER

With the balance of the company,

Major Henry, on horseback, followed the Yellowstone River

At the mouth of the Bighorn River, where it empties into the Yellowstone River,

he began building a post (his third establishment) -- Henry’s Fort on the Bighorn River

near Manuel Lisa’s establishment (known as Fort Raymond or Fort Manuel [1807-1808])

there Major William Henry and his trappers spent the winter

HUGH GLASS’S RETURN FROM THE DEAD

After recovering and gathering his strength at Fort Kiowa

Glass set out to track down those who had deserted him in his time of desperation

and inflict revenge

As Major Andrew Henry’s newest fort took shape at the mouth of the Bighorn River

Hugh Glass arrived

As luck would have it, John S. Fitzgerald had left Henry’s Fort on the Bighorn River

to go down the Missouri River

in fact, as Glass ascended the Missouri, he had passed Fitzgerald going the other direction

However, Jim Bridger was there, and Glass confronted him

soon Glass forgave Bridger due to youth and inexperience

(the older, more experienced John S. Fitzgerald would not be so lucky)

GENERAL WILLIAM H. ASHLEY REMAINED AT FORT KIOWA WITH HIS MEN

Remnants of the Ashley-Henry Combine, who still had the nerve,

resumed the trapping enterprise

setting out from the St. Louis Missouri Fur Company's Ft. Kiowa

(South Dakota on the Missouri River near the mouth of the Cheyenne River)

One party of about a dozen, including Hugh Glass, headed toward the mouth of the Yellowstone

they lost two men in a skirmish with Arikaras

Jedediah Smith captained another group that set out along the Cheyenne River -- September 28, 1823

included Thomas Fitzpatrick, William L. Sublette, James Clyman, and Thomas Eddie

and the notorious Edward Rose who enjoyed great stature among the Crow Indians

JEDIDIAH SMITH’S EXPEDITION

After following the Cheyenne River, Smith’s sixteen men were hungry, thirsty and exhausted

Smith sent Edward Rose ahead to get supplies

at the Crow Village (near Clark’s Fork of the Yellowstone)

three men and five horses were left at the village as the main force pushed on

Trapping party entered the Powder River basin

Smith, hunting by himself, was leading exhausted horses single file through a brushy area

a large grizzly bear charged down the slope toward the center of the line

huge beast turned and raced to the head of the column just as Smith emerged from the thicket

instantly the bear pounced, seizing him and throwing him to the ground,

smashing several ribs, and clawing away his scalp

Help arrived -- but none of the trappers claimed any medical skills

Smith directed one or two men to go for water and said, as Jim Clyman wrote: **“‘If you have a needle and thread git it out and sew up my wounds around my head.’ It bled copiously, for the scalp had been torn nearly off and hung only by an ear. Clyman found a needle and thread, ‘got a pair of scissors and cut off his hair and then began my first Job of dressing wounds.’ He got the scalp sewed back on, but said there was nothing to be done for the ear. Smith insisted that Clyman try. He did. ‘I put my needle stitching it through and through and over and over laying the lacerated parts together as nice as I could with my hands.’ Within two weeks, Smith had recovered sufficiently to resume his captaincy, although he bore scars for the rest of his life.”[[174]](#footnote-174)**

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY ASSIGNMENTS

Plans were arranged for John Work to go to Spokane House -- 1823

Field Governor George Simpson even went so far as to suggest

that John Work would do well to marry a Cayuse woman as a good-will gesture

expenses to be paid by the company

Dangers of the adventures are indicated in a letter

John Work wrote to his friend, Edward Ermatinger: **“I am happy in being able to inform you that I enjoy good health, and am yet blessed with the possession of my scalp which is rather more than I had reason to expect.”[[175]](#footnote-175)**

Alexander Ross resigned his position

as head at Hudson’s Bay Company Fort Walla Walla -- Fall, 1823

was placed in charge of Hudson’s Bay Company Second Snake River Expedition

to take place the next year as a new version of Donald McKenzie’s operation

(first expedition had been led by Finan McDonald)

EDWARD ROSE HAS SOME SUCCESS

After visiting a Crow Village to acquire supplies, Rose reappeared on the Powder River

with fifteen or sixteen Crow Indians and fresh horses

With Smith and his men following, they crossed the Tongue River -- mid-November 1823

and ventured south along the Big Horn River

after several days march up the Wind River, they made camp

here they stayed living on buffalo and sheep

Jedediah Smith and his party rested two months with the Crows

from whom they learned about South Pass

JEDIDIAH SMITH’S WINTER CAMP IN THE WIND RIVER VALLEY

Winter was spent with his party of sixteen trappers in a friendly Crow native village

Smith learned from the Crows that less than fifty miles west of the village creeks

was a stream which fed the Snake River and ultimately the Columbia River

while this was of great interest to Smith who wanted to hunt the Columbia region

of even greater interest, at that moment, was news of an even richer beaver ground

on a south-running river (the Green River)

Life in the village was difficult for Jedediah Smith and his companions

as the untrustworthy Edward Rose was the only white who could communicate with the Crows

his translations were not reliable

he often bolstered his position with the natives at the expense of his associates

MONROE DOCTRINE CHANGES AMERICANFOREIGN POLICY

Speech addressed to Congress delivered by President James Monroe -- December 2, 1823

outlined new American foreign policy regarding Europe

ended President Washington’s former neutrality policy

After Napoleonic Wars, European leaders demanded return of all seized property

United States feared Spain might try to regain her lost colonies and territories

in Western Hemisphere

U.S. announced it would protect Latin America Republics

published to the world that the U.S. was independent of European politics

This was a politically intriguing position as U.S. had almost no army or navy at the time

President Monroe knew Great Britain

was interested in trading with newly independent countries

assumed they would support our policy

Spain made no effort to reconquer her former possessions

because of fear of the British navy

Later, American control was extended to areas which included the North West coast

GENERAL WILLIAM ASHLEY AT FORT KIOWA

William H. Ashley decided to return to St. Louis to seek additional financing

to launch another party directly west from Fort Kiowa

to eventually link up with Henry’s men in Crow country beyond the Bighorn Mountains

Ashley and his men stopped at Fort Atkinson -- December 18, 1823

he learned of Moses Harris’ report of the (August) attack

on Henry’s Fort on the Yellowstone

Ashley and his men continued on to St. Louis

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY’S TRAPPING BRIGADES

Furs were trapped by Hudson’s Bay Company employees traveling in brigades

or traded by Indians at each post

foremost among furs procured in the interior were beaver skins

but many others such as mink, sharp-toothed otter, fox, lynx, and raccoon

were found in abundance

Some Hudson’s Bay Company employees were called servants

they had signed a contract for a specific term and were paid a salary

if they left before the end of the term, especially if they left before paying their expenses,

they were called deserters

Other employees were known as Freemen

they worked for themselves but traveled with the Hudson’s Bay Company brigades

and sold their pelts to the company exclusively at company prices

Both Servants and Freemen were expected to provide their own supplies through forage

or by buying them from the company with an advance on their future earnings

trappers wives and children accompanied them

Trapping Brigades were led by the Chief Trader and a clerk or two

they departed from a Hudson’s Bay Company post (in the late Fall)

when the coats of the beaver were at their prime

they moved from area to area

picking up and moving on as the beaver supply in a location became exhausted

when the horses were fully loaded, the men cached the furs in the remote location

In the (early summer) the catch was delivered to an outlying trading post

trapping brigades were paid off, furs were checked and repacked, and reports prepared

Bundled furs were transported to the company headquarters -- Fort George

by regularly scheduled canoe, boat, and horse brigades

SNAKE RIVER BRIGADE CHANGES LEADERS

Hudson’s Bay Company trader Finan McDonald was appointed Snake River Brigade leader

after the death of Michael Bourdon at the hands of Piegan Blackfoot [spring 1823]

he was not willing, after his bloody fight, to press his luck any longer

Chief Trader Alexander Ross

after resigning his position as head of Hudson’s Bay Company Fort Walla Walla

had the misfortune to take the position as Chief Trader of the Snake River Brigade

composed of forty Hudson’s Bay men and thirty-two horses

Alexander Ross then led this Snake River Brigade from Spokane House

into Snake River Country where they followed the usual British route

leaving the Snake River Plain across Lemhi Pass to the Beaverhead River

and thus into United States territory

then back over the Continental Divide to the head of the Bitterroot River

down that river to Clark’s Fork of the Columbia River,

then down Clark’s Fork to Flathead House (Eddy, Montana) -- [summer 1824]

OREGON BOUNDARY QUESTION

United States Government sought new negotiations with Great Britain

on the Oregon boundary question

British had carefully avoided the question [since 1818]

probably because their fur traders had complete control of Columbia Department

to surface the issue was to invite American dialogue on an equal footing

Secretary of State John Quincy Adams -- 1824

resumed boundary negotiations with Great Britain through U.S. Ambassador Richard Rush

Adams’ in his instructions to Richard Rush described America’s claims:

•Gray’s discovery and naming of the Columbia River,

•Lewis and Clark explorations,

•Astoria settlement, and restoration of Astoria [in 1818],

•acquisition of Spanish title of the Pacific Northwest

Secretary of State John Quincy Adams

believed the source of the Columbia River was as far North as 51º

he ordered Ambassador Rush to claim that parallel as the boundary

as a compromise, Adams was willing to accept 49º North

already adopted as the international boundary from the Great Lakes to the Rocky Mountains

GEORGE CANNING’S DOCTRINE REGARDING OREGON BOUNDARY QUESTION

British Foreign Secretary George Canning

disliked American Secretary of State John Quincy Adams personally

Canning would not accept 49º North from the Rockies to the Pacific Ocean as the boundary

he argued British Lieutenant Commander William R. Broughton

had discovered and took possession of the Columbia River

Captain Robert Gray’s claim did not count

as he did not officially represent the American government

This round of negotiations came to nothing

ALEXANDER ROSS LEADS HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY SNAKE RIVER BRIGADE

Ross recruited fifteen more men in Flathead Country

total Expedition consisted of a diverse crew eighty adults and sixty-four children

two Americans

seventeen French-Canadians -- five Canadians over 60 years old and two were about 70

five half-breeds

thirty-one Indians of various tribes -- mainly Iroquois

twenty-five of the men were married

thus twenty-five wives and sixty-four children had to be taken along

cavalcade was more than a mile long

Control difficulties were rooted in the so-called “Freemen”

these were half-breed, Iroquois and French-Canadian laborers (but mostly Iroquois) whose term of service to Hudson’s Bay Company had expired

but who preferred to remain the wilderness with their native families

rather than return east

Iroquois Indians in the Snake River Brigade were utterly irresponsible

as long as Hudson’s Bay Company was the Freeman’s only source of livelihood

British company administrators could make the system work

trouble came with the approach of a new source of supplies -- competing Americans

PART OF SNAKE RIVER BRIGADE COMES UNDER ATTACK

While trapping (in what is now southern Idaho), Hudson’s Bay Company trader Alexander Ross infuriated some Snake (Shoshone) Indians with his overbearing tactics

Seeking revenge, these Snakes attacked a detachment of Ross’s Iroquois Freemen

led by “Old Pierre” Tevanitagon (remembered in the geographic name Pierre’s Hole)

robbing them of everything but their season’s catch of beaver pelts

which, as the Snake Indians knew, fell under the protection of Hudson’s Bay Company

terrified Freemen managed to escape, but constantly feared for their safety

Alexander Ross, leading what remained of his motley Snake River Country Expedition,

constructed camp at the confluence of the Lemhi and Salmon rivers

this served as the home base for trapping and trading expeditions into the wilderness

GENERAL ASHLEY ARRIVED AND TAKES CARE OF BUSINESS IN ST. LOUIS

Where he stayed to administer business details

and attempt borrow money to purchase new supplies for yet another trapping expedition

He was forced to remain in St. Louis to please his creditors

JEDIDIAH SMITH BREAKS HIS WIND RIVER CAMP

Deep snows kept Smith, Tom Fitzpatrick and William Sublette and their trapping party

in the Crow Indian village rather than traveling north to trap along the Wind River

Smith decided to escape his winter camp with the Crows at the first practical opportunity

Smith and Thomas Fitzpatrick with their fifteen men took a southerly route

along the Popo Agie River to the Sweetwater

toward the anticipated rich beaver area indicated by the Crows -- (the Green River)

They left the Sweetwater again heading southwest -- February

JEDIDIAH SMITH AND HIS MEN REACH SOUTH PASS

Smith and his men rediscovered South Pass, which had been described to Smith by Crow Indians,

as they continued through the Rocky Mountains and across the Continental Divide

(this would later become a popular trade and immigrant route)

(Wind River Range of the Rockies previously had been crossed at a low point

[perhaps at his exact location] by Robert Stuart and his party of Astorians

en route Eastward from Astoria to St. Louis -- [1812])

(or, perhaps, Smith, Thomas Fitzpatrick and their party were the first to cross here)

Smith and his sixteen trappers pushed on to the Big Sandy River area and again turned due south

JEDIDIAH SMITH LAYS OUT PLANS FOR TRAPPING THE GREEN RIVER REGION

When they arrived on the Green River, the Green River Valley had been penetrated

by Ashley-Henry Combine Mountain Men

Smith divided his trappers into parties

set them working the main stream and its tributaries

furs they gathered were plentiful and of good quality

Jedediah Smith set off with seven men -- February 20, 1824

to hunt further south in the Black Fork region

JEDIDIAH SMITH AND HIS MEN REGROUPED ON THE GREEN RIVER

Smith divided ten of his trappers into parties

all agreed to meet again on the Sweetwater River [June 10]

most of the men, including Tom Fitzpatrick and Jim Clyman, remained on the Green River

they set to work on the main stream and the tributaries of the Green River

Jedediah Smith and the remaining three men set off to the West

they remained in the mountains to hunt (over the next winter) in the Bear River region

RUSSIAN CZAR

Issued a ukase (proclamation) that all lands north of 51º North belonged to Russia

he forbade foreigners to come within one hundred Italian miles of her coast

This demand led to further diplomatic talks with the United States

RUSSIAN-AMERICAN CONVENTION

Russia’s claim of all lands north of 51º North

was based on the discoveries of Vitus Bering and Alexander Chirikov

and on the occupation of Alaska by Russian fur traders

also on the [1799] Czarist grant to the Russian American Fur Company

America’s Monroe Doctrine raised the threat of America using British military power

which forced Russia to back down

Russian-American Convention was signed -- April 17, 1824

Russian claim was restricted to (Alaska)

set the Russian southern boundary at 54º-40’ North

and the eastern border at 141º longitude

Russia agreed to not push their activities in trade and settlement below 54º-40’ and America would not operate North of this line

This left only the U.S. and Great Britain with competing claims to the disputed area of Oregon

ORGANIZATION OF HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY

Chief officers of the corporation all were located in London

seven member of the Board of Directors was stationed there

as was the Governor of Hudson’s Bay Company who was the corporate head

as the eighth Board of Directors member he was directly responsible

to the other seven Board of Directors members

also the Deputy Governor who assisted the Governor

as the ninth board member he was directly responsible to the Governor

and other seven members of the Board of Directors

all nine of these officers were elected by the stockholders at an annual meeting

Much of Hudson’s Bay Company territory in North America was known as Rupert’s Land

vast Hudson Bay drainage basin stretching from Hudson Bay to the Rocky Mountains

named in remembrance of Prince Rupert of the Rhine, a nephew of King Charles I

and first Governor of Hudson’s Bay Company

included all of Manitoba, most of Saskatchewan, northern Alberta, eastern Nunavut Territory,

northern parts of Ontario and Quebec, parts of Minnesota and North Dakota

also included in Hudson’s Bay Company domain was the Columbia Department

land West of the Rocky Mountains

FIELD GOVERNOR GEORGE SIMPSON DENIED A LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Field Governor Simpson felt confident that conditions were stable in his Northern Department

still in Canada, he requested the Hudson’s Bay Company Council in London

grant him a leave of absence to get married -- Spring of 1824

his request was peremptorily denied

rather Field Governor Simpson was ordered to the Columbia Department

to initiate, with appropriate financial concern, the company’s new policies

American incursions into the Columbia Department were of paramount concern

to the Hudson’s Bay Company board of directors

Hudson’s Bay Company’s new direction required Field Governor Simpson to:

•deter the advance of American land trappers

by hunting bare approaches to the Columbia River thus removing the enemy’s incentive

they urged the Snake River trade be renewed with vigor to shut out American access

•drive away Yankee sea peddlers by building up the British maritime trade,

long neglected by the old North West Company

•replace Fort George by locating a temporary post

on the north bank of the Columbia River and by building a permanent central depot somewhere near the mouth of the Fraser, safely beyond the forty-ninth parallel

FIELD GOVERNOR SIMPSON DEMANDS CHANGES IN COMPANY OPERATIONS

Simpson believed the country South of 49º might eventually go to the Americans

Field Governor Simpson wanted permanent British occupation

of the relatively unexploited fur territory of the Columbia Department and coastal region

Nineteen North West Company trading posts in the West had been added

to Hudson’s Bay Company’s seventy-six Eastern posts

Field Governor Simpson reorganized the continent-spanning network of forts

to make it more efficient and profitable

many northern and western Canadian posts were closed and employees laid off

Simpson developed a policy of “trapping out” the Snake River area

to remove the principal attraction to the Americans

Snake River would become a barrier rather than an inducement to trappers

George Simpson supported the idea of a new interior supply line using the Fraser River

Field Governor also supported the construction of a new marine depot

to be established somewhere in the Southern Fraser River Valley

Simpson soon expanded the company trade system dramatically

he built forts and trading posts rather than using roving bands of trappers

he demanded conservation rather than extermination of the beaver

with the exception of the Snake River region

WESTERNERS WERE OUTRAGED

By the actions of the Arikara and Blackfoot Indians

No trading houses survived above forts Kiowa and Recovery

northern limit of dependable security resided at Fort Atkinson (Council Bluffs)

Indian Superintendent William Clark urged Secretary of War John C. Calhoun

to dispatch a military force upriver -- Spring 1824

However, confusion between businesses of trapping and trading muddied the issue:

•if the land belonged to the natives, trading seemed appropriate but trapping invasive;

•if the land did not belong to the Indians, trapping out the resource was acceptable;

•if the public concern was to protect property and lives

Indians had to be punished for their hostile treatment of trappers and traders

CONGRESS DISCUSSES EVENTS IN THE WEST

Businessman John Jacob Astor received the support

of Missouri’s United States Senator Thomas Hart Benton

Senator Thomas Hart Benton sponsored a bill

to permanently station a large military force on the upper Missouri River

for the protection of the fur trade

other senators worried about illegal fur hunting on Indians lands

and demanded to protect the Indians and their land from incursion by whites

Compromise was enacted by Congress -- May 1824

treaty commissioners, backed by a military escort, would ascend the Missouri River

and make peace with all of the tribes

ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR COMPANY CONDUCTS TRAPPING OPERATIONS

Major Andrew Henry had left his post at the mouth of the Yellowstone River

moved to the mouth of the Bighorn River-- Spring 1824

where he conducted a successful winter and spring hunt

utilizing his new post -- Henry’s Fort on the Bighorn River

MAJOR ANDREW HENRY RETURNED TO ST. LOUIS

Major Henry sent John H. Weber to lead a party of trappers on a hunt up the Powder River and across to the Bighorn River

Andrew Henry closed down Henry’s Fort on the Bighorn River where he had spent the winter -- 1824

set out for St. Louis with the season’s catch

REVIVAL MOVEMENT IN AMERICAN RELIGION

One of the great moral crusades of United States history was begun in western New York

under the leadership of Presbyterian minister Charles Grandison Finney

he stressed the Christian’s obligation to convert the unknowing

to be truly saved, one must bring the Word of God to the unconverted

this religious revival covered a twelve-year period -- 1824-[1836]

This effort required that American social environment be Christianized

so that the unchurched would have the chance to hear the message of hope

Reformers sought several social reforms:

•to abolish slavery,

•to control the sale and use of liquor,

•to foster education -- especially regarding teaching the deaf, mute, and blind

•to remake prisons and emphasize rehabilitation rather than retribution

•to protect the observance of the Sabbath

(Later coming of the missionaries to Oregon Country was stimulated by this moral force)

GENERAL HENRY ATKINSON WRITES TREATIES

General Atkinson traveled with a military party -- 1824

to make official treaties with the tribes of the Missouri River region Edward Rose, hired as a guide and interpreter to the Yellowstone region,

left the company in Montana to live among the Crow Indians

NORTHWEST COMPANY FRENCH FUR TRADERS ESTABLISHMENT A SETTLEMENT[[176]](#footnote-176)

Frenchtown was established in the Walla Walla River Valley -- about 1824

this village was associated with Northwest Company’s Fort Walla Walla

(and later with the Hudson’s Bay Company after the two companies merged)

Residents of Frenchtown, although they married Native American women,

usually maintained their French-Canadian character

and division was made in long strips rather than squares like the British and Americans

these strips usually radiated from a river which formed the central transportation corridor

and was the lifeblood of the settlement

French-Canadian log cabin construction utilized squared timbers

that were either notched at the corners

or joined to an upright corner timber by a mortise (slot in the log) and tenon joint

Roman Catholic religion was, perhaps, the most enduring reminder of French Canadian cultural

original Frenchtown Catholic mission was St. Rose of Lima

(Today Frenchtown is generally regarded as the area along the north side of the Walla Walla River

between the communities of Lowden, on the west, and Whitman on the east)

BRITISH POLICY TOWARD COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT (PACIFIC NORTHWEST)

American Secretary of State John Quincy Adams announced the American position on the boundary

to George Canning, British Foreign Secretary

international boundary would extend along 49º North from the Rockies to the Pacific Ocean

this position was adamantly rejected by the British diplomat

In a dispatch to the British commissioners -- May 31, 1824

British Foreign Secretary wrote a new British Oregon policy

based on fact Great Britain, at risk of war, had compelled Spain to recognize British claims

during the Nootka Sound Controversy

•British would share equal rights with all other powers

to make use of entire territory from 42º to 54º-40’

•British were willing to agree to a division of the territory

but demanded joint occupancy and reciprocal convenience

•British rejected the idea they should give up any portion of the coast line

containing Nootka Sound

•British were determined to not give free use of the Columbia River to America

**“…the only navigable communication, hitherto ascertained to exist, with the interior of that part of the country. The entrance to this river was surveyed by British officers, at the expense of the British government, many years before any agents of the American government had visited its shores,** [Canning did not recognize Captain Gray as an agent of the American government] **and the trading posts of the Hudson’s Bay Company are now and have for some time been stationed on its waters.”**

AMERICAN RESPONSE TO BRITISH POLICY

Americans were claiming the Pacific Northwest

invoking the claims of French title, Spanish title, and an American title

using the deficiencies of each one of these titles to enhance the arguments of the other titles

Negotiations of 1824 once again failed

ASHLEY-HENRY MEN MEET ON THE SWEETWATER RIVER

Tom Fitzpatrick and his party had great success trapping the Green River region

the did not arrive at the rendezvous site until -- June 15, 1824

where they saw no sign of Jedediah Smith

After a few days wait, and since the Sweetwater at this point was too shallow to navigate,

Jim Clyman traveled downriver alone

he planned to wait for the others at a place where the river was deep enough for a canoe

A few days after Clyman’s departure, Smith and his party rendezvoused with Fitzpatrick

Thomas Fitzpatrick and two men were assigned by Jedediah Smith to carry the winter’s catch to General William Henry Ashley in St. Louis

Jedediah Smith remained in the mountains to organize the coming season’s hunt

THOMAS FITZPATRICK TRAVELS DOWN THE SWEETWATER RIVER

Enough of the snow pack had melted in the meantime to allow for water travel

Fitzpatrick’s trappers constructed a “bull boat” -- buffalo hides stretched over a wicker frame

to float down the Sweetwater River

winter’s catch of pelts was transferred to the bull boat in an effort to bring it out to St. Louis

Fitzpatrick and two companions set off

although they did not know if the Sweetwater would flow into the Platte or the Arkansas river

Their anticipated meeting with Jim Clymer did not take place

instead of finding a place to launch a canoe, Clymer was surrounded and hunted by Indians

after twelve days of hiding, he set out alone for civilization

Fitzpatrick passed Clyman’s hiding place and guessed he had been killed by hostiles

TOM FITZPATRICK REACHED THE PLATTE RIVER

He and his two companions ran into difficulty

where the river became rocky and the canoe was swamped

Ashley-Henry Combine’s season catch was strewn down the river

Three trappers managed retrieve and dry most of the beaver pelts

but two rifles and all of their ammunition had been lost

so they cached their pelts at Independence Rock

and set out overland on foot for the Missouri River

ASHLEY-HENRY MEN ARRIVE AT FOR ATKINSON

Clyman arrived at the post after making his treacherous way down the Platte River

he was so overjoyed at seeing the flag flying in the distance that he fainted

Fitzpatrick and his two companions, after their own severe hardships,

also arrived at Fort Atkinson ten days after Clyman

At the post Fitzpatrick was staked with mules and equipment

by the Joshua Pilcher’s St. Louis Missouri Fur Company

Fitzpatrick returned to the Platte River to retrieve the cache

however, before he set out he wrote a letter to Major Andrew Henry

telling of Jedediah Smith’s rediscovery of South Pass and the successful hunt there

(Despite their horrible experiences, both Clyman and Fitzpatrick rejoined Ashley’s caravan

for another hunt into the west -- [Autumn 1824])

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY NEGOTIATES WITH EAST INDIA COMPANY

Hudson’s Bay Company entered into an agreement

to sell 20,000 beaver and 7,000 otter skins to the East India Company -- 1824

for access to East India ships to transport goods to North America and furs to London

Deal would relieve pressure on the London fur market

and also lessen Hudson’s Bay Company’s dependency

on the American J. and T.H. Perkins Company

which had provided transportation for the North West Company

Hudson’s Bay Company purchased the 161-ton brig *William* and *Ann --* 1824

and sent the supply ship from London on a yearlong voyage to the Pacific coast waters

MAJOR ANDREW HENRY RETURNS TO ST. LOUIS

Ashley-Henry Combine generated a great profit with the trade conducted on the Bighorn River huge gains had been produced with no serious losses of men or money

furs were plentiful and good

experienced trappers and traders had joined his forces

several new trapping fields had been opened

Major Henry made two significant announcements:

•his own retirement from the fur business

which left General Ashley without his field captain

•Jedediah Smith’s rediscovery of South Pass

General Ashley was now in a position to make up for his previous [1822-1823] losses

Ashley was excited about the news of Jedediah Smith crossing South Pass

as it meant they no longer had to rely on the Missouri River route through the mountains

to reach the trappers in the field

GENERAL WILLIAM ASHLEY SUPPLIES INDEPENDENT TRAPPERS IN THE FIELD

With the retirement of his field captain, Major Andrew Henry, Ashley became the sole company head

Ashley-Henry Combine cleared its self of debt and reorganized -- July 1824

Ashley would haul trade goods to the trappers and the Indians at an advertised wilderness location

to corner all the furs and trade all his supplies at bloated prices

before his competitors ever got a crack at any of them

his idea altered the fur trade dramatically -- 1824

General Ashley had enough money left to organize and lead an expedition to carry supplies by mule

into the Rocky Mountains to trade with itinerant trappers for their furs

because of the battle with the Arikara Indians, Ashley decided to go overland

through the newly opened South Pass

GENERAL WILLIAM ASHLEY ABANDONES THE POST AND FORT SYSTEM

In response to it no longer being legal to sell alcohol to the Indians

Ashley’s plan made Indian trappers and trading posts unnecessary

His employees would no longer build forts or trading houses which meant trappers had no home base

they lived independently, fended for themselves and trapped independently

they caught their own food, found their own shelter

and fought off wild animals and hostile Indians themselves

GENERAL WILLIAM HENRY ASHLEY SUPPLIES INDEPENDENT TRAPPERS

General Ashley tramped with 200 men and a pack train of trade goods to a meeting of trappers

held at Major Andrew Henry’s Fort at the mouth of the Yellowstone River -- 1824

Ashley-Henry Combine festivities opened (and closed) -- July 1, 1824

except for the camaraderie of scattered friends reunited, it was a day strictly of business

General William Ashley bought the trappers’ beaver and other pelts

and sold them the good he had carried from St. Louis

for most of the skeins he paid three dollars a pound,

although some drew only two and others as much as five dollars

Assembled at the rendezvous were assembled there were 150 whites:

•Ashley-Henry Combine Mountain Men

American trappers working the Rocky Mountain region;

•independent trappers from St. Louis, Santa Fe and Taos,

frontiersmen who had throttled the throats of savages

educated gentlemen, some traveling with servants, out to see the West in person

crude frontiersmen who had chocked the life out of savages with their bare hands;

•Hudson’s Bay Company deserters;

•adding to the spectacle were 800 Indian men, women, and naked children

playing at perpetual games of war;

•skulking dogs, half-wild horses and mules tethered to stakes completed the spectacle

Participants drank, gambled and raced their horses

slept little, ate too much, talked long, loud, and boastfully, fought, swaggered, lied,

cheated the Indians, cheated their own people, cheated the companies, and cheated each other

By the next morning the first of the great annual mountain fairs was over

when all the beads and baubles had been exchanged for hides and pelts

each trapper went his own way to labor and fight for another year

Traders and trappers prided themselves

on spending a year’s earnings in one evening’s play

At the close of business, General Ashley promised to meet them again the following summer

near the Green River

General William Ashley had established the Rendezvous System

LIFE OF A MOUNTAIN MAN -- AMERICAN TRAPPER WORKING THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

They held such deep mutual faith in one another’s integrity

they were known to rush into battle with the Indians shouting their wills to each other knowing full well the survivor would execute it faithfully

They had to survive primitive and dangerous mountain life and the equally dangerous annual meeting

carnival-like rendezvous where trappers and fur buyers sell furs and buy supplies

Indians and their wives and Mountain Men with their Indian wives converged

swapped “hairy banknotes” for raw alcohol from Cincinnati, coffee, sugar, tobacco,

arms and munitions, and blankets

Wages ranged from $120 to $600 a year depending on competition for their services

when accounts settled, the trapper was usually left in debt

NEW ROYAL LICENSE ISSUED TO HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY

British government, responding to pressure from pious subjects at home,

ordered the Hudson’s Bay Company to begin missionary and education efforts

among the natives -- 1824

required that **“religious instruction and moral improvement of the Indians”** be achieved

Field Governor George Simpson opposed bringing missionaries to the West

he wrote to his London Board of Director patron Andrew Colville

that bringing missionaries to the Indians was detrimental to the company

in an effort to gain support for his position

in his reply, Sir Andrew noted the recent struggle with the North West Company

had damaged the Hudson’s Bay Company reputation in missionary-conscious England

therefore, wrote Colville, **“It is incumbent on the Company…to allow missions to be established at proper places for the conversion of the Indians, indeed, it [would] be extremely impolitic…to show any unwillingness to assist in such an object.”[[177]](#footnote-177)**

Field Governor Simpson ordered all posts to hold religious services on Sundays

most of the traders paid no attention

FIELD GOVERNOR GEORGE SIMPSON SEEKS A SECOND-IN-COMMAND

Simpson had a difficult task finding men capable of keeping the Columbia Department profitable

he dedicated himself to the search for a resident manager

List of resident managers provided little to choose from with the exception of one name

which returned to him over and over and stood above all others

this was one man, whom Governor Simpson did not like and would eventually learn to hate:

was former Nor’Wester, thirty-nine year old towering, white-haired Dr. John McLoughlin

Simpson chose Dr. John McLoughlin

to serve in the capacity of Chief Factor of Columbia Department

GOVERNOR GEORGE SIMPSON SENT DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN WEST

Governor Simpson at Hudson’s Bay Company’s great depot -- York Factory on Hudson Bay

issued orders that Dr. John McLoughlin journey to the West

to the mouth of the Columbia River

Extreme haste had to be made to cross the Rockies before heavy snows arrived

DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT CHIEF FACTOR

Born [October 19, 1784] on the south bank of the St. Lawrence River

he was a mixture of Irish, Scotch, and French-Canadian blood

little is known of his childhood except he was baptized a Catholic, grew up on a farm, and received training in medicine at Quebec

at the age of nineteen he was licensed to practice medicine and surgery

His abilities were recognized by his superiors

he was made a partner in the North West Company [1814]

placed in charge of one of four departments or fur trading regions

after eighteen years in the fur trade

he was given the title Chief Trader at Fort William on Lake Superior

North West Company’s principal post

When the merger of North West Company and Hudson’s Bay Company was conducted -- [in 1821]

he was sent to London to represent the North West Company

in negotiations with Hudson’s Bay Company

Officers of Hudson’s Bay Company also quickly recognized his merits

his two-year success in undercutting American competition in the field in Canada

may have been one reason why Field Governor George Simpson suddenly selected him

to head the vast Columbia Department

Field Governor George Simpson named him Chief Factor of the Far West

McLoughlin was thirty-nine years old when he took charge of business in the region

he was sent to Pacific Northwest to take charge of business in New Caledonia

but he always considered his assignment as Chief Factor something of a banishment

pay back because he had dared demand better terms for his old employers

when it was bargaining with Hudson’s Bay Company [in 1821]

CHIEF FACTOR DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN HAD A STRIKING APPEARANCE

Six feet four inches tall, raw boned, well-proportioned and physically strong

Dr. McLoughlin had a powerful physique and commanding presence

He had a noble and expressive face

crowned by a great cascade of flowing prematurely white hair

which hung down over his massive shoulders

his piercing eyes could be soft and kind, or penetrate with anger

He was able to demand attention and respect especially from men -- whether Indians or trappers --

whose lives he controlled by no laws except the authority of his strong personality

Mature in character, he fully possessed physical, mental, and moral qualities

which distinguished him as an extraordinary man

he was firm yet kindly; prompt and businesslike but also sympathetic and helpful

he was able to govern wisely, justly, and kindly

Man of unchanging honor and loyalty to his company and his country

his every action was intended to be profitable for Hudson’s Bay Company

and beneficial to Great Britain

He was an autocratic leader who possessed both violent prejudices and a flaring temper yet he also possessed an extraordinary generosity that he bestowed frequently

sometimes he disagreed violently with his superior -- Field Governor George Simpson neither time nor distance diminished his and Simpson’s mutual ill will

He possessed an impulsive generosity

that lifted him far above the level of just another fur trader

Indians referred to him as “White-headed Eagle”

he would dominate the Columbia Department for the next two decades)

(Americans still honor him with the title “Father of Oregon”)

IMPLEMENTING FIELD GOVERNOR GEORGE SIMPSON’S ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN

Working out the details of the administrative plan for Columbia Department

was left to the capable Chief Factor, Dr. John McLoughlin

Dr. McLoughlin considered his assignment as Chief Factor as something of a banishment

imposed, he believed, because he had dared demand better terms for his old company

when it was merging with Hudson’s Bay Company -- in [1821]

Working under the Chief Factor were many shrewd and brilliant traders

Peter Skene Ogden, John Warren Dease, Francis and Edward Ermatinger

James McMillan, James Douglas, Archibald McDonald, Alexander Roderick McLeod,

and John Work

CHIEF FACTOR DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN WEST GOES WEST

Dr. John McLoughlin set out to expand the fur trade in the Columbia Department

through the use of traveling brigades

Dr. McLoughlin left Hudson’s Bay Company’s great depot on the west coast of Hudson Bay

departed York Factory bound for his distant post on the Columbia River

to assume his position of Chief Factor of the Columbia Department

three months short of his fortieth birthday -- July 27, 1824

this was a twenty-one day head start on Field Governor George Simpson

who was also heading for the Columbia Department

Lulled by the three week lead, although he knew the pudgy governor’s reputation for speed, McLoughlin fondly supposed he could cross the Rockies

and forge far down the Western river before his superior overhauled him

it was an embarrassing mistake, and one McLoughlin probably never forgot

FIELD GOVERNOR GEORGE SIMPSON GOES TO NEW CALEDONIA DEPARTMENT

Governor Simpson hoped a ship would arrive from London bearing final instructions

but time ran out and the expedition was forced to journey west overland without orders

He set out overland for the West from York Factory on Hudson Bay -- August 16, 1824

on a personal inspection tour

three weeks after Dr. McLoughlin had been dispatched to the west

traveling by canoe, Simpson was accompanied by Chief Trader James McMillan

eight voyageurs, an Indian guide, musicians, and a personal servant

On his journey through the Northern Department of Rupert’s Land he was demoniac

he displayed boundless energy in visiting posts along the route

he drove his voyageurs mercilessly

Field Governor George Simpson’s extreme haste was justified as the Rockies had to be crossed

before the heavy snows arrived

SPEED WAS NOT SACRIFICED FOR CEREMONY

Field Governor George Simpson was majestically regal on this and all of his journeys

he was eagerly anticipated by the natives who enjoyed the spectacle of a visit by the great chief

he was feared by his employees who knew the unlimited power he held over their livelihoods

Simpson always brought buglers in his company,

followed by the indispensable personal Highland piper, Colin Grase,

who played on his bagpipes to the mile-long procession

Simpson forced his voyageurs to the limits of speed

at two o’clock every morning camp was struck

a *voyageur* carried the field governor (and, indeed, any traveling person of importance)

piggy-back to his canoe, deposited him gently in the middle,

and handed him a lighted pipe

sternman, bowman and middlemen took their places in the canoe

red-painted paddles splashed,

speed was maintained until finally at eight o’clock there was a short halt for breakfast

before once again attacking the river or lake covering the distances as quickly as possible

shortly after noon there came another pause

while the men gulped a few mouthfuls of pemmican,

Simpson’s servant, meanwhile, provided him a cold cut and a glass of wine

brigade was off again incessantly paddling until 8:00 p.m.

often covering a hundred watery miles in the eighteen-hour day

under pressure the hours of voyage were extended

and Simpson’s traveling was always under pressure

Nor was style sacrificed for speed

Field Governor (and all Chief Factors in permanent posts) dressed formally every day

one observer related, **“in a suit of black or dark blue, white shirt, collars to his ears, frock coat, velvet stock, and straps on the bottom of his trousers…black beaver hat worth forty shillings…and over his black frock…a long coat made of Royal Stuart tartan lined with scarlet.”[[178]](#footnote-178)**

As the governor’s brigade approached an important post,

a bagpiper taken along for just this purpose unlimbered his instruments

bugles answered the piper’s call, *voyageurs* struck up a melodic chant,

and antiphonal musket shots echoed between canoes and bastions

after landing, Simpson was carried ashore

then strode to the gates, preceded by his bagpiper

Considering this demonstration, the natives knew a chief of great significance had arrived

GOVERNOR SIMPSON CATCHES UP WITH CHIEF FACTOR McLOUGHLIN

Dr. John McLoughlin contentedly believed he could cross the Rocky Mountains

and travel far down the Columbia River before his superior could overtake him

While still in camp at 7:00 a.m. on September 27, 1824

long before he had reached even the Athabasca River east of the Rockies,

Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin heard the triumphant sound of Simpson’s bagpiper

It was an embarrassing mistake

sitting beside his breakfast fire McLoughlin’s mortification was complete

when the Field Governor swept up

Field Governor Simpson noted all of this dryly in the official journal which he was keeping

for the London directors

to his self-satisfied account Simpson then added his famous description

of the Columbia Department new resident manager: **“…such a figure as I should not like to meet in a dark Night in one of the bye lanes in the neighborhood of London dressed in Clothes that had once been fashionable, but now covered with a thousand patches of different Colors, his beard would do honor to the chin of a Grizzly Bear…his own herculean dimensions forming a tout ensemble that would convey a good idea of the high way men of former Days.”[[179]](#footnote-179)**

SIMPSON AND McLOUGHLIN TRAVEL TOGETHER

George Simpson made sure there were no more late starts for John McLoughlin

For the next month the combined parties labored to drive twenty-one pack horses

across Athabasca Pass -- October 1824

they conquered marshlands and quagmires

they hacked through brush to the Columbia River headwaters

Field Governor George Simpson and Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin

arrived in the Columbia Department to inspect the remote region together

Together they swept four hundred miles down the Columbia in rain, snow, and fog

to the mouth of the Spokane River

Meeting a supply brigade bound for Spokane House,

they rode sixty miles eastward over rolling hills to inspect the post

FIELD GOVERNOR SIMPSON ARRIVES AT SPOKANE HOUSE

There Simpson’s frugal sensitivities exploded with outrage

Hudson’s Bay Company traders had fallen out of the habit of living off the land

because supplies for the Columbia Department were shipped around the Horn

there was room in the ships’ holds for what the governor called “European luxuries”

in Simpson’s opinion two canoe loads of supplies should have sufficed for Spokane House,

he discovered that five or six canoes were annually delivered upriver from the ocean, **“loaded with Eatables, Drinkables, and other *Domestic Comforts.*”[[180]](#footnote-180)**

there would be no more of that

rivers teemed with fish; the soil would grow potatoes -- these were good enough for any man

JEDIDIAH SMITH ENTERS SNAKE RIVER COUNTRY

Twenty-five-year-old Jedediah Smith traveling with his seven American trappers

found themselves in Snake River country

they discovered and named Henry’s Fork River

an important branch of Columbia River

Smith ran across a party of fourteen terrified Iroquois free trappers led by “Old Pierre” Tevanitagon

in the employ of Hudson’s Bay Company who had been harassed by Snake (Shoshone) Indians

Hudson’s Bay men anticipated the return of the Snake Indians at any moment

Smith and his Americans looked to them like deliverance from their crisis

Iroquois accompanied Smith’s party which provided protection

“Old Pierre” gladly gave Captain Smith 108 skins

for needed supplies and for guarding them on their perilous journey

back to Hudson’s Bay Company Chief Trader Alexander Ross’s camp

COMMERCE AND EMPIRE OF AMERICA AND GREAT BRITAIN COLLIDE

Jedediah Smith and his seven mountain men, swaggering confidently

appeared in Alexander Ross’s camp of eighty motley trappers and sixty-four Indian children

at confluence of the Lemhi and Salmon rivers -- October 14, 1824

Smith was accompanied by “Old Pierre” Tevanitagon’s much-relieved Iroquois freemen

Smith insisted on accompanying Alexander Ross back to his base

Hudson’s Bay Company Flathead House on the Clark’s Fork of the Columbia River

Hudson’s Bay Company Chief Trader Ross suspected Smith and his fellow travelers

of using the opportunity to spy out the land

but because he had no way to relieve himself of these pesky Americans,

Ross let them tag along back to Flathead House on the Clark’s Fort River

although he had orders from London

to do everything he could to hold all Americans at bay

AMERCIANS AND BRITISH TRAVEL TOGETHER

Alexander Ross’s Snake River Brigade and Jedediah Smith’s mountain men traveled together

followed the usual British route between the Snake River Plain and Flathead House, Alexander Ross led his own and Jedediah Smith’s parties across Lemhi Pass

to the Beaverhead River and thus into territory claimed by the United States

GOVERNOR AND CHIEF FACTOR IN COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT

Additional stops farther down the Columbia River brought additional fits of temper

at Fort Okanogan Simpson found traders who, it seemed to him,

spent undue time worrying about the faithfulness of their Indian wives

and were **“not satisfied unless they have a posse of Clerks Guides Interpreters and Supernumeraries at their disposal”**[[181]](#footnote-181)

no one bothered to farm because, as the traders stated, farming was not part of the fur trade

Governor Simpson frostily noted, **“Every pursuit tending to leighten** [sic] **the Expesce** [sic] **of the Trade is a branch thereof”***[[182]](#footnote-182)*

When George Simpson arrived at Fort Walla Walla with Chief Factor McLoughlin in tow

Field Governor discovered over the past three years the traders had purchased from the Indians

several hundred horses to use for food

**“The river with a potatoe** [sic] **Garden will abundantly maintain the Post”**[[183]](#footnote-183) he barked

Field Governor and Chief Factor then pushed furiously onward

racing through the roaring gorges of the Cascades to a final disturbing surprise at Fort George

JEDIDIAH SMITH OBSERVES HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY EXPLOITS

Smith traveled with Alexander Ross’s Snake Country Brigade

Yankee trapper made many geographic observations:

•upper Green River lay in Oregon,

•Snake River Plain lay in Oregon,

•Flathead House lay on the Clark’s Fork River in Oregon

Americans believe Alexander Ross and his Hudson’s Bay Company trappers

were trespassing on American soil

under the Convention of 1818 Great Britain and the United States jointly occupied Oregon

but in reality, since John Jacob Astor’s loss of Astoria [in 1814]

British had had Oregon all to themselves

only along the coast had Americans, sea captains out of Boston, competed for furs

Snake River Country became the first disputed ground in the American advance to Oregon

GENERAL WILLIAM ASHLEY LED A CARAVAN INTO THE MOUNTAINS TO TRAP

General Ashley’s trappers traveled up the Platte River from Fort Atkinson -- late October 1824

Camp was made where the Kansas River enters the Big Blue River

Ashley sent ahead Moses “Black” Harris and Jim Beckworth to acquire more horses

at a Pawnee Village on the Republican River

although they found no horses for sale, the did discover a route

that connected the Kansas and Platte rivers (later this would be part of the Oregon Trail)

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY LEADERS ARRIVED AT FORT GEORGE (ASTORIA)

Field Governor George Simpson and Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin

these two agents of change arrived at the Pacific Ocean

also traveling with the party was Chief Trader James McMillan

Despite side trips and inspection stops, the little dynamo had led his party

over the vast distance between Hudson Bay and the Pacific

in eighty-four days -- twenty less than it had ever been done before

they reached Fort George -- November 8, 1824

governor was enraged at Fort George to find the traders there

were **“amusing themselves Boat Sailing”**[[184]](#footnote-184)

GOVERNOR GEORGE SIMPSON REFLECTED ON HIS JOURNEY

Wrote of his journey to the Columbia Department -- 1824

**“In respect to the resources of the Country as to the means of living we know them to be abundant.... The soil is fertile, the Climate Salubrious, and the Rivers are periodically visited by immense shoals of Salmon Sturgeon and other Fish and Wood Animals are numerous.”[[185]](#footnote-185)**

Hudson’s Bay Company Field Governor of the Northern Department and Columbia Department

personally remained in Columbia Department during the winter of 1824-[1825]

in all, he spent three years journeying about and investigating the land and people

under his jurisdiction

VAST CHANGES WERE IMPLEMENTED BY FIELD GOVERNOR SIMPSON

Promptly Field Governor George Simpson ordered all posts to hold services on Sundays

most of the traders paid no attention

Other changes to the Columbia Department trapping and its inhabitants were rapid and permanent

by this time, Governor Simpson knew that advancing American trappers had reached

the upper Missouri River and probability would soon cross the Continental Divide

Simpson was quick to revise the administrative operations of the Columbia Department :

•he eliminated excess personnel and wasteful practices;

•he mapped out important trapping expeditions;

•he proposed that agriculture, stock raising, and salmon fishing would supplement the fur trade

Field Governor Simpson ordered the abandonment of Fort George

he dispatched a party to the Fraser River under Former Fort George Chief Factor James McMillan

to locate a new site for the company’s principal Western depot

it was a strange decision

although Simpson had never seen the northern river

and must have known of Simon Fraser’s ordeal in its canyons,

he nonetheless blandly described it to the London directors as **“formed by nature as the grand communication with all our Establishments on this side of the mountains”[[186]](#footnote-186)**

Governor George Simpson recommended that Hudson’s Bay Company

go ahead with the establishment of a new trading post on the lower Fraser River

to be named in honor of Thomas Langley, a Company director

Meanwhile he relegated Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin,

who would ultimately be responsible for running the Fraser River post,

to locating a subsidiary fort somewhere along the north bank of the Columbia

NATIVE REACTION TO THE CHANGES

Hudson’s Bay Company’s arrival in the Columbia Department resulted in a season of great gloom

Indians feared the days of the French-Canadian trappers were gone

they had always a favorite with the people

CHIEF TRADER JAMES McMILLAN LEADS AN EXPEDITION NORTH

Former Fort George Chief Factor James McMillan

led a Hudson’s Bay Company initial exploratory party -- late fall, 1824

•he was to report on the possibility of trading with the natives;

•he was to reconnoiter the never exploited Lower Fraser River region

tap the fur trading potential of Fraser Valley and eastern coast of Vancouver Island;

•he was to reconnoiter a route from the mouth of the Columbia River to the east;

•he also was to provide a second fort with good farmland

McMillan traveled with forty-two men including six Kanakas (Hawaiians)

interior route they took was a grueling course by canoe and portage

from the Columbia River, up the Cowlitz River, cross a short portage,

then downstream to Puget Sound

thus they avoided winter conditions on the Pacific Ocean

They reached the site McMillan recommended for a new fort -- Fort Langley

by canoeing up the Nicomekl River

and portaging to a small river flowing into the Fraser River

They found the Fraser River was teeming with salmon and sturgeon

and was surrounded by vast virgin forests

(However, travel conditions were so difficult that the task of building the post

would not be completed for three years)

LOCATON OF A NEW TEMPORARY POST ON THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Only a few days after the arrival at Fort George

Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin and his predecessor Alexander Kennedy

undertook the job of finding a location for a small fort North of the Columbia River

Dr. McLoughlin found a beautiful meadow surrounded by huge evergreen trees

a hundred miles up the Columbia River from Fort George

and a half dozen miles above the confluence with the Willamette River

where it would be safe from the rivalry between United States and Great Britain

This chosen site offered significant advantages over the Astoria location:

•fertile soil and genial, humid climate;

•plenty of level, fertile terrain for trading posts, farms, and houses for employees;

•it was accessible for ships from England

which could ascend from the ocean to unload their merchandise

and take on their cargoes of precious furs collected from outposts;

•it provided a natural terminus for both ocean and inland voyages

was the starting point for parties going up the Willamette Valley

or overland to Puget Sound

Field Governor George Simpson approved of the location of the new post

WILLIAM CANNING (aka: WILLIAM CANNON) JOINS HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY

Former Astorian who had journeyed West as an Astorian with Wilson Price Hunt

next joined with North West Company when they took over fur trapping in the Pacific Northwest

he served at Willamette Post -- [1814]

Now he became an employee of Hudson’s Bay Company -- 1824-[1838]

DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGE

American Albert Gallatin was sent to London to resume negotiations on the international boundary

British position was stronger than ever

George Canning served as head of the British Cabinet

Hudson’s Bay Company had absorbed the North West Company

Governor George Simpson and Dr. John McLoughlin

were the actual rulers of the Columbia Department

Oregon must be divided between the British and the Americans

British proposed 49º North from Rocky Mountains to the Columbia River

then along the center of the Columbia River’s course to its mouth

British were willing to concede giving the United States

ports on the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the upper Columbia River

This proposal became known as Canning’s Doctrine -- 1824

Canning’s proposal was rejected by the American’s Albert Gallatin

Joint Occupation was extended

both sides reserved the right to withdraw from the compact on a year’s notice

gave Americans time to occupy the region with settlers

and strengthen its claim

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY ATTEMPTS TO STOP AMERICAN EXPANSION

British Company hoped to remove the incentive

for Americans to explore, exploit, and potentially claim the region

It was decided to trap out the entire watershed of the Snake River (Idaho and Montana)

as they were the last beavers then within legal reach of American trappers

to render it a “fur desert” without a single beaver remaining in it

so that it would become unattractive to the American trappers and traders

coming from St. Louis

thus Americans would not be tempted to cross the Snake River region

for the Columbia River and beyond

Americans would remain confined in the Rocky Mountains on United States soil

SIMPSON REORGANIZED THE SNAKE RIVER COUNTRY EXPEDITION

Field Governor Simpson bestowed special attention on the Snake River Country Expedition

begun by the Nor’Westers, as this annual hunt in the Snake drainage struck Simpson

as being poorly conducted by Alexander Ross

Simpson recognized that the only truly disputed part of Oregon

lay between the forty-ninth parallel and the Columbia River,

and this region he wished to protect against American intrusion

Simpson hoped to remove as many incentives to American trappers as possible

for Americans to explore, exploit, and potentially claim the region

His best defense was a “beaver-free buffer zone”south and east of the Columbia River

this made political sense -- by stripping the Snake country of beaver

the incentive for Americans to venture west of the Continental Divide was gone

it also made commercial sense -- profiting from every beaver that could be harvested

as Simpson believed this region may surely fall to the Americans anyway

Simpson was determined to enhance the defensive role of the Columbia region

by reshaping the effort of the Snake River Country Expedition

PETER SKENE OGDEN RECEIVES A NEW ASSIGNMENT

Field Governor George Simpson named another of the giant figures of Western history

barrel-chested, domineering, wild-humored Peter Skene Ogden to replace Alexander Ross

Ogden was notoriously capable of physically handling any would-be troublemaker

in the entire Hudson’s Bay Company  
 Simpson had extracted a payment from Peter Skene Ogden for earlier resurrecting his career

Ogden was sent to Flathead House by Governor Simpson

where he was to replace the still absent Alexander Ross

as Chief Trader of the Snake River Brigade -- November 1824

he would be the supervisor responsible for “trapping out” the Snake River Country

putting Ogden in control gave the expedition new purpose

CHIEF TRADER ALEXANDER ROSS AND THE SNAKE RIVER BRIGADE RETURNS

Ross leading his Snake River Brigade and Jedediah Smith and his seven American mountain men

continued over the Continental Divide to the head of the Bitterroot River

down that river to Clark’s Fork River to Flathead House

Hudson’s Bay Company’s Peter Skene Ogden

was waiting for Ross at Flathead House -- late November 1824

Field Governor George Simpson ordered all Hudson’s Bay Company Iroquois employees

be exiled from the Columbia River to eastern Canada

Chief Trader Alexander Ross, who had first come to the Northwest with the Astorians,

was demoted and unceremoniously and summarily relieved of his command

of the Snake River Brigade by order of Field Governor George Simpson

even though Ross had led the Snake River Brigade on a successful venture

bringing back 5,000 beaver skins to Hudson’s Bay Company’s Flathead House -- 1824

Ross’s inability to remove the American threat to British trapping

finished his career on the Columbia River

PETER SKENE OGDEN TAKES COMMAND OF THE SNAKE RIVER BRIGADE

He initiated the changes Governor Simpson envisioned

oddly, the effort to “trap out” the Snake River Country

resulted in some conservation of the beaver resource:

•as Company men swarmed through the Snake River area,

older beaver trapping regions were given a rest

and time to replenish the stock of animals

•many Americans headed north to get their share of pelts

before the beaver were gone with the same result

CHIEF TRADER PETER SKENE OGDEN -- BIOGRAPHY

Son a colonial loyalist originally from New York

who moved to Quebec to become an admiralty court judge

At age sixteen or seventeen [1811 or so]

Ogden had quit the law books thrust on him by his father

taking up a life of adventure

he entered the employ of the North West Company as a clerk

he was respected by Indians who referred to him as the “fat trader”

he was one of the ablest fur traders

he was man of boundless energy and endurance

North West Company assigned him to the factory at Ile a la Crosse

he and another clerk quickly created mayhem

by assaulting a Hudson’s Bay Company trader inside his own post

then strutting away untouched by the victim’s own astonished *voyageurs*

When the clash between the companies reached open warfare

scrappy veteran of the bitter wars between the North West Company and Hudson’s Bay Company

Ogden captured the Bay Company’s Ile a la Crosse fort

used it for imprisoning twenty men, more than a hundred women and children, and “dogs innumerable”

this stroke of law defiance was too much even for the Canadian wilderness

authorities moved in and Ogden was ordered to flee across the mountains

to Fort George

when the firms merged, the Hudson’s Bay Company directors fired Ogden

Field Governor George Simpson reinstated Ogden as Chief Trader -- [1823]

barrel-chested Ogden was one of the ablest fur traders

quickly he became one of the giant figures of Western history

Astorian Clerk, Ross Coxe, made eight expeditions into the Upper Columbia area

he described Ogden in his book *Adventures on the Columbia River*

**“humorous, honest, eccentric, law-defying”**

who could **“out-brawl, outswear, and outjest any of his subordinates”**

PETER SKENE OGDEN LEADS THE SNAKE RIVER EXPEDITION

Chief Trader took charge of the sixty trappers of Alexander Ross’ former command

In Flathead Country the “Fat Trader” successfully recruited fifteen more trappers

bringing his Hudson’s Bay Company expedition to a total of seventy-five people

sixty trappers, mostly half-breeds, of Alexander Ross’ former command

twenty-five steady servants (laborers) and thirty-five unreliable freemen

many of them Iroquois traveling with their fifteen women and children

these erratic freemen outnumbered his more stable companions four to one

Ogden’s Snake Country Brigade was fully equipped

with twenty-five tepees, eighty guns, 364 beaver traps and 372 horses

This formidable Snake River Brigade left Flathead House on the Clark Fork River headed south

bound for the Snake River Country -- December 20, 1824

For protection through Blackfoot country, Jedediah Smith and his seven comrades

followed Ogden’s Hudson’s Bay Company Snake River Country Expedition

OGDEN AND JEDIDIAH SMITH TRAVEL TOGETHER

British and American expedition moved eastward on their journey toward the Snake River

Like his predecessors before him,

Ogden took a shortcut eastward to the Missoula and Bitterroot rivers

crossing a bulge of the Continental Divide through American territory

to the headwaters of the Missouri River and onto American soil

here Ogden let his restless freemen trap

neither Jedediah Smith nor his American employees protested

American Jedediah Strong Smith and his seven mountain men

and Peter Skene Ogden’s crew of seventy-five Hudson’s Bay Company men

continued to travel with the Ogden’s Hudson’s Bay Company Snake River Brigade

in unison, they explored the Missoula and Bitterroot river regions

HUDSON’S BAY SPREADS RUMORS TO THE INDIANS

When Jedediah Smith and his Mountain Men exited an area

Hudson’s Bay Company returned to paying the former lower prices to the Indians

Virulent outbreak of influenza struck the Columbia River area

a strong suspicion was planted in the minds of the Indians

that the river was poisoned by Americans

story persisted with the help of Hudson’s Bay men

CHIEF TRADER ALEXANDER ROSS RETIRES

Stripped of his authority and title of Chief Trader by Field Governor George Simpson

after his successful venture in Snake Country

Alexander Ross retired and left Hudson’s Bay Company’s Flathead House -- 1824

Field Governor Simpson took him back to Red River Colony (Winnipeg, Manitoba)

where he took up farming

where Hudson’s Bay Company gave him a one hundred acre land grant

he became a schoolteacher, and later, superintendent of schools

pursued his writing interest, and he wrote*:*

*•Adventures of the First Settlers on the Oregon or Columbia River* [1849]

•*The Fur Hunters of the Far West* [1855]

•*The Red River Settlement* [1856]

•also his letters and journal have been published

his books are the foundation on which much of our knowledge of the early Northwest rests

Alexander Ross passed away [1856]

ADDITIONAL HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY BRIGADES SENT OUT

Trapping brigades continued to work in the most remote areas

Snake River Brigade trapped to the east of the Cascade Mountains

California Brigade worked in the Willamette Valley, the Umpqua watershed ,

and over the Siskiyou Mountains into northern California

Without waiting for Peter Skene Ogden to return with his Snake River Brigade

Chief Factor John McLoughlin dispatched another brigade to the Snake River Country

under Archibald McDonald and Thomas McKay

additional brigades also were sent into the filed -- 1825

led by John McLeod, William Connelly, John Work and others

These trapping efforts regularly penetrated the country

of the Flathead, Cayuse, Nez Perce, and Blackfoot Indians

Such journeys were invariably dangerous

even though the company took every precaution to prevent Indian attack

Field Governor George Simpson even went so far as to suggest to Dr. McLoughlin

that John Work would do well to marry a Cayuse woman as a good will gesture

expenses to be paid by the Hudson’s Bay Company

hazards of the adventures are indicated in a letter John Work wrote

to his friend Edward Ermatinger: **“I am happy in being able to inform you that I enjoy good health, and am yet blessed with the possession of my scalp which is rather more than I had reason to expect.”[[187]](#footnote-187)**

PETER SKENE OGDEN’S SNAKE RIVER COUNTRY BRIGADE

Continued to investigate and trap the Missoula and Bitterroot rivers region

with his fifty-two Hudson’s Bay Company men of the Snake River Country Expedition

accompanied by Jedediah Strong Smith and his seven mountain men

Jedediah Smith began coaxing Ogden's men over to the General Ashley payroll

promising higher prices for their furs

ANGLO-RUSSIAN CONVENTION

Great Britain and Russia signed a treaty -- February 28, 1825

Russian’s claim was restricted to Russian America (Alaska)

Convention defined the boundary of this land as it is today

fixed the southern boundary line at 54º 40’ North

LITTLE FEDERAL INTEREST IN PACIFIC NORTHWEST BEYOND THE BOUNDARY ISSUE

Senator Thomas Hart Benton (later a champion of Pacific Northwest ) wrote -- 1825: **“The ridge of the Rocky Mountains may be named as a convenient, natural, and everlasting boundary. Along this ridge the western limit of the Republic should be drawn, and the statue of the fabled god Terminus should be erected on its highest peak, never to be thrown down.”[[188]](#footnote-188)**

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY CREATES COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT

Hudson’s Bay Company carved Columbia Department out of the Northern Department -- 1825

Columbia Department was composed of land drained by the Columbia River

As his tour of the Columbia Department was coming to an end,

Field Governor Simpson had put in place Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin

to carry out all business policies sent from London and York Factory

in the likely event existing policy did not cover a situation he was to invent his own

George Simpson was very explicit:

•administer each department and oversee all operations:

see to the writing of daily, weekly, monthly, and annual reports

oversee all operations

develop the long-neglected coastal trade

open business, if possible, with the Russians

eliminate fur-bearing animals between the Columbia River and United States territory

using the Snake River Brigade

send other brigades south toward California

and keep those expenses down

•oversee construction of new forts, supervise personnel and Indian trade: finish building the new post on the Fraser River

organize and control all trade and trapping expeditions

appoint traders to each area and see to their outfitting

plant gardens at all posts

•serve as unofficial representative of the British Empire:

stop all trade in alcohol

protect British citizens, provide law and order

Chief Factor McLoughlin governed Indians and half-civilized traders in the absence of laws

he proved to be just and wise

he forbade the sale of liquor to the natives

he married a Cree Indian woman

widow of Alexander McKay who had been lost on the *Tonquin*

together they lived a long and contented married life

Indians accepted John McLoughlin’s word as truth

he always kept his promises -- whether to reward or punish

OTHER HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY FORTS AND POSTS

Two former North West Company posts were abandoned:

•Fort George served as Hudson’s Bay Company headquarters in the Columbia Department

Convention of 1818 left some doubt that British could maintain control

of land south of the Columbia River

post was rebuilt on a smaller scale after fire destroyed the original fort

but it really was not in a suitable location -- could be attacked by sea

it was allowed to operate only on a very small scale and quickly fell into disrepair

•Rocky Mountain House was abandoned

Hudson’s Bay’s Action House took the name of Rocky Mountain House

However, many former North West Company trading posts were retained:

•Fort Hall and Fort Boise also served the Snake River region;

•Flathead House continued as a temporary post and supply point

into Snake River and Blackfoot Country;

•Fort Okanogan continued to operate where the Okanogan River entered the Columbia;

•Fort St. James on Stuart Lake

was operated by Chief Clerk Pierre Chrysologue Pambrun -- 1825;

•Fort Langley (after construction was completed) serviced the Fraser River region;

•Kootenai House and several other posts were slated for thorough revamping;

In addition to forts, smaller posts, McLeod, Fraser, Kamloops, Kootenai House, and Wallace House,

were also kept in operation manned by only one or two officers

and a small contingent of laborers (called servants by Hudson’s Bay Company)

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY’S FORT VANCOUVER

Field Governor George Simpson envisioned the permanent Hudson’s Bay Company’s headquarters

would eventually be located to the north on the Fraser River

Fort Vancouver replaced Fort George, at least temporarily, as the regional headquarters

would serve as Hudson’s Bay Company’s and Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin’s

headquarters in the Pacific Northwest

while Fort Langley was under construction on the Fraser River

Removal of Company headquarters to Vancouver was arranged

while Field Governor George Simpson was with Dr. McLoughlin at Fort George

as soon as enough bark roofs had been placed to provide adequate shelter at Fort Vancouver,

Fort George’s movable goods were ferried upstream

including thirty-one head of Spanish cattle and seventeen hogs

riding a specially constructed barge

although it replaced Fort George, Fort Vancouver was smaller -- but it grew steadily

Field Governor Simpson had chosen the post’s name, Fort Vancouver, carefully

as a pointed reminder to the Unites States

that the first man to penetrate this far up the river

had been Lieutenant Commander William R. Broughton,

exploring under orders from Captain George Vancouver

Field Governor Simpson, commander of Hudson’s Bay Company operations in Columbia Department personally christened the new fort -- sunrise on March 19, 1825

Governor noted in his journal: **“At Sun rise mustered all the people to hoist the Flag Staff of the new Establishment and in presence of the Gentlemen, Servants, Chiefs & Indians I Baptized it by breaking a Bottle of Rum on the Flag Staff and repeating the following words in a loud voice, ‘In behalf of the Honorable Hudsons Bay Company I hereby name this Establishment *Fort Vancouver* God Save King George the 4th** **with three cheers. Gave a couple of Drams to the people and Indians on the occasion. The object of naming it after that distinguished navigator is to identify our claim to the Soil and Trade with his discovery of the River and Coast on behalf of G’ Britain. If the HonorableCommittee however do not approve the Name it can be altered. ”[[189]](#footnote-189)**

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY BUILDS FORT VANCOUVER

There, on a swell of land inconveniently far from the Columbia River

but safely beyond reach of floodwaters,

they began work on a small stockade to replace Fort George -- 1825

Originally Fort Vancouver was smaller than Fort George

secondary even to the proposed new post on the Fraser River

No one bothered to record a description of the temporary fort

probably because it was thought to be of little merit

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY BRIGADE ROUTE

Brigades were organized to transport supplies -- 1825

from main depots such as Fort George to outlaying posts

from these interior posts the trading expeditions set forth and returned

Brigades also conveyed bales of furs back from the outposts

to the main depots for storage and final shipment to London

Most vital brigade trail had been established by the North West Company

it was a water route that connected Fort St. James headquarters on Stuart Lake to Fort Alexandria

from Fort Alexandria to Fort Okanogan the route was overland trail

from Okanogan to Fort George the route was the Columbia River

this route is still referred to as the Hudson’s Bay Brigade Trail

NUMBERS OF PEOPLE IN A HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY BRIGADE VARIED

Very early spring was the time to leave Fort Vancouver

From fifty to four hundred journeyed east

usually with as many horses as people

Certain people were always present in the brigade

person running the brigade was the Chief Trader,

but sometimes the Chief Factor was personally in charge

Out ahead were the hunters in search of food and the next camp site

Next came the person in charge followed by the indispensable piper

who played on his bagpipes to the mile-long procession

as a mark of distinction, the leader of the brigade was dressed in a broadcloth suit

white shirt with high collar, and a high beaver hat

leader carried a fire bag containing his flint and steel, touchwood, and tobacco

Then there were the hunters, trappers, traders, clerks, storekeepers,

and assorted Indians, whole families of them, whose job it was to care for the horses, to handle provisions, trading goods and other essential equipment

A packer accompanied each animal, with a carefully loaded pack on each animal

each pack held carefully in place by straps around the horse’s belly

made tight with the diamond hitch

Trudging along behind were the families of the packers

Malcom McLeod, a veteran company man wrote a description: **“A beautiful sight was that horse brigade, with no broken hocks in the train, but every animal in his full beauty of form and colour, and all so tractable -- more tractable than anything I ever knew in civilized life.”[[190]](#footnote-190)**

Catch was dispatched to Fort Vancouver by regularly scheduled canoe, boat, and horse brigades

FIELD GOVERNOR GEORGE SIMPSON LEAVES FORT VANCOUVER

His immediate task of organizing Columbia and New Caledonia districts for Hudson’s Bay Company

was accomplished

a new headquarters post was under construction

outposts had been reorganized or closed

Peter Skene Ogden had been placed in command of the Snake River Brigade

Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin had been placed in his position and given orders

With a boom of salutes ringing in his ears, Governor Simpson waved farewell and headed east

as he set out on the return trip across the Rocky Mountains to York Factory -- March 20, 1825

as Simpson noted: “**At 9 O’clock** a.m. **took leave of our Friend the D’** [Dr. McLoughlin]**, embarked and continued our Voyage. Put up for the night about 20 miles below the Cascade Portage.”[[191]](#footnote-191)**

Governor Simpson took with him several dozen pensioned *voyageurs* pared from the pay rolls

and Alexander Ross to be transplanted at the Red River colony

On the journey up the Columbia River Simpson conducted a personal inspection tour

of Company posts along the Columbia River stopping at

Fort Walla Walla , Fort Okanogan, and Spokane House

he decided that Spokane House on the Spokane River

was too expensive and too isolated to maintain any longer

FORT COLVILLE BUILT TO REPLACE SPOKANE HOUSE

Spokane House was to be abandoned, or rather replaced

Field Governor Simpson insisted that the operation be moved to Kettle Falls

seventy-five miles further north

he selected the more economical site himself

near the foaming ledges of Kettle Falls on the Columbia (near present Marcus, Washington)

where agricultural possibilities promised to make it self supporting

Simpson personally stepped off the boundaries of a potato garden

Field Governor Simpson ordered a new post built

and named the post Fort Colville after his benefactor on the Board of Directors, Andrew Colville

Dr. McLoughlin did not approve of the site, but there was no alternative to the Governor’s choice

once Field Governor George Simpson had made up his mind

SPOKANE HOUSE CLOSED AND FORT COLVILL;E CONSTRUCTED

John Work was selected to dismantle Spokane House

and to supervise construction of the first small structure located just above Kettle Falls

closing scene at Spokane House as a Company post was noted -- March 21, 1825

Original Fort Colville was an enclosure 208 feet square with a stockade fourteen feet high

there was only one bastion

some of the houses were built outside of the post

(eventually, a large part of the stockade was taken down

and several buildings were subsequently added to Fort Colville)

MISSIONARY WORK OF HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY

So as to not ignore the demands of the Royal License provided to Hudson’s Bay Company

and to assure that **“religious instruction and moral improvement of the Indians”** be achieved

Field Governor Simpson sent the sons of two chiefs to Canadian missionaries for an education

Spokane Indian Nicholas (Spokane) Garry

Flathead Indian J.H. (Kootenai) Pelly

Spokane Garry and Kootenai Pelly (both about age fourteen)

were taken from a Spokane Indian village -- 1825

they began their Christian education in the Red River Colony (Winnipeg, Manitoba)

where they studied for five years -- 1825-[1829]

at the Northwest Mission of the Church of England

where they learned English and absorbed the teachings of the Church of England

COASTAL INDIANS DEFEND THEMSELVES FROM ATTACK[[192]](#footnote-192)

Cowichan Indians of Vancouver Island lived very near (today’s Victoria) and were formidable

For hundreds and perhaps thousands of years, Olympic Peninsula and Puget Sound natives

lived in fear of attacking Indians from the north (Queen Charlotte Islands and Vancouver Island)

hundreds of invaders paddled their huge war canoes as they conducted raids

to acquire slaves to serve them and to be traded

sight of dozens of large canoes was enough to send the Suquamish, S'Kallam, Duwamish,

Nisqually and other tribes fleeing into the forest

(As later reported by Hudson’s Bay Company Factor Dr. William Fraser Tolmie)

Suquamish Chief Kitsap organized various villagers along Puget Sound who were weary of raids

into the largest intertribal coalition which the Puget Sound had ever seen

they launched as many as 200 canoes and paddled to Vancouver Island

to attack the Cowichans -- 1825

Kitsap’s forces methodically surrounded every Cowichan camp they could find

but the males of military age were missing

on Kitsap’s orders, all of the old people were killed

young women and children were taken captive

Kitsap’s flotilla crossed the Straits of Juan de Fuca to Dungeness Spit in a fog

nearing shore they heard Indians singing war songs

when the fog lifted Kitsap discovered the Cowichans celebrating a successful raid

Kitsap landed his forces on Dungeness Spit

in full view of the Cowichans, he had his captives killed

Cowichans returned the sentiment by killing their captives

both sides then joined battle and Chief Kitsap carried the day

he established himself as the most powerful chief on Puget Sound

FIELD GOVERNOR GEORGE SIMPSON CONTINUES EAST

Satisfied that the Columbia Department would now function efficiently,

Simpson resumed his headlong course back to York Factory

He ran the legs off his companions

when the entire group finally collapsed about him out on the Canadian central prairie,

he galloped on alone through the night to the next fort

GENERAL ASHLEY AGAIN CARRIES SUPPLIES INTO THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Ashley was instrumental in establishing the “rendezvous” system [1824]

rendezvous is a French word meaning “appointed place of meeting”

where trappers might exchange their season’s catch of pelts for supplies

Ashley led a caravan on a three month excursion

up the Platte River from Fort Atkinson bound for Chouteau's Landing (Kansas City)

on the way to supply fur traders in the Green River region

he guided wagon loads of goods destined for a Rendezvous of trappers in the field

accompanied by Tom Fitzpatrick, William Campbell and William L. “Billy” Sublette

Ashley maintained a diary of his experiences on this trip -- beginning March 25, 1825

after he had reached the Platte River just east of the Continental Divide

General William Ashley sent Tom Fitzpatrick to scout a route

from the Platte River to the Green River -- 1825

(that route would later become part of the Oregon Trail)

Ashley and his caravan followed Fitzpatrick’s route

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY FARMING

Goods which could not be manufactured at each outpost, such as flour and trade goods,

would be provided by the Company

Hudson’s Bay Company did not provide for agricultural activities -- until 1825

Dr. McLoughlin, at the prodding of Governor Simpson, saw the importance of this change

both believed each trader should grow enough food to meet his needs and keep a few cattle

Simpson in a letter to John Work stated, **“…you will be so good as to take care of …seed *not ate* as next spring I expect that from 30 to 40 Bushels will be planted.”[[193]](#footnote-193)**

FORT VANCOUVER GROWS

Clearings were made and some wheat was grown -- 1825

this was the third effort at agriculture in the Pacific Northwest:

•Daniel Harmon had planted a garden at Fort St. James -- [1811]

first white man in to farm in British Columbia

•Astorians had planted a few potatoes

which grew into the first garden south of the Columbia River --[1811]

Location of Fort Vancouver took on appearance of a thriving farming community

grist mill to grind wheat, oats, and barley

Hawaiian Islands soon became a major market for flour as well as lumber and fish

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY OVERLAND SUPPLY BRIGADE ROUTE

Hudson’s Bay Company was the only source of imported supplies, manufactured goods, trade, transport, and manpower west of the American fur trade at Green River

from York Factory on Hudson Bay’s western shore through Manitoba

to the crest of the Rockies at the head of the Columbia River

Water used as much as possible along the 1000 miles from Boat Encampment to Fort Vancouver

Brigades braved most rapids using marvelous skill and general good luck

but portages by voyageurs were sometime necessary

on long portages and across the mountains, horses were used

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY SUPPLY BRIGADE BOATS

Canoes were obtained from the Indians

hollowed from magnificent cedar trees which grew along the banks of rivers

sometimes fifty or sixty feet long with prow carved in fantastic, beautiful fashion

would hold from six to twenty people from half a ton to two or three tons of cargo

yet they were so light two men could carry one of medium size

four men handle any size

Bateau were boats built very high and broad -- unloaded it seemed to rest atop the water

propelled with oars and steered with paddles

usually thirty feel long and five feet wide

light draft and double ended -- these were more steady than canoes

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY SHIP *WILLIAM AND ANN* ARRIVED AT FORT GEORGE

Hudson’s Bay Company supply brig *William and Ann* under the command of Captain Henry Hanwell

arrived at arrived at Cape Disappointment, at the mouth of the Columbia River -- April 9, 1825

from London after a stop in the Galapagos Islands of South America

anchored near Fort George

In addition to the usual supplies she also carried two naturalists, David Douglas, and Dr. John Scouler

Douglas, a botanist of Scottish descent, had been sent to collect plants and seeds

for the Royal Horticultural Society

Scouler had signed on as a surgeon but he hoped to make a collection of plants and animals

during the long voyage to the Hudson’s Bay post

Together the two naturalists made the first botanical collections on record for the Galapagos

sadly much of it was damaged by humidity in transport to England

NATURALIST DAVID DOUGLAS ARRIVED AT FORT VACOUVER

No other botanical explorer in western North America is more famous that David Douglas

after attending school for only a few years,

he began his botanical career at age eleven at an English garden estate

for the next seven years he worked under the strict supervision of the head gardener

who disapproved of formal education

When he completed his apprenticeship, he moved to another estate

where he tended a huge variety of indoor and outdoor plants

he also had access to the estate’s botany library

David Douglas was accepted as a Fellow of the British Geological and Zoological Societies

he visited the United States where he made important botanical connections

in New York he met John Torrey who was rapidly becoming the foremost

botanist in America

Later he encountered Thomas Nuttall in Philadelphia

working together, the two men sought out some of the rarer plants near the city

Douglas gathered seeds for his sponsor, the Royal Horticultural Society

while the results were minimal at best,

still the Society was impressed with the quality of the material sent to London

Hudson’s Bay Company was willing to sponsor a collector

for a two year visit to the Pacific Northwest to gather specimens along the Columbia River

David Douglas was the immediate choice to collect plants for use in English landscapes

and herb specimens to enhance understanding of botany

Douglas received passage on Hudson’s Bay Company’s *William and Ann* -- 1824-1825

this was to be his first (of two trips) West

He introduced Pacific Northwest botanical specimens to the scientific world

including more than fifty species of trees previously unknown

such as Douglas Fir named in his honor (though it is a sugar pine)

and the Sugar Pine which he identified correctly

also more than one hundred species of shrubs, ferns, and other plants

he was given the name “Grass Man” by the Indians

David Douglas first used the name Cascade Mountains or Cascade Range of Mountains

Lewis and Clark called this range the “Western Mountains”

DAVID DOUGLAS GOES EXPLORING

Dr. John McLoughlin took Douglas upriver to Fort Vancouver which Douglas made his base

McLoughlin agreed to let Douglas accompany any trading or trapping expeditions

for the purpose of collecting specimens

Douglas was ardent in his assignment -- April 1825

he was scarcely ashore before he began to explore the vast region mostly on foot

to collect botanical specimens

Sometimes he traveled with a guide -- sometimes he would make camp with the natives

walking or traveling by canoe, he lived in the “rough”

all the time keeping a diary and making detailed notes about each of his discoveries

One of the first plants Douglas noted was the huge evergreen his name became popularly attached to the Pseudotsuga menziesii --Douglas Fir tree (that he later introduced into England)

(Scottish physician and naturalist Archibald Menzies previously discovered the tree [in 1791]

at Nootka Sound Vancouver Island, British Columbia on George Vancouver’s expedition

which had continued the work begun by James Cook)

Douglas was amazed by its size and uniformity

and he noted that it would be a boon to the timber industry

(In less than six months he would travel more than 2,000 miles and collect499 species of plants)

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY COASTAL SHIPPING IMPLEMENTED

Hudson’s Bay Company directors and Field Governor George Simpson issued orders

coastal trade was to be conducted, in part, to make a profit for the company

and, in part, to drive off foreign competition

but they did not place the Maritime Department under Dr. McLoughlin’s sole supervision

maritime trade between the Columbia Department and London

would be under his jurisdiction along with both the Spanish and Russian trade

however, coastal trade with the Indians was placed in the hands of the inept personnel

who commanded the department and the trading ships

Dr. McLoughlin received instructions to assign the recently arrived supply ship *William and Ann,*

then anchored at Fort George, to the coastal trade

although not directly in charge of shipping, Chief Factor John McLoughlin lost only a little time

in putting Governor Simpson’s maritime plan into action -- 1825

*WILLIAM AND ANN* BEGINS THE COASTAL TRADE

Hudson’s Bay Company became engaged in the coastal trade when the *William and Ann* sailed north to Observatory Inlet along the northern Canadian Pacific coast on a reconnaissance voyage

*William and Ann*’s captain, Henry Hanwell, was methodical, incompetent, negligent and lazy

at least in the eyes of Chief Factor Dr. McLoughlin

Dr. McLoughlin did not fully support the Maritime Depart

he favored a system of permanent trading posts stretching to Alaska rather than coastal trade

COMPETITORS TO HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY

Were of two nationalities -- Russians and Americans

*William and Ann* met an American ship, *Owyhee*, which also was engaged in coastal trade

*Owyhee* posed a new kind of threat to the British operation

Americans wanted, not sea otters as previous trading ships had sought,

but rather trade with the coastal Indians for beaver pelts

received through trade with interior natives

GENERAL WILLIAM ASHLEY’S CARAVAN REACHES THE GREEN RIVER

General Ashley and Tom Fitzpatrick reestablished contact on the Green River

Ashley placed Tom Fitzpatrick in charge of some forty men

they trapped in the Green River valley that summer

Ashley's diary detailed his trip down the Green River in bullboats

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT EFFORT TO WRITE TREATIES WITH THE INDIANS

After a delay of several months, Indian Treaty Commissioners

General Henry Atkinson and Indian Agent Benjamin O’Fallon

set out from Fort Atkinson up the Missouri River -- May 1825

accompanied by an escort of nearly five hundred soldiers

Emissaries negotiated their way from tribe to tribe up the Missouri River impressing the natives with their colorful military displays,

lavishing on each Indian leader an array of presents,

and concluding a treaty of peace and friendship with each band

all, even the lately belligerent Arikara, partook in the signings and the presents

Each of the treaties was the same:

•Indians acknowledged the supremacy of the American Great Father

and his power to regulate all trade and interaction

•Indians promised to protect American traders

and turn over all foreign traders to American officials

•treaty provisions dealt only with the regulation of trade and redress of Indian grievances

none addressed hunting or trapping on Indian land

Concluding treaties with Poncas, Sioux, Cheyennes, Arikara, Hidatsas, and Mandans, expedition next proceeded to the mouth of the Yellowstone River

and even beyond in hopes of bringing Blackfoot, Assiniboines, and Crows to the table

only the Crows could be coaxed in

and the council with their chiefs almost ended in battle

the interpreter at this event was the notorious Edward Rose

LOCATION OF THE SECOND RENDEZVOUS IS ANNOUNCED

General William H. Ashley with twenty-five men

proceeded with bull boats down the Green River to the mouth

of what he named “Randavouze [sic] Creek” -- April 29, 1825

(later, for some reason, it was given the name Henry’s Fork)

he announced the first Rendezvous site **“at the mouth of the last stream entering the Green River from the west before it disappeared into the canyons of the Uinta Mountains”[[194]](#footnote-194)**

GENERAL ASHLEY CHANGES LOCATIONS

Ashley discovered an even better site twenty miles up Randavouze Creek -- May 3, 1825

in a broad valley lush with grass, cottonwood groves, and sparkling water,

with the Uinta Mountains rising abruptly on the south

in territory belonging to Mexico (today’s Wyoming)

**(**just north of the Utah-Wyoming border near the present town of McKinnon, Wyoming

PETER SKENE OGDEN’S SNAKE RIVER COUNTRY BRIGADE LOSES EMPLOYEES

Jedediah Strong Smith and his seven Ashley-Henry Combine trappers

continued to travel south with Hudson’s Bay Company’s Snake River Brigade

until they reached the Bear River (Idaho-Wyoming-Utah)

Smith almost came into direct conflict with the Hudson’s Bay Company brigade -- May 1825

Smith induced twenty-three of Ogden’s men, mostly Iroquois, to desert

natives transferred their allegiance and packs of furs over to the Americans

Ogden continued to investigate and trap the Missoula and Bitterroot river basins

with the two dozen or so men remaining with him including Joseph Portneuf

*WILLIAM AND ANN* SAILED NORTH

Hudson’s Bay Company brig entered Puget Sound through the strait of Juan de Fuca at the mouth of the Fraser River she took on a return cargo --1825

(before sailing for London [October] arriving safely there [April 1826])

PETER SKENE OGDEN’S SNAKE RIVER BRIGADE RECEIVES REINFORCEMENTS

Ogden’s fifty-two Hudson’s Bay Company employees

continued to be accompanied by Jedediah Smith and seven Ashley-Henry Combine men

together they investigated and trapped the most remote Snake River areas

as Smith continued to entice Odgen’s Snake River Brigade members to change companies

Ogden was joined en route

by Archibald McDonald and Thomas McKay and their Hudson’s Bay Company Expedition

bringing the total count of Hudson’s Bay Company men to seventy-five

Leaving the Salmon and Snake river area, united party of Hudson’s Bay Company

and Ashley-Henry Combine Mountain Men all started south together

Jedediah Smith kept up the pressure to change companies on the Ogden’s Freemen

PETER SKENE OGDEN LOST MOST OF HIS MEN TO JEDIDIAH SMITH

Chief Trader Ogden, through desertions of all types,

lost eighty men, women, and children -- mostly Iroquois

eventually Peter Skene Ogden had only fifteen men remaining

Deserters went over to the Americans taking 700 beaver skins

and leaving behind debts owed to the Hudson’s Bay Company

Ogden’s men including Archibald McDonald, Thomas McKay and Joseph Portneuf

left the Salmon and Snake rivers for the Bear River

JEDIDIAH STRONG SMITH LEADS HIS MOUNTAIN MEN

One morning Jedediah Smith and his Americans vanished

from the sight of Ogden’s Hudson’s Bay Company Snake River Brigade

Smith and his men disappeared into the hills of the upper Bear River

PETER SKENE OGDEN CONTINUED SOUTH

Ogden had only fifteen Hudson’s Bay Company Snake River Brigade men remaining

including Archibald McDonald and Thomas McKay

Thinking himself free of outside interference at last,

Peter Skene Ogden and men struck out for the Missoula and Bitterroot rivers

Hudson’s Bay Company Snake River Brigade leader trapped ruthlessly as he went

usually the Hudson’s Bay Company conserved enough game to keep the region profitable,

but this country (around the city now bearing Ogden’s name) had already been written off as lost

for once exploitation, leaving nothing to lure the Americans westward, would be good business

Ogden and his Hudson’s Bay Company men probably ventured as far south as the Great Salt Lake

GREAT SALT LAKE

Original discoverer of the Great Salt Lake is not known for sure as the event was not recorded

Jim Bridger using a bull boat went down the Bear River

may have discovered the Great Salt Lake [1824]

Jedediah Smith was perhaps first white to reach Great Salt Lake -- 1825

Smith, learning of the upcoming rendezvous, set out with his Mountain Men to join the event

but Peter Skene Ogden conducted the most of the detailed exploration of the region -- 1825

he probably ventured so far south as to discover the Great Salt Lake on North and West shore and the site of the Utah city that today bears his name

FIRST RENDEZVOUS TAKES PLACE

Approximately 120 people not counting women and children, moved up the creek to the new location

those in attendance included:

William “Billy” Sublette and Moses “Black” Harris

who had been trapping for General Ashley in the Rocky Mountains

as well as and Mulatto trapper Jim Beckwourth who began to establish his reputation

as a compelling storyteller by recalling (occasionally accurately) his own exploits

he looked the part of a mountain man -- six feet tall and strongly built,

he wore his black hair down to his waist and frequently sported braids, ribbons,

earrings, gold chains, and Crow Indian leggings

also twenty-nine deserters from Hudson’s Bay Company,

Jedediah Smith with his seven Ashley-Henry Combine trappers,

John H. Weber and twenty-five to thirty men including Caleb Greenwood

Etienne Provost led thirteen of his men from Taos to the Rendezvous

including four deserters from the [1822] Snake River Brigade

Francois Method, Jack McLeod, Lazard Teycalecourigi and Patrick O’Conner

during the journey with Provost, Patrick O'Conner was killed by Snake Indians

near Great Salt Lake

General Ashley was the last to arrive at the scene, but he presided over the second rendezvous

this event lasted only one day -- July 1, 1825

except for the camaraderie of scattered friends reunited, it was a day strictly of business

General William H. Ashley bought the trappers’ beaver and other pelts

and sold them the goods he had carried from St. Louis

he paid two to three dollars a pound for Ashley-Henry men’s pelts

and as much as five dollars to free trappers

MUCH IS LEARNED AT THE FIRST RENDEZVOUS

First rendezvous seemed sedate compared with the carnivals of later years

Ashley had failed to bring whiskey

Ashley discovered that trappers were willing to remain in the mountains year-round

that meant they had to be supplied in the mountains

and their catch hauled out of the mountains to St. Louis

that in turn meant that the true profits of the fur business

fell to the supplier-buyer rather that the trapper

At this rendezvous Ashley formed a better idea of what should be packed on the mules of the caravan

besides the essentials: traps, powder, lead, flint, knives, coffee, sugar, tobacco, and blankets

it was also obvious liquor was necessary

Etienne Provost’s freedmen, actually deserters from Hudson’s Bay Company, suggested to Ashley that other merchandise such as ribbons, bells, beads, and other trinkets could be sold

these became increasingly important

as Mountain Men brought their Indian wives to the gathering

From these discoveries sprang the annual supply caravan from St. Louis

and the annual summer rendezvous

GENERAL WILLIAM ASHLEY TAKES ON A NEW PARTNER

Ashley preferred the amenities of St. Louis to the outdoor life of a mountaineer

three times he had been called from his position as Missouri Lieutenant-Governor

and Missouri militia Brigadier General

and now his field captain, Andrew Henry, had withdrawn altogether

Ashley needed a master of men and mountains who could free him

to deal with the business of fur in the comforts of St. Louis

his choice fell on humorless, grimly conscientious Jedediah Strong Smith -- July 1825

who was offered the position while en route from the Rendezvous down the Missouri River

Jedediah Strong Smith became a partner with General Ashley in the Ashley-Smith Combine

with his promotion to partner in the combine, Captain Jedediah Smith was assigned

to his next trek across the still imperfectly known plains to the Rocky Mountains

Thomas Fitzpatrick was promoted to second in command of the expedition

William “Billy” Sublette, David E. Jackson and others were given lesser positions

AFTER THE CLOSE OF THE RENDEZVOUS

Trappers, Indians and General Ashley looked forward to the raucous gatherings in the wilderness

held at predetermined spots in the west annually between 1825 [and 1840]

Jedediah Smith accompanied General William Ashley and his brigade of furs to St. Louis

ASHLEY-SMITH FUR COMPANY CONTINUES TOWARD ST. LOUIS

General William Henry Ashley and his new partner Captain Jedediah Strong Smith,

accompanied by William “Billy” Sublette and Moses “Black” Harris,

headed for St. Louis after the Rendezvous of 1825

Shrewdly, Ashley fixed on a roundabout route home

he was aware that General Henry Atkinson and Indian Agent Benjamin O’Fallon

were conducting peace talks with the tribes of the upper Missouri River area

ASHLEY-SMITH FUR COMPANY CONNECTS WITH GENERAL ATKINSON’S EXPEDITION

General William Henry Ashley and his Mountain Men left the Green River area

set out down the Bighorn River toward its mouth

at the mouth of the Bighorn River they entered the Yellowstone River

below the Big Horn Mountains -- August 7, 1825

Here they packed their cargo of furs into bullboats

floated down the Yellowstone to an almost perfectly timed union

with the General Henry Atkinson and Indian Agent Benjamin O’Fallon military expedition

Obligingly, General Atkinson loaded all the furs onto his army keelboats

and provided free transportation and protection down the Missouri as far as Council Bluffs

ASHLEY-SMITH FUR COMPANY ARRIVES IN ST. LOUIS

General William Henry Ashley and Jedediah Smith reached St. Louis -- October 5, 1825

Ashley had two purposes in mind in St. Louis:

•deliver 8,829 pounds of beaver pelts worth between $40,000 and $50,000 in St. Louis

•make arrangements to equip a new caravan to provision

trappers currently wintering in the mountains at a second Rendezvous

to be held [next summer] in the Rocky Mountains

PETER SKENE OGDEN STARTS BACK TOWARD FORT VANCOUVER

Movingnorthward from the Great Salt Lake

Ogden and what was left of his men Hudson’s Bay Company Snake River Brigade

trapped the Bear, Snake and Salmon river watersheds

Moving northward they turned toward Fort Vancouver

FIELD GOVERNOR GEORGE SIMPSON RETURNS TO YORK FACTORY

Simpson decided the Columbia Department business must be conducted more efficiently

he ordered each post to grow as much of its own food as possible

thus reducing dependence on expensive imported provisions to be packed across Canada

Hudson’s Bay Company Governor and Committee in London

felt the far western fur operation of the company had been saved

they were so impressed with his whirlwind accomplishments and administrative efforts

that Simpson was voted a bonus of five hundred pounds

and a salary increase of two hundred pounds year

ASHLEY-SMITH FUR COMPANY JOURNEY’S BACK INTO THE MOUNTAINS

Less than a month after reaching St. Louis, General William Ashley dispatched his partner,

Captain Jedediah Smith, on an expedition to trap the Great Salt Lake region

and to supply the [1826] Rendezvous

Smith led a caravan of seventy men and 160 animals loaded with provisions

bound for the Rocky Mountains where the next Rendezvous was to be held -- November 1825

As Smith and his trappers moved Westward,

Edward Rose joined them for the trip as far west as South Pass in the Rocky Mountains

JEDIDIAH SMITH’S ASHLEY-SMITH FUR COMPANY EXPEDITION BECOMES STALLED

When Captain Smith and his expedition reached the Republican Fork of the Kansas River

bad weather and slow travel virtually wiped out the herd of pack animals

General William Ashley had to be informed of the situation

Captain Smith sent Moses “Black” Harris and Jim Beckwourth

back across the frozen plains to General Ashley in St. Louis

carrying Jedediah Smith’s report requesting additional pack animals and supplies

Harris was renowned for his powers of walking

another small party moved ahead to the Pawnee Village to seek immediate assistance

Ashley-Smith Company men camped in Cache (or Willow) Valley (Utah)

when snow piled too deeply, they decided to cache the supplies for the next year’s Rendezvous

and struck out for the Great Salt Lake’s Weber River where they were to trap

PETER SKENE OGDEN AND THE SNAKE RIVER BRIGADE ARRIVE HOME

They reached Hudson’s Bay Company’s Fort Vancouver headquarters -- November 1825

Ogden had brought out 3,090 beaver skins -- enough profit to encourage another visit

even though American trappers were also in the that region

Under orders from Hudson’s Bay Company, he was so diligent on his hunts

that the streams he worked are still destitute of beaver

policy of trapping out the Snake River region appeared to work

as American trappers afterward tended to stay in the Rocky Mountains

earning them the title Mountain Men

In his trapping efforts, the “fat trapper” became the first explorer

to traverse the Rocky Mountains from north to south

he opened to the public’s attention much of Idaho, Utah, and Northern California

(his reports and maps of his travels increased the knowledge

of the interior of Oregon Country and the West

these were printed and publicized throughout America, England, and Europe)

(Ogden subsequently led six more expeditions into the Snake River Country

and continued to lead expeditions for next 15 years [1840] through what are now parts of the states of California, Oregon, Idaho, Utah and Washington

and opened to the public’s attention on these areas)

GENERAL WILLIAM ASHLEY RECEIVED SMITH’S REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

Moses “Black” Harris and Jim Beckwourth and a small party

carrying Jedediah Smith’s request for additional supplies

was delivered to General William Ashley in St. Louis

THOMAS “TOM” FITZPATRICK LEADS ASHLEY-SMITH FUR COMPANY TRAPPERS

General Ashley placed Tom Fitzpatrick in command

of a party of forty Ashley-Smith Fur Company Mountain Men

who conducted a trapping expedition along Henry’s Fork of the Green River

In an accident, a musket exploded in Fitzpatrick’s left hand and blew away two fingers -- 1826

because of this, Indians named him “Broken Hand, Chief of all Mountain Men”

“Broken Hand” Fitzpatrick and his men trapped in the Green River valley that winter -- 1825-1826

JEDIDIAH SMITH ENDURES A TERRIBLE WINTER

Captain Smith and his party moved on to the shores of Great Salt Lake

near the mouth of the Weber River (near today’s Ogden, Utah)

Shoshones (Snake) Indians camped with them, as did Hudson’s Bay freemen with their families

women and children, whether Indian or mixed blood, would henceforth be a fixture of trapper life

and, coincidentally, would provide an enlarged market for Ashley-Smith goods

DAVID THOMPSON WORKS ON HIS MAPS OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

After he resigned his position as the British representative to the Boundary Commission -- 1826

David Thompson worked as an independent surveyor

busying himself surveying canals, township boundaries and land grants

but he also continued to work on his maps of the areas he previously had visited

Thompson forwarded his remaining maps to the British government -- 1826

when the British negotiated for the Columbia Department

he offered to provide first-hand knowledge of the complete region

Both David Thompson and his maps were ignored by British government cartographers

he was bewildered and annoyed by the slight

(in fact, his maps were so accurate that upon publication [1857]

they became the basis for the cartography of the Columbia Department for many years)

CHANGE IN HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY ADMINISTRATION

Hudson’s Bay Company Field Governor William Williams was recalled to London

relinquishing his governorship of the Southern Department of Canada

Field Governor George Simpson was promoted to sole head of Hudson’s Bay Company in Canada

Governor George Simpson’s duties were expanded to include the governorship of the Southern

as well as Northern Department -- he became Governor of Rupert’s Land

HUDSON’ BAY COMPANY’S CALIFORNIA EXPEDITION

Alexander R. McLeod’s led the company’s California Brigade

they worked in the Willamette Valley, the Umpqua watershed,

and over the Siskiyou Mountains into northern California -- 1826

Additional expeditions journeyed south each year

FORT VANCOUVER INCREASES IN SIGNIFICANCE

Hudson’s Bay Company’s activities, although they overlapped, consisted of three main areas:

•extensive trade north of the Columbia River at a series of trading posts or forts

Indians brought beaver pelts to exchange for goods manufactured in England

or at Fort Vancouver or at Fort Colville

• brigade fur trade which had been pioneered by the North West Company

these units operated south and east of Fort Vancouver

•Maritime Department was indispensable to the success of the company

ships brought the trading goods from England

and sent the furs to the Orient and other markets

if they did not arrive at Fort Vancouver, a year’s trade might be lost

Chief Factor John McLoughlin’s post became the center of a whole range of activities

Fort Vancouver became Chief Factor Dr. McLoughlin’s command center in the West:

•from there brigades set out;

•from there orders were issued to outposts hundreds of miles away;

•to there flowed bales of valuable furs;

•to there gravitated would-be settlers, visiting dignitaries, scientists, and travelers;

•to those arriving by sea, it provided safe shelter

Eventually the fort would receive pelts from interior posts:

•in the North: forts McLeod, Fraser, St. James, Langley, Colville, Kamloops, Okanogan,

and Kootenai House

•in the South: Umpqua and Wallace House

•in Snake River area: Flathead House, Fort Hall, Fort Boise, and Fort Walla Walla

FARMING AT FORT VANCOUVER EXPANDED

In response to instructions from Governor of Rupert’s Land George Simpson

and under the supervision of Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin

farming was expanded from a field of wheat

to additional fields of barley, Indian corn, peas, and potatoes -- 1826

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY SHIPPING

Sixty-ton schooner *Vancouver* was constructed at the fort she was named after

she was the first ship built in (today’s Washington state) and was put into service -- 1826

*William and Ann*,company supply brig, made her second voyage to the Columbia River

arrived -- September 1826

she delivered supplies and picked up furs at Columbia Department posts

remained in the region serving the company until her return to London [February 1828]

ASHLEY-SMITH FUR COMPANY SUPPLY CARAVAN SETS OUT FROM ST. LOUIS

General William H. Ashley had to head a field expedition for the fourth time

this time to come to the aid of Jedediah Smith and his large party of Mountain Men

and to provided additional supplies for the third annual Rendezvous

They set out from St. Louis bound for the Cache (or Willow) Valley (Utah) -- March 1826

each employee on the expedition was assigned two mules and a saddle horse

ASHLEY-SMITH FUR COMPANY CARAVAN REACHES CACHE VALLEY

Captain Jedediah Smith and his Mountain Men had spent [winter 1825]-1826

trapping the Weber River region of the Great Salt Lake

they descended the Weber River where they met Etienne Provost

at his encampment in the Uintah Basin before setting out for the Cache Valley (Utah)

GENERAL WILLIAM ASHLEY AND JEDIDIAH SMITH UNITE

General William Ashley and Captain Jedediah Smith and their Mountain Men

united at the designated 1826 Rendezvous site in the Cache Valley -- late May

for a short time of celebration including such men as Louis Vasquez, James Clyman,

Henry G. Fraeb, Daniel T. Potts and many others

CACHE (or Willow) VALLEY RENDEZVOUS PARTICIPANTS

All Mountain Men gathered at the prearranged rendezvous in the Cache Valley (Utah)

festivities opened -- July 1, 1826

this year it lasted for several days -- perhaps even weeks

On this occasion, assembled at the rendezvous were:

•skulking dogs, half-wild horses and mules tethered to stakes;

•savages of all degrees

naked children playing at everlasting games of war

halfbreeds with their native squaws;

•frontiersmen who had throttled the throats of savages;

•educated gentlemen out to see the West first hand;

•Jedediah Smith with his gun and his Bible

who had become the first American to come overland from St. Louis to California and back to the Rocky Mountains by way of Utah and Nevada;

•trapping partners who had such deep mutual faith in one another’s integrity

that, as they rushed into battle with the Indians,

they had been known to shout their wills to each other

well aware the survivor would execute it faithfully

This year Ashley had not neglected the liquor essential to a true rendezvous

for once, Jim Beckwourth’s description probably did not embellish the reality: **“Mirth, songs, dancing, shouting, trading, running, jumping, singing, racing, target shooting, yarns, frolic, with all sorts of extravagances that white men or Indians could invent, were freely indulged in. The unpacking of the *medicine water* contributed not a little to the heightening of our festivities.”[[195]](#footnote-195)**

MOUNTAIN MEN ATTEND THE RENDEZVOUS

Trappers who lived alone running trap lines in the Rocky Mountain region

roamed the mountain regions going west in the spring hunting beaver

returned east in the fall with the year’s take of pelts

Expert hunters, trappers, bear fighters, Indian killers, their skills fell into two categories

first were the specialty skills:

•beaver trapping

•marksmanship with rifle and pistol

•horsemanship

•swimming

•mountain climbing

•game hunting

•bodily combat with all weapons

•survival in extreme weather and terrain

•reading nature’s signs was especially important

sights, sounds, smells all carried significant meaning in the trapper’s world

interpreting their presence or absence could mean life or death

second were personal characteristics -- physical, mental, emotional, and instinct:

•physical strength and endurance were essential

•fortitude and bravery were, also

•quick, accurate thinking which led to instant action was critical

•instinct based on experience was needed to give warning when nothing else did

1826 RENDEZVOUS ACTIVITIES

This Rendezvous began to take on the attributes of the annual fair it quickly became

participants drank and gambled

raced their horses, slept little, ate much, talked long and boastfully

fought, swaggered, lied, cheated the Indians, their own people, and each other

Traders and trappers prided themselves

on spending a year’s earnings, which ranged from $120 to $600, in one evening’s play

by the next morning the great annual mountain fair was over

all the beads and baubles had been exchanged for hides and pelts

when all accounts were settled, the trapper was usually in debt

each trapper went his own way to labor and fight for another year

Ashley-Smith Combine used mule trains to pack the furs back to St. Louis Missouri

while sick, sober and penniless trappers wandered into the wilderness

to scrounge enough “plews” (pelts) -- for next year's Rendezvous

RENDEZVOUS TRADITION

As the yearly rendezvous caravan evolved, trappers refined their own culture

they adjusted their own yearly rhythm to the new business cycle

not only free and engaged trappers of Ashley’s following,

but Indians, French Canadians, and Iroquois freemen participated

tents mingled with tepees, and women and children abounded

Every summer the Mountain Men, Indian trappers,

and traders in the Rocky Mountains would gather at a “rendezvous”

Originally planned as a cunning commercial change of pace for the American fur trade, rendezvous suddenly evolved into a combination trade fair, gaming and gambling fit interrupted by mating rites and fist fights

It was a chance to relax and enjoy themselves after a long season in the mountains

trappers both white and Indian, could sell their furs and trade for needed supplies,

meet with old friends, get rip-roaring drunk, engage in storytelling, dancing, gambling,

gun duels and contests of all sorts

horse racing, wrestling bouts, and shooting contests were the favorites

Indians and their wives and Mountain Men with their Indian wives converged

swapped “hairy banknotes” for raw alcohol from Cincinnati, coffee, sugar, tobacco,

arms and munitions, and blankets

It became a giant pow-wow, a carnival, and a circus all rolled into one

a common exclamation between departing Mountain Men was:

“Meet me on the Green”

MOUNTAIN MAN LIFE

What the trappers did between rendezvous differed from the popular understanding

they did not wander in lonely solitude through the mountains trapping beaver

that would have been suicidal -- an invitation to watching Blackfoot natives

instead, they traveled in brigades of forty to sixty men

including camp tenders and meat hunters

from brigade base camps, they fanned out, usually in pairs, to set their traps

then they were most vulnerable, and Indians ambushes took their heaviest toll

Mountaineers did not hunt constantly

they called trapping expeditions a hunt, a term also applied to seeking game for food

there was a spring hunt and a full hunt

spring hunt garnered the winter fur and the best pelts

fall hunt pelts were of lesser quality

summer, of course, was Rendezvous

winter was simply winter camp, waiting for the spring hunt

Contrary to conventional views,

of the thousand or so mountain men who roamed the Rockies in the 1820s and 1830s, only a minority were Americans

typically they had emigrated with their families from Kentucky or Tennessee

to Missouri or Arkansas before heading for the mountains

some reached their destination by way of New Mexico,

but most went up the Missouri the Yellowstone, or the Platte rivers

large majority, three-fourths or more, claimed French, French-Canadian, or Creole blood

many traced their origins to the Montreal-based fur ventures

that for a century and a half competed with the London-based Hudson’s Bay Company

last and most aggressive of the Montreal firms was the North West Company

Mountain Men had to survive both mountain life and the rendezvous

but the potential rewards were freedom of the wilds, and adventure

no less than 1,560 American trappers were working West of the Continental Divide

between [1823 and 1829]

ninety-four Mountain Men were killed in those six years

GENERAL ASHLEY RETIRES FROM THE FUR TRADE

For General William Henry Ashley 1826 Rendezvous marked his final trip to the mountains

he had seen enough to know that the largest profit and least risk

lay in supplying the trappers and buying their beaver pelts

not in committing capital to the trapping operation itself

Immediately after the 1826 Rendezvous, General Ashley sold his interest to his partners

Jedediah Strong Smith, David E. Jackson, and William L. Sublette

in a complicated transaction involving beaver pelts, credit,

and arrangements assuring Ashley, in St. Louis, the ability to supply of goods

which his old partners needed for future Rendezvous

and which would guarantee him a liberal profit each year

Jedediah Strong Smith, David E. Jackson, and William L. Sublette

became the new owners of the Ashley-Smith Fur Company

bill of sale was dated -- July 18, 1826

Ashley led his expedition back to St. Louis

this year’s returns cleared a profit of some $80,000 in St. Louis

this money liberated him from debt and awarded him a modest fortune

In St. Louis, Ashley continued to supply goods which his old partners needed

making a liberal profit from them

SMITH, JACKSON &SUBLETTE FUR COMPANY BEGINS OPERATION

After General Ashley left the trapping and trading business

new partnership, Smith, Jackson and Sublette, was formed on the Bear River

with Jedediah Smith as the head of the company

(Smith, Jackson & Sublette continued to prosper for the next seven years 1826-[833])

new company laid plans for a Fall hunt

Smith, Jackson and Sublette Fur Company was divided into two brigades:

David E. Jackson and William “Billy” Sublette would lead a party into Blackfoot Country

at the Three Forks of the Missouri River

with a big enough brigade to fend off the Blackfoot

Jedediah Smith would lead his party into the unknown beyond the Great Salt Lake

this combined his obsession for exploration with the fall quest for beaver pelts

SMITH, JACKSON & SUBLETTE FUR COMPANY EMPLOYEES

French-Canadian predominance prevailed at every level, from common laborer to top management

engages (“engaged” men) worked for the company -- at first only for Smith, Jackson,& Sublette, later for the competing companies that began to challenge the domination of Ashley’s heirs

Whatever firm employed them, engages occupied one of three social levels:

•lowest form was the *mangeur de lard*, or “pork eaters”

veterans applied this derisive term to greenhorns new to the mountains

they tended camp, stoked the fire, butchered and cooked the meat,

packed and unpacked the animals, and did all the other drudge labor

that the better sort disdained

•next in the hierarchy stood the “engaged” hunters and trappers

equipped by the company and paid an annual salary,

they either hunted meat for the brigade or trapped beaver for the company

•highest class consisted of what may be termed “sharecroppers”

company equipped and supplied them in return for a stipulated share of their catch

or for the entire catch at a price agreed in advance

of unique character was the “free trapper” who was unbeholden to any company

he looked with condescension from the pinnacle of the social pyramid

he equipped and supplied himself, traveled with a company brigade or not -- as he wished

and sold his catch to whoever offered the highest price

he was the aristocrat of the business as his attire and outfit demonstrated

Joe Meek described the free trapper’s finery: **“They prided themselves on their hardihood and courage; even on their recklessness and profligacy. Each claimed to own the best horse; to have had the wildest adventures; to have made the most narrow escapes; to have killed the greatest number of bears and Indians; to be the greatest favorite with the Indian belles, the greatest consumer of alcohol, and to have the most money to spend, i.e. the largest credit on the books of the company. If his hearers did not believe him, he was ready to run a race with him, to beat him at ‘old sledge,’ or to fight, if fighting was preferred.… The only authority which the free trapper acknowledged was that of his Indians spouse, who generally ruled in the lodge, however her lord blustered outside.”[[196]](#footnote-196)**

SMITH, JACKSON & SUBLETTE EXPEDITION SETS OUT

David E. Jackson and William L. Sublette left the Bear River region

bound for the Three Forks of the Missouri River and Blackfoot Country

leading one contingent of Smith, Jackson & Sublette men

they trapped around the north end of the Tetons into Jackson Hole -- August 1826

they turned north to the head of the Snake River

Jackson and Sublette were the first to explore the area of (today’s Yellowstone Park)

they dropped into a fantastic land of geysers, bubbling pots of hot mud,

and gurgling cauldrons covered by thin colored crusts

they viewed the great blue sheet of (Yellowstone Lake),

which they named Sublette Lake in honor of William “Billy” Sublette

When they arrived at the Three Forks region, they were rewarded with a yield of plentiful beaver

as well as occasional clashes with Blackfoot Indians,

one of which took the life of Old Pierre (Pierre’s Hole) Tavanitagon

JEDIDIAH STRONG SMITH’S EXPEDITION SETS OUT

Jedediah Smith and his seventeen men represented the second contingent

of the Smith, Jackson and Sublette Company

They set out from the Bear River region -- August 1826

to work down the Wasatch Mountain Range

and probe the southern and western fringes of the Great Salt Lake

looking for untapped beaver streams

if possible they would return to Cache Valley after the fall hunt

if not, they would be back in time for the [July 1827] Rendezvous

Their route led them down the Virgin River, which merged with the mighty Colorado

they traveled through (the area of today’s Zion National Park)

they followed the Colorado River south through the land of the Mojave Indians,

these natives received Smith well, but their attitude rapidly deteriorated

perhaps due to ill treatment by the trappers

Trapping party headed west across the great Mojave Desert

during the desert trek, heat became so intense that it forced Smith and his men

to bury themselves in sand to keep cool

Fall hunt turned up precious little to hunt, or even to eat -- Fall 1826

dismounted, hungry, with few beaver skins, Smith thought of turning back

but decided to winter among the Mojave Indians who lived on the Colorado River

find mounts, and look for beaver streams which had so far eluded him

Mojave Indians would trade for food, but would not part with any of their horses

with men and animals exhausted, provisions dangerously low

and winter descending on the Rockies,

Smith judged it was too risky to return to the mountains

Mojaves said that the Mexican settlements lay ten days’ journey to the west

Smith decided to travel there to resupply

his plan encountered formidable obstacles, both geographical and human

YOUNG-WOLFSKILL EXPEDITION OUT OF SANTA FE (NEW MEXICO)

Ewing Young, in conjunction with his business partner William Wolfskill

recruited eighteen men for a hunt to the Gila River -- Fall 1826

Party included:

Milton Sublette who had a reputation for being reckless with life and money

he had finished his apprenticeship with the Ashley-Henry firm

under the guidance of his older brother William “Billy” Sublette

Thomas L. Smith, a big man like Milton Sublette, rowdy, fearless and courageous

with a nearly endless capacity for “Taos Lightning”

William Wolfskill led the expedition

after Ewing Young became ill and had to remain in Santa Fe

Young-Wolfskill expedition successfully hunted the Gila River for about 250 miles

at the mouth of the Salt River they ran afoul of Apache Indians

who kept the trappers from removing their traps

a shower of arrows hastened the departure of the trappers

Milton Sublette was hit in the leg and was carried from the scene by Tom Smith

Trapper’s hasty retreat ended back in Santa Fe

DAVID E. JACKSON AND WILLIAM SUBLETTE EXPEDITION TO GREAT SALT LAKE

After a thorough effort was completed in the Three Forks region of the Missouri River William L. Sublette and David E. Jackson led their men

into the desert northwest of Great Salt Lake

A thorough investigation of the Salt Lake area was undertaken -- 1826

Jackson and Sublette sent four men with a bullboat to circumnavigate the lake

James Clyman, Hiram Scott, Henry Fraeb and Louis Vasquez

tried to find an outlet for the mythical Buenaventura River

which supposedly flowed to the Pacific Ocean

it was a difficult and thirsty twenty-four days as mudflats form the western shore their effort was unsuccessful as no outlet was found

JEDIDIAH SMITH EXPEDITION LOOKED FOR A SETTLEMENT

Following the advice of Mojave Indians

Jedediah Smith crossed Mojave Desert of Southern California

en route to the Mexican settlements

it was a thirsty, fatiguing crossing lasting fifteen days

before the Smith, Jackson and Sublette Company men arrived in San Diego -- October 1826

DAVID E. JACKSON AND WILLIAM SUBLETTE EXPEDITION MAKES WINTEER CAMP

From the Great Salt Lake the Jackson and Sublette Expedition returned to the Cache Valley

Smith, Jackson and Sublette trappers went into winter camp -- November 1826

at the confluence of the Weber and Ogden rivers in the Salt Lake Valley

William Sublette, accompanied by long distance walker Moses “Black” Harris, hiked to St. Louis

to organize the [1827] Rendezvous caravan

snow prevented travel on horseback

JEDIDIAH SMITH EXPEDITION ENCOUNTERS THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT

Leaving San Diego, Smith and his men crossed the San Bernardino Mountains at last

they entered the San Bernardino Valley -- November 26, 1826

lush with orchards and fields tended by mission Indians

they reached Mission San Gabriel (near today’s Los Angeles)

making them the first Americans to enter California overland from the east

After successfully crossing the Mojave Desert,

their second obstacle was Mexican Governor Jose Maria Echeandia

who was profoundly skeptical of beaver hunting

he could not decide whether to imprison his unwanted guests, expel them,

hold them pending instructions from Mexico City, or send Smith himself to Mexico City,

or even to decide to decide

After a month of this vacillation, Smith enlisted the aid of a ship captain in the harbor

with some convincing by the captain, the governor decided the Americans could leave by the route they had entered

Instead of following Governor Echeandia’s orders, Jedediah Smith and his men

remained with the Spanish at Mission San Gabriel

CHIEF TRADER PETER SKENE OGDEN’S THIRD SNAKE RIVER BRIGADE

Again went into Snake River Country for Hudson’s Bay Company

to advance the work of trapping the region dry -- winter 1826-1827

and thus impede American incursion into Columbia Department

DAVID E. JACKSON AND WILLIAM SUBLETTE SET OUT ONCE AGAIN

Jackson and Sublette broke winter camp in the Cache Valley near Salt Lake -- January 1827

leading their party of Smith, Jackson and Sublette Company trappers,

they conducted a successful spring hunt on the Green River

SECOND YOUNG-WOLFSKILL EXPEDITION OUT OF SANTA FE

Ewing Young took the leadership role this time as William Wolfskill remained in Santa Fe

party of thirty men started west -- January 1827

Young had two intentions for this expedition:

•to take beaver

•to punish the Apache Indians

His opportunity to inflict harm arrived near the mouth of the Salt River

Young sent three men by night to act as decoys near the Indian village

at the dawn, Tom Smith fired a shot killing an Indian

as the natives rushed forward toward the decoys,

a volley of fire from the trappers rained on the Indians

those uninjured raced in retreat

Next day a delegation of Indians asked for peace

Young departed down the Gila River confident a lesson had been taught

JEDIDIAH SMITH LEAVES MISSION SAN GABRIEL

With a party of thirteen trappers re-provisioned and with fresh horses

they set out from Mission San Gabriel -- mid-January 1827

Smith and his Smith, Jackson and Sublette Company trappers

re-crossed the San Bernardino Mountains as no Mexican lived east of these coastal mountains

rivers tumbled from the Sierra Nevada Mountains to feed the San Joaquin River

Smith and his party turned northward to the San Joaquin Valley

to the streams Captain Smith predicted would yield beaver

these yielded beaver in sufficient quantity

for the trappers to accumulate a substantial catch

as they worked their way northward along the Sierra foothills

NATURALIST DAVID DOUGLAS RETURNS TO THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Made his second expedition to the Pacific Northwest

in search of new botanical specimens -- 1827

PETER SKENE OGDEN’S SNAKE RIVER BRIGADE TRAPS IN CALIFORNIA

Hudson’s Bay Company Snake River Country had been pretty thoroughly despoiled

by the Hudson’s Bay Company Snake River Brigade trappers -- 1827

however, just South and West of it lay virgin ground

in what is now (southern Oregon and northern California)

Fearful that Americans would open a way into the untracked region, find it profitable, and then swing north along the coast to the Columbia Department

Chief Factor John McLoughlin and Chief Trader Peter Skene Ogden

determined to move in ahead of them

From Fort Walla Walla the stocky trapper hurried almost directly south

across the high, gray sage deserts of western Oregon,

penetrated illegally into northern California,

found and named a gigantic mountain (Mount Shasta)

which the Mexicans did not know they possessed,

and came back to Fort Vancouver

with a wealth of both skins and geographical knowledge

*OWHYHEE* (AMERICAN SAILING SHIP) ARRIVES AT FORT VANCOUVER

Brig out of Boston under Captain John Dominis

carried a load of sheep up from California to Fort Vancouver

first American ship to enter Columbia River since [1814]

sailed up the Columbia River on a ten day visit -- 1827

DAVID E. JACKSON. AND WILLIAM SUBLETTE RETURN TO ST. LOUIS

After their successful hunt on the Green River region the Smith, Jackson Sublette Expedition

reached St. Louis -- March 1827

William “Billy” Sublette without relinquishing trapping altogether

increasingly handled the business affairs of the partnership

taking on responsibility for organizing and conducting the annual supply caravan

he came to understand the St. Louis business world

as well as the Rocky Mountain trapping system

GENERAL WILLIAM H. ASHLEY BEGINS A NEW COMPANY

Ashley was advertising for a new company of fur trappers

he had made an overture to Pierre Chouteau of Pratte, Chouteau, and Company

William Sublette, who had bought Ashley's fur company interest,

along with Jedediah Smith and David Jackson was furious at Ashley

After negotiations with “Billy” Sublette, Ashley agreed to send

James B. Brufee and Captain Hiram Scott with supplies

to be delivered to Sublette's company in exchange for future furs

this complex arrangement also included deals

with the St. Louis Missouri Fur Company and American Fur Company

SECOND YOUNG-WOLFSKILL EXPEDITION OUT OF SANTA FE

Ewing Young’s thirty men trapped through the desert of the Gila River and the lower Colorado

they turned up the Colorado River until they reached the Mojave Valley -- March 1827

Relations with the Mojave Indians were tenuous at best

although six months before, Jedediah Smith had been treated well by them

this change may have been due to Smith’s lack of effort

to conceal his well-known contempt for all Indians

An inevitable attack on the trappers’ camp shattered the dawn

volley of rifle fire from the barricaded camp felled sixteen warriors

remainder were sent fleeing in panic

Further up the Colorado Valley, near the mouth of the Virgin River,

Young’s party divided due to a conflict between the leader and Tom Smith

who refused to take orders from anyone

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY CONTINUES TO DIVERSIFY

Kanaka (Hawaiian) John Coxe (Naukane) returned to the Northwest Coast -- 1827

(after his visit to Fort George and London with the Hawaiian Royal family [1823])

John Coxe (Naukane) retired and was given a plot of land two miles below Fort Vancouver

when pig-keeping expanded he came out of retirement and became fort’s swineherd

grazed pigs on the plain below the fort and river -- later called Coxe’s Plain

Kanaka John Coxe planted fruit trees in the Columbia Department

beginning of the industry is indicated by a story attributed to historian Hubert Bancroft: **“The first fruit tree grown on the Columbia sprang from the seeds of an apple eaten at a dinner party in London. A lady had placed the seeds in** [George] **Simpson’s waistcoat pocket, so the story goes, and they were not discovered until the Governor again gave the seeds to the gardener, who planted them…and thence within the territory of Oregon began the growth of the apple-trees.”[[197]](#footnote-197)**

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY SAW MILLING OPERATION

First sawmill built West of the Mississippi River -- 1827

manual labor sawmill operated North of Columbia River by Hudson’s Bay Company

at Mill Creek on Columbia River seven miles East (upstream) of Fort Vancouver

Inexpensive to build and operate -- it proved to be very successful

one man took up a position in a pit dug under the log to be cut

second man stood on top of the log

each “sawyer”held one end of a long ripsaw which was used to cut the log into planks

two sawyers could cut about three thousand feet of planking a day

Sawmill was soon staffed with eight man crew of Kanakas

who were paid seventeen English Pounds per year for their work

plus meals which consisted of smoked salmon and sea biscuit

*CADBORO* ARRIVES AT FORT VANCOUVER FROM LONDON

Seventy-ton two-masted British schooner *Cadboro* was built in London

she was the crack vessel of the fleet and was sent to the Columbia Department

*Cadboro,* under Captain John Swan, arrived on the Columbia River from England

reached Fort Vancouver with thirty new employees for the fort -- Spring 1827

Chief Factor John decided to use *Cadboro* in the Columbia Department trade

to transport men and supplies to open Fort Langley

and to stand guard while that fort was being built

U.S. MILITARY’S FORT ATKINSON ABANDONED

Colonel Henry Leavenworth withdrew his garrison far down the Missouri River -- 1827

Fort Leavenworth, built to replace Fort Atkinson,

was established in a position to be more easily supplied

and, supposedly, gave protection to both Santa Fe and the fur traffic upriver

JEDIDIAH SMITH EXPEDITION SET OUT FOR THE RENDEZVOUS

Smith’s investigation of the Sierra foothills with his Smith, Jackson and Sublette Company men

had determined that no large river connected the interior with the Pacific Ocean and no pass existed through the Sierra Nevada Mountains

With rendezvous less than two months in the future,

Smith knew he had to get his furs over the mountains

Smith turned his caravan up the rough canyon (near today’s Sacramento)

climbed sixty miles into the heights still buried in snow -- first week in May 1827

with six horses fallen, the rest could not break through

he next wound his way south to the Stanislaus River

SECOND YOUNG-WOLFSKILL EXPEDITION

After the discontented breakup on the Colorado River

they eventually all made it back to Santa Fe -- May 1827

Ewing Young had expanded the geographic knowledge over a huge arc

they may have even seen the Grand Canyon from the north rim

However, the commercial value of the expedition was a failure

Mexican authorities had impounded much of their catch

Milton Sublette had fled with his share of the furs

but Young lost his furs to confiscation by the Mexican government

and found himself under arrest in the bargain

JEDIDIAH SMITH DIVIDES HIS TRAPPING PARTY

Back in the San Joaquin Valley Captain Smith reached a painful decision

he would leave eleven men with the furs in camp on the Stanislaus River

while he and two companions, Robert Evans and Silas Gobel

attempted another assault on the Sierra Nevada Mountains over Ebbetts Pass

with nine horses and mules

after the rendezvous, he promised, he would return and take up a fall hunt

Smith and his two travelers started across the snow-covered Sierras -- May 20, 1827

they became the Americans first to reach the Great Basin

(a portion of which was referred to as the Great American Desert)

JEDIDIAH SMITH AND HIS TWO COMPANIONS TRAVEL SOUTH

Smith and two Smith, Jackson and Sublette Company men journeyed south of the Humboldt River

they struggled directly east across the (Nevada) desert

serrated by one narrow mountain range after another

Smith noted **“High Rocky hills afford the only relief to the desolate waste.”[[198]](#footnote-198)**

Captain Smith despaired of surviving

at times they buried themselves in sand to cool their bodies

On the twenty-fifth day, Robert Evans collapsed

Smith pushed ahead and stumbled on a water hole

that enabled him to go back and save his comrade

CHIEF TRADER JAMES McMILLAN SENT INTO THE LOWER FRASER VALLEY

McMillan was sent a second time by Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin

to occupy the lower Fraser River region

and construct the post demanded by Governor of Rupert’s Land George Simpson

Party, completely outfitted, came this time by sea on the supply ship *Cadboro*

included three clerks, and twenty-one men among them two Kanakas

Chief Trader James McMillan and his men

arrived and began construction of the long-delayed Fort Langley -- June 24, 1827

on the Lower Fraser River

FORT LANGLEY PLANNED

Although Governor Simpson viewed this fort as the headquarters post for Hudson’s Bay Company

Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin saw its purpose as a backup to Fort Vancouver

in case of some disaster

such as serious Indian attack on Fort Vancouver

or Britain being forced out of the Columbia Valley

Fort Langley also was to be built as a defense against American ships

its location made it an effective provisioner and provider

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY’S FORT THOMPSON

Was built across from Astorian (Pacific Fur Company) David Stuart’s Fort Okanogan -- [1811]

Fort Thompson was located on the opposite side of the Columbia River -- 1827

JEDIDIAH SMITH REACHED THE GREAT SALT LAKE

Traveling with Robert Evans and Silas Gobel

three Smith, Jackson and Sublette Company men successfully crossed the Nevada desert

once again they saw the Great Salt Lake -- June 27, 1827

1827 RENDEZVOUS BEGINS

This year’s Rendezvous held at the South End of Bear (Sweet) Lake

(near Great Salt Lake, Utah) began -- June 27, 1827

Whiskey flowed freely, and the festivities lasted for weeks

things generally got rowdy -- debauchery ran rampant at the rendezvous

by the time the Rendezvous was over, many of the mountain men

had lost their entire year's earnings

JEDIDIAH SMITH REACHES THE RENDEZVOUS

Smith, Robert Evans and Silas Gobel led one mule and one horse

when they emerged from the eastern foothills of the Wasatch Mountains

to the south shore of Bear (Sweet) Lake -- July 3, 1827

Rendezvous was in full swing **“My arrival caused a considerable bustle in camp for myself and party had been given up as lost. A small Cannon brought up from St. Louis was loaded and fired for a salute.”[[199]](#footnote-199)**

Captain Jedediah Strong Smith, along with his comrades, had again played the pioneer

they were the first Americans to return from California by an overland route

becoming the first known whites to surmount the Sierra Nevada Mountains

and the first to cross the Great Basin

SMITH, JACKSON & SUBLETTE SHOWS A PROFIT

When Jedediah Smith rejoined his partners at the Smith. Jackson and Sublette Combine Rendezvous

he and his partners:

•had amassed 7,400 pounds of beaver;

•discharged all debts;

•ordered the next year’s supplies;

•and counted a modest profit

To this success Jedediah Smith had contributed nothing

season’s furs he had gathered remained in the Central Valley of California

west of the Sierra Nevada Mountains

Rather the credit fell to David E. Jackson and William “Billy” Sublette

who dominated the partnership along with the able, young Robert Campbell serving as clerk

AMERICAN FUR COMPANY EXPANDS

Ramsay Crooks, a lieutenant in John Jacob Astor’s company

convinced Bernard Pratte of Pratte, Chouteau and Company

to take over management of the Western Department of the American Fur Company

under this agreement, B. Pratte & Company would buy all of their merchandise

and dispose of all of their furs through the American Fur Company

Ramsay Crooks also acquired for Astor the Columbia Fur Company from Kenneth McKenzie

McKenzie, a veteran Nor’Wester, had ruled Columbia Fur Company since its beginning [in 1821]

had been competing with Astor’s operation on the Mississippi River region

company name was changed to the Upper Missouri Outfit of the American Fur Company

Kenneth McKenzie continued his domination under the new company name

Ramsay Crooks and the American Fur Company had seized control of trapping and trading

from the Big Sioux River to the Yellowstone River

Crooks dominated trade on the whole Mississippi-Missouri river system

ST LOUIS MISSOURI FUR COMPANY ENTERS THE WEST

Major Joshua Pilcher and a party of trappers representing the St. Louis Missouri Fur

traveled to the Colorado River basin and as far to the northwest as Fort Colville on a two-year trading expedition Company – 1827-(1829)

JEDIDIAH SMITH THOUGHT CALIFORNIA TO BE PROMISING

Ten days after his arrival at the Smith. Jackson and Sublette Combine’s Bear Lake Rendezvous

Jedediah Smith hit the return trail to California with eighteen men -- July 13, 1827

to rejoin the eleven men he had left behind trapping the Merced area

He had told the eleven men he had left on the Stanislaus River in California

to wait for him no longer than [September 20]

that gave him nine weeks to get back to them

He followed the route he had taken the year before

across the mountains to the Colorado River

but he was sure men and animals could not cross the desert

between the Sierra Nevada Mountains and the Great Salt Lake

he intended to head north, up the Central Valley and the seacoast

toward the heart of Hudson’s Bay Company domain

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY SHIPPING

Captain Swan turned over command of the *Cadboro* to Lieutenant Amelius Simpson

*Cadboro* was based at Fort Langley and was long a familiar site in local ports

she made money for the Company in trading trips to and from Nootka Sound

*William and Ann* served Hudson’s Bay Company as a permanent supply ship -- 1827

*Broughton* a twenty-five to thirty-ton sloop launched at Fort Vancouver -- 1827

was used by Hudson’s Bay Company exclusively for river service

FORT LANGLEY CONSTRUCTED

Men and horses were unloaded from the *Cadboro --* July 30, 1827

work of building the first fort easily accessible from the Pacific north of the Columbia began

first timber for the fort was cut -- August 1

First objective of the small group of Hudson’s Bay Company employees

was to complete one of the bastions

rumors had been heard the Indians were preparing to massacre them

if they persisted in building the fort

Construction of a stockade 120 by 135 feet took only six weeks to complete according to the journal of Archibald McDonald who became Chief Trader

first bastion, 12 feet square and built of 8 inch logs,

was up except for the bark roof -- [August 13]

second bastion was finished except for the roof -- [August 31]

This area was regarded as most suitable for catching and processing salmon

James McMillan made his first large salmon catch -- 1827

natives used canoes to do the actual fishing

boatloads of freshly caught fish were brought to the beach

where women cleaned and dried them for shipping to the post

dried salmon were exchanged for goods much like furs

McMillan stated: **“We could trade at the door of our fort, I suppose, a million of dried salmon, if we chose -- enough to feed all the people of Rupert’s Land.”[[200]](#footnote-200)**

Because of the hasty construction, the post rapidly deteriorated

(was eventually rebuilt two miles further upstream [1839]

but that new post lasted only one year before fire destroyed it

rebuilt again, the next post served for fifty years)

LINKS BETWEEN FORT VANCOUVER AND FORT LANGLEY

Hudson’s Bay Company sea link from Fort Vancouver to Fort Langley

required ships to cross the treacherous Columbia River bar

navigate along the fog-shrouded and rocky coast devoid of safe harbors

and enter the current-torn inner waters of the Strait of Juan de Fuca and Straits of Georgia

getting into the Fraser River was very difficult

as shown by the journal entry of one member of an expedition: **“Another attempt was made this morning to beat up the entrance of the cannel into Fraser’s River but without preceding any distance, for the wind fell and about 7 am anchor was again cast on the edge of the south Sturgeon Shoal. Captain Simpson and Mr. Annance were off twice in a boat during the day to sound for the channel; but returned after nine at night without having discovered one.”** -- July 27, 1827

There was an alternative canoe route

which had been taken by the initial exploratory party

Hudson’s Bay Company developed this important canoe communication link

with the help of Kanakas labor

CONVENTION OF 1827

Area in dispute between the United States and Great Britain

(approximately 2/3 of the present state of Washington)

was no better known than it had been during the skirmishes

preceding the first treaty of Joint Occupation -- [1818]

American Albert Gallatin and the British met -- August 6, 1827

extend Convention of 1818 -- Joint Occupation to run forever

each country must give the other one year notice to change the agreement

No provision was made to allow for establishing a government in the Pacific Northwest

in fact, any such effort was in strict opposition to the treaty agreement

No more effort was made to gain a foothold in Pacific Northwest for over a decade

nor was any effort made to assist American citizens

however, American trappers, traders, businessmen, and missionaries

created a bond between Pacific Northwest and the United States

Questionable future of Texas also compelled America

to be concerned about the Mexican territories

FIRST MAP OF BRITISH COLUMBIA’S INTERIOR

Was drawn by Archibald McDonald of the Hudson’s Bay Company -- 1827

to illustrate his district report to the Company

This map collected what knowledge there was of the region and fixed the location of several places

he showed the region’s connection to the Fraser River

Kamloops is shown between the Columbia River

and the Hudson’s Bay Company District of New Caledonia

JEDIDIAH SMITH JOURNEYS TO CALIFORNIA ONCE AGAIN

Mojave Indians had been warned by Spanish officials not to let Americans pass

Jedediah Smith seemed ironically doomed to violence

although he was one of the most skilled, humane, and religious

of the American Mountain Men

Smith’s trapping party of eighteen men eventually reached the Colorado River

where a crossing was attempted -- August 18, 1827

provisions and gear were loaded on a cane raft

horses began swimming the river

When Smith and eight men reached midriver, the Mojave Indians suddenly attacked

ten of Smith’s men remaining on shore fell victim to arrows and clubs,

while the others fended off waterborne assaults

Smith and his Smith. Jackson and Sublette Combine companions reached the opposite bank in safety,

although one man had taken a severe blow to the head from a war club

Confronted on shore by several hundred warriors,

Smith scattered most of his goods along the river

in hopes of diverting his assailants with the lure of plunder

When that ploy failed, he gathered the survivors in a small cotton wood grove

and prepared to fight to the last

Mojaves closed in slowly, taking advantage of the scant cover

when some drew within range, Smith had two of his best marksmen fire

they killed two and wound a third

**“Uppon** [sic] **this the indians** [sic] **ran off like frightened sheep and we were released from the apprehension of immediate death.”[[201]](#footnote-201)**

Death less immediate yet loomed large

they were nine men, one badly hurt, cast adrift in a desolate land

with fifteen pounds of fried meat but no horses or even containers for water

Smith decided to attempt to return to California -- back across the Mojave Desert

his talent for finding water got them through the desert

good fortune also assisted when they stumbled upon Indians

from whom to purchase four horses and some containers for water

Ten days after the fight on the Colorado River -- August 28, 1827

Smith and his eight companion trappers entered the San Bernardino Valley

reluctant to test the California government too openly,

they clung to the eastern fringe of the valley while traveling North,

trapping efforts along the way proved to be very successful

JEDIDIAH SMITH NEEDS SUPPLIES AND HORSES

He wrote to Father Jose Sanchez at San Gabriel Mission but did not go there

instead he butchered some cattle stolen from the mission

and added enough horses to mount his men

Then he withdrew east of the San Bernardino Mountains and turned north

JEDIDIAH SMITH REUNITES WITH HIS CALIFORNIA TRAPPERS

Smith reached the Stanislaus River -- September 18, 1827

when he rode into the camp he had left four months earlier

reunited with the nine survivors¸ all that was left of the original eleven,

who had remained trapping

he was two days earlier than he had promised

Smith once again needed to reequip

in an effort to acquire more horses and needed supplies

which were necessary to keep his company moving north

Smith led his men West toward the San Jose Mission

*CADBORO* SAILED AWAY FROM FORT LANGLEY

Weighed anchor and headed south leaving the fort's occupants to fend for themselves -- September 18

formidable structure they lived in was only 40 X 45 yards -- November 26

Flagstaff was erected and the new post was officially named Fort Langley

in honor of Thomas Langley -- prominent stockholder in the Hudson’s Bay Company

FATHER PIERRE JEAN DE SMET -- BIOGRAPHY

Born in Termonde, Belgium to a wealthy ship outfitter -- [January 31, 1801]

he was raised by firm but kind parents

however, his father’s rigorous attitude resulted in a distance between father and son

As a boy and youth De Smet developed a fine physique and great determination

his playmates call him Samson -- in reference to the physically strong Biblical character

he acquired a taste for adventure and travel which remained with him for the rest of his life

His father feared he would become a soldier of fortune

or mere wanderer seeking adventure

he sent his son to the Catholic Preparatory Seminary at Mechlin, Belgium

young man’s world broke down when his beloved mother suddenly died

Mechlin Seminary was visited by Father Charles Nerinck, a missionary from Kentucky

he told students, including twenty-year-old Pierre De Smet, of limitless opportunities

he remarked: **“How can it be that Napoleon found millions of men ready to sacrifice their lives to ravage a nation and to aid him in conquering the world while I can not find a handful of devoted men to save an entire people and extend the reign of God.”[[202]](#footnote-202)**

his graphic descriptions persuaded Pierre Jean that he had found his vocation

he was determined to become a missionary in the United States

Pierre De Smet and several companions left Belgium to become missionaries in America

they reached their destination -- [June 3, 1823]

St. Ferdinand de Florissant, a small village between St. Charles and St. Louis,

close to the mouth of Missouri River

De Smet become a teacher of Indian youth

he collects all sorts of species of plants and animals

which he sent back to his correspondents in Europe

FATHER PIERRE JEAN DE SMET

Pierre-Jean (also known as Peter-John) De Smet joined the Society of Jesus and was ordained a priest

in St. Stanislaus church in St. Ferdinand de Florissant -- September 23, 1827

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

was assigned to teach religion, English language and agriculture in a Catholic boarding school

(when the school was closed, De Smet is transferred to college of St. Louis [1830])

Father De Smet was a man of tremendous energy and vitality

possessing great physical and spiritual strength

he showed courage combined with Christian gentleness

and was indefatigable but gentle and resolute

Father De Smet’s voluminous writing showed a well-integrated, attractive personality

with a keen sense of humor with good taste

he possessed considerable power of analysis and prophecy

His next ten years were spent among the American natives of the East

JEDIDIAH SMITH AT SAN JOSE MISSION

Captain Smith visited with the mission leader Father Narciso Duran

who proved to be much less accommodating

than Father Sanchez at Mission San Gabriel

Smith once again fell under the power of Mexican Governor Jose Maria Echeandia

now headquartered in Monterey -- October 1827

Again Smith had trouble as officials seized two wounded men

one died under cruel treatment

other was sentenced to death -- (but was later released)

However, Smith discovered that horses were plentiful and cheap in California

in the mountains horses could be traded as profitably as beaver pelts

Smith sold his accumulated beaver skins -- 1,568 pounds

to the captain of a ship in San Francisco Bay for $2.50 per pound -- October 1827

this brought nearly $4,000 which Smith used to purchase 250 horses and mules

to add to the sixty-five head he already possessed

For three months the governor detained the Americans

before deciding to permit Jedediah Smith and his trappers to leave

provided he promise stay out of California

Smith immediately began preparations for a journey to the North

two more men were added from the Spanish settlement

to replace the man who died and another who had deserted

Ironically, authorities now grew increasingly agitated over how much time he was taking

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY PUNITIVE WAR

Hudson’s Bay Company Chief Trader Alexander McKenzie

left Fort Vancouver for the Fraser River area to deliver letters to Fort Langley

McKenzie along with other four men was surprised on Hood's Canal by Klallam Indians

and murdered while they camped on the shores of Puget Sound -- December 1827

an Indian woman traveling with the whites was taken hostage

Chief Factor McLoughlin believed if Indians were not punished, whites would not be safe

he cut off all trade goods and supplies to the Olympic Peninsula area

Alexander R. McLeod was sent to find the culprits

he led a Hudson’s Bay Company punitive expedition of sixty men including at least two Kanakas manning canoes, to retaliate against the Klallams

McLeod had chance meeting at which eight Indians were killed

**“Two families of Clallam** [sic] **were encountered and wiped out. Two men, two women and four children** [were] **killed. It was never ascertained if they knew anything about the killing of McKenzie.”[[203]](#footnote-203)**

remainder of the Klallams in the area retreated to a nearby village to negotiate

McLeod’s expedition was supported by the firepower of the *Cadboro*

which located the main party of Klallam natives and blasted their village with cannons

after which Hudson’s Bay Company men landed and torched the remaining huts

burning the village to the ground along with forty-six canoes

Defeated Indians gave up their female hostage and executed the warriors who killed McKenzie

a count revealed seventeen Klallam people had been killed

PETER SKENE OGDEN’S SNAKE RIVER BRIGADE REENTERS SNAKE COUNTRY

Ogden had entered Oregon and California earlier with his brigade -- 1827

thus raising some defense against possible American encroachment

Ogden now returned to the Snake River area -- winter 1827-1828

conditions were terrible as bitter cold and towering drifts locked him in his camp

on the (Portneuf River) in the southern part of (Idaho)

Ogden’s success was complete

in each of the four years he focused on that region [1825-1828]

he brought back in excess of three thousand skins

JEDIDIAH SMITH AND HIS TWENTY TRAPPERS REACH THE SACRAMENTO RIVER

Smith and his men finally separated themselves from the Mexican Governor Jose Maria Echeandia

with the addition of fifty more animals

an impressive procession of twenty men driving 365 horses and mules was formed

they turned back to the eastern edge of the Central Valley

a safe distance from Mexican settlements -- end of December 1827

Smith reached the Sacramento River with his Smith. Jackson and Sublette Combine men

he followed its principal fork which he named the American River

there he spent the next three months trapping and hunting beaver

along the streams of the Sacramento and American rivers -- Winter 1827-28

Smith was disappointed to discover -these rivers did not breach the mountain range to the east

but the streams provided abundant beaver yielding 800 pelts

even if a scarcity of traps limited the catch

HALL JACKSON KELLEY -- PUBLICIST OF OREGON

Author and promoter of Pacific Northwest was born in New Hampshire -- [1790]

he was manually dexterous, but given to solitary dreams rather than to handicrafts

he injured his eyes, he said, through studying Virgil by moonlight

He established himself as a schoolteacher

married the daughter of a minister -- lost her and took a second wife -- [1822]

He was humorless, self-centered, inflexible, and cursed with an unfortunate ability

to grate on the nerves of everyone with whom he came in contact

He was summarily fired for undisclosed reasons from the Boston school

at which he was teaching -- [1823]

After studying maps of the region, he predicted a great port city would develop

at junction of the Willamette and Columbia rivers

a prediction which proved to be correct (Portland, Oregon)

Reading the *Journal of Lewis and Clark* further spurred his interest in Oregon

Kelley decided to found a new republic of civil and religious freedoms

he presented a Memorial to Congress on the subject -- February 11, 1828

FORT UNION -- AMERICAN FUR COMPANY POST

Was established by the American Fur Company

at the mouth of the Yellowstone River -- 1828

Presided over in grand style by Kenneth McKenzie

head of the Upper Missouri Outfit of the American Fur Company

there he demonstrated why he was known by friend and enemy alike

as the “King of the Missouri”

UNITED STATES ARMY CAPTAIN BENJAMIN LOUIS EULALIE DE BONNEVILLE

Born in France -- [April 13, 1796]

son of a civil engineer and outspoken political journalist

who was forced into exile by Napoleon

Brought to the United States by his parents while still a child [1803]

Benjamin was well educated, at age eighteen he received an appointment

to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point -- [1813]

Benjamin Bonneville received a degree in engineering in just two years [1815]

and entered the United States Army

He was commissioned brevet second lieutenant[[204]](#footnote-204)of the light artillery

spent his first ten years of military service supervising the construction of roadways

at posts in New England, Mississippi, and the Arkansas Territory

He was transferred to Fort Gibson, Indian Territory (Oklahoma) -- [1824]

and shortly thereafter was promoted to Captain

a short, stocky man, it was noted: **“…the moment his head was uncovered, a bald crown gave him credit for a few more years that he was really entitled to.”[[205]](#footnote-205)**

his journal showed him to be susceptible to the grand and beautiful

and revealed his kindness of spirit

After traveling back to France as a guest of General Lafayette,

Bonneville was transferred to Jefferson Barracks, Missouri -- 1828

PETER SKENE OGDEN AGAIN LEADS THE SNAKE RIVER BRIGADE

“Fat trader” was sent on another Hudson’s Bay Company expedition into Snake country -- 1828

this year the brigade included the three Findlay brothers: Augustin, Miequim, and Pinesta

Ogden’s Hudson’s Bay Company party would venture so far southward from the Snake River

he would reach Great Salt Lake and the Humboldt River

they passed through the wastes of the Great Basin on to the lower reaches of the Colorado River

where they used short wooden spears to fight off attacking Mojave Indians

his French-Canadians killed twenty-six

then set traps all the way down the river to the Gulf of California before turning homeward

On the way back to Fort Vancouver by way of the Pitt River in Northern California

Ogden would acquire furs that netted him a profit of about $15,000

Details of the epic journey are only sketchily known

after reaching Fort Walla Walla with his catch,

Ogden started down the Columbia River in a canoe

at the Dalles the canoe capsized: nine lives, five hundred furs, and all of Ogden’s records

were lost

CHIEF FACTOR JOHN McLOUGHLIN’S PLAN TO EXPAND SHIPPING

Trade could begin much earlier in the season if sufficient materials were on hand at Fort Vancouver

rather than waiting for the arrival of the annual trading ship from London

London leaders attempted to implement this idea -- 1828

by allocating three ships (about two hundred tons each) to the Columbia Department

two to make annual voyages to London and the third to remain along the coast

From this year on, Hudson’s Bay Company operated yearly round-trip brigades from Fort Vancouver

to the Snake River country, to California, to Montreal, and to New Caledonia (Fort Alexandera)

FURTHER HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY DIVERSIFICATION

Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin found time to establish new posts

until there was a dozen forts under his care

He developed new industries:

•he purchased and exported salmon;

•he established trade with Alaska;

•he erected flour mills, built a sawmill four or five miles up the river from the fort;

•he was exploring possibilities of exporting lumber and salmon to California and Hawaii

•he saw to the raising of crops to supplement food supplies

considerable acreage behind the Fort Vancouver was under cultivation;

•he planted the first fruit trees along the Columbia River

Dr. John McLoughlin also was a humanitarian

he encouraged planting of gardens, the promotion of home life and domestic industry

LUMBER EXPORTED TO HAWAII

Chief Factor John McLoughlin had put a small sawmill in operation

its development hinged on the Hawaii market

where 1,000 board feet brought from forty to fifty dollars

First shipment of lumber to Hawaii

was hauled from original Columbia River Mill -- 1828 arrived in Hawaii -- [1829]

demand was spotty and unpredictable

EARLY FARMING

Dr. John McLoughlin had determined none of livestock would be killed for meat

until a sufficient herd existed

McLoughlin built the herd from thirty-one Spanish cattle to 153 head -- 1828

Fort Vancouver’s other livestock soon included

horses, sheep, goats, chickens, turkeys, pigeons, and 200 pigs [from a start of 17]

Chief Factor McLoughlin’s fields during the past season produced

4,000 bushels of potatoes and more than 3,000 bushels of various grains

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY SETS POLICY

According to Company thinking, action was necessary in Columbia Department :

•Snake River Brigades were to go on holding the Americans at bay;

•activity against the Yankee sea peddlers on the coast would have to be stepped up; •in particular, the new central depot Simpson had ordered built on the Fraser River

would have to be given more attention

than Dr. John McLoughlin, still stationed at Fort Vancouver, seemed willing to give it

Chief Factor’s attitude annoyed Governor of Rupert’s Land George Simpson

though a crew dispatched by the massive Chief Factor had obediently

built Fort Langley thirty miles upstream from the Fraser’s double-pronged delta, McLoughlin himself declined to visit the new post

worse, McLoughlin refused to use the Fraser River for supplying New Caledonia

instead, goods came in over the ship-crippling bar of the Columbia River,

were painfully hauled by canoe five hundred miles upstream to the Okanogan River,

and then were laboriously ferried up the Okanogan

to horseback trails Nor’Wester John Stuart had blazed fifteen years before

Dr. McLoughlin’s sole excuse for the negligence, so he wrote the directors in London,

was that he had heard that the Fraser was **“difficult and dangerous and** [a] **Great part of it in the Summer Months unnavigable.”[[206]](#footnote-206)**

JEDIDIAH SMITH AND HIS SMITH, JACKSON & SUBLETTE TRAPPERS IN CALIFORNIA

After successfully hunting the upper reaches of the Sacramento River

they climbed out of the Central Valley and turned toward the Pacific Ocean

carrying about 800 beaver pelts with them -- April-May-June 1828

Mountains which fed the Trinity and Klamath rivers proved nearly impassable

for men driving more than three hundred animals

which he planned to sell at the American fur hunters annual rendezvous

in what is now (Wyoming)

horses and mules crowded the narrow trails slowing progress

several plunged to their death on rocky precipices

game all but disappeared

Indians tracked them -- seldom missing an opportunity to harass the trappers with arrows

Captain Jedediah Smith and his companions reached the Pacific Ocean

even the ocean afforded scant relief as forests grew to the water’s edge

they turned North toward Oregon

JEDIDIAH SMITH AND HIS TRAPPERS ENTER THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Crossed 42º North into Oregon -- June 23, 1828

expedition made their first Oregon camp on the north side of the (Winchuck River)

that evening, Indians visited camp bringing berries, small fish and roots to trade

Next day, because of high tide, Smith’s expedition traveled only three miles

they camped on the south bank of the (Chetco River) -- June 24

near the camp was a village of ten or twelve Indian lodges -- but the natives had all disappeared

Smith’s party traveled twelve miles along the Pacific coast before turning inland -- June 25

they took an old Indian trail behind (Cape Ferrelo), and crossed (Whalehead Creek)

no Indians were seen that day, but two men who were sent back to hunt for a mule reported being attacked by Indians

Mountain Men escaped by retreating on horseback and swimming a creek

trappers camped that night on the north bank of (Thomas Creek) near its mouth

once again the Indians could not be seen, but their lodges were close by

Next morning, three of the missing horses were found badly wounded with arrows -- June 26

this day’s travel was relatively easy as they continued along the Indian trail

to the mouth of the (Pistol River)

there, because of high tide, the group camped on the south side

when counting horses, one particularly valuable animal was found to be missing it was presumed killed by Indians when the earlier three horses were wounded

Expedition traveled over Cape Sebastian and along the beach -- June 27

to the mouth of the (Rogue River) where they established their fifth camp in Oregon

on the south side of the (Rogue River)

large numbers of Indian lodges were counted on both sides of the river

but again, all of the natives had vanished

because timber was scarce along the beach

one of the lodges was torn down by the trappers to acquire puncheons to make rafts

JEDIDIAH SMITH’S PARTY CONTINUES NORTH THROUGH OREGON

Rafts were used the next morning to ferry goods across the (Rogue River) -- June 28, 1828

followed by the animal herd -- twelve to fifteen animals drowned in the crossing

resulting in a loss of some two dozen horses and mules in just three days

once across the (Rogue River), the brigade moved northward along the shore

to establish a camp at (Euchre Creek near Ophir) -- June 28, 1828

On this day only five miles were made -- June 29

high tides again prevented travel on the beaches

forced the brigade into the thicket-covered hills

camp was made at (Mussel Creek)

Next morning, Captain Jedediah Smith took the group up the beach -- June 30

they worked their way behind (Humbug Mountain) where camp was made on (Brush Creek)

two more mules had been lost:

•one fell into an elk pit made by Indians

•and the other fell down a cliff

Smith. Jackson and Sublette Combine brigade continued the next day -- July 1

they moved along the beach and crossed the hills through Port Orford, past (Garrison Lake),

and through the gap at Cape Blanco where one horse was crowded off a cliff and killed

they pressed on to the (Sixes River) where camp was made on the south side

while the expedition waited for low tide

Following day was an easy day of travel along the beach and over small sand hills -- July 2

past (Floras River) to their tenth campsite in Oregon located just south of (Bandon)

length of service for most of the men most of the men expired this day -- July 2

Smith called all hands together

he re-engaged them all for the Smith. Jackson and Sublette Combine

at a rate of one dollar per day

Expedition made another early start this time bound for the (Coquille River) -- July 3

Jedediah Smith arriving at the river ahead of the group,

discovered some Indians moving as fast as possible up river in a canoe

Smith galloped his horse to get ahead of them

when they saw they could not outrace him

they pulled ashore and attempted to destroy the canoe

with Smith screaming at them, they abandoned the canoe and fled

Smith and his trappers used the canoe to ferry their goods across the (Coquille River)

all but one of the horses successfully swam over

group traveled five miles further and camped at (Whiskey Run Creek) -- July 3

JEDIDIAH SMITH’S TRAPPERS TAKE A CAPTIVE

At (Whiskey Run Creek) in the morning -- July 4, 1828

one of the men caught an Indian boy about ten years old

boy was brought to camp and was given beads and dried meat

Indian indicated by using signs:

•that all of the other Indians had fled in canoes and left him

•he was from the Willamette Valley

•he was a slave of one of the bands who fled at Smith's approach

trappers gave him the name of Marion and he continued with the group to the (Umpqua River)

Smith. Jackson and Sublette Combine Brigade continued to hug the coastline

they experienced difficult travel through thickets and across challenging ravines

that night camp was made on a long point of (Cape Arago)

this marked the first American 4th of July in southern Oregon

JEDIDIAH SMITH’S TRAPPERS TRADE WITH THE INDIANS

Next day was a short day of travel making less than two miles -- July 5,1828

finding good grass and judging the horses to be tired,

camp was made in the natural meadows of (Shore Acres)

friendly contact with Indians was made for the first time since the (Winchuck River)

two Indians who spoke Chinook jargon visited camp

told the trappers the welcome news that there were only ten days travel from the Calapooya people in the Willamette Valley

meeting Indians who could communicate in trade language

indicated the brigade had entered the region of Hudson’s Bay Company influence

JEDIDIAH SMITH AND HIS MEN CAMP FOR TWO DAYS

Progress was slow once again as thick brush and marshes limited advancement to two miles

before camp was set up at (Sunset Bay) -- July 6

after the camp was established, two elk were killed

On their fifteenth day in Oregon it was decided to maintain the (Sunset Bay) camp -- July 7

to rest the horses, prepare meat for travel, and clear a road to (Coos Bay)

camp was visited by about 100 Indians bringing fish and mussels for sale

Smith bought a sea otter skin from the chief

these Indians were all armed with knives and tomahawks -- one had a flintlock musket

some natives possessed items which indicated trade for otter and beaver skins

one wore a cloak, and others had cloth pieces

JEDIDIAH SMITH CAMPED AT A COOS INDIAN VILLAGE

Expedition moved North two more miles from (Sunset Bay) camp -- July 8

before they broke through the thick brush to the beach (at Charleston)

where they found a large Indian village and camped

villagers brought goods to trade including fish, shell fish, berries, and some furs

in the evening it was discovered that arrows had been shot into eight of their animals three mules and one horse had been killed

and another horse was injured so badly that it had to be left behind

Indian interpreters told the trappers

killing was done by an Indian angry over a trade he had made

tribal oral history identifies the vandal as a visitor from a lower Umpqua village

who tried to steal some elk meat and was driven from camp by the cook

angered, the Indian wanted the Coos to attack the trappers to avenge the insult

Expedition crossed (South Slough) using canoes -- July 9

then moved up the east shore of Coos Bay where camp was established for the night

area was well-populated with Indian lodges

many Indians came to the camp with fish and berries for sale

trappers bought as much as they could

more beaver and otter skins were also purchased

trappers asked the Indians about the shooting of their animals the day before

but the local chiefs claimed no responsibility

Next day, trappers again used canoes to cross Coos Bay to the (North Spit) -- July 10

crossing went well

Jedediah Smith remained on the east side with five men

to swim over the last horses and mules

he felt apprehensive because the Indians' behavior

indicated they were considering an attack

Captain Smith and his mountain men camped for the night (near Henderson Marsh)

JEDIDIAH SMITH REACHED THE UMPQUA RIVER

After a long day’s drive along the beach they arrived at the mouth of the (Umpqua River) -- July 11 camp was established near a small Indian village -- July 11, 828

on the south bank of the river (at Winchester Bay)

Indians living in the area appeared friendly and Chinook jargon was spoken by several

large delegation of seventy to eighty Indians brought fish and berries

which they sold at an expensive rate

Hudson’s Bay Company was always wary in dealing with the Umpqua Indians

only well-armed parties were sent through their country

Smith’s brigade was unaware that these Indians had a reputation as being hostile to fur traders

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY GOVERNOR GEORGE SIMPSON TRAVELS WEST

With characteristic impulsiveness, Hudson’s Bay Company Governor George Simpson

decided to check in person on Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin and the Columbia Department

Governor of Rupert’s Land Simpson left York Factory on Hudson Bay -- July 12, 1828

complete with bagpipes, tartan, and tall beaver hat

he led eighteen men in two canoes up the Peace River with its terrible portages and crossed overland through central British Columbia

INCIDENT WITH THE UMPQUA INDIANS

Captain Jedediah Smith on the morning of their twentieth day in Oregon -- July 12

led his brigade across the Umpqua River to a landing (near the future site of Umpqua City)

From there Jedediah Smith’s party traveled three miles upriver

along the way, one of the Indians accompanying the caravan stole and hid an axe Smith and another trapper seized the native and tied a cord around his neck

to frighten him into revealing the location of the axe

while other trappers stood by with guns drawn

in case there was resistance from the other fifty Indians present

axe was recovered, but the incident carried more significance than first thought

Indian who was involved was an Umpqua Chief

Camp was made that afternoon on the north side of (Winchester Bay) -- July 12

remainder of the day passed peacefully enough in trading furs and buying berries

JEDIDIAH SMITH ESTABLISHED CAMP ON THE SMITH RIVER

Expedition continued for about four miles

around the east side of (Winchester Bay) -- Sunday, July 13, 1828

eighteen Americans once again made camp

this time at the mouth of a tributary which took Smith’s name along the west bank

probably on the north bank of the Smith River channel

opposite the west tip of (Perkins Island)

Once again fifty to sixty Kelawatset Indians came to trade furs and food

they reported easy traveling to the Willamette Valley -- less than twenty miles upriver

Another incident occurred during this encampment

Umpqua Chief involved in the stolen axe incident wanted his tribe to retaliate against the trappers

but a chief of higher authority overruled him

after this brief hostile exchange, the higher ranking chief mounted one of the brigade's horses

to ride it around camp

one of Smith's men ordered the higher ranking chief to dismount

this chief was insulted by the incident and gave his consent to attack the trappers

UMPQUA MASSACRE

Jedediah Smith left camp early in the morning -- July 14, 1828

departing in a canoe he traveled up the Umpqua River to find a crossing

for a route to the Willamette Valley

he took with him John Turner, Richard Leland, and an Indian guide

his final instructions to his men were for them to keep on guard

After Smith left, Smith. Jackson and Sublette Combine trappers who remained

allowed about a hundred Kelawatsets into camp for a trading session

On a signal, the Indians rushed the trappers and quickly overpowered them

Arthur Black was cleaning his rifle when the attack came

two attackers wounded his hands with knives while fighting him for his gun

a third hit him a glancing blow on the back with an axe

Black, giving up his rifle, ran into the woods for cover

in his flight he saw others of the party falling in the attack

Drifting back downstream late in the morning, Smith could see no activity in his camp

he thought it strange that none of his men were visible

just then an Indian on shore called to Smith's guide

who turned around in the canoe, seized Smith's rifle and dived into the water

Kelawatsets hidden on shore then began to fire on the canoe

Smith, Turner and Leland frantically paddled to the opposite bank

they scrambled ashore, took to the woods and climbed a hill to get a view of the camp

scanning the campsite from hills across the river

and seeing none of their party come forward to help them, Smith drew an accurate conclusion

Unknown to Smith one man, Arthur Black, had escaped

remainder, fifteen in all, had been hacked to death

all of the contents of their camp, including 728 beaver pelts

and 228 horses and mules fell into Indian hands

Without help in the wilderness and all but destitute

Jedediah Smith decided that nothing could be done for the rest of his men

Smith, John Turner and Richard Leland had but one chance

to seek relief from the Hudson’s Bay Company at Fort Vancouver

ARTHUR BLACK SET OUT ALONE FOR FORT VANCOUVER

For the next four days after the Umpqua Massacre, Black wandered in the woods

until he emerged at the ocean a few miles north of the Umpqua River

Knowing the closest refuge was Fort Vancouver

he traveled north following the coast seeking the Hudson’s Bay Company post

First Indian Black encountered wanted to take his knife, but the trapper resisted

short time later seven Indians stripped him of all his clothing except his pants

escaping this group, he saw no more Indians until he came to a Tillamook village

here he met friendly people who led him to the Willamette Valley

and a Hudson’s Bay freeman

Arthur Black arrived at Fort Vancouver -- August 8, 1828

twenty-six days after the attack

to his knowledge, he was the sole survivor of the Umpqua Massacre

SEARCH PARTY SENT BY DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN

Chief Factor, after hearing the events described by Arthur Black,

immediately sent Indian messengers and Michael Laframboise to the Umpqua River

to seek out survivors and offer rewards for their return -- August 9, 1828

Willamette chiefs were instructed to search for Jedediah Smith and any other potential survivors

Chief Factor also gave warning to the natives not to harm the Americans

Dr. McLoughlin treated his unwanted guest with generosity and compassion at the fort

JEDIDIAH SMITH ARRIVED AT FORT VANCOUVER

Smith, John Turner and Richard Leland traveled north via an unknown route

after much suffering and privation they reached Fort Vancouver -- August 10, 1828

Chief Factor, Dr. John McLoughlin received them kindly -- supplied all of their needs

Dr. McLoughlin recorded that Jedediah Smith reached the ocean (at the Alsea River)

staying inland for fifty miles to avoid hostiles

then followed the coast to a Tillamook village

where Indians took him to the Willamette Valley and Fort Vancouver

DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN SENDS A PUNITIVE RAID TO THE INDIANS

Preparations were already in progress for the annual Umpqua Brigade

a trapping expedition to the Umpqua River

but instead the Hudson’s Bay Company Chief Factor

ordered Alexander McLeod and Tom McKay to hurry preparations for departure

as they were to be sent to recover Smith's property

This strong force started south -- September 6, 1828

on a punitive raid to intimidate the Umpqua Indians

this was McLeod’s second retaliatory raid on the natives

McLeod-McKay Expedition, including Jedediah Smith and his three surviving men,

accompanied by William Canning (Cannon) and Joseph Gervais

journeyed south through the Willamette Valley -- September 16, 1828

then over the Calapooya Mountains to the Umpqua River

GOVERNOR OF RUPERT’S LAND GEORGE SIMPSON EXPLORES THE FRASER RIVER

After arriving in New Caledonia (central British Columbia), Simpson’s Expedition

stopped to visit Fort St. James on Stuart Lake

where trader Frances Ermatinger was stationed

Governor Simpson moved on to the Fraser River -- later September

his visit caused him to reevaluate his opinion of usefulness of the river

in his report to the Board of Directors in London, he noted: **“I…consider the passage down [the Fraser River] to be certain Death, in nine attempts out of Ten. …I shall therefore no longer talk of it as a navigable stream.”[[207]](#footnote-207)**

indeed, Fort Langley could not serve as a center for the Northwestern fur trade

in fact, Dr. John McLoughlin had been correct

Governor Simpson had more boats constructed at Fort Langley

to accommodate his party now swelled to thirty-three men

Leaving Fort Langley, Simpson exited the Fraser River into the Gulf of Georgia

they threaded past the lovely San Juan Island and reached the southern end of Puget Sound

there he burned his boats to keep them from the Indians

Governor and his Expedition portaged to the Cowlitz River

then descended that tributary to the Columbia River

ST LOUIS MISSOURI FUR COMPANY IN COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT

Major Joshua Pilcher had been conducting a beaver hunt

with a ragtag, bankrupt remnant of the St. Louis Missouri Fur Company

these Mountain Men had set out from St. Louis --1827

journeyed as far into the Pacific Northwest as Fort Colville

Joshua Pilcher proposed an illegal scheme to Hudson’s Bay Company Governor George Simpson

they would unite the two fur companies, but using only Pilcher’s name

to circumvent the United States embargoes against trapping by foreigners

Governor Simpson refused to participate

GOVERNOR OF RUPERT’S LAND GEORGE SIMPSON ARRIVED AT FORT VANCOUVER

Chief officer of Hudson’s Bay Company tirelessly pounded on the gate of the fort

late in the night -- October 25, 1828

he had arrived for a winter-long inspection tour

Immediately the Governor found fault with the efforts of his Chief Factor

while it was true some strides had been made in diversifying company operations

nonetheless, Fort Vancouver stood too far from the river docks

and from a suitable supply of domestic water

to meet the increased burdens soon to be imposed upon it

entire establishment would have to be uprooted and moved

Second site had been selected by Dr. McLoughlin and Governor George Simpson together -- 1828

less than a mile upstream from the original site

and within two hundred yards of the river bank

McLEOD-McKAY PUNITIVE RAID REACHES SOUTHERN OREGON

Alexander McLeod and Tom McKay Expedition

arrived at the site of the Umpqua Massacre -- October 28

they buried the mangled remains of the eleven skeletons which were found

remains of four others of Smith's men could not be found

at the time of the attack, Smith had 228 horses and mules,

728 beaver and fifty sea otter skins

200 pounds of beads and 100 pounds of goods and tobacco

McLeod was less rigorous in his dealings with the Kelawatset natives

than he had been in his punishment of Puget Sound Indians a few months before

McLeod felt that Smith’s men had provoked this outbreak

Moving along the coast, McLeod-McKay Expedition was remarkably successful

in recovering the goods taken and then traded by the Kelawatsets

for nearly three patient, rain-soaked months they pressed every lead

thirty-eight horses and mules, 700 skins, several rifles, cooking pots, traps, clothes, beads

and assorted other equipment including the journals of Smith

and his clerk, Harrison Rogers were returned to Fort Vancouver

McLeod-McKay Expedition raid also led to the death of twenty-one natives,

destruction of two villages, forty-six canoes and much other Indian property

Alexander McLeod and Tom McKay turned back up the Umpqua River

to return toward Fort Vancouver -- November 12, 1828

JEDIDIAH SMITH DEALS WITH GOVERNOR SIMPSON AT FORT VANCOUVER

When Jedediah Smith arrived back at Fort Vancouver -- mid-December 1828

he dealt directly with Governor of Rupert’s Land Simpson who responded with formal courtesy

Simpson admonished the American for the trouble and expense he has caused

but also recognized the necessity of dealing with their obvious needs

In an act of good will, the Hudson’s Bay Company Governor

consented to buy the recovered furs, “the worst he had ever seen,” and livestock

at the market price despite their now poor condition -- $2,369.06

Governor Simpson charged Smith only for the time the search party had been gone

at the Hudson’s Bay Company hourly rate; and $4 for each animal lost on the trip

Jedediah Smith fully appreciated the Hudson’s Bay Company generosity

in response he assured Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin that Smith, Jackson & Sublette

would confine its operations to the region east of the Continental Divide

GOVERNOR OF RUPERT’S LAND GEORGE SIMPSON DENOUNCES DR. McLOUGHLIN

Simpson upbraided Chief Factor McLoughlin for giving aid and comfort to the enemy

Mortified the Chief Factor retorted with an array of affidavits supporting his action

from other personnel at Fort Vancouver

This effort struck Governor George Simpson as presumptions,

and added to the ill-will between the two men

AMERICAN BRITISH EXCHANGE INFORMATION

Employers of the both fur companies exchanged information

surprising perhaps, given the two groups were competitive rivals

Jedediah Smith and his men, while in Oregon, told stories of the wealth of furs

found along the central corridor of California

their tales led the Hudson’s Bay Company to later dispatch fur trappers

to California's Central Valley

Some of the information Jedediah Smith gave to Dr. McLoughlin was sent to London

it eventually found its way onto the maps of John Arrowsmith

this was the first map to accurately show the relative positions

of the Columbia and Snake rivers

based also on information obtained by Peter Skene Ogden

this map was later used by Senator Lewis F. Linn to illustrate a bill

introduced to authorize the president to occupy Oregon

JEDIDIAH SMITH SPENT THE WINTER WITH DR. McLOUGHLIN

Smith and his three companions remained in Columbia Department (until the next spring)

they enjoyed the hospitality at Fort Vancouver -- Winter 1828-1829

They gratefully appreciated Governor George Simpson’s and Dr. McLoughlin’s generosity

SMITH, JACKSON & SUBLETTE MEN TRAP THE UPPER MISSOURI RIVER

William Sublette, Moses “Black” Harris, and their Smith. Jackson and Sublette Combine men

trapped in the Yellowstone region -- 1829

Company partner David Jackson remained in St. Louis

where he made arrangements to supply the upcoming Rendezvous

ST LOUIS MISSOURI FUR COMPANY IN COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT

Major Joshua Pilcher had been conducting a two-year beaver hunt

with a ragtag, bankrupt remnant of the St. Louis Missouri Fur Company

Pilcher and his Mountain Men traveled as far into the Pacific Northwest as Fort Colville [1827]

where Hudson’s Bay Company Governor Simpson rejected an illegal Pilcher proposal [1828]

Pilcher and his men returned to the United States ­-- 1829

traveling from the Pacific Northwest by way of the Athabasca River

Pilcher’s expedition faced near starvation on a harrowing trip back to St. Louis

where he offered a useful but highly prejudiced anti-British report on conditions in Oregon

to the United States government

SECOND FORT VANCOUVER CONSTRUCTED

Governor of Rupert’s Land George Simpson had given up on developing Fort Langley

as a headquarters and supply base in New Caledonia and the Columbia Department

for Hudson’s Bay Company operations

Location of Fort Vancouver was moved to a new location three-quarters of a mile Northeast

to slightly higher elevation but within two hundred yards of the river bank -- 1829

Water for the fort was provided by a pair of rock-lined wells fed through seepage from the river

SIZE OF NEW FORT VANCOUVER

Dimension was in the shape of a parallelogram -- 250 yards long and 150 yards wide

enclosed by a wall twenty feet high formed of beams set upright in the ground

fitted together and supported by buttresses on the inside

usual bastions stood at the angles of the walls

As usual, small cannon guarded the corner bastions -- two eighteen pounders on sea-carriages

these were viewed with awe by natives

Additional cannon were placed along the front wall

powder was stored in a special brick and stone magazine [by 1832]

Area inside the stockade was divided into two courtyards

around which were arranged forty wooden buildings for carrying on the business of trade

CHIEF FACTOR’S HOUSE

Hudson’s Bay Company Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin and his family

lived in a two story forty-by-seventy-foot residence

made of massive square-hewn timbers

located at the center of a courtyard

home contained very elegant furniture -- fit for the Chief Factor of Hudson’s Bay Company

Dwelling eventually would contain such un-frontier-like pretensions

as a huge central fireplace

french windows that opened onto a vine-covered porch

that could be approached by two curved staircases

and boasted a piazza and flower beds at the front

FORT VANCOUVER DINING HALL

Gentlemen, clerks, chaplain, physician and important guests dined together each evening

with the Governor (when present) presiding, or in his absence, the Chief Factor

Strict order of precedence was observed in seating the company

an abundance of good fare, a fine dinner setting, and table linens were assured

Variety of wines were provided in decanters to honored guests

moderation was the rule at the Chief Factor’s table

he, himself, seldom used wine, except once a year

to toast the opening of festivities honoring the return of the brigades

Dr. McLoughlin’s family consisted of his half-breed wife, Marguerite, and daughter, Maria

his principal associate, James Douglas (who succeeded him as Chief Factor)

noted Maria was “quite an interesting young lady”

At dinner half-breed women, the daughters of chief traders, always dressed in English clothing

these women spoke both English and French correctly

they were permitted to enter the dining hall with their husbands

while full-blooded Indian women were not permitted in the dining hall

OTHER FORT VANCOUVER STRUCTURES INCLUDED

Bachelors’ Hall or smoking room with walls adorned by weapons, costumes,

and other curiosities of savage life

Other necessities inside the walls of the post were:

•officer’s quarters and company offices,

•apartments for the clerks, kitchens, a bakery,

•workshops for carpenters, smith, coopers, wheelwrights, tinners, etc.,

•warehouses, drug store, commissaries, various retail shops for the English goods,

•schoolhouse, library, two chapels, (and later, a church),

•trash pits, privies, and even a jail

OUTSIDE THE FORT VANCOUVER WALLS

Hudson’s Bay Company maintained a hospital, boathouses, granaries, warehouses, threshing mills, dairy buildings, pens for livestock, fields and orchards

Visiting Indians camped outside the post

Outside the north stockade were several small log houses for esteemed married men

FORT VANCOUVER VILLAGE

Sixty or more houses built in rows on the bank of the Columbia River were south of the fort

these served as dwellings for the 500 to 800 people who lived at the fort

here also less important guests stayed

here, too, the Company maintained a hospital

Families were crowded together in shared accommodations

homes were occupied by mechanics and boatmen and other servants

English, Americans, French-Canadians, and Indians

all with their native wives and children

Fort Vancouver village also served as home base

for largest single group of Kanakas (Hawaiians) ever to congregate outside of the islands

**“Kanaka Village** **a** **boisterous little community…where the Company’s employees of lower rank -- Iroquois, Scottish, Hawaiian, French, and Metis** [mixed blood of French and Indian ancestry] **-- lived with their Indian wives and families.”[[208]](#footnote-208)**

To counteract excessive drunkenness, gamboling, fighting,

and other “corruptions” among the Kanaka half of the work force

Chief Factor McLoughlin asked Hudson’s Bay Company's agent **“to search out a trusty educated Hawaiian of good character to read the scriptures and assemble his people for public worship.”[[209]](#footnote-209)**

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY GRIST MILL

Hudson’s Bay Company grist mill at Fort Vancouver was powered by Indian ponies

William Canning (aka: William Cannon) constructed the mill and rigged the wheels and cogs

he also is credited with making the overshot waterwheel that powered the gristmill

that soon replaced the Indian ponies as the source of power

grist mill was followed by many other buildings

Goods which could not be manufactured at each outpost such as flour and trade goods

would be provided by the Company headquarters post

FORT VANCOUVER ULTIMATELY WAS A COMPANY TOWN

Hudson’s Bay Company was the employer, landlord, shopkeeper, creditor

and only provider of transportation or communications with home

Life consisted of dawn-to-dusk drudgery under rigid military-like style of discipline

work six days a week with Sundays off

More than a fortress, Fort Vancouver was the hub of Pacific trade

with the annual arrival and departure of ships by sea and canoes and bateau by river

sailing ships brought supplies and luxuries from London

an average of twice a year, Spring and Fall, the overland express to Montreal

brought important letters, world news, visitors, supplies, personnel and furs

thousands of bales of beaver pelts left Columbia Department

destined for London warehouses

outbound trapping brigades were made up for the Snake River, Kamloops,

Puget Sound, Spokane, Clark’s Fork and California areas

intercostal trade with the Russians in the north and Spaniards in the South

connected traders and natives alike with the world

Fort Vancouver was the center of culture and commerce for the Company and region

provided rich supplies of foods, and ample buildings

hunting trips and Indian trade provided profit and recreation

capital for initiation and enactment of policies toward Indians and trappers alike

JEDIDIAH SMITH WATCHES CONSTRUCTION

Start of this construction took place under the coolly appraising American eyes of Jedediah Smith

No longer was Smith the mere wandering trapper

that Alexander Ross had injudiciously brought among the Flatheads

he had risen to full partnership in the aggressive firm of Smith, Jackson & Sublette

as such he possessed a competitor's keen interest

in the developments taking place on the Columbia River

and the threat they might pose to every beaver stream in the West

Captain Smith learned from Indians visiting Fort Vancouver

that his company, Smith, Jackson & Sublette, was conducting a trapping operation

in the Yellowstone region

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY ANNUAL BRIGADES

Spring saw the departure from Fort Vancouver of the Montreal or York Factory Brigade

Fall was the time of the Snake River Brigade

at first to Snake River Country and back to Fort Vancouver [1822-1828]

later to the annual Rendezvous and back to Fort Vancouver [1829-1843]

New Caledonia Brigade connected forts Vancouver and Alexandria

Southern Brigade traveled from Fort Vancouver to northern California

AMERICAN SEA TRADERS TURN TO THE BEAVER TRADE

These ships represented a new kind of threat to the British fur empire

sea otters had been all but eliminated by 1829

To replace that branch of the fur business

Americans wanted, not sea otters as previous trading ships had sought,

but rather trade with the coastal Indians for inland furs beaver pelts

received through trade with interior natives

Soon Yankee captains began to lure beaver-trapping interior Indians to the coast

with promises of guns and rum

AMERICAN SHIPS COMPETE WITH HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY

At least six Yankee vessels visited the coast trading for beaver -- 1829- [1830]

they competed directly with Hudson’s Bay Company

Yankee ships scanned the coast and even entered the Columbia River

For seventeen months one or the other of the American ships remained in the Columbia,. trading as far upriver as the Dalles

Natives raised their prices on pelts because Americans sold liquor to the Indians

TWO AMERICAN TRADING VESSELS CAUSE CONCERN FOR HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY

Yankee ships *Owyhee* and *Convoy,* tradingat the mouth of the Columbia sharpened Governor George Simpson’s worries about the neglected maritime trade

American brig *Owyhee* under Captain John Dominis

arrived on its second visit to the Columbia River with plans to develop a fishery

(had first ventured into the Pacific Northwest two years before [1827])

*Convoy*, a Boston trading brig under Captain D.W. Thompson,

was also conducting trade along the Pacific coast

*OWHYEE* (AMERICAN TRADING BRIG) IS SUCCESSFUL

Brig ran aground at Deer Island in the Columbia River below the mouth of the Willamette

Dr. McLoughlin dispatched a crew of French-Canadians and Hawaiians to help

as always, an ungrudging friendliness was one hallmark of John McLoughlin’s nature

Chief Factor gave Captain Dominis potatoes, sold him needed lumber,

treated a sick mare, and legend adds, forestalled an Indian attack on the ship

*Owyhee* was refloated and anchored off Deer Island -- February 14, 1829

Captain Dominis hired a local native to place a channel marker to prevent future accidents

Captain John Dominis sailed from Deer Island up the Willamette River

became the first ocean-going ship to do so when she anchored at Clackamas Rapids

Captain Dominis accumulated cargo there for several months

he traded for furs and packed salmon salted down into sixty empty rum hogsheds (barrels)

Events at the rapids are unclear

some accounts say that Captain Dominis became irate during negotiations over the salmon price

he threatened the Clackamas Indians

other accounts say that the Clackamas people simply guarded their fishery at the rapids

in any case, Clackamas swimmers cut the *Owyhee’s* anchor cable and Dominis gave up the effort

Owhyee sailed home to Boston and sold salmon at 10¢ a pound

together his cargo of furs and fish were worth $96,000

DISEASE RUNS RAMPANT IN THE PACFIC NORTHWEST

*Owyhee* did not sail away soon enough to save the natives

aboard his ship Captain John Dominis carried many sick sailors suffering from fever (malaria)

illness spread from the crew to the never-before-exposed natives

who had helped free the ship at Deer Island

these Indians passed the illness on to the local Clackamas people

Malaria-like fever broke out among the local Indians

Willamette Valley Indians called the affliction “cold sick”

Many natives blamed the crew of *Owyhee* for the beginning of epidemics

Clackamas Indians associated the disease with the channel marker

placed by an Indian employee of Captain Dominis

that Indian had quickly become sick and died

other rumors (quite likely perpetuated by Hudson’s Bay Company employees) were begun

that the infection was a deliberate attack on the natives by the American captain

Later the story intertwined in the native’s minds with the story of Astorian Duncan McDougall

who had threatened to release small pox on the Indians from a small, blue vial in his pocket

Dominis who had become angry during negotiations with the Clackamas

became confused in local accounts with “Chief Small Pox” McDougall

In this single year, 1829, nine out of ten Clackamas natives died of the cold sick

NATIVE AMERICANS ARE PLACED ON THE BRINK OF DISASTER

Life in Hudson’s Bay Company’s Columbia Department and the United States’ Oregon

seemingly continued as before as Native Americans continued to live in their established villages

chiefs provided political and practical leadership with what was best for everyone in mind

hunting and fishing grounds were visited as they always had been by Indians men

trade was conducted with friendly villages and battles fought with ancient enemies

Indian women cared for their families and developed their artistic skills

Indian children were educated in the old ways and prepared for life as it had always bee

However, native life had forever changed as the invaders traded animal pelts, fish, horses and dogs

for tools that made construction easier,

household goods that made life simpler,

ideas that seemed more powerful,

and most significant of all, diseases brought upon an unsuspecting people

EPIDEMICS SWEEP THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Beginning in 1829 through and continuing through [1832]

disease wiped out most of the local Indian population

Particularly heavy hit were the people along lower Columbia River

with families, villages and entire tribes wiped out by white man’s diseases

such as: malaria, measles, smallpox, influenza, fevers, and venereal diseases

These diseases were thought to have been brought to the coast by ships’ crews

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY TRADING SHIPS

Sailing brig *William and Ann* with Captain John Swan in command

was on her third trip to the Columbia Department

she was to be retained for use in the country by Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin

*William and Ann* cleared the Hawaiian Islands -- February 1829

in company with the Hudson’s Bay Company schooner *Cadboro*,

Lieutenant Aemilius Simpson in charge

Both ships headed for the Columbia’s mouth,

with the lighter and faster brig distancing the heavier schooner

TRADE WAR IN COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT

Governor Simpson’s instructions arrived from the Governor and Board of Directors in London

these specifically directed, **“If the American Traders settle near our Establishments, they must be opposed, not by violence, which would only be the means of enabling the Traders to obtain the interference of their Government, but by underselling them.”[[210]](#footnote-210)**

To carry out this underselling Governor Simpson ordered Chief Factor McLoughlin

to open wide Fort Vancouver’s warehouses

Simpson was confident that the company’s annual supply vessels

*William and Ann and Cadboro* would soon arrive to replenish the stock

Prices tumbled fantastically:

•blankets fell from five beaver pelts each to one;

•guns (which the company for security reasons liked to keep expensive)

fell from eighteen skins each to six

Hudson’s Bay Company warehouses rapidly were being stripped bare

SHIPWRECK ON THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Hudson’s Bay Company’s 300-ton brig *William and Ann* under Captain John Swan

arrived at the entrance to the Columbia River -- morning of March 9, 1829

ahead of her consort, Hudson’s Bay Company’s *Cadboro*

*William and Ann* met the *Convoy*, a Boston trading vessel under Captain D.W. Thompson

that evening *Convoy* entered the river ahead of the *William and Ann*

British brig *William and Ann* entered the breakers of the bar

she broke up on Clatsop Spit -- March 10, 1829

crew took to lifeboats but all twenty-four men and boys of the crew perished in the raging surf

her cargo was a total loss

This was first known shipwreck at the mouth of the Columbia River

(later known as the “Graveyard of the Pacific”)

*CONVOY* MADE ANCHOR AT FORT VANCOUVER

Captain D.W. Thompson learned of the fate of the *William and Ann* -- March 11, 1829

from Captain John Dominis of the American trading vessel *Owyhee* then in the harbor

bodies of all twenty-four men and boys of the lost vessel, including ten Kanakas,

were found washed ashore

There were those who said that crew members who had made shore alive

were quickly massacred by Clatsops (Klallam) Indians

this was never conclusively proven, but two Clatsop leaders were later killed in retaliation

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY SUPPLY SHIP *CADBORO* ARRIVED

*Cadboro* under the command of Captain Aemilius Simpson,

arrived at the mouth of the Columbia River from the Hawaiian Islands

this Hudson’s Bay Company supply vessel reached Fort Vancouver

just in the nick of time to restock the company’s depleted warehouses

Trade matters leveled off

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY MARINE DEPARTMENT

Was created by Governor of Rupert’s Land George Simpson

to compete with American sea captains and vessels -- 1829

Governor Simpson placed his cousin, Captain Aemilius Simpson, Master of *Cadboro,*

as the head of the department

Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin had trouble with the Marine Department

captains were insubordinate and too often drunk -- crews were frequently unruly

McLoughlin preferred to deal with men of his own experience and way of life

This constant controversy did not improve the relationship

between Dr. McLoughlin and his superior, Governor Simpson

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY TRADE WITH THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

Trade with the Hawaiian Islands was established and maintained through the years

by vessels belonging to the Company

Hudson’s Bay Company ships plied the route between Hawaii and the Columbia River

JEDIDIAH SMITH AND HIS MEN LEAVE FORT VANCOUVER

Smith. Jackson and Sublette Combine parted from their Hudson’s Bay Company friends

to return to the northern Rocky Mountains -- March 12, 1829

for the reunion with David Jackson and William “Billy” Sublette in the Yellowstone region

Smith, Arthur Black, and Richard Leland crossed to the south side of the Columbia River

fourth survivor of the Umpqua massacre, John Turner,

chose to stay with the Hudson’s Bay Company and was employed as a guide

for expeditions working into California

three Mountain Men followed the Columbia River to the Umatilla Indians’ territory where he should logically turn east,

Smith, for some reason, decided to venture further up the Columbia River

going almost due north overland to Spokane House

by way of the Walla Walla and Palouse rivers

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY’S SOUTHERN BRIGADE

Company French-Canadian trappers left Fort Vancouver -- Spring 1829

made their way to a location just south of (Stockton) in the San Joaquin Valley

They set up an encampment known today as the town of French Camp

they trapped beaver, raccoon and other pelts

then floated them down the river to Yerba Buena (now known as San Francisco) where they sold the skins

GOVERNOR OF RUPERT’S LAND GEORGE SIMPSON DEPARTS FORT VANCOUVER

Governor set out for York Factory -- March 26, 1829

Left behind was Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin and the quickly emptying company warehouses

McLoughlin was left to his own devices to do the best he could with what he had

DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN’S LAND CLAIM

McLoughlin made known his intention

to claim two square miles of land and water power at the waterfalls (Willamette Falls)

along East side of the Willamette River twenty-five miles upstream from its mouth

at (today’s Oregon City)

part of his land claim was a small island in the Willamette River located near the crest of the falls

two or three acres in size in normal water and four or five acres at low water

separated from the east bank by not more than forty feet of water in summer

this island was known as “Governor’s Island” after Dr. John McLoughlin

(but was changed to Abernathy Island in the Donation Land Law [1850])

Water-power rights to Willamette Falls provided the obvious motivation

what was less obvious was whether Dr. McLoughlin was making the claim

in his own name or for the benefit of Hudson’s Bay Company

McLoughlin at the time carefully stated in writing his right to the riverbank and to: “**the small Island in the Falls…which I intend to claim when the Boundary line is drawn”[[211]](#footnote-211)**

Sites unique topography featured three terraces that rose above the river:

•lowest terrace, which was the earliest to be developed, was only two city blocks wide

but stretched northward from the falls for several blocks

•second terrace was about fifty feet above sea level at the riverbank

•upper terrace was more than 250 feet above sea level

CONSTRUCTION BEGINS AT WILLAMETTE FALLS

Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin employed Etienne Lucier to lead a work party

to build a log storehouse and three cabins at Willamette Falls

(this was the first construction at the future site of Oregon City)

Lucier was a former Astorian who arrived with Wilson Price Hunt

and later worked for Hudson’s Bay Company

McLoughlin began construction of a sawmill at the falls -- 1829

Chief Factor had a mill-race blasted out of the rocks from the head of the island

it was asserted that these improvements were made for Hudson’ Bay Company

but in his documents Dr. McLoughlin says: **“I had selected for a claim, Oregon City, in 1829, made improvements on it, and had a large quantity of timber squared.”**

Indians burned the cabins and the pile of squared timbers meant for construction of a sawmill

to protect their fishing grounds and prairie but construction was restarted by McLoughlin

OLD GROWTH FORESTS DOMIONATED THE LANDSCAPE OF WESTERN WASHINGTON

Pacific Northwest Old-Growth Forest was a conifer forest of huge old trees

generally dominated by Douglas firs and western hemlocks up to 1,000 years old

Sitka spruce and western hemlock dominated along the Pacific coast

and at higher elevations in the Cascade Mountains

no other forest in the world had an entire group of tree species that were equal size and long life

to the trees in the Pacific Northwest old-growth forest

some of California’s giant redwoods are bigger than the biggest Douglas-fir tree

but several species of big trees grow in the Pacific Northwest old-growth forest, not just one

Occasionally lightning storms or Indians would set fire to tiny portions of the dense forest

Indians used fire to clear spots in the blanket of trees

to allow grasses to grow to feed their animals

when pioneers arrived they often settled in these clearings and named them “prairies”

such as “French Prairie” or “Connell’s Prairie” (often the apostrophe was dropped) FRENCH PRAIRIE BECAME THE FUTURE HOME OF FRENCH-CANADIAN TRADERS

French Prairie was selected by Dr. John McLoughlin as the most desirable located for a settlement

while fringed by forests this large prairie itself had few trees and little brush

its soil was alluvial river bottom: rich, easy to cultivate, sufficiently dry for cultivation

and yet well-watered by small streams and springs

it was bounded on the west and north by the Willamette River

and on the east by the Molalla River

(this would be the future location of Champoeg State Park and Historic District,

and the historic towns of Aurora, Donald, Butteville, Gervais, Hubbard, St. Louis, St. Paul

and Woodburn and a number of French Prairie historic churches)

ETIENNE LUCIER IS THE FIRST WHITE SETTLER ON FRENCH PRAIRIE

After leaving Dr. McLoughlin’s construction project at Willamette Falls

former Astorian and Hudson’s Bay Company employee Etienne Lucier shifted locations

he became first Hudson’s Bay Company fur trapper to retire on the plains of Champoeg

(later called French Prairie in tribute to Lucier and the French-Canadian trapper-farmers

who retired to the area and joined him)

Lucier built a log house along the Willamette River (near present-day Champoeg State Park) -- 1829

he settled his family, broke ground and planted crops

he became first permanent settler to begin farming in Willamette Valley

and was the first Pacific Northwest wheat farmer

CHIEF FACTOR CHANGES HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY POLICY

Company rules forbade ex-employees from settling Indian lands

and mandated after their term of service that they return to their place of origin

Since settlement seemed inevitable, Dr. McLoughlin at Fort Vancouver

encouraged ex-employees to farm -- but only in the Willamette Valley

To implement his new policy, Dr. McLoughlin used Etienne Lucier to guide the way-- 1829

Lucier and other French-Canadians retirees who followed him

were encouraged to do so by Dr. McLoughlin who provided supplies and a pair of cattle

CATTLE RAISING

Thirty-one head of Spanish cattle delivered from Fort George along with seventeen hogs

became extremely important to Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin

they were mixed with English cattle to improve the strain

Chief Factor’s policy was to increase and preserve the Company’s herd at all costs

old cattle could be purchased from the chief factor

but under no circumstances would he sell any breeding stock to the settlers

calves had to be returned to the Company -- which assured the Company’s monopoly on animals

Dr. McLoughlin knew calves might be butchered -- and thus slow production of the herd

occasionally a bull calf was killed for rennet used in cheese-making

but all other slaughter was strictly forbidden [until 1836]

TOWN OF CHAMPOEG TAKES ROOT

Gradually enough retired Hudson’s Bay Company French-Canadians

built farms close enough together to justify a warehouse to hold grain

for shipment on Hudson’s Bay Company boats that carried freight down the Willamette River

Construction of such a warehouse was the seed that produced the village of Champoeg

which soon became a prime port for the thriving Willamette River trade

JEDIDIAH STRONG SMITH TRAVELS THROUGH OREGON COUNTRY

After reaching Spokane House, Smith, Arthur Black and Richard Leland turned east

they skirted well to the north of Coeur d’Alene Lake

continued on around the north end of the Bitter Root Mountains

they passed through the valley between them and Lake Pend d’Oreille

and then up Clark Fork River to Flathead Lake where Smith had been several seasons before

When they reached Flathead House (in Montana)

Jedediah Smith chanced to find David E. Jackson who was looking for Smith -- August 5, 1829

Out of gratitude to Hudson’s Bay Company, Smith hurried Jackson’s trappers

back across the mountains away for British trapping grounds

never again during the short remainder of his life did the men of Jedediah Smith’s

Smith. Jackson and Sublette Combine reentered the Columbia watershed

JEDIDIAH STRONG SMITH DECIDES TO ATTEND THE RENDEZVOUS

Not until Smith reached Flathead House did he decide to attend the Rendezvous

Having connected with his partner, David E. Jackson, at Flathead House

Smith, taking the most direct overland route, journeyed strait south

toward the Smith. Jackson and Sublette Combine 1829 Rendezvous held at Pierre’s Hole

REVEREND JONATHAN S. GREEN -- CONGREGATIONAL MINISTER

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions heard reports

from their missionaries in the Hawaiian Islands

that the Pacific Northwest might be fertile ground for additional missionary work

Congregational Mission Station nearest to Oregon was in Honolulu

it was from there that the first overtures for establishing a center

for the enlightenment and salvation of savage souls of the Pacific Northwest began

Congregational minister Rev. Jonathan Green was sent by the Prudential Committee

of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions

from the Hawaiian Islands to the Northwest on a reconnaissance tour

Although he did not venture inland, he did visit several ports

most of Green’s scouting was done among the northern coastal tribes

he had planned to conduct a special survey of the lower Columbia River

but inclement weather and high seas prevented his entering the river

Rev. Green noted in his report: **“The Indians on the Northwest Coast… are atheists in heart. That they live ‘without God’ and are devoid of all consciousness of accountability is certain. They appear to have no sense whatever of obligation. Gratitude is a flame which no favor can kindle in the icy bosoms.”[[212]](#footnote-212)**

**“Nootka Sound… was formerly much visited by traders, but as furs have been scarce, vessels have not been there for several years. The natives had become hostile long before their trade ceased. The Straits of Juan de Fuca… are now becoming a place of resort for the purpose of trade. They are easily entered, and the country about them is said to be an excellent one. The natives are unacquainted with the use of firearms and ardent spirits.”[[213]](#footnote-213)**

**“Somewhere in the vicinity of the Columbia River such a[n American] colony, I doubt not, would find a salubrious climate, a fertile soil and ultimately a country of great importance…. An establishment here, in addition to the good which might be affected in behalf of the native inhabitants, would have a happy influence on the interests of the Sandwich Island mission. Timber, fish and other necessities could be obtained for the islands, while it would afford a better than New England climate for those whose strength had withered beneath the influence of a tropical sun.”[[214]](#footnote-214)**

He was thoroughly pessimistic in his report written late in 1829

although he believed the Mission Board had delayed too long

he recommended that a mission be established near the mouth of the Columbia

or the lower part of the river

HALL JACKSON KELLEY APPROACHES CONGRESS

Thirty-year-old Boston school teacher and author had determined in his mind

that the Pacific Northwest belonged to the United States

He accepted the common American error that supposed the United States

held indisputable claim to Oregon

and that the joint occupation treaty merely ceded certain temporary privileges to Great Britain

While waiting for Congress to seize on the opportunity to form a new republic in Oregon

Kelley gave up teaching and textbook writing

instead, he wrote wildly exaggerated accounts of the wonders of the West

although he had never been there

strong religious overtones invaded his thinking

he was dubbed the **“Prophet of Oregon”** and talked and wrote the part

**“All nations who have planted colonies have been enriched by them…. The present period is propitious to the experiment. The free governments of the world are fast progressing to the consummation of moral excellence, and are embracing within the scope of their policies the benevolent and meliorating principles of humanity and reform.**

**“The most enlightened nation on earth will not be insensible to the best means of national prosperity. Convinced of the utility and happy consequences of establishing the Oregon colony, the American Republic will found, protect and cherish it… and extend the peculiar blessings of civil polity and of Christian religion to distant and destitute nations.”[[215]](#footnote-215)**

Much of his sight unseen enthusiasm came from reading

Lewis and Clark’s reports of the agricultural potential of the region

Kelley flooded Congress with appeals

for the United States to take immediate possession of Pacific Northwest

because he hoped to found a settlement at the mouth of the Willamette River

AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR ENCOURAGING THE SETTLEMENT OF THE OREGON TERRITORY

Hall Jackson Kelley devised and announced a plan

to lead a caravan of three thousand New England farmers

from Massachusetts to the banks of the Columbia River -- 1829

Kelley advertised for emigrants from the United States to form the company

he distributed circular appeals for recruits and used word of mouth to advertise his scheme

Four goals were established by the founder:

•to improve the moral condition of the Indians by providing preachers and teachers;

•to provide a place for unemployed American workers to settle;

•to reopen the China Trade;

•to break the British grip on Pacific Northwest and make Oregon American

He planned that his colony would survive based on agriculture, lumber, fishing, and whaling

KELLEY’S SCHEME

Called for traveling overland to St. Louis then following the routes of fur companies across the plains to the “River of Oregon”

He enrolled 400 prospective emigrants and interested thousands of others

Where the Willamette River enters into the Columbia River

he projected both a commercial colony, and an agricultural colony

he was a competent surveyor, and laid both colonies down on paper

without ever having been there

Kelley postponed the proposed journey while petitioning Congress for aid

Congress refused to act

as it was felt it did not have the power to establish land grants in Pacific Northwest

HALL JACKSON KELLEY’S ENTERPRISE FAILED

Opposition to Kelly’s plan surfaced from the fur companies

His extravagant hopes and irritating personality also hurt his cause

Adverse press added to the criticism of his efforts

Hall Jackson Kelley’s Expedition never left the east coast

PIERRE’S HOLE RENDEZVOUS

Was held (near present-day Teton, Wyoming) -- August 20th to late September 1829

William “Billy” Sublette successfully delivered the necessary Smith. Jackson and Sublette supplies

to the impatiently waiting thirsty merry-makers

JEDIDIAH SMITH ARRIVED AT THE RENDEZVOUS

Traveling with David E. Jackson, Smith reached the 1829 Pierre’s Hole Rendezvous

Smith had led the first overland trip from the United States to California

and from California to Oregon

Smith and Jackson joined William H. Sublette uniting the three partners

for the first time since their Smith. Jackson and Sublette Combine had been formed [in 1826]

Also at the Rendezvous were Mountain Men

Moses “Black” Harris, Joe Meek, Jedediah Smith, David E. Jackson,

and Thomas “Tom” Fitzpatrick

ROCKY MOUNTAIN FURVCOMPANY PARTNERS CONFER

Jedediah Smith insisted the coming Fall company hunt be conducted East of the Continental Divide

he had voluntarily decided to continue his trading limited to land East of the Rockies

in territory undisputed by Hudson’s Bay Company

thus Hudson’s Bay Company maintained its monopoly in the Pacific Northwest

Smith returned to St. Louis from Pierre’s Hole along the route (which became the Oregon Trail)

WILLIAM “BILLY” SUBLETTE SETS OUT FROM THE PIERRE’S HOLE RENDEZVOUS

He led a contingent of Smith. Jackson and Sublette Combine Mountain Men to the Shoshone River

included were Moses “Black” Harris, Joe Meek, and Thomas “Tom” Fitzpatrick

Mountain Men reached the Big Horn Plains

where they joined William’s brother Milton Sublette and his party of forty men

EWING YOUNG DECIDES TO TRADE WITH SHIP CAPTAINS

Trouble with Mexican officials in Taos had led him to a conclusion

already reached by other Taos trappers

sea captains regularly called at California ports and would buy furs to add to their cargo

Gila River (New Mexico and Arizona) could be trapped and the catch carried on to California

and sold there to the masters of American or foreign vessels

Young placed himself at the head of forty men and set forth from Taos (New Mexico) -- August 1829

he journeyed north for fifty miles to deceive suspicious Mexican officials

before circling back southwest to Zuni Pueblo

among Young’s men was an unimpressive youth of nineteen: Christopher Houston “Kit” Carson

CHRISTOPHER “KIT” CARSON

Even as a youth he was short and stoop-shouldered with freckled face and reddish brown hair

he spoke quietly, sparingly, and modestly,

but in the three years since arriving in New Mexico he had sharpened his outdoor skills

and he revealed courage, strength, endurance, and intellect

Kit Carson had grown up on the Missouri frontier

and had listened eagerly to the stories of the West recounted by his brothers

he was especially influenced by his half-brother Moses -- a successful trapper in his own right

at sixteen Kit had run away from home and joined a pack caravan on the Santa Fe Trail

EWING YOUNG’S TRAPPING PARTY

From the Colorado River, the Young party followed a route already twice traveled by Jedediah Smith

across the Mojave Desert and Mojave River to Cajon Pass

through the San Bernardino Mountains

and thence to the hospitality of Father Jose Sanchez at San Gabriel Mission

Young found the beaver to be scarce, however, and soon learned why

when he overhauled a trapping brigade of the Hudson’s Bay Company

sixty men, many with their families

heading it was an old adversary to American trappers, Peter Skene Ogden

PETER SKENE OGDEN’S LAST SNAKE RIVER BRIGADE

Hudson’s Bay Company’s Chief Trapper had made six expeditions between [1824 and 1830]

in his exploits he encountered the Humboldt River area

he was one of the first whites to see the Great Salt Lake

he completely explored the Snake River country, Oregon, Salt Lake, Bear River areas, and most of northern California

Ogden submitted written reports on each of these expeditions

to the Hudson’s Bay Company in London

This was his sixth and final Snake Country Expedition -- 1829-[1830]

he ranged south from Fort Vancouver along the western rim of the Great Basin all the way to the Gulf of California

then returned to the Columbia River by way of California’s Central Valley

where he encountered Ewing Young and Kit Carson

NATIVE SONS RETURN HOME

Sons of two Indian chiefs, Nicholas (Spokane) Garry and J.H. “Kootenae” Pelly

completed their Christian education in the Red River Colony (Winnipeg, Manitoba) in Canada

after five years [1824]-1829

Two young men, about age nineteen, returned to their tribes and revisited their people

before returning to the Red River Colony for additional training

in the teachings of the Church of England -- 1829

CAPTAIN JEDIDIAH STRONG SMITH ORGANIZED ANOTHER BRIGADE

Praying Trapper led the Smith. Jackson and Sublette Combine 1829-1830 Expedition

this time from St. Louis to invade the Blackfoot country -- late Autumn 1829

partner David E. Jackson went along on the expedition

Jim Bridger, now one of the ablest mountaineers, served as pilot

VIRGINIA CONGRESSMAN JOHN FLOYD PROMOTES THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

U.S. Representative Floyd continued to hound Congress about the Pacific Northwest

for six years until he was elected Governor of Virginia -- November 1829

As governor, he began to generate interest among Virginians

WILLIAM “BILLY” SUBLETTE’S EXPEDITION TO THE WIND RIVER

Smith. Jackson and Sublette Combine Mountain Men led by Captain William Sublette

combined with Milton Sublette and his party of forty men left the Big Horn Plains

they reached the Wind River -- December 1829

where they conducted a successful hunt before returning to St. Louis

JEDIDIAH SMITH MAKES WINTER CAMP

Smith. Jackson and Sublette Combine men interrupted their Fall and [spring 1830] hunt

with a winter camp on the Powder River

Blackfoot Indians harassment finally drove them out of the region

but only after they had amassed a rich store of beaver pelts to take to the [1830] Rendezvous

1830-1839

SERIES OF GREAT EPIDEMICS DECIMATES COASTAL NATIVES

Swept through the Northwest (between the years [1829 and 1832] and peaking in [1833])

which had a devastating effect on the native people

within a brief period of time, the native population was greatly diminished

loss of life was particularly heavy along the lower Columbia River

with families and even entire villages wiped out by pestilence

These epidemics came in the form of white man’s diseases

such as malaria (cold sick), smallpox, measles, cholera, influenza, fevers

and venereal diseases

possibly or even probably brought by sailing ships’ crews

of vessels harbored on the Columbia River

because of ignorance, unsanitary habits, and unusual practices in treating illness

natives became easy prey to the devastation

Many Indians blamed Captain Dominis and the crew of the American brig *Owyhee* in particular

which anchored off Deer Island in the Columbia River -- [February 1829]

and loaded cargo for months

soon after she arrived, an epidemic of Malaria-like fever broke out among the Indians

which began the devastation of the Chinook people

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY’S COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT

Also known as the Pacific Northwest by Americans ranged from 42º north to 54º north

from Pacific Ocean to Rocky Mountains and was divided by Columbia River

British unofficially claimed everything north of the Columbia River

they were also reluctant to allow Americans south of the River

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY CONTROLS THE ECONOMY

From the 1830s to [1850] Hudson’s Bay Company

maintained the standard of exchange in the Northwest

imperial English bushel (seventy pounds) served as the standard

Fort Vancouver was home of five hundred to seven hundred residents

it was most the important community on the entire Pacific coast

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY EARLY CATTLE FARMING

Cattle was purchased and allowed to multiply

700 head of cattle grazed on lands adjacent to Fort Vancouver up from 200 head the year before

BOSTON MERCHANTS SEND A TRADING SHIP TO THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Boston merchants owned the brig whose cargo consisted of trading merchandise

Captain William Henry McNeill sailed the brig Llama from Boston 12,000 miles

around Cape Horn to the Pacific Northwest on a fur trading expedition -- 1830

Hudson’s Bay Company purchased the Lama and its cargo and retained McNeill as captain

but in order to work for the company, McNeill was required to become a British citizen

HALL JACKSON KELLEY -- AUTHOR AND PUBLICIST

Boston author who published a very influential book:

*A Geographical Sketch of that Part of North America called Oregon* *-- 1830*

book is more famous for its effects in stirring migration than its factual accuracy

contained an exaggerated account of the wonders of the west

(despite the fact it would be five years before he actually got to the Pacific Northwest,)

Kelley wrote: **“When improved and embellished by the white man, Oregon will become the loveliest and most envied country on earth. Oregon cannot be outdone whether in wheat, oats, rye, barley, buckwheat, peas, beans, potatoes, turnips, cabbages, onions, parsnips, carrots, beets, currants, gooseberries, strawberries, apples, peaches, pears, or fat and healthy babies.”**

Kelley described the Pacific Northwest as a place where **“mountains are high and rough** [but where also] **the air is more salubrious and the country better furnished with natural facilities for application of labour.”[[216]](#footnote-216)**

he urged his readers to go to the Pacific Northwest: **“The settlement of the Oregon country, would conduce to a freer intercourse, and a more extensive and lucrative trade with the East Indias.”[[217]](#footnote-217)**

Kelley published a second pamphlet: *A Manual of the Oregon Expedition* -- [1831]

WILLIAM SUBLETTE’S EXPEDITION TO THE WIND RIVER

Smith, Jackson, & Sublette Mountain Men led by Captain William Sublette

conducted a successful hunt along the Wind River --Winter 1829-1830

Captain Sublette, Moses“Black” Harris and others of the fur-trading party

returned to St. Louis -- February 1830

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY SHIPPING

Annual supply ships arrived at Fort Vancouver -- usually in March of each year

delivered cargo for next season’s trade

It was a disaster when a ship was wrecked like the *William* *and Ann* [1829] *Isabella* [1830]

losses seriously affected trade by reducing outfits

and disrupted schedule of trade with company outposts and lowered employee morale

SUPPLYING THE WIND RIVER RENDEZVOUS

Partnership of Smith, Jackson & Sublette was formed by Jedediah Smith, and David Jackson

and three Sublet Brothers led by William, along with Milton, and Andrew

two heavy wagons left St. Louis -- April 10, 1830

Followed Platte and Sweetwater rivers

ten 5-mule teams pulled two heavy wagons carrying eighteen hundred pounds each

accompanied by twelve head oxen and milk cows

buffalo provide food for the party

AMERICAN FUR COMPANY WESTERN DEPARTMENT

John Jacob Astor had appointed Pierre Chouteau as the director of the department

his mission was to directly compete with Smith, Jackson & Sublette

in providing supplies to trappers at the Wind River Rendezvous

Two pack caravans were organized by Chouteau to search out the Rendezvous of 1830

one led by Lucien Fontenelle and Andrew Drips

second was under Kenneth McKenzie

Fontenelle and Drips set out from St. Louis in search of the 1830 Rendezvous

Lucien Fontenelle at age thirty was the temperamental and hard-drinking

son of a New Orleans French plantation owner

Andrew Drips at forty-one had emigrated from Ireland as a child

had matured into a plainspoken man of decisive action

who combined stability with good judgment

At the same time, Kenneth McKenzie launched his mule caravan from Fort Union

under the leadership of William H. Vanderburgh

Vanderburgh had been educated at, but not graduated from,

West Point Army military academy

he enjoyed wide respect and as an accomplished trader and leader of men

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOR INDIANS

Five more Indian boys went to the Red River settlement (Winnipeg, Manitoba) -- 1830

began their Christian education at the Northwest Mission of the Church of England

where they joined Spokane Garry and Kootenai Pelly

during this time, Pelly fell off a horse and was killed

(next year they were joined by a sixth Indian youth -- [1831])

INDIAN REMOVAL ACT

U.S. Government plan to relocate the remaining 200,000 Indians East of the Mississippi

to receive new “homelands” in the region West of the Mississippi River

Indian Removal Act was passed by Congress -- May 28, 1830

whites were anxious to get control of Eastern Indian land

missionaries who served these people favored the removal of natives

believed Indians would not be civilized even if they lived close to whites

because of the degrading influence of such things as liquor

Eastern Indians were sent Westward across the Mississippi River

which caused great distress among the Native Americans

newspapers recited stories of the Indian’s suffering

which produced a great wave of sympathy for the displaced natives

Roman Catholic Church authorized their missionaries to stay with the deported Indians

Catholic and Protestant missionaries followed some tribes West

laboring among the people they had known East of the Mississippi River

however some missionaries worked among native groups not known to them before

they preached Christianity and taught children to read and write

induced natives to farm and live in permanent houses like the whites

sometimes the government employed missionaries as teachers or Indian Agents

NATURALIST DAVID DOUGLAS IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST AGAIN

Returned for a second time to the Northwest (after an absence of three years) -- June 1830

continued his scientific (if sometimes inaccurate) study of native plants

After arriving at Fort Vancouver, Douglas investigated the Willamette Valley

traveling down the Umpqua and McKenzie rivers and along Pacific Northwest coast

he proceeded overland to Monterrey, California

in addition to his botanical work, he found the people of California to be very pleasant

EWING YOUNG TRAPPING IN CALIFORNIA

Seized an opportunity to make himself useful to the Mexican authorities in California

and thus smooth the way for the sale of his furs in San Francisco

Some of the San Jose Mission Indians had revolted and taken refuge

with other tribesmen in the Sierra foothills

weak contingent of solders had failed to dislodge them

Mexican officials asked for American help

Young sent twelve men, including Kit Carson, to oblige the Mexicans -- July 1830

after the offending Indian village was attacked and burned,

runaways were turned over to Young’s men

who escorted them back to the San Jose Mission

these prisoners were gratefully accepted by the Mexican government

Not surprisingly Ewing Young encountered no official interference

with the sale of his furs to the master of a schooner tied up in San Francisco

With the proceeds of the sale of his furs Young bought horses and mules both for his own needs

and to sell on his return to New Mexico

RENDEZVOUS 1830 HELD

Wind River Rendezvous held just below the mouth of the Popo Agie River (near Riverton, Wyoming)

opened -- July 4, 1830

although supplies would not arrive for another two weeks

(trade was conducted, off and on until about [August 3, 1830])

AMERICAN TRADING SHIPS COMPETE WITH HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY

*Owyhee* and *Convoy* moved to Puget Sound -- July 1830

for a brief time they cut briefly into Fort Langley’s trade

at last they departed with twenty-nine hundred pelts

mediocre return for a year and a half’s effort,

but a serious loss to Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin

SMITH, JACKSON & SUBLETTE SUPPLY CARAVAN SUPPPLIES THE 1830 RENDEVOUDS

Two heavy wagons led by William “Billy” Sublette proceed toward the Wind River Rendezvous

Smith, Jackson and Sublette Combine caravan journeyed through South Pass

and the Rocky Mountains

mountain passes and valleys were green with food for the stock

Sublette reached the headwaters of the Wind River

and arrived at the Rendezvous without mishap -- July 18, 1830

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AMERICAN FUR COMPANY CARAVANS

Both mule pack trains failed to find the 1830 Rendezvous

pack train under the leadership of Lucien Fontenelle and Andrew Drips

cached their merchandise at Ham’s Fork of the Green River

after wandering vainly in search of the rendezvous site

divided their men into groups for a fall hunt which trapped a few pelts

(before they spent the winter in the Cache Valley [1830-1831])

William H. Vanderburgh’s pack train also failed to reach the 1830 Rendezvous

Vanderburgh turned his fifty men into trappers (for a fall hunt)

toward the Three Forks of the Missouri River -- 1830

where they were attacked and routed by Blackfoot Indians

American Fur Company leaders had a great deal to learn

as demonstrated by the fact they failed to even find the site of the rendezvous

BRIG *OWYHEE* -- AMERICAN TRADING SHIP

Left the Columbia River with Captain John Dominis in command -- July 1830

they moved to Puget Sound, cut briefly into Fort Langley’s trade, and at last departed for Boston

with twenty-nine hundred pelts -- a mediocre return for a year and half’s effort,

but a serious loss to Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin

In addition to her cargo of furs, *Owyhee* carried pickled Columbia River salmon

salted down and placed into sixty empty rum hogsheds (barrels)

SMITH, JACKSON & SUBLETTE COMBINE SOLD

With a comfortable profit to show for their four-year operation

partnership of Jedediah Smith, David E. Jackson & William Sublette agreed among themselves

to withdraw from the fur trade -- thus ending their company’s influence

on both Hudson’s Bay Company, and Astor’s American Fur Company

and also on all independent trappers

sale of Smith, Jackson & Sublette was complete -- August 4, 1830

with the understanding that Smith, Jackson & Sublette

would supply a caravan for the next [1831] Rendezvous

After the sale, Jedediah Smith, David E. Jackson and Captain William Sublette set out for St. Louis

with the furs they had gathered in the field and at the Wind River Rendezvous

ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR COMPANY FORMED

Owners of the new company consisted of a partnership composed of

Tom Fitzpatrick, Milton Sublette, Jim Bridger, Henry Fraeb, and Jean Baptiste Gervais

Five partners, all accomplished mountain men, styled themselves the Rocky Mountain Fur Company

this was a very successful the next four years 1830-[1834]

Two trapping expedition were organized by the Rocky Mountain Fur Company

Henry Fraeb, and Jean Baptiste Gervais

led a small party into the Colorado Mountains for a year

Tom Fitzpatrick, Milton Sublette, Jim Bridger

went to the Powder River Valley in Montana

SMITH, JACKSON & SUBLETTE CARAVAN

Arrived at St. Louis from the Wind River Rendezvous -- October 11, 1830

to complete the sale of their assets and disband their company

Townspeople took note of the caravan because

in addition to the usual pack animals and about fifty Indians

it included two heavy wagons

for the first time, wagons had gone to the Rocky Mountains and returned

St. Louis newspaper editorialized **“The ease with which they did it and could have gone on to the mouth of the Columbia shows the folly and nonsense of those ‘scientific’ characters who talk of the Rocky Mountains as the barrier which is to stop the westward march of the American people.”[[218]](#footnote-218)**

Smith, Jackson & Sublette sold their catch in St. Louis

for more than eighty-four thousand dollars

START OF THE SANTA FE TRAIL

Jedediah Smith, David Jackson and William Sublette

were no longer associated with supplying trappers at rendezvous or even with the fur trade

they pondered forming a new company

to carry supplies from the Missouri River to Santa Fe (New Mexico)

they could then supply the trappers at future rendezvous from the south

Smith, Jackson and William Sublette now turned their interest to linking Missouri and (New) Mexico

over the Santa Fe Trail

but first they had to arrange to provide the [1831] rendezvous caravan

as they had agreed with the new owners of their old company

now called the Rocky Mountain Fur Company

JEDEDIAH SMITH WAS DISTRESSED

He had received word of his mother’s death and now he was homesick

his strong religious convictions left him guilt-ridden over neglecting his parents

and hungry for the comfort and support which could be provided by the clergy

PACIFIC NORTHWEST EPEDEMICS REACH CRISIS LEVELS

In the wake of the *Owyhee* and other trading ships, devastating plagues broke out -- October 1830

characterized by an intermittent fever followed by chills and sweating

although it would linger for several years, the first months of the onslaught were the worst

Along the lower Columbia River, where alcohol and venereal diseases

had long since undermined native resistance to illness,

nine-tenths of the native population lay dead amid scenes of indescribable filth and misery

Chinook Indians, remembering Duncan McDougall’s threat at Astoria [1811]

to open a vial of smallpox among them, blamed the outbreak on “bad water”

let loose by American trading brigs such as the *Owyhee*

other Indians, and several whites, attributed the outbreak to bad atmosphere (pollution) rising from the newly-plowed ground near Fort Vancouver

While not fatal to whites, the disease was painfully incapacitating

at one time seventy-five of Vancouver’s employees were on the sick list

work almost came to a standstill

Dr. McLoughlin, irritably recollecting his almost forgotten medical knowledge,

was forced to take personal charge of the improvised hospital

Other diseases of the whites spread from families to villages to entire tribes

all were at risk of being wiped out by measles, smallpox, influenza, fevers, and venereal diseases

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY TRAPPING BRIGADES CAME TO A STANDSTILL

Only the trapping brigades to the south continued to function with anything like normal vigor

stimulated by Jedediah Strong Smith’s stories,

Peter Skene Ogden investigated the wastelands of the Great Basin

to the lower regions of the Colorado River

Ogden’s brigade was attacked by fierce Mojave Indians

Hudson’s Bay Company men used short wooden spears to fight them off

twenty-six natives were killed

Ogden’s party then set traps all the way down the river to the Gulf of California before turning back

Details of Ogden’s epic journey are only sketchily known

after reaching Fort Walla Walla with his catch Ogden started down the Columbia River

to French *voyageurs* “dalles” meant a place where water was confined by rocks

and forced its tumultuous way through the chutes or rapids

“grand dalles” referred to the great rapids located just east of (today’s city of The Dalles)

one of Ogden’s canoes capsized at the Grand Rapids and nine lives were lost

including Joseph Portneuf and his two children

Portneuf River (in Idaho) was named in his honor

five hundred furs, and all of Ogden’s records also were lost

ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR COMPANY POWDER RIVER VALLEY EXPEDITION

Thomas Fitzpatrick, Milton G. Sublette, James Bridger of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company

went North from (Wyoming) into (Montana) with a party of trappers

reached Powder River Valley where they found a few of the men

attached to Fontelle and Drip of the American Fur Company already there

Disgusted, the partners slipped away to find another field

only to be followed relentlessly by the Astorians

Thomas Fitzpatrick now had his back to the wall

he offered to compromise with the American Fur Company

by dividing the territory between them

Astor’s men declined and the battle for streams was on

(hide-and-seek game continued throughout the [winter of 1830-1831])

BEGINNINGS OF “OREGON FEVER”

Jedediah Smith wrote a letter to the Secretary of War -- October 29, 1830

detailing the return trip from the 1830 Rendezvous

and the ease with which loaded wagons and even milk cows

could be taken over the Rocky Mountains through South Pass

he also chronicled his life in Oregon

Smith, David Jackson, and Captain William Sublette all signed the letter

which later became Senate Document 39 of the 21st Congress

Joshua Pilcher, leader of the Missouri Fur Company, also wrote a letter

on the suitability of Oregon for settlement

These letters were the genesis of “Oregon Fever”

as farmers and settlers got the idea they could migrate to and settle in Oregon

JEDEDIAH SMITH WANTED TO PUBLISH HIS KNOWLEDGE

He carried with him to St. Louis his maps and journals

that recorded his experiences and geographical observations in the Far West,

from the Continental Divide to the Pacific Ocean

He intended to publish a book and a master map of the American West

as he wanted to lay his vast store of knowledge before the public

From personal experience, he understood the Great Plain, the northern Rockies,

the Great Basin, the lower Colorado,

and the Pacific Coast from southern California to the Columbia River

equally important, he understood how they fitted together

At each rendezvous he quizzed others about territory he had not seen,

and on his map drafts he identified these sources

In St. Louis during the winter of 1830-1831 he worked on his maps and journals

BONNEVILLE REQUESTS A LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM THE WAR DEPARTMENT

U.S. Army Captain Benjamin Bonneville was stationed at Cantonment Gibson (later Fort Gibson) in Oklahoma Territory with the Seventh New York Infantry, “B” Company

At age thirty-six, he had served in the regular army for fifteen years

had become extremely bored with military life in a remote post

Bonneville possessed an imaginative disposition which had become fired up

with the thought of leading an expedition to the Far West

After gaining experience with the fur trade while serving at frontier posts, Bonneville requested a leave of absence from the army -- late 1830

to lead a privately financed trapping expedition

on an extended military reconnaissance west of the Rocky Mountains

along with trapping beaver in that region

In his letter to commanding general, Alexander Macomb requesting leave,

Bonneville proposed: **“To explore the country of the Rocky Mountains and beyond, with a view to ascertaining the nature and character of the several tribes of Indians inhabiting those regions, the trade which might profitably be carried on with them, quality of soil, productions, minerals natural history, climate, geography and topography, as well as geology of the various parts of the country within the limits of the territories of the United States between our frontier and the Pacific.”**[[219]](#footnote-219)

DISASTERS SWEEP THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

New type of fever, perhaps measles or the flu -- 1831

killed many Indians inland all the way to the Walla Walla Valley

Mt. St. Helens (in Washington near the Columbia River) erupted this year

METHODIST CHURCH MISSIONARY EFFORT

Began steps to initiate the first missionary effort to the natives of the Pacific Northwest

Dr. Wilbur Fisk was appointed [1826] principal of the Methodist Academy

located in Wilbraham, Massachusetts

Jason Lee, six feet three inches tall and hard-muscled from years of dawn-to-dusk farm labor,

decided to supplement his meager education by enrolling at the school [1826]

overage (twenty-three-year-old) applicant impressed Fisk

Impressing his teachers, Jason Lee was ordained by Bishop Elijah Hedding

into the New England Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church

(now the United Methodist Church)

Likewise, Dr. Fisk’s success with the academy was noted by many Methodists

Dr. Fisk was offered the presidency of the new Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut he accepted the position as its first president -- 1831

AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR ENCOURAGING THE SETTLEMENT OF OREGON TERRITORY

Hall Jackson Kelley had formed this organization [1829]

in anticipation that three thousand emigrants would join him journeying West

*A General Circular to All Persons of Good Character, Who Wish to Emigrate to the Oregon Territory*

was written by Kelley about the Pacific Northwest Country while in Boston -- 1831

this wasanother request that all persons interested in traveling to Oregon Territory (sic)

contact him

When only 400 signed up, he rescheduled the group's departure date [from January to June 1832]

frustrated by the delay, many who previously had signed on dropped out

Kelley published a second pamphlet seeking additional recruits:

*A Manual of the Oregon Expedition* -- 1831

CAPTAIN NATHANIEL WYETH BECOMES INTERESTED IN OREGON

Captain Wyeth (an honorary title) was a talented, well-educated and energetic man

from Cambridge, Massachusetts

at age twenty-nine he served as manager of Frederic Tudor’s Cambridge ice company

they made money exporting ice from Fresh Pond, Cambridge to South America

Wyeth was described by James Russell Lowell: **“He was a very remarkable person, whose conversation I valued highly. A born leader of men, he was fitly called Captain Nathaniel Wyeth as long as he lived.”**[[220]](#footnote-220)

Undoubtedly Captain Wyeth had been influenced

by the report of Rev. Jonathan Green concerning the Pacific Northwest

but he was much more influenced by the written propaganda of Hall Jackson Kelley

HALL JACKSON KELLEY CONVINCES NATHANIEL WYETH

Wyeth caught some of Kelley’s enthusiasm and became a convert to his ideas -- 1831

he borrowed books from Kelley and futilely searched the local libraries for more

he believed it was time to prove the Pacific Northwest was part of the United States

he believed even more that a great deal of money could be made in Oregon

Captain Nathaniel Wyeth agreed to abandon Tudor’s bizarre business

(although eventually it would make fortunes for both of them)

and accompany Hall Jackson Kelley into the West

Kelley’s motives in going to Oregon were philanthropic and patriotic -- Wyeth’s were commercial

Wyeth was bent on making a fortune in the Pacific Northwest

but he had no experience in the fur trade

U.S. ARMY CAPTAIN BENJAMIN LOUIS EULALIE DE BONNEVILLE BECOMES INTERESTED

Bonneville had been born in France

well educated, he was a West Point graduate

Ben Bonneville possessed an imaginative disposition

that was inspired by the writings of Hall Jackson Kelley

and editorials in the *St. Louis Enquirer* written by Thomas Hart Benton

Bonneville wanted to explore the west, and if possible, join the westward movement

his imagination became fired up with the thought of leading an expedition to the Far West

Captain Bonneville met with Hall Jackson Kelley

soon thereafter Kelley appointed Bonneville to lead one of two expeditions to Oregon

Nathaniel Wyeth was to lead the other contingent

AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR ENCOURAGING THE SETTLEMENT OF OREGON TERRITORY

Two obstacles were insurmountable

for the American Society for Encouraging the Settlement of Oregon Territory:

•first was the uncertain diplomatic situation;

•secondly, antagonism to Kelley’s plan broke out from the fur companies

both American and British fur traders fearing competition from settlers circulated rumors that he had underestimated the ease of transportation to Oregon

and had overestimated its natural resources

Adverse press also criticized his efforts

Hall Jackson Kelley was a better talker than an organizer

his extravagant hopes and irritating personality hurt his own cause

AMEICAN SOCIETY FOR ENCOURAGING THE SETTLE OF OREGON TERRITORY FAILED

Captain Nathaniel Wyeth quickly became inpatient with Boston schoolteacher Hall Jackson Kelley

American Society for Encouraging the Settlement of Oregon Territory

broke up in disagreements, recriminations and bitter arguments

Kelley rushed to Washington City in the hope that personal interviews

might stir laggard congressmen into voting him aid for his efforts in Oregon

PACIFIC TRADING COMPANY

Nathaniel Wyeth formed a Joint stock company -- 1831

planned a powerful commercial colony to break the Hudson’s Bay Company monopoly

brilliant planner but he was not a man who was easily diverted by the advice of others

Wyeth concocted a scheme much like John Jacob Astor had attempted

by sea and land he would advance on the Columbia River

where he planned to establish a three-pronged enterprise:

•he would tap the fur resources of the Rocky Mountains,

supplying his trappers from the Columbia River

and shipping the furs to market by sea

•he would ship barrels of salted salmon harvested from the Columbia River

to the east on his own vessels

•finally, he would begin an American agricultural colony in the Willamette Valley

American sailing brig *Sultana* was furnished to Captain Nathaniel Wyeth

by a company of Boston merchants

U.S. ARMY CAPTAIN BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE DEVELOPS A SCHEME

With the failure of Hall Jackson Kelley’s organization

Bonneville would lead his own trapping and exploring party throughout the West

Historians still argue about the true purpose behind Bonneville’s seemingly wild idea

to lead a privately financed trapping expedition to collect geographical and other data

along with beaver trapping, in the region west of the Rocky Mountains

Some historians, such as Hiram M. Chittenden and H. H. Bancroft,

believe that Bonneville's reasons for beginning such an expedition

were entirely commercial in nature

however, Bonneville’s request for a leave of absence indicates a different intent

FORTUNATE MEETING

To succeed in his plan, Ben Bonneville needed an experienced mountaineer

to recruit, organize, and lead the trappers

and to coach him in the ways of life in the wilderness

Joseph Walker stopped at Cantonment Gibson, in Oklahoma Territory

where Captain Bonneville was stationed -- early 1831

Bonneville could not have found a more qualified man to serve him as a leader

Walker had earned a reputation for being an explorer, mountain man,

and an individual who had pursued many occupations in his life

currently Walker was on a return trip from Texas

where he had been involved in horse trading

During this chance meeting at the post, Walker impressed Captain Bonneville

he explained to Walker his proposal for an expedition and its purpose

Bonneville asked Walker if he might be interested in acting as his chief scout

and second in command

Walker agreed and left for his home Fort Osage, Missouri

where it was agreed that Walker would organize and begin the expedition

JOSEPH “JOE”WALKER

May have been the greatest Mountain Man of all

certainly he was second only to Jedediah Smith

in the value of his contribution to geographic knowledge

and the expansion of national interests

He was born in Roane County, Tennessee -- [December 13, 1798]

At age fifteen, he along with his older brother, he fought under Andrew Jackson

against the Creek Red Stick Indians in the Battle of Horseshoe Bend

He moved to the extreme western boundary of Missouri along the Missouri River -- [1818] where he rented government land near Fort Osage and tried farming

he also traded with local Indians and served as county sheriff

But restless by nature, Walker left Missouri for the New Mexico area

where he had hoped to trap beaver in an effort to make a living [1820]

unfortunately, he was accused of spying for the United States

was taken into custody by the Spanish authorities, but was later released

under the promise that he would help the Spanish fight their war

against the Pawnee Indians

after cooperating with the Spanish, Walker returned to the Fort Osage area

Joe Walker looked the part of the Mountain man

large, six feet four inches tall and more than two hundred pounds,

he sported a heavy, full beard

he acquired the dress and trappings of his comrades

for himself, his Indian wives, and his horses

in addition to physical strength, endurance, and fortitude

he added the Mountain Man’s restlessness, rootlessness, individualism

and an aversion to authoritarian restraint

His leadership skills were sharpened by practice

he knew Mountain Men could be led but not commanded

PACIFIC FUR TRADING COMPANY -- SHIPPING COMPANY

(Not to be confused with Nathaniel Wyeth’s Pacific Trading Company)

Jedediah Smith, David Jackson, and Captain William Sublette were in St. Louis

where they formed a shipping venture -- Pacific Fur Trading Company

to deliver supplies by wagon from St. Louis to Santa Fe

wagons were just beginning to be used in the Santa Fe trade

first, however, their company was supposed to provide a caravan

for the Rocky Mountain Fur Company from St. Louis to the 1831 Rendezvous

to be held at Cache (or Willow) Valley (Utah) west of Bear Lake

JOSEPH GERVAIS JOINS ETIENNE LUCIER AT FRENCH PRAIRIE

Former Astorian and retired Hudson’s Bay Company employee Etienne Lucier

acquired as a neighbor on French Prairie

long-time resident of the Pacific Northwest Joseph Gervais

Joseph Gervais had stayed at Fort Astoria (winter of [1813-1814])

next he worked for the North West Company at the newly-named Fort George

for several years he labored as a Nor’Wester and as an independent trapper

before joining Hudson’s Bay Company out of Fort Vancouver [1824]

leaving the fur industry, Gervais took up land at Chemaway [1828] and lived there for three years

Joseph Gervais settled on French Prairie (where the town of Gervais is today) -- 1831

he built a square-cut 18 by 24 foot two-story log cabin

in stages he added a vertical-planked barn

he planted an apple orchard and grew sixty-five acres of wheat

he added several outbuildings including a grist mill

FRENCH PRAIRIE BECOMES A HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY SETTLEMENT

Retired French-Canadian traders were encouraged by Dr. John McLoughlin

to settle on farms at French Prairie even though Hudson’s Bay Company had its own farms

French-Canadians, primarily retired Hudson’s Bay Company trappers, who once worked

out of Fort Vancouver were the first non-native settlers in the Willamette Valley

they farmed along an old brigade trail over the Chehalem Mountains to Fort Vancouver

Willamette River also provided the transportation link to Fort Vancouver

Joseph Delor and John Perrault, also Astorians before joining Hudson’s Bay Company,

joined Etienne Lucier and Joseph Gervais

French Prairie was soon home to eight retirees from Hudson’s Bay Company

who owned little farms scattered along the southern bank of the Willamette River

they had Native American wives and large numbers of children

who were known as “Metis” (pronounced Matee)

Very soon thirteen retired French-Canadian trappers and their Mestis families

occupied small farms along the Willamette River on the southern edge of French Prairie

they lived in log cabins with their Indian wives and Metis families

Dr. McLoughlin furnished them stock and provisions

French-Canadian families gave a name to the area

FRENCH PRAIRIE REMAINED FRENCH IN NATURE

Biggest collection of French-Canadian settlers was located on French Prairie

(located south of today’s Champoeg Park)

French-Canadians retained their nationality, religion, and language

their spoken French was retained from old Quebec

although modified in many ways during the previous two hundred years

their 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

set them apart from American pioneers

These settlers were assisted in their farming efforts by Hudson’s Bay Company

Dr. McLoughlin provided loans for discounted supplies and a pair of cattle

(these animals were on loan from the company

and were not to be used for founding the settler's own herd)

calves must be returned to the Company to maintain its monopoly

wheat was grown exclusively

Dr. McLoughlin furnished seed and bought their wheat

vast amounts were sent down river to Fort Vancouver by barge or bateau

or was ground into flour by local mills

(French-Canadians domination lasted on French Prairie almost twenty years

successful Metis agricultural communities developed in several locations

French Prairie was the oldest and largest of these

other locations included Elliott Prairie, Chehalem Hills, Pudding River and Mission Bottom)

AMERICAN FUR COMPANY OPENS A NEW POST (MONTANA)

Kenneth McKenzie accomplished the incredible feat

of opening negotiations with the Blackfoot (Piegan) Indians --1831

and secured their approval for a trading post high on the Missouri River

near the mouth of the Marias River

Fort Piegan (later renamed Fort McKenzie) opened a shaky trade with the natives

EWING YOUNG SHOWS A PROFIT

Young was back in Taos, (New) Mexico with his party of trappers -- April 1831

his effort in California was highly profitable in both beaver pelts and horses

PACIFIC NORTHWEST FISH IS INTRODUCED TO BOSTON

American brig *Owyhee* commanded by Captain John Dominis returned to Boston

from the Columbia River after three year’s absence with a cargo of furs -- April 15, 1831

in addition, *Owyhee* carried a shipment of pickled Columbia River salmon

that sold for 10¢ a pound and caused quite a stir among American entrepreneurs

together furs and fish brought in $96,000

However Captain Dominis had to pay import duty on the salted salmon

because President Jackson’s Revenue Department insisted the importer pay duty

on what was identified as “foreign-caught fish”

a somewhat incongruous stand in view of cries currently rising in Congress

regarding American ownership of the Northwest

AMERICAN FUR COMPANY’S *YELLOW STONE* (SIDE-WHEEL STEAMBOAT)

Built for the American Fur Company in Louisville, Kentucky [during the winter of 1830-1831]

by permission of John Jacob Astor

First vessel to be constructed with a shallow draft

that is required for navigation of the Missouri River

120-foot-long side-wheeler of 144 tons was delivered to St. Louis [April 1, 1831]

Navigation of the upper Missouri River began under the command of Captain B. Young

*Yellow Stone* left St. Louis on its maiden voyage -- April 16, 1831

arrived at Fort Tecumseh (now in the vicinity of Pierre, South Dakota) --[June 19]

before being stopped by low water

then delivered its first cargo back at St. Louis -- [July 5, 1831[

CAPTAIN BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE DEPARTS FROM THE ARMY

Military officer exited from Cantonment Gibson, in Oklahoma Territory -- April 24, 1831

to meet with Joe Walker at Fort Osage, Missouri

who was making arrangements for the expedition into the west

although no leave of absence had yet been granted to Bonneville

ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR COMPANY RENDEZVOUS

Annual gathering of American Mountain Men

this year was to be held west of Bear Lake (Utah) in the Cache (or Willow) Valley -- 1831

PACIFIC FUR TRADING COMPANY CARAVAN

Jedediah Smith, David Jackson and Captain William Sublette

had agreed to assist their old company, now known as the Rocky Mountain Fur Company,

by supplying the 1831 Rendezvous

Rocky Mountain Fur Company lead partner Tom Fitzpatrick

was still actively playing hide and seek in the Powder River Valley (Montana)

with American Fur Company trappers

thus Fitzpatrick did not arrive in St. Louis at the time he was anticipated

Jedediah Smith, David Jackson and Captain William Sublette

decided to supply the 1831 Rendezvous themselves out of the south from Santa Fe (New) Mexico along the Santa Fe Trail rather than from St. Louis

this route was not well defined

Pacific Fur Trading Company caravan set out from St. Louis bound for Santa Fe

pack train was composed of eighty men

were responsible for the care and driving of twenty new freight wagons loaded with supplies

caravan was large enough to assure safety under normal circumstances

TOM FITZPATRICK -- ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR COMPANY PARTNER

Tom Fitzpatrick, Milton Sublette, Jim Bridger, Henry Fraeb, and Jean Baptiste Gervais

were the five partners who now owned the Rocky Mountain Fur Company as it became known

Fitzpatrick had intended to return to St. Louis from the Powder River Valley in Montana

in time to have Jedediah Smith, David E. Jackson, and William Sublette

help him organize a supply caravan for the Cache Valley 1831 Rendezvous

as had been arranged during the purchase of their company

Tom Fitzpatrick, en route to St. Louis, arrived in Missouri two months later than arranged

however, the Rocky Mountain Fur Company partner met his old friends

Jedediah Smith, William Sublette and David Jackson

traveling with the twenty new Pacific Fur Trading Company freight wagons

on the road to Santa Fe and Taos, (New) Mexico -- May 1831

Smith, Jackson and Sublette persuaded Tom Fitzpatrick to accompany them to Taos

they promised to supply his Cache Valley Rendezvous needs from the South

out of Santa Fe or Taos

Fitzpatrick could assemble his own caravan there for the journey to the Cache Valley rendezvous

Tom Fitzpatrick had no other option than to accompany the Pacific Fur Trading Company caravan

to (New) Mexico

along with Jedediah Smith, David Jackson and Captain William Sublette

PACIFIC FUR TRADING COMPANY SUPPLY CARAVAN FALTERED

Jedediah Smith lost his way in the desert

drought-stricken Cimarron Cutoff of the Santa Fe Trail overwhelmed the caravan

company’s water was gone, their eyes ached, tongues became thick, and speech difficult

animals suffered even more than the men

Together Jedediah Smith and Tom Fitzpatrick set forth in an attempt to find water

at a dry hole, Fitzpatrick stopped to dig while for water

Jedediah Smith left his expedition to find water by himself

following a buffalo trail he came to the dry bed of the Cimarron River

aware of the nature of desert streams, Smith dug a hole

watched the water seep and rise into the depression

JEDEDIAH SMITH KILLED

While on the verge of saving the lives of his men, he lost his own near the Cimarron River

fifteen or twenty Indians, probably Comanche warriors,

suddenly burst from hiding and surrounded Smith -- May 27, 1831

he made peace signs, which they ignored

after wary maneuvering a Comanche chief fired a musket ball into Smith’s back

he reeled in the saddle, raised his rifle, and sent a fatal shot into the warrior

others swarmed over Smith with lances

life of Jedediah Smith, the Praying Trapper was ended -- he was thirty-two

his body was never found

When he died, most of Smith’s knowledge died with him

his papers disappeared, probably in a fire

fragments of copies of his journals turned up a century later,

but no map was ever found

luckily, some of the information was incorporated into maps made by others,

but for the most part, the knowledge was lost

PACIFIC FUR TRADING COMPANY CARAVAN PARTNERSHIP

With Jedediah Smith dead on the Santa Fe Trail remaining partners, Tom Fitzpatrick,

William Sublette, Jim Bridger, Henry Fraeb and Jean Baptiste Gervais

faced the difficult of prospect of running the company without Jedediah Smith

Jackson and William Sublette decided to continue on to Santa Fe,

with the expert guidance of Tom Fitzpatrick

CHRISTOPHER “KIT” CARSON

Was only twenty-two when the Pacific Fur Trading Company expedition arrived in Santa Fe

had nonetheless ended his apprenticeship under Ewing Young with high marks

this self-effacing youth had not only developed into an exceptional trapper

but had become an excellent marksman, hunter, and wilderness traveler

he had impressed Young with his courage and endurance,

his unfailing dependability, and his growing leadership qualities

like Young himself, Carson had shown himself a fearless, no-nonsense Indian fighter, untroubled by sentiment or sympathy

OLD IGNACE LA MOUSSE -- INDIAN MISSIONARY

Old Ignace (Ignace La Mousse) grew up near Montreal, Canada where he learned the Catholic faith

fur trading expeditions eventually led him and twenty-three other Iroquois to settle in Montana

where they were accepted by and married into the Flathead tribe

Old Ignace, as leader of the band of Iroquois, witnessed to his Catholic beliefs

this native missionary taught the receptive Flatheads about the Catholic God and Church

natives learned the Sign of the Cross and many other prayers

Sunday was the Lord’s Day to be set aside for contemplation, prayer and rest

people in danger of death were to be baptized

NATIVE QUEST FOR A CATHOLIC PRIEST

Flatheads, along with the Iroquois, longed for a priest to teach them more and to bring the Sacraments

because of his travels into the Pacific Northwest,

Old Ignace knew about the famous explorers Lewis and Clark

and that William Clark, a tribal folk hero, was living in St. Louis

Old Ignace also believed that Clark, a Catholic, would help them in their quest

natives met in council and decided to send four volunteers all the way to St. Louis

to bring back a “Black Robe” (priest) to accompany them on their return (to Montana)

Four volunteers, two Flatheads and two Indians from the neighboring Nez Perce tribe,

set out across the Rocky Mountains for the Great Plains and St. Louis

**“In the spring of 1831, the four braves who had volunteered to undertake the expedition began the long perilous journey.”[[221]](#footnote-221)**

perhaps another motive for the trip was simply curiosity

as the Indians wanted to see where the whites were coming from

Meanwhile, Old Ignace continued to witness his faith and teach the Flatheads

his influence and that of other Catholic natives proved very successful

(later arriving whites were surprised by the refusal of Nez Perce to hunt on Sunday

because it would dishonor the Great Spirit

and lived in peace and followed the Ten Commandments very strictly)

INDIAN DELEGATION JOURNEYS TOWARD ST. LOUI

On the headwaters of the Missouri the Indian delegates met more Nez Perces and Flatheads

who were hunting buffalo

discussions, the usual Indian vacillations, and sudden fears all depleted the number of pilgrims

This was the first of at least four separate groups of Indians

who asked for “Black Robes” and the “White Man’s Book of Heaven”

and desired information concerning the “Christian’s Book” and “White Man’s God”

SPOKANE GARRY AND KOOTENAI PELLY MINISTER TO THE SPOKANE INDIANS

Spokane Garry had been born [1811]

had been sent to school by Hudson’s Bay Company Governor George Simpson [1826]

along with another Indian: “Kootenai” Pelly

both were educated for five years in the Red River (Winnipeg) School

at Northwest Mission of the Church of England

to be of service to their own people and to the Hudson’s Bay Company

They returned to the Spokane Indians -- 1831

brought back a Protestant Bible, and some knowledge of English and French

both men also possessed an interest in agriculture and a veneer of culture

Kootenai Pelly fell off a horse and was killed

Garry opened a makeshift school among his people -- near Drumheller’s Springs (Spokane)

he read to young and old students from the Bible;

he taught the Ten Commandments;

he tried to teach farming, but the occupation was rejected by the Indians as “women’s work”

INDIAN DELEGATION ARRIVE IN ST. LOUIS

After months of weary travel, the four Indians, two Flatheads and two Nez Perce,

reached St. Louis -- summer 1831

They came to seek General William Clark whom old men remembered had visited them

they found the General (Superintendent of Indian Affairs) and were hospitably received by him

General Clark happily put the natives into contact with the Catholic Church

however, no one could understand their native dialect

NATIVES’S PLIGHT INSPIRES OTHER CONCERNED RELIGIOUS LEADERS

There is some confusion regarding what the Indians were seeking in St. Louis

as the Catholics report the story, the Indians asked for Blackrobes (priests),

as Protestants tell the same story, the quest was for the white man’s “Book of Heaven”

All of the protestant missionaries who later came to Oregon traced their inspiration to this event

as these natives were exhibited before a large public as the heroes of a heartrending saga

together these four Native Americans sparked the imagination of the public

and intensified an interest in missionary work in the Northwest

CAPTAIN NATHANIEL WYETH’S FRUSTRATION

Nathaniel Wyeth’s enterprise had not grown as he had hoped which only added to his frustration

eleven men and three boys each had paid $40 each

to join Nathaniel Wyeth and take part in the land expedition

they also were required to sign a pledge to be good citizens

most signed their real names

NATHANIEL WYETH’S PACIFIC TRADING COMPANY ORGANIZED

Preparations were undertaken in Boston for an expedition across the continent

Wyeth designed a brightly colored uniform for his party:

outfitted each man in coarse jackets, pantaloons, striped cotton shirts and cowhide boots, each also carried a musket or rifle and a bayonet and large clasp knife in a broad belt

and each man carried a bayonet and large clasp knife in a broad belt

Wyeth knew the trip would be partly overland and partly on water

he invented three vehicles he called “amphibia” which he had constructed

his new invention could be used either as a wagon bed or as a boat

wagon boxes were caulked and fitted for quick conversion into boats

could be drawn on wheels or sailed on water

these amphibia proved less useful than hoped -- but were an inspiration for much humor

Sea Expedition was composed of the brig *Sultana*

furnished to Captain Nathaniel Wyeth by a company of Boston merchants

she was laden with Wyeth’s trade goods and supplies for the new colony

he expected soon to have a business earning $200,000 a year

HALL JACKSON KELLEY DECIDES TO JOIN WITH NATHANIEL WYETH

Kelley who had already convinced ten companions to join with him,

made arrangements to accompany Nathaniel Wyeth’s Pacific Trading Company

westward across the continent

Kelley abandoned his plans to lead a continent himself across the country

because he was still lobbying for support in Washington City

Kelley’s ten companions joined with Wyeth’s eleven men and three boys

in forming the membership of the Pacific Trading Company

since Kelley himself was not ready at the appointed time, he was left behind

PACIFIC FUR TRADING COMPANY REACHED SANTA FE

Tom Fitzpatrick’s trade caravan arrived in Santa Fe

where he met a young man, Kit Carson, and signed him up as trapper

When they reached St. Louis William Sublette and David Jackson

agreed to disband their company -- the Pacific Fur Trading Company

but first the partners decided they would honor their commitment to provide supplies

for Tom Fitzpatrick to take to the rendezvous

once this obligation had been met, both Sublette and Jackson could return to St. Louis

from the rendezvous

then David Jackson and Captain William Sublette would be free to act on their own behalf in all business dealings

PACIFIC FUR TRADING COMPANY CARAVAN TO THE RENDEZVOUS

When Tom Fitzpatrick finally got the supply caravan under way from Santa Fe

Kit Carson rode as one of Tom Fitzpatrick’s company

he made an ideal recruit for the caravan

Supply caravan arrived at the Cache (or Willow) Valley 1831 Rendezvous -- September 3, 1831

but they were far too late -- thus there was no rendezvous that year due to lack of supplies

Tom Fitzpatrick began the return trip to St. Louis -- September 9

MARINE DEPARTMENT OF HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY CHANGES

Head Captain Amelius Simpson died suddenly -- 1831

Chief Factor Dr. McLoughlin took charge of the vessels: *Cowlitz, Columbia,* and *Vancouver*

managed to make them an auxiliary to the trading posts

McLoughlin saw Peter Skene Ogden was the “man to get things done”

McLoughlin placed the blocky little trader in charge of the Marine Department

as supervisory officer of the vast (for the time) shipping enterprise

Ships made frequent trips to London carrying furs from the outposts

returned to Fort Vancouver each year with supplies and trade goods

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY SHIPPING PUSH

Peter Skene Ogden himself took two ships toward the Arctic

He proposed to the Russians that they use the Hudson’s Bay Company,

rather than any of the several the fly-by-night American traders currently in the area,

as a source of goods and farm produce for the Alaskan settlements

JOHN WORK PROMOTED BY HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY

Was elevated by Dr. John McLoughlin to Snake River Country Brigade leader

as a replacement for the promoted Peter Skene Ogden

Strong physique, great endurance, and very practical mind

His services ranked with Peter Skene Ogden in value to the Hudson’s Bay Company

FORT SIMPSON CONSTRUCTED

Hudson’s Bay Company’s Peter Skene Ogden constructed the last of the company outposts

Fort Simpson on the Nass River about twenty miles upriver from the mouth – 1831

This post was dedicated solely to fur trapping

but also served as an indicator to the Russian trappers

that Hudson’s Bay Company had every intention of remaining in the area to trap

and to be a source of provisions

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY TRADING POSTS – 1831

Were all very similar

six to eight houses served as lodgings for officers and men, mess halls, workshop,

trading store, and storage places

all within a square wall from fifteen to twenty feet high

in two of the four corners and rising above the walls were wooden bastions

usually octagonal shaped and opened on all sides

to accommodate six- and twelve-pound cannon

surrounding countryside was within range of the cannon fire

WILLIAM WALKER SPREDS THE WORD

Half-breed interpreter and Indian Chief from Wyandotte Reservation in Ohio

(this reservation was to be moved to new lands)

Walker was a responsible and respectful leader

who had received a reasonably good education on the reservation in Ohio

He traveled to St. Louis -- autumn 1831

to confer with Superintendent of Indian Affairs General William Clark

General Clark told Walker of the recent visit by Indians from Rocky Mountain area

Walker talked with one of Indians who was near death at Clark’s home

Wishing to make a good story even better by personalizing it,

Walker said that he had witnessed things which had, in fact, reached him only by word of mouth

he told of interviewing the delegation and learning of their epic journey

for **“a book containing directions how to conduct themselves”[[222]](#footnote-222)**

he said that Clark had given the Indians **“a succinct history of man,”**

and a briefing on the doctrines of salvation

no easy feat, if at all possible, in sign language

Walker also added a drawing of the visitor’s heads, misshapen to slope backward from their eyebrows to a peak above their ears

this typical Pacific coast deformation he could have been gotten from various sources

but not from the Indians Walker since the artist George Catlin

sketched two survivors [spring 1832]

their heads were normal

(in fact, Flatheads did not flatten their heads and Nez Perce did not pierce their noses)

these names came from clumsy European translations

of the sign-language gestures for the tribes

INDIAN DELEGATION IN ST. LOUIS

Of the four natives who arrived at St. Louis, two old men soon became gravely ill

priests were sent for and both had received a Catholic baptism

and they gave expressions of satisfaction

each received little crosses which they took with eagerness, kissed it repeatedly

the gift could be taken away only in death

Funeral services for the two old men were conducted in a Catholic church

where they were buried with Catholic rites

burial register of the cathedral at St. Louis

gives the baptismal names of the Indians as Narcisse and Paul

It is said the two remaining Indians gave a speech while in St. Louis

(although the speech has never been authenticated, and it is not held in high historical repute)

they were reported to say: **“I come to you over the trail of many moons from the setting sun. You [General Clark] were the friend of my fathers, who have all gone the long way. I came with an eye partly open for my people, who sit in darkness. I go back with both eyes closed. How can I go back blind, to my blind people? I made my way to you with strong arms through many enemies and strange lands that I might carry back much to them. I go back with both arms broken and empty. Two fathers came with us. They were the braves of many winters and wars. We leave them asleep here by your great water and wigwams. They were tired in many moons and their moccasins wore out.**

**“My people sent me to get the White Man’s Book of Heaven. You took me to where you allow your women to dance, as we do not ours, and the book was not there. You took me to where they worship the great (sic) Spirit with candles, and the book was not there. You showed me images of the good spirits and the pictures of the good land beyond, but the book was not among them to tell us the way. I am going back the long and sad trail to my people in the dark land. You make my feet heavy with gifts and my moccasins will grow old in carrying them, yet the book is not among them. When I tell my poor blind people after one more snow, in the big council, that I did not bring the book, no word will be spoken by our old men or by our young men. One by one they will rise up and go out in silence. My people will die in darkness and they will go a long path to other hunting grounds. No white man will go with them, and no White Man’s Book to make their way plain I have no more words.”[[223]](#footnote-223)**

NATHANIEL WYETH’S BRIG *SULTANA*

Set sail from Boston -- fall 1831

was sent around the Horn to the West coast, bound for the Columbia River

she was to return to Boston with furs for sale

CAPTAIN BEN BONNEVILLE RECEIVES A LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM THE ARMY

Commanding General Alexander Macomb in granting Bonneville's request -- October 1831

(six months after he had departed from Cantonment Gibson, in Oklahoma Territory)

added several stipulations: **“The leave of absence which you have asked...has been sanctioned. You are, therefore, authorized to be absent from the army until [October, 1833] ... It is understood that the government is to be at no expense”[[224]](#footnote-224)**

CAPTAIN BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE’S INSTRUCTIONS

Whatever Bonneville’s intent it is undisputed

that the army’s commanding general, Alexander Macomb backed by the War Department,

not only granted the leave of absence but left Captain Bonneville explicit instructions

on how his leave of absence was to be spent

War Department specifically emphasized collecting data concerning Indians

**“the nature and character of the several tribes of Indians inhabiting”**

the region which was to be explored (**“the Rocky Mountains and beyond”)**

in particular, the Army wanted more information on Indian warfare,

asking Captain Bonneville to observe: **“…the number of warriors that may be in each tribe or nation that you may meet with; their alliances with other tribes, and their relative position as to a state of peace or war, and whether their friendly or warlike dispositions toward each other are recent or of a long standing.”[[225]](#footnote-225)**

he was further requested to note the Indians':**“…manner of making war; of the mode of subsisting themselves during a state of war, and a state of peace; their arms, and the effect of them; whether they act on foot or on horseback; detailing the discipline and maneuvers of the war parties: the power of their horses, size, and general description….”**

In conclusion, General Malcom indicated: **“You will avail yourself of every opportunity of informing us of your position and progress, and at the expiration of your leave of absence, will join your proper station.”[[226]](#footnote-226)**

These instructions make it apparent that while Captain Bonneville

did intend to do some trapping and trading during his travels,

his major purpose in organizing the expedition was the collection of intelligence information

Commercial activities, which helped finance the expedition

and allowed him to hire civilians to carry out his plans

provided Captain Bonneville an almost covert element to his adventure

“Spy” is too strong a term

but clearly Captain Benjamin Bonneville had objectives far beyond mere trapping

It is also undisputed that a friend of John Jacob Astor’s

who in turn had close ties to the highest levels of the federal government bankrolled a trapping operation led by an army officer

who was lacking either military distinction or trapping experience

It is again undisputed is that Bonneville devoted less effort to gathering beaver

than to gathering data about the military capabilities of the Indians

and, especially, the strength and disposition of the British in Oregon

and the Mexicans in California

A proud and committed military man, Bonneville took his orders seriously,

fulfilling his obligations as best he could

CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE GOES TO FORT OSAGE, MISSOURI

Captain Bonneville used his leave of absence from service in the U.S. Army,

as a foundation from which to traverse the western states with a small group

regions which today compose Oregon, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming were visited

Bonneville will spend the next four years exploring and dabbling in the fur trade

WILLIAM H. ASHLEY ELECTED TO CONGRESS

Possessing a fortune earned in his successful trapping and trading enterprise

General William Ashley retired to the life of a politician

was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives for one term -- November 11, 1831

Ashley had in his possession one or more of Jedediah Smith’s maps

which he took them with him to Washington City

PIERRE PAMBRUN EXPOSES INDIANS TO THE CATHOLIC FAITH

Hudson’s Bay Company’s Pierre Chrysologue Pambrun served as Chief Trader -- 1832

he previously had been a clerk at Stuart Lake [1825]

Pambrun gave Catholic religious instruction to Indians at the locales he served at Fort Walla Walla

he stayed in command of this post until his death [1840]

DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN -- MAN OF VISION

Chief Factor sent a crew to the Willamette Falls to blast a channel for a mill-race

sawmill to cut dressed lumber was located on Mill (later Abernathy) Island

this was the first use of water power in the Columbia Department

(later grind stones for a grist mill were added to grind coarse flour)

Hudson’s Bay Company’s Dr. William Tolmie and a crew of Klikitat and Iroquois Indians

cut a cart road around Willamette Falls on the east bank

Dr. McLoughlin had the ground surveyed by Hall Jackson Kelley and laid out into lots for a town

Hudson’s Bay Company crew also built cabins at Dr. McLoughlin’s “land claim”

on the east bank of the Willamette River just below the falls

this time local Indians allowed the buildings to remain

these buildings became the first permanent white settlement in the Willamette Valley

Dr. McLoughlin’s claim was operated mainly by Kanakas (Hawaiians)

who had signed on for a two-year term of service

in addition to the sawmill, workers farmed the nearby land

Chief Factor McLoughlin and several other officers of the Hudson's Bay Company -- March 1832

issued a prospectus to Governor of Rupert’s Land George Simpson

for “The Oragon [sic] Beef and Tallow Company”

this proposal was not be associated in any way with the Hudson's Bay Company,

but rather was a private venture financed and operated by McLoughlin and his colleagues

prospectus described a joint stock company to develop export trade with England and elsewhere

dealing in tallow, beef, hides, horns etc. generated through the purchase

of seven to eight hundred head of California cattle for breeding stock

to be raised and slaughtered in the Columbia Department

Governor Simpson, for whatever reason, held the proposal without acting on it

DR. McLOUGHLIN’S PERSONALITY

Governor of Rupert’s Land George Simpson noted in of Dr. McLoughlin’s personality -- 1832

in his secret *Book of Servant’s Characters*: **“A very bustling active man who can go through a great deal of business but is wanting in system and regularity and has not the talent of managing the few associates and clerks under his authority; has a good deal of influence with Indians and speaks the Soulteaux tolerably. Very zealous in the discharge of his public duties, and a man of strict honor and integrity but a great stickler for rights & privileges and sets himself up for a righter of wrongs. Very anxious to obtain a lead among his colleagues with whom he had not much influence owing to his ungovernable violent temper and turbulent disposition, and would be a troublesome man to the Comp’y if he had sufficient influence to form and tact to manage a party, in short, would be a Radical in any Country under any Government and under any circumstances; and if he had not pacific people to deal with, would be eternally embroiled in ‘affairs of honor’ on the merest trifles arising I conceive from the irritability of his temper more than a quarrelsome disposition. Altogether a disagreeable man to do business with as it is impossible to go with him in all things and a difference of opinion almost amounts to a declaration of hostilities, yet a good hearted man and a pleasant companion.”[[227]](#footnote-227)**

1832 RENDEZVOUS LOCATION IDENTIFIED

Rocky Mountain Fur Company partners

Tom Fitzpatrick, Milton Sublette, Jim Bridger, Henry Fraeb, and Jean Baptiste Gervais

had fixed the site in a valley about twenty miles long and perhaps two miles wide

This valley called Pierre's Hole was located between two mountains perpetually covered with snow

west of the Teton Mountains (in present-day Teton County near Tetonia, Idaho)

it took its name from “Old Pierre”Tevanitagon

an Iroquois Indian who had been killed by Blackfeet in a fight there [1827]

south fork of the Teton River ran north through lush mountain meadows

grassy, well-watered basin at the western foot of the Grand Teton Mountains

was flanked by stands of timber that ran to the Snake River

valley was sheltered to the west and southwest by the Big Hole Mountains

to the south rose the Palisade Range

Through a gap in the Palisades a trappers' trail wound into the valley,

branching up from the well-used route between the Green River and the Snake

Across the Teton Mountains through Teton Pass was another lush valley, Jackson's Hole

named, like Pierre's Hole, for an early trapper

Although it was the Rocky Mountain Fur Company’s Rendezvous, anyone could attend

NATHANIEL WYETH’S PACIFIC TRADING COMPANY SETS OUT

At the appointed time, Nathaniel Wyeth and his eleven men and three boys

were joined in their expedition by Hall Jackson Kelley’s ten companions

since he was not ready at the appointed time Kelley was left behind

Nathaniel Wyeth, in command of the Overland Party,

led the twenty-one men and three boys out of Boston -- March 11, 1832

Party, fully armed, equipped, and smartly dressed, marched overland to Baltimore, Maryland

at Baltimore, four additional men were added

making the total about twenty-eight men and boys

From Baltimore they proceeded by road and river steamboat to St. Louis, Missouri

PACIFIC FUR TRADING COMPANY (not to be confused with Wyeth’s Pacific Trading Company)

David Jackson, and William Sublette were in St. Louis

they organized another caravan to deliver supplies by wagon from St. Louis

to Santa Fe and, this time, to the Pierre’s Hole Rendezvous

Pack train was composed of eighty men responsible for the care and driving

of twenty new freight wagons

under normal circumstances this party would be large enough to assure their safety

AMERICAN FUR COMPANY DIVISIONS CHANGE THEIR PURPOSE

Kenneth McKenzie’s Upper Missouri Outfit of the American Fur Company

shifted its focus from trapping to trading -- Spring 1832

Pierre Chouteau’s Western Department of the American Fur Company

would oversee the battle with the Rocky Mountain Fur Company -- Spring 1832

in supplying mountain men at rendezvous,

in transporting returns to St. Louis,

and in fielding competing trapping parties

AMERICAN FUR COMPANY SUPPLY EFFORTS

John Jacob Astor had become involved in the rendezvous supply effort

Astor had underwritten Captain Benjamin Bonneville’s supply caravan to the west

co-led by his partners Joe Walker and Michael Cerre

now journeying toward the rendezvous

in addition, Astor’s American Fur Company Western Department headed by Pierre Chouteau

who used the latest technology -- the Steamboat *Yellow Stone*

to carry goods up the Missouri to a waiting mule train

led by Lucien Fontenelle and Etienne Provost

Now the battle for control of the mountain fur trade began in earnest

speed was essential for the Pacific Fur Trading Company in their race against the Astorians

supply expedition which arrived first got most of the free trapper’s business

both in sale of merchandise and the purchase of pelts

*YELLOW STONE (SIDE-WHEEL STEAMBOAT)* SAILS UP THE MISSOURI RIVER

John Jacob Astor’s steamboat did not set out upriver from St. Louis until -- March 26, 1832

of the four Native Americans who visited St. Louis and General William Clark

two survivors, both Nez Perce, started their journey home aboard the *Yellow Stone* -- 1832

ethologist and painter George Catlin traveled upriver with them

to Fort Union (North Dakota) very near the mouth of Yellowstone River

it was his intention to document a vanishing race

Catlin later reported about this trip in the *Smithsonian Report* [1885]: **“These two men when I painted them, were in beautiful Sioux dresses which had been presented to them in a talk with the Sioux, who treated them very kindly, while passing through the Sioux country. These two men were part of a delegation that came across the mountains to St. Louis, a few years since, to inquire for the truth of representation which they said some white man had made among them that our religion was better than theirs, and that they would all be lost if they did not embrace it. Two old and venerable men of this party died in St. Louis, and I traveled two thousand miles, companion with these fellows, toward their own country, and became much pleased with their manners and dispositions. When I first heard the objects of their extraordinary mission across the mountains, I could scarcely believe it; but, on conversing with General Clark on a future occasion, I was fully convinced of the fact.”[[228]](#footnote-228)**

One of the Nez Perce died near Fort Benton

(the other Indian eventually arrived safely home)

collectively these four Native Americans sparked imagination of the public

they intensified the interest in missionary work in the Northwest

JOE WALKER MAKES PREPARATIONS

After his encounter with Captain Bonneville at Cantonment Gibson, in Oklahoma Territory

Walker returned to his home at Fort Osage, Missouri

there he began to take the necessary steps to assemble an expedition -- April 1832

With his reputation, it was easy for him to recruit experienced trappers and traders eager to head west

Walker hired several Delaware Indians to serve as hunters

He ordered supplies and acquired equipment including twenty wagons

in which a wide assortment of goods were packed to be transported to the upcoming rendezvous

Walker used wagons to save the delay of packing and unpacking horses at night

and fewer horses meant less chance of them getting stolen by the Indians

wagons also were easily defended and provided good protection

By the time Benjamin Bonneville arrived at Fort Osage,

Joe Walker was already deeply engaged in the manning and outfitting of the expedition

ARMY CAPTAIN BENJAMIN LOUIS EULALIE DE BONNEVILLE

Joined with Joe Walker in making preparations for a Western expedition

to supply American trappers in the Rocky Mountains at the 1832 Rendezvous

Bonneville secured private financial backing and organized a fur trapper’s expedition

found a willing private sponsor in John Jacob Astor of American Fur Company fame

who was still deeply interested in the fur trade of the Rockies and Far West

wide assortment of goods were packed into the twenty wagons

CAPTAIN BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE’S EXPEDITION SETS OUT

Bonneville’s and Walker’s twenty freight wagons -- May 1, 1832

set out Westward from Fort Osage, near Independence, on the Missouri River

they were bound for the 1832 Rendezvous at Pierre's Hole

According to Benjamin Bonneville’s own count, 121 men, including twenty employees of his own, accompanied him into the West

along with assorted mules, horses, and oxen

Expedition leadership consisted of a loose triumvirate,

Bonneville captained, Joe Walker and Michael Cerre were his second in command

Walker was a mountaineer and leader of men

Cerre was a young man with experience on the Santa Fe Trail

who demonstrated great talent as a businessman

curiously the three sometimes acted together and sometimes acted independently

Walker in particular simply set his own course

when Bonneville’s designs made no sense to him

Bonneville maintained strict military discipline with his men

however, he proved to be popular with his employees and with Indians alike

Their journey took them through the Kansas plains

on the way, Bonneville made friends with the Kansas Chief White Plume

SOME OF NATHANIEL WYETH’S MEN DESERT

Dissension developed among Nathaniel Wyeth’s Pacific Fur Company along the way to St. Louis

only twenty of the original members remained with the expedition

Wyeth called a meeting, but he permitted no discussion

he merely asked for a vote on the question of going on

nine had decided that Wyeth’s western adventure was not for them

voted not to proceed which reduced Wyeth’s party to eleven

MEETING IN ST. LOUIS

Captain Nathaniel Wyeth reached St. Louis with eighteen men

after crossing the continent from Boston

ten Pacific Fur Company participants, including the three boys, had lost heart and turned back

Wyeth and his remaining men discovered how unprepared they were compared to their competitors

dismayed, three more of the company promptly resigned

Wyeth however was a man of boundless optimism and compelling charm

he learned that Captain William L. Sublette and David Jackson were in St. Louis

making preparations for a Pacific Fur Trading Company supply caravan

bound for Santa Fe and Taos, and then to the 1832 Rendezvous at Pierre’s Hole

in an effort to assure safe passage, Wyeth approached William Sublette

and made arrangements to join the expedition

William Sublette agreed to guide Wyeth and his Pacific Trading Company men

to the Rocky Mountain Fur Company Rendezvous at Pierre’s Hole by way of Santa Fe

provided Wyeth did not bring along his amphibia

Wyeth agreed to dump the boat-wagons in St. Louis

but regarding the remainder of his goods and men his enthusiasm was unabated

PACIFIC FUR TRADING COMPANY SUPPLY CARAVAN SET OUT

Captain William L. Sublette, David Jackson completed their preparations

for their Pacific Fur Trading Company caravan to Santa Fe

and to the 1832 Rendezvous at Pierre’s Hole

train was composed of twenty supply wagons driven by eighty men

including William Sublette’s brother Pickney

Captain Nathaniel Wyeth and the twenty-four men of his Pacific Trading Company

joined forces with them

They all set out from St. Louis bound for Independence, Missouri -- May 12, 1832

PACIFIC FUR TRADING COMPANY SUPPLY CARAVAN LEAVES INDEPENDENCE

Leaving Independence, the route West followed the Platte River

Captain William Sublette's column traveled military-style

•camping in a hollow-square formation,

•changing their guards every four hours,

•standing-to before dawn each morning

At least one more of Nathaniel Wyeth’s men deserted

leaving about seventeen members of the Pacific Trading Company

PACIFIC FUR TRADING COMPANY ENTER SANTA FE

William Sublette’s Pacific Fur Trading Company twenty wagons arrived in Santa Fe

accompanied by Nathaniel Wyeth and the remaining members of the Pacific Trading Company

William Sublette discovered he would have a great deal of competition supplying the Rendezvous

PACIFIC FUR TRADING COMPANY’S EFFORT TO SUPPLY THE 1832 RENDEZVOUS

In Santa Fe Captain William L. Sublette and David Jackson

made ready to journey to the Rendezvous at Pierre’s Hole

William Sublette departed from Santa Fe with a 180-mule supply caravan and more than 100 men

including Sublette’s brother Pickney and Rocky Mountain Fur Company’s Tom Fitzpatrick

escorting Nathaniel Wyeth and his few Pacific Trading Company followers

Bill Sublette was now in a race with the Astorians

*YELLOW STONE* REACHES FORT UNION (MONTANA)

She journeyed slowly up the Missouri River a distance of approximately 2,000 miles

to American Fur Company's Fort Union at the mouth of the Yellowstone River

steamer’s late start and slow pace up the Missouri River forced a long wait for supplies to arrive

When the *Yellow Stone* eventually tied up at the riverbank in front of Fort Union (Montana) American Fur Company Western Department leader Pierre Chouteau disembarked

(but the supply effort was already doomed to failure)

Lucien Fontenelle’s and Etienne Provost’s American Fur Company supply mule caravan

trip to the 1832 Rendezvous did not get away from Fort Union until [June 19]

HALL JACKSON KELLEY FRUSTRASTED IN BOSTON

Returning to Boston after his failed efforts in Washington City

Kelley learned that Nathaniel Wyeth had already left for the west with twenty-four men and boys

He frantically tried to advance his own dream -- summer of 1832

Kelley engaged a ship, rented warehouse space, scheduled weekly meetings,

and bombarded the newspapers with letters rehashing all of his old arguments

He even added a new (but not original) vision

which very shortly, in different hands, would have a potent impact:

sending missionaries to the Columbia Department to convert the Indians to Christianity

EWING YOUNG BACK IN CALIFORNIA

Had accompanied a second expedition from Taos (New) Mexico to California

After their safe arrival, Young remained in California

to trap the San Joaquin and Sacramento valleys

He tried his hand at hunting sea otter -- summer 1832

but he promptly abandoned the enterprise

For the next two years, Young captained a company of trappers

that swept the Central Valley of California

all the way to the head of the Sacramento River

After his return to Los Angeles, Young’s beaver hunting days were over

he found California congenial

and replete with ways of making a living that did not depend on beaver

he would stay

TOM FITZPATRICK CAME CLOSE TO LOSING HIS LIFE

Famous Mountain Man rode ahead of Captain William L. Sublette’s and David Jackson’s

Pacific Fur Trading Company supply train to alert the trappers camping at Pierre’s Hole

of the caravan’s approach

when he had a confrontation with a grizzly bear

Following that event, he was riding alone down a narrow canyon with steep, rocky sides

leading a pack horse carrying his supplies

he knew there were dangerous Indians in the area

but he was in a hurry to inform the rendezvous of the trading caravan’s arrival

About thirty Blackfoot Indians charged down the canyon walls and surrounded him

Indians on foot chased Fitzpatrick for hours

He dropped the lead of his pack horse and dug his spurs into his horse which reared up several Indians were scattered to the ground

Fitzpatrick, still mounted on his horse, jumped over them, and charged up the rocky hill

In a short time his horse became exhausted and Fitzpatrick jumped off

he rolled around looking for a good hiding place

he found a crevice several feet deep in the ground and quickly plunged into it

Tom maneuvered some brush and rocks around the top of his hiding place to camouflage it

this effort was successful as the Indians went back and forth

over his hiding place several times but never discovered him

Indians searched in vain until it became dark

they left taking his horses and returning to their village

Fitzpatrick crept from this hiding place and descended only to blunder into the Blackfoot camp

hastily backing out, he returned to his hiding place for the night

Next day warriors resumed the search without success

with nightfall, Fitzpatrick again set out this time traveling far enough to feel safe

Fitzpatrick escaped with his scalp, but unfortunately both of his horses were gone

he started walking in the direction of Pierre’s Hole

Day after day he pushed forward living off roots and berries

fearful that a rifle shot aimed at game would alert the Indians

crossing a stream, he saw his rifle and shot pouch swept away

one night a pack of wolves assailed him

he escaped only by climbing a tree and remaining until daylight

shreds of meat carved from a rotting buffalo carcass saved him

but he grew weaker and weaker until he expected each day to be his last

1832 WAS THE LARGEST RENDEZVOUS EVER

This was the Rocky Mountain Fur Company Rendezvous but anyone could attend

in addition to the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, free trappers, company trappers, and Indians

had already begun to gather at Pierre’s Hole from all across the Rockies

Beginning in late June, trappers rested in the ten-mile wide valley and waited to commence trading,

they told tales of isolation and hardship and comrades dead in last season's Indian fights

for a few days each year, the Mountain Men could enjoy plenty of raw whiskey

and compliant Indian women

as the saying went they could “sleep with both eyes shut” for awhile

it may be true the valley was be full of rattlesnakes

but no Indian war party would dare disturb so many armed men

for a little while they left behind the hardships and dangers of the high mountains

for the peace and quiet in a valley of deep grass and plentiful game

This was the largest as well as the most significant rendezvous held in the Rocky Mountains

Vanderburgh and Drips arrived with ninety American Company trappers -- early July

ultimately there may have been a thousand or more people, along with their stock,

assembled in Pierre’s Hole to do their trading and sow a few wild oats

But men’s fashions were changing as silk hats were introduced in Europe and America

beaver hats were on the verge of being replaced

WILLIAM SUBLETTE CARAVAN ARRIVED AT THE RENDEZVOUS

Race covering 1,800 miles of tough trail from St. Louis to supply trappers in the field, was won handily by William Sublette and David Jackson -- July 8, 1832

At noon, the popping of gun shots announced the arrival of the Pacific Fur Trading Company

180-mule supply caravan

at the column's head was its “booshway” (bourgeois, or boss)

veteran trapper-turned-trader, scar-faced Bill Sublette

followed by more than one hundred men

It had not been an easy trip

Pacific Fur Trading Company had repulsed a Blackfoot nighttime horse raid in the Wind River

they lost ten horses, but the raiders did not further attack

nobody was hurt on either side

Pacific Fur Trading Company had beaten its rivals to Pierre’s Hole (near Tetonia, Idaho)

AMERICAN FUR COMPANY CARAVANS

Arch competitor, Astor’s American Fur Company caravan,

led by Lucien Fontenelle and Etienne Provost was still far to the north in the Big Horn Valley

after getting a late start from Fort Union

due to the delayed arrival of the steamer *Yellow Stone*

rendezvous was over before they even reached the Green River

John Jacob Astor’s other venture to make supplies available to the trappers

led by Benjamin Bonneville, and financed by Astor, never even got to the rendezvous

ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR COMPANY PARTNERS ARRIVE

Milton G. Sublette and Jim Bridger reached Pierre’s Hole Rendezvous

but they had not supply caravan

After surveying the scene at the rendezvous, they believed their partner Thomas Fitzpatrick

might have returned to St. Louis

partners sent Henry Fraeb to search for him

NATHANIEL WYETH’S PACIFIC TRADING COMPANY IS FRACTURED

Newcomer of importance at the Rendezvous was Nathaniel Wyeth

hardheaded businessman who was successful as a Boston ice merchant

leading his eleven remaining loyal New England emigrants -- seventeen had deserted

Wyeth decided to journey to the Salmon River about 200 miles to the West

where he would conduct trade with the natives and independent trappers of the region

accordingly he purchased twenty-five high-spirited horses from the large herds owned by Indians

Wyeth now faced a rebellion among even these members of his company

he called a meeting, but he permitted no discussion

he merely asked for a vote on the question of going on

three more men, including Wyeth’s own brother, the surgeon of the expedition, and a cousin who took measure of the opposition around them and bitterly tossed in their hands,

but not before casting recriminations against Wyeth

this momentarily reduced Wyeth’s Pacific Trading Company members to eight

TOM FITZPATRICK’S ABSENCE FROM THE RENDEZVOUS

Dampened the celebration of the arrival of the Pacific Fur Trading Company pack train

he had not been seen since riding ahead of the caravan

After weeks alone on foot, he at last fell in with two friendly Iroquois

who brought him safely to Pierre's Hole

barely alive, the Rocky Mountain Fur Company partner

trudged safely into the Rendezvous in the evening -- July 8, 1832

exhausted and emaciated, his feet bare, his clothing in shreds,

without horses or weapons,

his hair turned prematurely snow-white by his ordeal

he was a grim reminder that death lurked everywhere in the wilderness

At the Rendezvous he told the story of his encounter first with a grizzly bear

and then with thirty Blackfoot Indians

RENDEZVOUS BEGINS IN ERNEST

William Sublette's supply caravan had brought the necessary furnishings

now both celebration and trading could begin

Nathaniel Wyeth and his New England emigrants gazed in awe

Sublette would have first crack at the bales of fine furs brought in

by Rocky Mountain Fur Company trappers, whose rendezvous (in theory) it was,

and by unaffiliated trappers, company trappers, Astorians, added to the revelry

and by the several hundred Indians

about 120 lodges of Nez Perce, some Flatheads, and a few Iroquois and Delawares

Trading with the Pacific Fur Trading Company employees went on for more than a week

trappers exchanged their precious beaver pelts for powder and ball, knives, hatchets, kettles, blankets, and the bright trade goods coveted by Indian women

they also traded for fresh horses

Nez Perce bred a particularly fine pony: the Palouse horse -- ancestor of today’s Appaloosa

Mountain Men did not seem to mind that everything was marked up

as much as 2,000 percent over prices in St. Louis

life in the mountains was uncertain at best -- cash was of little value

Trappers and Indians partook copiously of Sublette's little square kegs of pure alcohol since it was unlawful to give or sell liquor to Indians,

Sublette had gotten a “passport” in St. Louis to carry up to 450 gallons of whiskey “for the special use of his boatmen”

that was pure fiction, of course since Sublette had come overland and had no boatmen

at the rendezvous, nobody cared how the alcohol got to Pierre's Hole

most of the men present simply enjoyed it,

got gloriously drunk and found cooperative Indian women

CAPTAIN BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE EXPEDITION

Composed of twenty white-topped wagons drawn by oxen

now 110 men, pack horses and mules captained by Bonneville

while Joe Walker and Michael Cerre served as copartners

They struck the fork where the Platte River divided into North and South Platte rivers -- July 11, 1832

though the route along the North Platte was unknown to him

he took it because he was headed to the Rocky Mountains

herds of buffalo became more plentiful on this route

and as they passed between Chimney Rock and Scott's Bluff, (Nebraska)

they noted that the prairie was black with buffalo

CAPTAIN BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE’S CARAVAN

His party continued on their way to the Rendezvous

had progressed from the Platte River to the Sweetwater River -- by mid-July 1832

coming at last into view of the Rocky Mountains

END OF THE 1832 RENDEZVOUS

Whiskey drunk and furs gone, Pierre’s Hole Rendezvous came to an end

Rocky Mountain Fur Company trappers began to pack for the high country

to return to their traps and the beaver streams, of the Green, Yellowstone, Snake,

and Humboldt rivers

and to impatiently await the Winter Fair on the Laramie River

as did all of the other company and independent trappers

while Indians, visitors, and dignitaries went their separate ways

They could not know that 1832 was the last great harvest of the beaver trade,

but they did know that it was good to take life as it came -- enjoying it while they could

WILLIAM SUBLETTE’S PACK TRAIN DEPARTED FROM THE RENDEZVOUS SITE

After the Pierre’s Hole Rendezvous, Nathaniel Wyeth’s deserters

were to return East with Alfred K. Stevens and a party of four trappers

accompanying William Sublette to St. Louis

Bill Sublette set out for St. Louis with the Pacific Fur Trading Company furs -- July 15, 1832

first day’s journey was only a mere eight miles before they camped south of Pierre's Hole

perhaps the short distance was the result of too much celebration at the rendezvous

perhaps they were just cautious

wary from Tom Fitzpatrick’s terrible experience

CAPTAIN NATHANIEL WYETH CHANGES SUBLETTES

Wyeth had left William Sublette’s Pacific Fur Trading Company protection

and placed themselves under Milton Sublette Rocky Mountain Fur Company

until they could clear Blackfoot country in the lower Snake River region

then they would strike out for the Columbia River on their own

after adding three more adventurers, Wyeth was now accompanied by eleven men

Wyeth decision to seek additional protection and expert assistance was a sound one

with fewer than half of his original Pacific Fur Company men,

with more than half of his trade goods lost or expended an no supply depot nearer than St. Louis,

it is very probably they would never reach the west side of the Rocky Mountains

without the help of, first William and now Milton, Sublette

MILTON SUBLETTE LEADS ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR COMPANY BRIGADE WEST

Captain Milton G. Sublette, William Sublette’s younger brother, led a party of company men southwestward out of Pierre's Hole bound for the Salmon River -- July 17, 1832

they intended to cross the Snake River Mountains

and work their way southward to the Humboldt River for a Fall beaver hunt

In addition to the Rocky Mountain Fur Company and Nathaniel Wyeth and his followers,

also with Milton Sublette were fifteen free trappers under veteran Alexander Sinclair

and a few Flathead braves tagged along as there was safety in numbers in this perilous land

MILTON SUBLETTE’S ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR COMPANY PARTY TRAVELS SLOWLY

Camping at the southern end of Pierre’s Hole these men awoke -- July 18, 1832

as they were breaking camp a caravan of something was seen

proceeding through the pass and into the valley

it was expected to be the American Fur Company supply train

under Lucien Fontenelle and Etienne Provost

which was late in arriving to the Rendezvous

or it could be a herd of migrating buffalo

After using a telescope, the remains of their holiday mood vanished approaching from the Palisade Mountain Range to the south

wound a long column of Indians, as many as 200, emerging from Teton Pass

displaying a British flag

they were Gros Ventre Indians, but this morning they had their families with them

and did not seem to be looking for trouble just then

GROS VENTRE INDIANS

All Mountain Men knew the “Big Bellies”

so-called for their insatiable appetites -- capable of wearing out anybody's hospitality

even their kinsmen, the Arapaho, called them “spongers”

American trappers simply called them “Blackfoot”

lumping them together with that much-stronger nation

whose language they often spoke, and with whom they often allied against the white man

Gros Ventre were, however, a distinct tribe, not only acquisitive but also very tough

This group was returning from a visit to the Arapaho Indians

a vacation taken in part to escape the wrath of the British Hudson's Bay Company,

to whom the Big Bellies had been a perpetual plague and menace

in fact, this Gros Ventre party had stolen their British flag

from a Hudson's Bay Company party they had recently ambushed

CAPTAIN MILTON SUBLETTE’S ENCOUNTER WITH THE GROS VENTRE

As the trappers watched, most Indian women and children returned to the mountains this was an ominous sign

Milton Sublette dispatched two men to seek reinforcements from his brother

who was about eight miles away

Gros Ventre Indian braves came on

Mountain Men sent a couple of trappers back to the rendezvous for reinforcements Milton Sublette ordered a barricade made of their packs

and they waited to see what the Indians intended

Perhaps as a ruse, perhaps sincerely,

Gros Ventre sent an unarmed war chief, Baihoh, to the trappers

Baihoh wore a red robe and carried a medicine pipe,

a holy article with a green soapstone bowl and long, decorated wooden stem

Baihoh may have thought he was dealing with Lucien Fontenelle’s American Fur Company men whom he knew should be in that area

Gros Ventre were momentarily at peace with the American Fur Company

as an Arapaho brave said later, Baihoh would never have advanced alone and unarmed if he knew he was dealing with his enemies the Rocky Mountain Company men

Milton Sublette was willing to talk, but he chose the wrong envoys

he sent Antoine Godin, the mixed-breed Iroquois who had rescued Tom Fitzpatrick

Godin hated the Blackfeet as two years earlier they had killed his father on the Big Lost River

in Godin's eyes this chief was just another killer

beside him rode a Flathead chief whose tribe had been repeatedly savaged

by both Blackfoot and Gros Ventre war parties

As Baihoh extended his hand, Godin gripped it hard and shouted to the Flathead “Fire!”

Baihoh toppled from his horse

before the Gros Ventre could react

Godin and the Flathead were galloping back to the trappers' barricade,

whooping and waving the red robe -- and the chief's scalp

BATTLE OF PIERRE’S HOLE

Rage erupted from the Gros Ventre, and the fight was on

Big Bellies quickly took cover in a wooded, swampy area,

fortifying their position with logs and branches

and trenches dug furiously by some of their women

Both sides filled the air with lead, but there was little movement

WILLIAM SUBLETTE BRINGS REINFORCEMENTS

Hearing of the threat to his brother Milton and his men,

Captain William Sublette ordered every man at the rendezvous site to get ready immediately

Bill Sublette had brought, by frontier standards, a whole army

with him rode some 200 white trappers, plus about 200 Flatheads and 300 Nez Perce warriors,

all eager to fall on the hated Gros Ventre

Taking command, William Sublette got Wyeth's greenhorns out of the line of fire,

then led a force of some sixty volunteers into the willow-shaded swamp

with Sublette was veteran frontiersman Robert Campbell,

he and Sublette exchanged “oral wills” as they moved into combat

BATTLE GROWS MORE INTENSE

Fighting soon turned into a murderous point-blank hail of arrows and rifle balls

Indian’s barricade proved difficult to penetrate

veteran trapper Alexander Sinclair went down, mortally wounded

he was carried out of the line of fire

William Sublette hit one Gros Ventre brave peering through a cleft in the barricade,

but it was difficult for the trappers to get a clear shot

Gros Ventre were shooting well

veteran trapper Henry Fraeb lost a lock of hair to a well-aimed ball

Even under such circumstances, William Sublette and others pressed ahead into the fire

Sublette decided to charge the natives and ordered his men to follow him

six men standing beside Billy Sublette joined in hand-to-hand combat

of these seven four were wounded and one killed

Sublette was standing behind a tree reloading when he was hit in the shoulder by a ball

which went on to strike another trapper in the head

Other trappers and Indian allies fell under the Gros Ventre' accurate fire

one boozy trapper wobbled into the open,

climbed onto the logs of the Indian barricade,

and promptly took two bullets in the head

There was considerable confusion, and the attackers recoiled

although William Sublette remained in command for a time, his shoulder blade was broken,

and he was losing blood

he finally collapsed and was carried back to safety

a flanking party led by Milton Sublette also failed to gain any ground from the Gros Ventre.

Even the bravest of the trappers were glad to fall back

one of them, the indestructible Zenas Leonard, later wrote

that he was delighted to carry away a wounded trapper

it gave him a chance to fall back without anybody questioning his courage,

and he lost no time in packing his companion out of the fight

TRAPPERS SET UP A CROSS-FIRE

Trappers had now managed to cover two sides of the Gros Ventre’ position,

but in doing so, they were shooting at each other as well as their enemies

it was desperate work at close quarters

some of the trappers began to lose any enthusiasm they might have had

Nathaniel Wyeth, in the thick of the fight, observed dryly, **“The idea of a barbed arrow sticking in a man's body, as we had observed it in the deer and other animals, was appalling to us all, and it is no wonder that some of our men recoiled from it.”[[229]](#footnote-229)**

nevertheless, the attackers worked in closer and closer to the Gros Ventre line,

both sides screaming insults at one another

As the day wore on, however, ammunition began to run low

so low, in fact, that after the fight the trappers would have to return to the battlefield to dig lead from the trees

MOUNTAIN MEN CHANGE STRATEGIES

Finally, the attackers decided to burn the Gros Ventre out

they began to gather dry wood and brush

Indian allies were not happy with the idea

fire would destroy the plunder they hoped to gain

Before any fire was laid, the Gros Ventre shouted that they would be avenged,

that 400 lodges of their tribe were near and would exterminate the white men utterly Somehow this threat got mistranslated into a warning that a multitude of Gros Ventre

were even now plundering the trappers' main camp back at the rendezvous

Leaving only a small guard to watch the Gros Ventre,

most of the trappers immediately raced off north to save their possessions

other trappers heard only **“Blackfeet comin’, heap Blackfeet, heap big fight.”[[230]](#footnote-230)**

this was enough to convince them that unseen Gros Ventre reinforcements

were about to attack them directly

many whites and Indian allies ran for their lives

It did not take them long to realize that no hostile reinforcements were nearby, however

trappers who had raced off to defend their own camp found their possessions intact

no Gros Ventre warriors had even come near the camp

some returned to continue the siege of the Big Belly breastworks

but most trappers did not return to the fight until after dark

TRAPPERS WAIT OUT A LONG NIGHT

With the dawn trappers began again to close in on the Gros Ventre stronghold

closer and closer they crept, and no shot was fired

finally, they mounted a charge, up and over the logs and branches, to find...nothing

sometime during the darkness, the Gros Ventre had skillfully withdrawn,

taking their wounded with them

Inside the Indians’ defensive position lay twenty or thirty dead horses,

but only nine Indian corpses

a few more Gros Ventre bodies turned up

as the trappers fruitlessly followed blood trails into the woods

trappers also found a few forgotten white men,

a wounded mountain man who soon died

a wounded Gros Ventre squaw whom the Flatheads murdered forthwith

BATTLE OF PIERRE’S HOLE WAS OVER

Nathaniel Wyeth somewhat melodramatically wrote: **“The din of arms was now changed into the noise of the vulture and the howling of masterless dogs.”[[231]](#footnote-231)**

that was all that remained, except to bury the dead and collect the plunder

there was lots of that, blankets and other personal possessions

and a herd of several dozen horses -- including the treasured pony Tom Fitzpatrick had lost during his escape from the Blackfoot Indians

Gros Ventre body count rose to sixteen

Big Bellies later admitted that twenty-six of their people had been killed and thirty-five wounded

since Indians customarily understated their losses,

this was probably substantially below their actual casualties

Of the fur company men, seven were dead and thirteen wounded

seven friendly Indians had been killed and seven more injured

Gros Ventre had fought well, against great odds

Zenas Leonard honestly wrote that the Big Bellies had shown themselves

to be both smarter and braver than their attackers

they had, he thought, deserved to win

William Sublette and the other trappers returned to Pierre's Hole

for a few days, giving Sublette time to heal a little

However, there were beavers to trap and miles to cover

Mountain Men began to filter off toward the far rivers

AMERICAN FUR COMPANY SUPPLY CARAVAN

Rendezvous was over before Astor’s pack train led by Lucien Fontenelle and Etienne Provost

reached the Green River after traveling from Fort Union

pressing on, however, the American Fur Company supply train reached the Rendezvous site

Because of the great rivalry between the Rocky Mountain Fur Company and Hudson’s Bay Company

both corporation maintained separate camps

Rendezvous continued on for several additional days -- [until July 30]

after the final departure of the Pacific Fur Trading Company company’s leader William Sublette

Although their arrival was tardy

this venture demonstrated the ability of steamboats to navigate the Missouri

and transport large quantities of trade goods up and furs down the river

Henceforth, although often thwarted by the vagaries of the Missouri River,

cargoes of merchandise would be transported upriver

and cargo of pelts and robes carried down river much more cheaply and swiftly

CAPTAIN BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE CARAVAN CROSSES (WYOMING)

En route to the Rendezvous, they continued up the North Platte River

(crossing into today’s Wyoming) to the Sweetwater River

They were the first expedition to cross the Rockies north of Mexico with wagons

wheeled vehicles had come to the mountains before,

but never had a wagon train of this size surmounted South Pass

was the first to take wheeled vehicles over the continental divide of the Rocky Mountains

(a trail that would prove essential to the overland emigration that followed)

Bonneville and his 121 men reached the Wind River Mountains on July 20, 1832

wagon train left the Sweetwater and headed west over a rocky ridge -- July 24, 1832

BUSINESS AGREEMENT SIGNED

William Sublette and Tom Fitzpatrick signed an agreement -- July 25, 1832

before either launched a Fall beaver hunt

Fitzpatrick represented the five partners of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company

himself, Milton Sublette, Jim Bridger, Henry Fraeb, and Jean Baptiste Gervais

but Billy Sublette represented only himself

Sublette would take the Rocky Mountain Fur Company’s beaver pelts down to St. Louis to dispose of them and handle all outstanding debts

Fitzpatrick did not understand the terms and conditions of the legal agreement

in effect, he had mortgaged the Rocky Mountain Fur Company to Sublette

who could now manipulate the agreement and take the company under his control

William Sublette, acting as agent, acquired 168 packs of furs worth $85,000

and the power to resolve all debts owed by the Rocky Mountain Fur Company

he set out from the rendezvous site -- July 30

CAPTAIN BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE CARAVAN ENTERS THE NORTHWEST

With Joe Walker they crossed the Continental Divide over the Rocky Mountains

and entered into the Northwest

They proceeded to a point three miles below the confluence of the Salmon River forks

this route would prove to be too rough for wagons

Pressing on, however, the American Fur Company supply train

reached the Rendezvous site -- early August 1832

arriving far too late to conduct any business

BEN BONNEVILLE ARRIVED AT THE RENDEZVOUS SITE MUCH TOO LATE

Ninety mountaineers and packers settled into the Green River valley -- early August

to rest their livestock, hunt, and replenish what stores they could

With no prospect of finding customers, Bonneville realized that his wagons and many of the supplies

could be cached along the upper Green River near the rendezvous site

in the vicinity of the mouth of Horse Creek (near today’s Daniel, Wyoming)

CAPTAIN WILLIAM SUBLETTE EN ROUTE TO ST. LOUIS

On his way east with 168 packs of precious beaver pelts

belonging to the Rocky Mountain Fur Company,

His party ran head-on into the main Gros Ventre body, angry and painted for war

but the Indians were short of powder, and long on experience

they were a little reluctant to tangle with “Cutface” as they called Bill Sublette

so-named for the scar on his chin

Sublette avoided a fight, mixing a judicious combination of ready rifles

and a gift of twenty-five pounds of tobacco

he could afford the present; his pelts were worth $85,000

CAPTAIN NATHANIEL WYETH AGAIN ORGANIZES HIS MEN

The ten remaining members of the Pacific Trading Company made new preparations

Mr. Abbott (fur trapper), John Ball, W. Breck, G. Sargent, John Sinclair, J. Woodman Smith,

Solomon H. Smith, Calvin Tibbits, Guy Trumbell**,** and Mr. Whitier

ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR COMPANY MEN GO WEST

Milton Sublette once again set out from the Pierre’s Hole Rendezvous site

Captain Nathaniel Wyeth and his ten men of the Pacific Trading Company

accompanied Sublette through Blackfoot Country all the way to the Snake River

which they reached after several savage encounters

GROS VENTRE REVENGE

Three day’s journey after the fight near Pierre’s Hole about thirty Gros Ventre warriors

lay in ambush twenty yards off the trail on the slopes of Jackson's Hole

suddenly they sprang up and fired into the small party of trappers

as the horses wheeled about, George More was thrown and Alfred K. Stevens killed

natives raced past More as they knew they could not get away from them

five trappers successfully reached the top of hill and were considering how to save More

when one of the warriors shot him through the head

perhaps a better fate than if he had been captured and tortured to death

(Other trappers were picked off by ones and twos that year and later, in the merciless wilderness ironically, a veteran leader of the unoffending American Fur Company trappers

was among those ambushed and murdered by the Gros Ventre before the year was out)

FORT BONNEVILLE CONSTRUCTED

After the rendezvous, Captain Bonneville became apprehensive

about the presence of hostile Blackfoot Indians in the vicinity

he realized that his wagons and many of the stores could be cached in the Green River Valley

Bonneville stored what he could, buried the wagons, cached most of their goods near the Green River

and directed his men to construct a fort (near Daniel, Wyoming)

on the right bank of the Green River between the river and Horse Creek

Bonneville and Mountain Man Joe Walker differed over this scheme

but Bonneville was determined to build a fort on the Green River

Walker argued that the location, while excellent for a rendezvous,

provided a terrible setting for either trapping or a trading post:

•open valley afforded no shelter from winter storms

•also, trapping brigades wintered at various sites depending on game and forage

not at a trading post

perhaps Bonneville never visualized the post as a primary base for tapping or trading

his mind’s eye may have pictured it garrisoned by United States soldiers

rather than rough mountaineers

if so, the site made strategic sense

Considerable amount of labor was expended in the construction of Fort Bonneville

designed primarily for protection,

stockade structure was completed -- August 9, 1832

Fort Bonneville was an impressive fort of logs set firmly in the ground

fifteen feet in height with protruding blockhouses at two opposite corners

FORT BONNEVILLE WAS ABANDONED

Nature changed Captain Bonneville’s mind when the early and heavy fall snows

caused him to abandon the site -- apparently now believing the location to be a poor one

Bonneville divided his company into groups:

•twenty men stayed at Fort Bonneville

•ninety men were sent off in three brigades to hunt buffalo and other game

Sarcasm and ridicule were directed at the post as the gathered force of trappers laughed

many of the trappers referred to it as “Fort Nonsense” or “Bonneville's Folly”

Trapping brigade, wagons, and animals moved south and west

from the Green River -- August 22, 1832

exploring the region (of what is now Wyoming)

CAPTAIN BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE AND HIS MEN JOURNEYED WESTWARD

They were hungry and thirsty when the ninety men and their animals

finally reached the upper Salmon River -- September 19, 1832

at a point three miles below the confluence of the Salmon River forks

Here they established their winter quarters -- September 26

near the mouth of the Lemhi River and Carmen Creek (by today’s Salmon, Idaho)

at a place unsuitable for a permanent camp

Game was scarce that winter and they had a hard time feeding themselves

altitude and severe weather indicated predictable problems would prevail

this unsuitable location proved to be an even worse place to winter

than the upper Green River (Wyoming) would have been

WILLIAM SUBLETTE ARRIVED IN ST. LOUIS

His caravan came out of the high country safely,

his animals laden with the last great beaver harvest

Washington Irving, out on the frontier with a government commission,

watched Sublette lead his men home: **“Their long cavalcade stretched in single file for nearly half a mile. Sublette still wore his arm in a sling. The mountaineers in their rude hunting dresses armed with rifles and roughly mounted. . . looked like banditti returning with plunder.”[[232]](#footnote-232)**

ST. LOUIS MISSOURI FUR COMPANY FORMED

William Sublette and Robert Campbell formed their own fur company -- fall 1832

with the goal of challenging John Jacob Astor’s American Fur company

along the upper Missouri River

CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE MADE CONTACT WITH THE LOCAL NATIVES

They met and befriended a band of five Nez Perce families on the upper Salmon River

Nez Perce joined them -- October 8, 1832

they had no food either, but they showed the captain a few edible wild plants

Flatheads and Pend d’Oreilles, known as “hanging ears,” also were camped in the area

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY LEARNS OF BEN BONNEVILLE’S VISIT

Word of Bonneville’s presence and activities reached Fort Vancouver's John McLoughlin in very terse and direct terms, the Chief Factor forbid company traders

to associate with Bonneville or his men

having established themselves and developed trade relationships with the Indians,

Chief Factor McLoughlin was determined to maintain control of the fur trade in the West

Hudson’s Bay Company had been trapping and trading in the region

since the early [1820s], and although (as indicated by Washington Irving):**“…the Indians were sorely tempted by his** [Bonneville’s] **blankets and other trade goods, they refused to trade with him because they feared that when he had gone the traders of the Hudson's Bay Company would not buy their furs….”[[233]](#footnote-233)**

Caught between the Hudson’s Bay Company’s control

and the tribes’ reticence to stir the Company’s wrath

success and survival in Oregon for Bonneville was difficult

CAPTAIN NATHANIEL WYETH AND HIS MEN REACH THE SNAKE RIVER

Pacific Trading Company men had stayed with Milton Sublette’s trapping caravan

a hundred miles west from Pierre’s Hole through the Blackfoot Country

eventually Wyeth and his men reached the Snake River

after several savage encounters with the natives

CAPTAIN MILTON SUBLETTE TURNS TOWARD CALIFORNIA

Milton Sublette left the Pacific Trading Company to care for themselves (for the winter)

as the captain and his Rocky Mountain Fur Company trappers turned toward the Humbolt River

WYETH ADDS FIVE TRAPPERS TO HIS PARTY

After taking leave of Milton Sublette and his Rocky Mountain Fur Company men

Wyeth and his remaining men were joined by five free trappers

Wyeth and his men followed Wilson Price Hunt’s route -- [1811-1812]

down the Snake River and over the Blue Mountains

this trail was still being used by the Hudson’s Bay Company Snake Country Expeditions

Wyeth hunted beaver in the scraggly hills along the present Utah-Idaho boarder

he proved to be fairly successful as a trapper

however, bad luck hounded the effort -- three of his remaining men departed

Wyeth was forced to cache his furs as his party was too small to carry them out

they hurried northward ahead of winter to the Hudson’s Bay Company’s Fort Walla Walla

PACIFIC TRADING COMPANY REACHED FORT WALLA WALLA

Wyeth and his followers were met by Hudson’s Bay Company Chief Trader Pierre Pambrun

who gave Wyeth a new suit of clothes, agreed to care for the party’s horses (until spring)

and put the men aboard a downriver barge

Eleven days after portaging around the roaring falls at the Dalles and The Cascades,

and after staring at the vast cone of Mount Hood

and, most particularly, after studying the ways of the river Indians,

Wyeth reached Fort Vancouver

CAPTAIN NATHANIEL WYETH ARRIVED AT FORT VANCOUVER

Ten bedraggled Americans led by a thirty-year-old Bostonian named Nathaniel Wyeth

appeared at Dr. John McLoughlin’s gate calling themselves the Pacific Trading Company

five who had accompanied Wyeth across the continent from Boston:

John Ball, Osborne Russell, John Sinclair, Solomon Howard Smith, and Calvin Tibbetts

five free trappers who had joined with Wyeth along the Snake River

Mr. Abbott, W. Breck, G. Sargent, J. Woodman Smith, and Guy Trumbell

they were the first American party to traverse westward the entire length

of what would become the Oregon Trail

Chief Factor noted their arrival that day in his report to Hudson’s Bay Company London headquarters

**“He says he came to ascertain if possible to make a business of curing Salmon in the River, & at the same time to supply [with trade goods and equipment] the American Trappers in the Rocky Mountains.”[[234]](#footnote-234) --** October 29, 1832

Dr. John McLoughlin made him welcome

at first because of his natural courtesy

and later because Wyeth’s magnetic charm won the factor over completely

an admiration the American returned in full

However, Wyeth’s plans to enter the fur trade got no cooperation from the British

HALL JACKSON KELLEY RAISES FUNDS IN NEW YORK

Left Boston for New York City -- November 1, 1832

in New York he somehow obtained credit, plus contributions, Bibles, and religious tracts

for uplifting the Indians of Oregon

NATHANIEL WYETH COULD SEE HIS PLAN UNWRAVELING

Wyeth was extremely disappointed to learn his ship, the *Sultana,* had not yet arrived

without the *Sultana* the sea expedition was a failure

overland expedition had not fared as well as hoped either

less than a fifth of the members of the Pacific Trading Company had reached Fort Vancouver

Completely disheartened, the last of his partners now asked to be released from their contract

Wyeth acceded and granted his five men temporary leave -- November 19, 1832

to shift for themselves

Wyeth and his men scattered

two men, John Ball and Solomon H. Smith stayed the winter of 1832-33 at Fort Vancouver

where they were hospitably entertained as the guests of Dr. McLoughlin

(at various times they taught Oregon’s first schools at Fort Vancouver

and later farmed -- Ball at Champoeg and Smith on the Clatsop Plains)

two of Wyeth’s ex-associates Osborne Russell and Calvin Tibbets

drifted up the Willamette River to French Prairie to try farming

John Sinclair suffered from chills and fevers and left Oregon via ship [October 1833]

eventually most of the company returned to the United States, but at least two stayed in Oregon

JOHN BALL BEGINS THE FIRST SCHOOL IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

He had been a New York lawyer and successful businessman

and had accompanied Nathaniel Wyeth as a member of the Pacific Fur Company

Ball was hired by Dr. John McLoughlin to serve as the first teacher for children at Fort Vancouver

at the first “white” school in the Pacific Northwest which operated within Fort Vancouver’s walls

classes were begun -- November 19, 1832

where he taught eight half-breed children of French-Canadian families at Fort Vancouver

they spoke a variety of tongues, but no English

ONE OF JOHN BALL’S STUDENTS IS A FUTURE WORLD TRAVELER

(Ranald MacDonald was born at Fort Astoria [February 3, 1824]

to Archibald MacDonald, a Scottish Hudson’s Bay Company fur trader,

and Raven (also known as Princess Sunday) the 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

much of Ranald’s first nine years were spent with his Chinook relatives)

Archibald McDonald moved his son to Fort Vancouver where he attended school --1832-[1833]

taught by John Ball, the first teacher in Oregon Country

DEVELOPMENT OF THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY

Official company policy frowned on the effort to settle south of the Columbia River

in the eyes of the London directors, farming and the fur trader did not go together

furthermore, the firm’s government license

forbade leaving discharged servants in the Indian’s country

however, the Willamette Valley did receive retired trappers

Rather than drive retirees into the arms of rival companies, McLoughlin worked out a compromise

if a would-be settler was married and had fifty pounds credit on the company books

that is, if the farmer was solvent enough not be easily tempted by the sea peddlers’ offers McLoughlin would loan him enough equipment and livestock to get his farm started

and would guarantee him a market for his produce -- principally wheat

By the time of Nathaniel Wyeth’s arrival nine families had started tilling widely separated farms

on what would soon be known as French Prairie

one overriding doubt plagued them:

when the joint occupation treaty ended, the land south of the Columbia

would almost certainly go the United States

what would happen to their land claims?

CAPTAIN NATHANIEL WYETH VISITED THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY

Where he made plans to establish his business ventures

Wyeth made note of the conditions he found: **“…Hudson’s Bay Company [has] exclusive control, they are at peace with the Indians, and the Indians among themselves. Wars with the Indians on the British frontiers have long since ceased….**

**“A further evil that attends our loose laws and their looser execution is that the Indian country is becoming a receptacle for fugitives from justice. The preponderance of bad character is already so great amongst traders and their people that crime carries with it little or no shame. I have heard it related among white American trappers as a good joke that a trapper who had said he would shoot any Indian whom he could catch stealing his traps, was seen one morning to kill one, and on being asked if the Indian had stolen his traps he answered no, but he looked as if he was going to. An Indian was thus wantonly murdered and white men were found to laugh at the joke….”[[235]](#footnote-235)**

Regarding America’s role in Oregon Wyeth summed up: **“In conclusion I will observe that the measures of this Company have been conceived with wisdom, steadily pursued, and have been well seconded by their government, and the success has been complete. And, without being able to charge on them any very gross violations of the existing treaties, a few years will make the country west of the mountains as completely English as they can desire. Already the Americans are unknown as a nation, and as individuals their power is despised by the natives of the land. A population is growing out of the occupancy of the country whose prejudices are not with us, and before many years they will decide to whom the country shall belong, unless in the meantime the American Government make their power felt and seen to a greater degree that has yet been the case.”[[236]](#footnote-236)**

U.S. ARMY CAPTAIN BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE CONTACTS THE NATIVES

Bonneville sent brigades out to hunt and reconnoiter -- November 1832

Bonneville’s hunters established friendly relations during his first winter in the West

While his men were securing the winter's supply of meat,

Captain Bonneville, himself, continued visiting tribes along the Snake River

he had counted on tribal trade to replenish his supplies

he met with the local Nez Perce, Flathead, and Pend d’Oreille Indians

collecting information and pelts and anything else that was fit for trade

he camped near the Bannock Indians, hunting buffalo

and experienced decidedly unfriendly contacts with the Blackfoot Indians

Bonneville also met with small groups of white trappers

among them Captain Milton Sublette and Joseph B. Gervais

NATURALIST DAVID DOUGLAS’S THRID VISIT TO THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Douglas again returned to Fort Vancouver aboard a Hudson’s Bay Company ship -- late fall 1832

he went to Spokane House to see gunsmith Jaco Finlay

who was the only man within 800 miles able to repair Douglas’ gun

(Finlay was a half-breed who along with Finan McDonald had built Spokane House -- [1810])

Douglas undertook preparations for an extensive journey ranging from California to Alaska

and continuing overland to Russia and Europe

winter was spent at Fort Vancouver where arrangements for the excursion were finalized

BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE AND HIS MEN FACED A FOOD SHORTAGE

To find game he and his men were forced to move their camp -- December 9, 1832

to the north fork of the Salmon River where there was lots of bunchgrass to feed the horses

and elk and mountain sheep were plentiful

but they had to be constantly on the watch for enemy Blackfoot Indians

he and his men trapped hardly at all

CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE’S EXPLORATIONS

Bonneville surveyed the Indian tribes he met his first winter in the West

His assessments of the tribes (as reported later by his “biographer”Washington Irving)

were characterized by a keen and genuine interest in the cultures and customs of the tribes he met

Captain Bonneville learned that the Indians were deeply religious

as demonstrated by their passionate belief in a supreme being

Bonneville’s report of the Nez Perces serves as an example of his insight: **“Simply to call these people [Nez Perces] religious would convey but a faint idea of the piety and devotion which pervades their whole conduct. Their honesty is immaculate. Their purity of purpose and their observance of the rites of their religion are uniform and remarkable.... Their customs and manners are all strongly imbued with religion.”[[237]](#footnote-237)**

*SULTANA* IS LOST

Nathaniel Wyeth learned his ship *Sultana* had been wrecked along the coast of South America

she had hit a reef at the Society Islands and had sunk with all supplies lost

this marked the end of the Pacific Trading Company and Nathaniel Wyeth’s high hopes

ANOTHER GREAT EPIDEMIC

Swept through the Northwest

many of the Indians in the region were stricken and died of the disease

CAPTAIN BENJAMIN L.E. BONNEVILLE INVESTIGATES THE SALMON RIVER AREA

He and his trappers occupied themselves more with reconnoitering than with trapping

they made their first attempt at trapping-- January 1833

Bonneville arrived at the Godin River -- February 28

CAPTAIN NATHANIEL WYETH’S BUSINESS PROPOSAL

Wyeth had learned the year before that Francis Ermatinger

had taken trade goods into the Snake country to swap good for furs with American trappers

This made good sense to Wyeth -- working out of Fort Vancouver

using cheap Nez Perce horses as pack animals and mounts

and French-Canadian labor would be cheaper and easier than traveling from St. Louis

Enthusiastic about the notion of supplying trappers from the West instead of from St. Louis,

Wyeth would cooperate with Hudson’s Bay Company by providing supplies

he could purchase goods at Fort Vancouver

to sell to trappers South of the Columbia River away from Hudson's Bay Company posts

and to take on pack trains to the rendezvous,

he would collect furs from trappers by underselling the American supply companies,

and return the pelts to the Hudson’s Bay Company depot at a guaranteed price

Trapping threat proposed by Nathaniel Wyeth did not worry Dr. John McLoughlin

Hudson’s Bay Company’s brigades could easily outmaneuver the American

any real danger lay in the possibility that rebuffing Wyeth’s proposal

might lead the Yankee to counter with cheap goods

or, most damaging, alcohol imported from outside sources

also the Chief Factor was certain that Wyeth’s scheme would in time fail

through its own inadequacies

Seeing no need to grind down Wyeth, a man whom he liked, McLoughlin agreed to the proposal, providing confirmation could be received from is superiors

CAPTAIN WYETH WRITES TO GOVERNOR OF RUPERT’S LAND GEORGE SIMPSON

Wyeth proposed in a letter written to Hudson’s Bay Company Governor George Simpson

written from Fort Colville

that Wyeth become a supplier of goods for trappers in the field

After acquiring Wyeth’s proposal, Governor Simpson immediately appreciated the idea

(until the London directors’ uproar against intruding Americans reached him)

Dr. McLoughlin also thought the idea was a good one -- at first

The confirmation never materialized

NATHANIEL WYETH LEAVES FORT VANCOUVER BOUND FOR BOSTON

Wyeth signed on with Hudson’s Bay Company man Francis Ermatinger

who was in charge of the Snake River expedition that year

and was just setting out for Flathead post (in present Montana)

Snake River Brigade left Fort Vancouver -- Spring 1833

NATHANIEL WYETH REACHES FLATHEAD POST

After sending the letter to Governor of Rupert’s Land George Simpson from Fort Colville,

Wyeth settled down with Ermatinger at Flathead post

to learn how the Hudson’s Bay Company ran its business

TWO OF NATHANIEL WYETH’S MEN BEGIN FARMING

John Ball finished his first (and only) term as teacher at Fort Vancouver -- March 1, 1833

he was only partially successful as a teacher

after one term he was replaced as teacher at Fort Vancouver by Solomon H. Smith

SOLOMON HOWARD SMITH -- TEACHER AND FARMER

Had arrived in Oregon as one of four Pacific Fur Company men to accompany Wyeth

He replaced John Ball as teacher at Fort Vancouver

and kept the teaching position for eighteen months -- 1833-[1834]

He became involved with an Indian woman -- the wife of the baker at Fort Vancouver

she left her husband and joined Smith

Smith left teaching to farm on the Clatsop Plains near the mouth of the Columbia River

He was the only member of Wyeth’s company

who remained in the Pacific Northwest as a permanent settler

AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS (AMERICAN BOARD)

American Board missionary effort was established by New England Congregationalists

[officially chartered in 1812]

this was the first American Christian foreign mission agency

Congregational organization expanded its financial base by adding other denominations

was now composed of three national churches headquartered in Boston:

•Congregational

•Presbyterian

•Dutch Reform

Missionaries were sent to various counties and American possessions

but their work in Hawaii was especially notable

(from [1820 to 1848] more than eighty missionaries

introduced Christianity, Western education and printing there)

American Board organization followed very closely the efforts of the Methodists in Oregon

*CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE AND JOURNAL*

Was aProtestant Christian magazine published in New York

William Walker served as interpreter for Wyandotte Indians

and Agent for Methodist businessman G.P. Disoway in New York

Walker wrote a letter to Mr. Disoway regarding a story he had heard in St. Louis

about four Indians traveling to St. Louis seeking the Bible

Disoway submitted the letter, along with his commentary,

to the editor of Methodist newspaper: *The New York Christian Advocate and Journal*

Walker’s letter was published -- March 1, 1833

Disoway wrote in his postscript: **“How deeply affecting is the circumstances of the four natives traveling on foot three thousand miles through thick forests and extensive prairies, sincere searchers after truth! The story has scarcely a parallel in history…. There are immense plains, mountains and forests in those regions whence they came, the abodes of numerous savage tribes. But no apostle of Christ has yet had the courage to penetrate into their moral darkness.**

**“Adventurous and daring fur traders only have visited these regions, unknown to the rest of the world…. May we not indulge the hope that the day is not far distant when the missionaries will penetrate into these wilds where the Sabbath bell has never yet tolled since the world began! …Not a thought of converting or civilizing them ever enters the mind of the sordid, demoralizing hunters and fur traders. These simple children of nature even shrink from the loose morality and inhumanities often introduced among them by the white man. Let the Church awake from her slumbers and go forth in her strength to the salvation of these wandering sons of our native forest!”[[238]](#footnote-238)**

this message, if not the writing, struck deep-rooted feelings of concern

and interest was created among several church denominations

Information in Walker’s letter was summarized by Dr. O.W. Nixon (Chap. III):

General Clark presented the two remaining chiefs a banquet on their last night in St. Louis

one of the chiefs gave a speech (although the speech has never been authenticated,

and it is not held in high historical repute)

he was reported to say: **“I come to you over the trail of many moons from the setting sun. You were the friends of my fathers, who have all gone the long way. I came with my eyes partly open for my people who sit in darkness. I go back with both eyes closed. How can I go back blind to my blind people?**

**“I made my way to you with strong arms through many enemies and strange lands that I might carry back much to them. I go back with both arms broken and empty. Two fathers came with us, they were the braves of many winters and wars. We leave them asleep here by your great waters and wigwams. They were tired in many moons and their moccasins wore out.**

**“My people sent me to get the ‘White Man’s Book of Heaven.’ You took me to where you allow your women to dance as we do not ours, and the book was not there. You took me to where they worship the ‘Great Spirit’ with candles and the book was not there. You showed me images of the good spirits and the pictures of the good land beyond, but the book was not among them to tell us the way. I am going back the long and sad trail to my people in the dark land. You make my feet weary with gifts and my moccasins will grow old in carrying them, yet the book is not among them.**

**“When I tell my poor blind people after one more snow in the big council, that I did not bring the book, no word will be spoken by our old men or our young braves.**

**“One by one they will rise up and go out in silence. My people will die in darkness, and they will go a long path to other hunting grounds.**

**“No white man will go with them, and no ‘White Man’s Book’ to make the way plain. I have no more words.”[[239]](#footnote-239)**

Story was later re-published in several religious papers

this created additional keen interest and sparked imagination of the public

this was the beginning of interest in missionary work in the Northwest

Story also was responsible for the first misstatement of facts

it was an imaginative account written to please Protestant readers

EARLY ASIAN SHIPWRECK

Japanese junk (boat) was driven ashore fifteen miles south of Cape Flattery -- March 1833

three survivors of the crew of seventeen were taken to Fort Vancouver

they were sent East by Hudson’s Bay Company to be returned home via England -- [1834]

these men, however, may not have been the first Asian visitors to the Pacific Northwest

STEAMBOAT *ASSINIBOINE*

Joined John Jacob Astor’s American Fur Company steamboat *Yellow Stone*

to make the keelboat seem like a relic of antiquity

METHODIST CHURCH INTERESTED IN THE MISSIONARY MOVEMENT

Christians believed in the goodness of God and in his personal direction of their lives

Christians should work not to gain salvation, but to do good deeds for the love of God

News of the great number of “unsaved” Indians in the Pacific Northwest

sparked missionary zeal in New England

Methodist Mission Society in Utica, New York began steps to initiate the first missionary effort

to the natives of the Pacific Northwest

faithful knew that their lives would not be easy -- temptation was always present

adversity required courage

hardships could come for inexplicable and unexpected reasons

DR. WILBUR FISK -- INCREASES INTEREST IN THE MISSIONARY MOVEMENT

Dr. Fisk, now President of Wesleyan University at Middletown, Connecticut

New England’s foremost Methodist spokesman

seems to deserve credit for the opening move

he wrote: **“Hear! Hear! Who will respond to the call from beyond the Rocky Mountains? The communications of G.P. Disoway…has excited in many of this section intense interest. And to be short about it, we are for having a mission established there at once…. Let two suitable men, unencumbered with families and possessing the spirit of martyrs, throw themselves into the nation, live with them -- learn their language -- preach Christ to them…. Who will go? Who? …Were I young and healthy and unencumbered, how joyfully would I go. But this honor is reserved for another. Bright will be his crown; glorious his reward.”[[240]](#footnote-240)**

Dr. Fisk enlisted the interest of his former student, Rev. Jason Lee

who was currently engaged in missionary work in Quebec

Rev. Jason Lee grasping the significance of the Fisk’s gesture set out for Utica, New York

to meet with the New England Methodist Church Conference

REV. JASON LEE -- YOUTHFUL AND FERVENT MINISTER

Born on a farm near the town of Standstead, Quebec [June 28, 1803]

grew up to be a tall, athletic and industrious young man

both emotional and religious

Twenty-three-year-old Jason Lee and his twenty-year-old nephew Daniel Lee

had been converted to the Methodist Church

at a backwoods revival meeting -- [1826]

(both later became ordained ministers)

Both answered the Methodist call for missionaries

Jason Lee was given the title of Chief Missionary

and Daniel that of Mission Associate and Junior Assistant

Spring [and summer] sped by dedicated to preparations and in stumping the East for contributions

REV. JASON LEE DESCRIBED

Methodist minister, youthful at 31 years of age, was a big man, in both size and spirit

tall, six foot three inches in height, athletic, slow-moving and physically commanding

he was industrious and possessed tremendous endurance

friendly, and fearless, he was sometimes lacking in firmness of attitude

practical, he was not polished or graceful in manner, but was powerful in spirit

he was full of zeal and dedication

he was a fervent minister with an unswerving faith in God

most important to him was an active search for the will of God

through prayer, study, and being receptive to religious experiences

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY’S FORT McLOUGHLIN

Fort McLoughlin was built by Hudson’s Bay Company on Milbanke Sound -- 1833

off the coast of central British Columbia (near Bella Bella, British Columbia)

as part of chain of posts that stretched to Alaska

FORT NISQUALLY-- “SCENT OF FLOWERS”

Hudson’s Bay Company established what was known as Nisqually House

at the mouth of the Sequalitchew (Chambers) Creek

about two miles north of the Nisqually River on the bank of Puget Sound -- spring 1833

(Later that year the operation was moved inland to a more permanent location to the east

this second post became known as Fort Nisqually

this fur trading post was built to help the British claim area North of Columbia River

Chief Trader Archibald McDonald directed construction of a 15x20 foot storehouse

this was the first European settlement in Pierce County

McDonald noted in his journal: **“Little as it is, it possesses an advantage over all the settlements we have made on the Coast.”[[241]](#footnote-241)**

other buildings were added to the post as was a stockade which enclosed them

located near the mouth of Sequalitchew Creek

on the route between Fort Vancouver and Fort Langlie on the Fraser River

Fort Nisqually served as way station between the two forts)

DR. WILLIAM FRASER TOLMIE -- FACTOR AT FORT NISQUALLY

Trained in medicine at the University of Glasgow

had arrived at Fort Vancouver by ship -- 1833

Hudson’s Bay Company employee

assisted by Dr. McLoughlin in medical practice at Fort Vancouver

he was in charge of medical activities in the Columbia Department

until the Company withdrew from the area [1849]

Dr. John McLoughlin confided to young doctor William Tolmie

that he believed the beaver trade was coming to an end -- spring 1833

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY SAWMILL

Sawmill operation on Mill Island had been expanded to meet the increased demands of the company

plus the needs of newly arrived immigrants

Even with increasing local demands, enough lumber could be cut

to create a fifty thousand board foot surplus of planking each year

which was exported to China

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY CONFRONTS THE RUSSIANS

Peter Skene Ogden having received little response from the Russian traders

to the completion of Hudson’s Bay Company’s Fort Simpson near the mouth of the Nass River

or to the construction of Fort McLoughlin on Milbanke Sound

or to the offer to supply the Russians at their posts

Ogden now pushed boldly north from Fort Simpson into the Stikine River area

whose mouth the Muscovites held

Ogden, the “man to get things done” promptly created an international incident

(which would resonate for the next half dozen years)

CAPTAIN WYETH JOINS A TRAPPING PARTY

Still learning, Captain Wyeth from Francis Ermatinger and his handful of Canadians

he accompanied them on the slow journey through the chill Montana Rockies

Soon the hunters fell in with a nomadic village of perhaps a thousand Flatheads and allied Indians

like most whites, Wyeth admired the mountain savages

they were cleanly, honest, handsome, and amiable

they were also protection against marauding Blackfoot natives

British and American trappers stuck close to their Indian allies

as they crossed the Divide to hunt buffalo on United States territory,

then swung erratically back to the headwaters of the Salmon River (in central Idaho)

there they picked up nine more whites traveling with a group of Nez Perces

In an incredible picture of confusion, twelve hundred Indians driving nearly two thousand horses, wandered southward into Snake country

Out of the swarming mob Wyeth picked up two natives

who would play their own accidental but significant part in the history of the Unites States

one was a twenty-year-old Nez Perce employed by Wyeth as a sort of roustabout

as chance would have it this Indian had a slightly deformed skull

other native was an alert, shiny-eyed little Flathead-French-Canadian half-breed named Baptiste, twelve or thirteen years old, whom Wyeth decided to train as an interpreter

REV. SAMUEL PARKER -- CONGREGATIONAL MINISTER

Pastor of a Congregational Church in Middlefield, Massachusetts

preacher and scholar had, among other things, once served as the headmaster

of a girls' boarding school

he was a keen observer, fastidious, elderly, critical and somewhat pedantic man

full of energy, religious zeal and enthusiasm

He read published accounts of Indians looking for “white Man’s Book of Heaven”

and sought the opportunity to conduct missionary work in Northwest

Rev. Samuel Parker of Middlefield, Massachusetts offered his services

in a letter to the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Mission -- dated April 10, 1833

NATURALIST DAVID DOUGLAS’S FINAL VISIT TO THE NORTHWEST

Douglas left Fort Vancouver journeying up the Columbia River -- spring 1833

to investigate New Caledonia (British Columbia) on his way to (Alaska)

Douglas went to Spokane House to see gunsmith Jaco Finlay

who was the only man within 800 miles able to repair Douglas’ gun

Finlay was a half-breed

who along with Finan McDonald had built Spokane House [1810]

Douglas planned to continue his scientific work after crossing the Pacific Ocean into Russia

and return to Europe overland across Siberia

however the terrain was unforgiving and the weather harsh

David Douglas returned to Fort Vancouver from Alaska

tragically during this effort he capsized his canoe and lost all his supplies and over 400 specimens

By now his eyesight was failing, as his eyes had suffered further damaged

from the bright California sun

SNAKE RIVER BRIGADE TRAVERSES THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Francis Ermatinger’s Hudson’s Bay Company men -- spring 1833

they lead the huge cavalcade of Indians

accompanied by Nathaniel Wyeth

also with them are the two young Indians he had acquired as servants

By fits and starts the cavalcade moved through the Rockies working their trapping lines

ST. LOUIS MISSOURI FUR COMPANY EXPANDS

During the spring and summer [and into the fall] William Sublette’s and Robert Campbell’s company

built a dozen or so posts -- each in close proximity to an American Fur Company fort

Robert Campbell set out for the rendezvous -- May 1833

with supplies valued at $15,000

U.S. ARMY CAPTAIN BENJAMIN L.E. BONNEVILLE TRAPS (CENTRAL IDAHO)

Bonneville and his trappers and traders operated along the upper Snake River

during the spring and summer of 1833

Ben Bonneville and his comrades returned to their cache on the Salmon River

to resupply and reorganize -- beginning of June 1833

they remained on the Salmon River a few days, then split up again

Bonneville, with one of his parties of men, made an attempt to barter with the Indians

but the local Hudson's Bay Company man had such a grip on them that they would not trade

Bonneville and his ninety men set out trapping (central Idaho)

NATHANIEL WYETH MEETS CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE

Francis Ermatinger’s Hudson’s Bay Company trapping party constantly changed in size

sometime increasing with additional natives; sometimes fragmenting as various groups departed

While en route they met Captain Benjamin Bonneville on the upper Snake River

Francis Ermatinger’s Snake River Brigade eventually turned back to Fort Vancouver

Wyeth and Bonneville formed a partnership

to hunt for beaver skins South of the Columbia River while in the Rocky Mountains

EARTHQUAKE SHAKES PUGET SOUND

Dr. William Fraser Tolmie, Factor of Hudson’s Bay Company’s Fort Nisqually along with four others

were examining land near the fort

Tolmie and Francis Heron were on horseback and the other three walked

Dr. Tolmie reported in his journal: **“Mr. Heron returned about 9 this morning to breakfast. Afterwards we mounted the north bank of Coe by the path & were occupied nearly all day in collecting specimans of the soil .... H**[eron] **and I on horseback. While thus engaged our three attendents,** [John] **McKie,** [William] **Brown & Peter Tahi, the islander, felt the earth under them shake violently at least twice. Brown first exclamed, & seemed much alarmed -- He & McKie were on their knees at the time & felt violently lifted up, the sensations of Peter I could not ascertain, Mr. H & I did not perceive anything remarkable -- this happened at 20 minutes from 2 ... which is not far wrong. On returning to the house we learn’t that the shock had been felt there, the boards in the floor of the house rattling together. The Indians were much struck & said, “The chief’s** [Heron’s] **medicine is strong, He has gone up the hill to shake the grounds.’ In some quarter of the globe, perhaps the Almighty has wrought some dire devastations by earthquake, one of the most powerful & calamitous instruments of chastisement employed against Mankind. The steep & broken faces to Eastward of the islands in the sound render it probable, that they have been severed from the main shore by an earthquake.”[[242]](#footnote-242)**

This small earthquake was not felt outside of the vicinity of Fort Nisqually

ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR COMPANY SUPPLIES THE RENDEZVOUS

Thomas Fitzpatrick sent Henry Fraeb east to intercept Robert Campbell’s supply train

and purchase all of the St. Louis Missouri Fur Company’s goods

if the pack train had as yet not set out, Fraeb was to continue to St. Louis to buy supplies

Fraeb met Campbell’s supply train at Laramie Creek where he bought the outfit

Fraeb and Campbell proceeded up the North Platte and Sweetwater rivers and on to South Pass

where Thomas Fitzpatrick, Milton G. Sublette, Joseph B. Gervais were met

CAPTAINS BONNEVILLE AND WYETH MEET THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR COMPANY

Bonneville and his ninety men and Wyeth and his two companions and two natives

all traveled together as they hunted for beaver in the Rockies

Captain Benjamin Bonneville was surprised and disappointed to meet another American expedition

St. Louis Missouri Fur Company pack train on their way to the 1833 Rendezvous

led by Thomas Fitzpatrick, Milton G. Sublette, Joseph B. Gervais, Henry Fraeb

and Robert Campbell

Bonneville and Wyeth learned the rendezvous site [to be held summer of 1833]

was to located in the vicinity of the fort which Captain Bonneville had built and abandoned

in the valley of the Green River

AMERICAN FUR COMPANY SUPPLIES THE 1833 RENDEZVOUS

Company steamboats *Assiniboine* and the ill-fated *Yellow Stone* tied up at the company’s Fort Union

this journey saw the *Yellow Stone’s* crew stricken with cholera

all died except the captain and a young pilot named Joe LaBarge

*Yellow Stone* was met by Lucien Fontenelle and Andrew Drips

who led the pack train to the rendezvous site

ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR COMPANY RENDEZVOUS SITE

General rendezvous would take place Fort Bonneville

along the Green River at Horse Creek (near Daniel, Wyoming) -- July 8-[24], 1833

location of Captain Benjamin Bonneville’s post proved to be well suited

“Fort Nonsense” or “Bonneville’s Folly” served as a major center of trade

Was the first of six rendezvous held there

this site, and others in the Wind River area, or Idaho and Utah, were chosen

because there was ample space for up to 500 mountain men and 3000 Indians

ample grazing and water was needed for the thousands of horses

all of the rendezvous were held in Shoshone territory

rather than farther east or north where the hostile Sioux, Blackfoot, and Crow

dominated the region

This year’s Rendezvous would, in fact, be spread out for ten miles along the Green River

Thomas Fitzpatrick, Milton G. Sublette, Joseph Gervais Henry Fraeb and Robert Campbell arrived -- July 5, 1833

with their supply train at the confluence of the Green River and Horse Creek

Rocky Mountain Fur Company would set up their camp ten miles south of Fort Bonneville

Lucien Fontenelle and Andrew Drips arrived -- July 8

American Fur Company would have an encampment about five miles south of the fort

between the Rocky Mountain Fur Company camp and Fort Bonneville

ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR COMPANY 1833 RENDEZVOUS

Some 350 whites and 500 Shoshone, Flathead, and Nez Perce Indians gathered

on the upper Green River where all could inspect and make fun of Fort Nonsense

All the big names of the mountains turned up for the festivities

Joe Walker, Michael Cerre with Benjamin Bonneville

Tom Fitzpatrick, Jim Bridger, Robert Campbell, Henry Fraeb, Benito Vasquez

and Milton Sublette Joseph B. Gervais of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company

American Fur Company trappers and Astor’s traders led by Lucien Fontenelle and Andrew Drips

who arrived on time this year after picking up supplies at Fort Union

from the steamships *Yellow Stone* and *Assiniboine*

Benjamin Bonneville and Nathaniel Wyeth arrived at the Rendezvous

Captain Bonneville’s ninety men were looking for another adventure

he counted only a dismal return on his year’s labor -- he failed even to cover expenses

Captain Nathaniel Wyeth was journeying back to Boston

Attacks over two or three successive nights in both of the lower camps by a rabid wolf (or wolves)

contributed to the early break-up of the rendezvous

about a dozen men were bitten savagely on the face

several of these men over several weeks and months subsequently died of hydrophobia

Generally, the harvest of beaver pelts was good

more than 165 packs of beaver worth about $60,000 was taken out of the mountains

however, this amount was split among four companies:

•Rocky Mountain Fur Company

•American Fur Company

•St. Louis Missouri Fur Company

•Benjamin Bonneville

CAPTAIN NATHANIEL WYETH STRIKES A DEAL

In his mind, Wyeth’s business plans underwent fluctuations

he at first agreed to undertake a trapping expedition in California for Captain Bonneville

then changed his mind when he saw the outrageous prices trappers at the rendezvous

were paying to get trinkets for their Indian women, and alcohol

and a few bare necessities they purchased for themselves

Convinced anew that a fortune lay in supplying future rendezvous from the Columbia River,

Wyeth decided not to wait for Governor George Simpson and the Hudson’s Bay Company

to play ball with him,

but would drum up his own financing in Boston, send a shipload of goods around the Horn,

meet the brig in the Columbia River, and load her with salmon and furs

As an added enhancement he acquired a contract

(either at the rendezvous or on the caravan trail to the Big Horn River)

to ship from St. Louis (not Fort Vancouver as previously proposed)

Rocky Mountain Fur Company’s [1834] requisition of supplies

worth about $3,000 in trade goods

CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE WRITES TO THE U.S. ARMY COMMANDING GENERAL

He realized that a year was insufficient time to finish his information-gathering,

he could not keep his promises to General Macomb to return to the States (by October)

there was too much yet to accomplish

While the trappers cavorted in alcoholic frolics, Bonneville sat in his tent

penning a letter to Commanding General Alexander Macomb: -- July 1833

•documenting his reconnaissance work to date

•asking for an extension of his leave of absence

•citing several reasons for lingering in the West

he had been on the upper Salmon and Snake rivers -- technically part of Oregon

he described at length the Hudson's Bay Company's operations and successes

and his interest in their operations in New Caledonia (British Columbia)

and the Cottonais (Kutenai country, Montana)

he also wrote a long report which furnished much of the information

that General Macomb had requested about the country and the Indians

he detailed his explorations

noting watersheds and rivers he traveled

tribes he met and their temperaments,

and the soils' potential for sustainable agricultural operations

but he noted he had yet to visit the stronghold of the Hudson’s Bay Company itself

on the lower Columbia River

even so, he wrote: **“The information I have already obtained authorizes me to say this much: that if our Government ever intends taking possession of Origon** [sic] **the sooner it shall be done the better, and at present I deem a subalterns** [lower military rank] **command equal to enforce all the views of out Government.”[[243]](#footnote-243)**

BEN BONNEVILLE DEVELOPS A PLAN TO RECONNOITER

Bonneville and his men remained at the rendezvous for almost two weeks

Bonneville now felt he and his men were now seasoned enough

for a little more challenging adventure

Bonneville had three regions he wanted to explore before his return to duty:

•he wanted to go west, especially to the lower Columbia River

and the Willamette Valley in Oregon

•he wanted to see California and gather information about the geography, resources, economy, and government as well as ascertain how best to get there

•he wanted to see the Great Salt Lake and assess its potential for trapping

CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE DECIDED TO SPLIT HIS COMMAND

In an effort to accomplish his ambitious dreams

Bonneville ordered experienced trapper Michael Sylvester Cerré back to St. Louis

Cerre, a trustworthy courier, was entrusted

to carry the few furs which had been collected to St. Louis

along with Bonneville’s letter to Commanding General Alexander Macomb

Bonneville suggested to Joe Walker that he should take a party of men to California

by way of the Great Salt Lake

beaver appeared to be in decline throughout the Rocky Mountains

Bonneville thought that new trapping opportunities would be found

in this unexplored territory

Bonneville, himself, after accompanying Walker to Salt Lake,

would visit the lower Columbia River and return by way of California

It was decided his men would rendezvous with Bonneville

at the Bear River Valley (Southern Idaho) the next year -- [summer 1834]

JOSEPH WALKER -- CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE’S PARTNER

Circulated around the rendezvous recruiting free trappers to accompany him

on an expedition to California

His reputation as a mountaineer and leader, combined with the lure of California attracted plenty of recruits of which forty-five were selected for the journey

Walker was outfitted for a year’s expedition

MICHAEL CERRE LEFT THE RENDEZVOUS

Second in command of Bonneville’s expedition along with Joe Walker

Cerre, a trustworthy courier, was assigned to carry to St. Louis 4,000 pounds of beaver pelts

that they had collected over the past year

and a large package of intelligence information to Washington City

that had been collected during the same time

along with Bonneville’s letter to Commanding General Alexander Macomb

BEN BONNEVILLE AND JOE WALKER LEFT THE RENDEZVOUS

Traveling from the Rendezvous site at Fort Nonsense

they continued their trek through the Rocky Mountains

first night they camped on Henry's Fork, a tributary of the Snake River -- July 22, 1833

ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR COMPANY LEAVES THE RENDEZVOUS

Robert Campbell, Nathaniel Wyeth, and the partners of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company

transported fifty-five packs of beaver

This strong force circled down through South Pass

and up to the junction of the Shoshone and the Bighorn rivers,

where they embarked on bullboats for the mouth of the Yellowstone River

At the mouth of the Yellowstone River, Wyeth was entertained at the palatial Fort Union

by the famous American Fur Company trader Kenneth McKenzie

McKenzie displayed a great deal of pride in his new still -- used to manufacture alcohol

Wyeth was outraged:

1) at the price charged the natives and trappers for the product

2) at the fact McKenzie would not sell them any liquor for their own trade efforts

CAPTAIN BEN BONNEVILLE AND JOE WALKER AT SALT LAKE

They reached the Great Salt Lake's northern shore -- August 1833

Ben Bonneville and Joe Walker part company

with Bonneville's instructions to head west: **“…through unknown country toward the Pacific, and…he should return to the Great Salt Lake the following summer.”[[244]](#footnote-244)**

Before leaving on his own trek to the Northwest

Captain Bonneville gave each man under Walker's command

four horses, blankets, ammunition, trade goods, and a small supply of food

it was with these provisions that Walker and fifty-eight men set out

Bonneville took the remaining company, numbering an estimated forty members,

struck a round-about course that visited the Colorado River

JOE WALKER SETS OUT FOR CALIFORNIA

He and his fifty-eight companions

left the northern shore of the Great Salt Lake August 20, 1833

Their journey was a great success

Walker's party became the first Americans to discover and explore California’s Yosemite Valley

on their return trip, Walker discovered a good route through the Sierra Nevada mountains (later named Walker Pass)

BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE IN THE GREEN RIVER VALLEY

Traveling with forty men, he came to the Green River Valley -- September 17, 1833

where he re-supplied himself from his caches

from there they continued south toward the Colorado River

ST. LOUIS MISSOURI FUR COMPANY ADDS MORE TRADING POSTS

William Sublette’s and Robert Campbell’s St. Louis Missouri Fur Company

established a dozen or so trading posts in the same areas

where American Fur Company posts were located -- summer [and autumn 1833]

one of Billy Sublette and Campbell’s post was Fort William

established near the mouth of the Yellowstone River

about three miles below Astor’s American Fur Company’s Fort Union

However, the St. Louis Missouri Fur Company was unable to compete

with Astor’s powerful American Fur Company which did everything possible

to destroy William Sublette and Campbell’s company

Astor even paid two-three times the market price for beaver (as much $12 per pound)

to keep any furs at all from being obtained by his competitor

CATHOLIC CHURCH SEEKS ASSISTANCE IN EUROPE

Many Missouri-area Jesuit priests had been born in Holland and Belgium

(De Smet had first come to American -- [1821] where he studied for the priesthood

after his ordination into the clergy [1827]

he learned about Indian customs and other useful information)

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet offered to go to Europe to seek funding and recruits

in advancing the Catholic work among the Indians of the plains

ten years of deprivations on the frontiers had seriously affected the priest's health

he urgently needs some rest

Due to health problems, Father De Smet left St. Louis en route for Europe -- end of September 1833

TWO OF NATHANIEL WYETH’S MEN MOVE TO FRENCH PRAIRIE

John Ball retired from teaching to Champoeg along Willamette River

on the North edge of French Prairie

with assistance of French-Canadian ex-employees of Hudson's Bay Company

John Ball built a cabin and put in a wheat crop

there he was the first American lawyer in the Pacific Northwest

and he operated the first American farm along with John Sinclair, another Wyeth man

After a successful harvest Sinclair, who suffered from bouts of fever and chills,

left Oregon by ship -- October 18, 1833

NATURALIST DAVID DOUGLAS GOES TO HAWAII

At Fort Vancouver Douglas decided to take a ship to the Hawaii -- October 1833

hoping next to sail on the next ship bound for the British Isles

Douglas continued his botanical study as he visited Hawaii

U.S. ARMY CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE AND HIS MEN

Reached Liberges Fork, a tributary of the Colorado River -- October 25, 1833

there were signs of a large Indian party that had recently passed,

so they determined to continue on

Approximately forty men headed to Janes Fork, another tributary to the Colorado River

he stayed there overnight before they followed the Bear River (Southern Idaho)

which flows into the Great Salt Lake

CAPTAIN BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE SET UP WINTER CAMP

Ben Bonneville continued from the Bear River to the Snake River which they crossed

before turning to the Portneuf River Valley arriving there -- late October 1833

Bonneville and his men camped at Little Lake -- November 6, 1833

NATHANIEL WYETH BACK IN BOSTON

Arrived from Fort Vancouver back at his home in Cambridge

with his two Indian companions -- November 7, 1833

Eager to try his luck in the west once again he began looking for a wealthy backer

to finance a scheme to supply Mountain Men in the Rockies and build a salmon-salting company

HUDSON’S BAY COMANY RFEJECTS CAPTAIN WYETH’S PROPOSAL TO SUPPLY TRAPPERS

Governor of Rupert’s Land George Simpson, taking his cue from the London Board of Directors

rejected Wyeth’s proposal

Simpson then scolded Dr. McLoughlin for giving aid and comfort to the enemy

Mortified, the Chief Factor retorted with an array of official statements

which Simpson thought presumptuous

this disputed added one more rift between the quick-tempered governor

and his self-assertive subordinate

METHODIST MISSIONARIES APPOINTED TO THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Rev. Jason Lee visited the Methodist Church headquarters in Utica, New York

he was the first to respond to natives’ call for religious guidance

and the first who grasped the possibilities of being of service

Rev. Lee was appointed by the New England Methodist Conference

as superintendent of a mission to the Pacific Northwest -- 1833

he was given the title “Missionary to the Flatheads” (he never did serve the Flathead Indians)

Rev. Lee named as his associate Rev. Daniel Lee (Jason’s 28 years old nephew)

Daniel was quiet and self-effacing -- he was more successful as a missionary than was his uncle

NATHANIEL WYETH BEGINS HIS NEW ENTERPRISE

Once again following John Jacob Astor’s example

two efforts to reach Ft. Vancouver were launched from Boston:

•Overland Expedition: Wyeth’s second trip across the continent

•Sea Expedition: Wyeth’s second effort to get a ship to the Columbia River

Tucker and Williams, Boston merchants, invested with Wyeth

formed the Columbia River Fishing and Trading Company in Boston

*May Dacre* was outfittedin Boston to conduct a salmon-salting operation

on the lower Columbia River

Wyeth also began preparation for another overland expedition

he spent the fall and winter 1833-1834

gathering supplies to take to the Rocky Mountain Fur Company rendezvous

JASON AND DANIEL LEE PRFEPARE TO GO WEST

Lees held a farewell service in New York City

then read in the next morning’s newspaper that Captain Nathaniel Wyeth

had just returned to Boston form Oregon with two Flathead Indians

Excited by this good luck, Jason and Daniel rushed north to Boston to consult with Captain Wyeth

at this meeting they learned the confident and persuasive mountain man had already raised money for a second expedition to the Columbia River

he had used his contract to supply the 1833 Rendezvous as a lever

Two Methodist ministers gained even more than they had dared hope for

CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE TRAPPING AND EXPLORING (TODAY’S IDAHO)

Took three men from his camp at Little Lake on the Portneuf Plain

near the Portneuf River (in the vicinity of today’s Pocatello, Idaho)

area was a lava plain with many crevasse and gullies requiring rough going

Here they met some Bannock Indians with whom they went buffalo hunting

Bonneville and his small contingent continued to the Snake River which they crossed

Captain Bonneville set up a temporary camp

forage for horses was barely adequate being mostly wormwood (sage)

but it provided a rest

and the opportunity for several short reconnaissance trips away from the post

Bonneville was not successful

in his plan to visit the lower Columbia River and return by way of California

he tried -- but, in fact, not very hard

MEETINGS TO GENERATE INTEREST IN THE MISSIONARY MOVEMENT HELD IN BOSTON

Captain Nathaniel Wyeth met a tall, bearded, electrically excited man who asked him for an interview

he introduced himself as Jason Lee

Lee asked breathlessly whether it was true, as newspapers said, that Mr. Wyeth

had recently brought two Flathead Indians from the Columbia

but a Flathead! could -- would Mr. Wyeth bring the Indians to a missionary meeting

at the Bromfield Street Church on Friday evening, November 29, 1833

Captain Wyeth was one of the featured speakers for the evening

after the meeting Rev. Jason Lee discussed traveling out West with Wyeth

Jason and Daniel Lee intended to locate among the Nez Perce and Flathead Indians

who had earlier [1832] sent representatives to St. Louis

METHODIST MISSION SOCIETY SPONCERS MISSIONAIRES

Methodist Mission Society learned from Rev. Jason Lee that Nathaniel Wyeth

was expecting to again cross the continent Utica, New York

Methodist Mission Society at once opened negotiations with Captain Wyeth

arranged to have all supplies, provisions and equipment for a new mission

to be shipped on Columbia River Fishing and Trading Company’s *May Dacre*

Methodist Mission Society agreed to meet with Wyeth in Independence, Missouri

for the overland trip

Rev. Jason Lee and his nephew Rev. Daniel Lee proceeded westward

to meet with Captain Wyeth in St. Louis

CAPTAIN BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE SETS OUT TO MEET THE BRITISH

Bonneville set out from his temporary camp with three men

along the Portneuf Plain to explore the Columbia River -- December 25, 1833

and to a set up fur trading operation to compete with the Hudson's Bay Company

They journeyed down the Snake River toward Fort Walla Walla

trip was more difficult than necessary -- Bonneville having chosen the most difficult way

area they crossed was a lava plain which was rough going with many crevasse and gullies here they met Bannock Indians with whom they went buffalo hunting

CAPTAIN BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE SETS OUT FOR THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Left Fort Bonneville (Idaho) once again -- January 9, 1834

this time with three of his men and a Shoshone guide

they were aiming for the Willamette Valley by way of the Columbia River

they followed the Snake River until their guide departed for other obligations

leaving Bonneville to his instincts

Party traveled into the steep gorge (today called Hell's Canyon) -- January 12, 1834

past the (present-day site of Homestead, Oregon, the Big Bar,

and the present Hell’s Canyon dam site)

eventually the canyon's craggy walls became too steep to safely maneuver

After backtracking upriver a bit, the group found their way out of the canyon,

up and over the Wallowas near (today’s Himmelwright Springs)

they passed into the Grande Ronde Valley which was now deep in snow

THREE JAPANESE SAILORS ARE SHIPWRECKED OFF CAPE FLATTERY

(In an effort to insulate the country from outside influences Japan had been closed to foreigners

by order of the Emperor since the early [1600s] thus leading to the name the “Hermit Kingdom”

to assure this policy was enforced, construction of ships capable of ocean voyages was prohibited

Japan relied instead on single-masted vessels designed for navigation in shallow coastal waters

Japanese ships had sturdy hulls but were easily disabled during storms

Sailors of the fifty-foot Hojun Maru left their home port of Onoura, Japan [October 11, 1832]

bound for Edo (Tokyo) with a cargo of rice and porcelain

Sometime after making a call at the port of Toba south and east of Tokyo [early November 1832]

Hojun Maru was hit by a typhoon, stripped of its rudder and mast and drive off to sea

crew members had rice from the cargo and fish from the sea to eat

they were able to collect rainwater and to desalinate seawater for drinking

but they had no access to Vitamin C

By the time the ship ran aground near Cape Flattery -- January 1834

all but three of the crew had died -- probably of scurvy

Iwakichi, 28; Kyukichi, 15, and Otokichi, 14

all were from the same village on Japan’s Honshu Island

“Three kichis” (as they became known) were discovered by a group of Makah Indian seal hunters

they were briefly held as slaves before Captain William McNeil of the American brig *Llama*

delivered the Japanese castaways to Fort Vancouver

When word of their capture reached Hudson’s Bay Company Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin

he had them ransomed and brought to Fort Vancouver

“Three kichis” stayed at Fort Vancouver for about five months where they learned a little English

during this time they met a young boy, Ranald Mac Donald, who developed a fascination

with the Japanese castaways and their culture

he cherished a desire to investigate the forbidden mysteries of the “Hermit Kingdom” (Dr. McLoughlin arranged to send the “Three kichis”

to Hudson’s Bay headquarters in London [November 1834]

he thought the British government could use the men to establish trade relations with Japan)

RANALD MacKINZIE FURTHERS HIS EDUCATION

(Archibald McDonald was assigned to the Hudson’s Bay Company post at Kamloops

he journeyed there with his new bride [1833])

Archibald’s son, Ranald, stayed with his Chinook relatives until his tenth year -- 1834

when he joined his father and step-mother in Kamloops

Archibald MacDonald showed great concern about young Ranald’s education

Ranald was sent to the Red River Settlement (Winnipeg, Manitoba) to attend school

THOMAS “BROKEN HAND”FITZPATRICK

It was on a trapping trip that Thomas Fitzpatrick received his nick name of “Broken Hand”-- 1834

he was discovered by a band of Blackfoot Indians who began to chase him

during the chase, Fitzpatrick and his horse leaped from a high bluff into the Yellowstone River

where he landed on a sand bar

when the Indians continued their pursuit, Fitzpatrick attempted to remove his rifle cover

he accidently shot himself in the left wrist costing him two fingers

AMERICAN SHIP *MAY DACRE*

Was the fishing portion of Nathaniel Wyeth’s Columbia River Fishing and Trading Company

*May Dacre* was under charter to Wyeth

shewas outfitted and set sail from Boston -- February 7, 1834

to journey down the Eastern seacoast and around the Horn to the Columbia River

with trade supplies and salmon fishing, salmon salting and packing equipment

she carried hundreds of knocked-down barrels to be filled with pickled salmon

and also carried Methodist missionary supplies and equipment

NATHANIEL WYETH’S OVERLAND EXPEDITION

Wyeth had signed a contract to provide supplies for the Rocky Mountain Fur Company trappers

at their upcoming Rendezvous at Ham’s Fork

Three months after his return home in Boston

Nathaniel Wyeth again set out overland -- February 7, 1834

bound for St. Louis and then on to the Pacific Northwest

trading portion of Nathaniel Wyeth’s Columbia River Fishing and Trading Company

Accompanying Wyeth were three lay (not ordained) members of the Methodist Mission Society:

•Cyrus Shepard-- lay assistant missionary

•Philip L. Edwards -- teacher and writer who signed on as a lay assistant missionary

•Courtney M. Walker -- former trapper who served as an additional hired hand

CAPTAIN BEN BONNEVILLE’S PARTY IN THE IMNAHA VALLEY

Still traveling in deep snow through the Grande Ronde Valley

all four men were growing very hungry,

Party eventually ran out of food and went for three days without eating

men finally got food when one mule died and was butchered

Continuing toward the Imnaha Valley they reached the banks of the Imnaha River

where they found lush grass for the horses which was just turning green

On the banks of the Imnaha River (at the present community of Imnaha) -- February 17, 1834

Bonneville was welcomed by Nez Perces who saved the expedition from starvation

in a description echoing his attitude toward Indians he met during a western trek

historian Edith Lovell wrote: **“Bonneville enjoyed royal treatment. He won good will by fashioning turbans for the women from his own plaid jacket; the Indians eyed his shiny pate and titled him ‘The Bald Chief.’ In a dos-a-dos of gift giving, Bonneville received a fine horse in exchange for a rifle, hatchet** [for the chief’s son]**, and ear bobs** [for the chief’s wife]**.”[[245]](#footnote-245)**

Bonneville’s party followed the Imnaha River to the Snake River

where they met a band of lower valley Nez Perce led by an old chief -- Yo-mus-re-cut

who butchered a colt as a welcome to his village

BONNEVILLE AND HIS MEN DEPART FROM THE IMNAHA VILLAGE

They were led toward Fort Walla Walla by old Chief Yo-mus-re-cut and a guide

Alvin Josephy describes Bonneville's departure from the Imnaha village: **“When it came time to leave that settlement they were accompanied by the headman and a young Indian, who guided them up and down the steep draws and across high, broken country from the lower valley of the Imnaha to the deep canyon of Joseph Creek. They reached that stream near its junction with the Grande Ronde River, which Bonneville called the Way-lee-way, close to where it flowed past the high goosenecks of land to empty into the Snake. As the travelers approached the mouth of Joseph Creek, their guide informed them that he had sent word of their arrival ahead to an important village at the junction of the Grande Ronde. Rounding a high grassy hill, they came upon the Indian settlement, the sheltered winter camp of the principal chief of the Wallowa Nez Perces, Tuekakas. The father of the more celebrated Chief Joseph** [who would be born in this vicinity six years later]**, Tuekakas was in his late forties....**

“**Nowhite man knew of the Wallowa Valley, much less wanted it at that time, and the Indians welcomed Bonneville and his companions as representatives of a friendly and honorable people.”[[246]](#footnote-246)**

BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE’S PARTY VISITS THE NEZ PERCE INDIANS

Tuekakas, chief of the Wallowa Nez Perce, and his people welcomed Bonneville

with a reception in which the Nez Perce individually greeted Bonneville

and pledged friendship to him and his three companions

celebratory feast was followed by a long and intense conversation

about the United States and the Nez Perce

Benjamin Bonneville and his companions decided to stay awhile

Bonneville ministered medically to the Indians

they had heard stories of his medical skills from their relatives, the upper Nez Perce

BONNEVILLE CONTINUES ON TO THE GRANDE RONDE RIVER

Captain Bonneville was again accompanied by Chief Yo-mus-re-cut and the Indian guide

after leaving the large Nez Perce village in the Wallowas

Following the Grande Ronde River to its confluence with the Snake River Bonneville's party entered another Nez Perce village

(near the modern town of Asotin, Washington)

Bonneville met Apash Wyakaikt, (later called Looking Glass)

(his son, also named Looking Glass, became the War Chief of the Nez Perces [1877])

Apash Wyakaikt worked closely with the Hudson’s Bay Company at Fort Walla Walla

and on the Snake and Clearwater rivers

he knew that the Americans “gave better terms” than did the British

and was eager to trade with Bonneville

Bonneville’s Party was greeted with another warm reception and celebratory feast

journals and reports recounting the meeting

do not include what arrangements the men might have negotiated

After this meeting, Bonneville continued down the Snake River

entered the Columbia River and continued on to Fort Walla Walla

Hudson’s Bay Company post located at the mouth of Walla Walla River

U.S. ARMY CAPTAIN BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE MEETS HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY

Bonneville and his men had been traveling through the winter for fifty-five days

journey was more difficult than necessary

having chosen what was in fact the most difficult way from the Portneuf River

Bonneville reached Fort Walla Walla at the mouth of the Walla Walla River -- March 4, 1834

where they were greeted by six or eight Hudson’s Bay Company men

this Hudson’s Bay post, traded with Nez Perce, Walla Walla, and Cayuse tribes

Chief Trader Pierre C. Pambrun, in charge of the fort, was most hospitable

he enjoyed some success in bringing the Catholic religion to the Nez Perce

he extended a cordial welcome but would provide no supplies

made it clear to Bonneville the Company would not outfit the rival

BONNEVILLE RETURNS TO HIS MAIN PARTY

Benjamin Bonneville was so indignant at Chief Trader Pierre Pambrun

he refused the Chief Trader’s offer to accompany a British party about to cross the mountains

on their way to Fort Vancouver

instead Bonneville punished himself with another toilsome journey back to the Portneuf River

Bonneville’s expedition thus far had taken longer than he had intended

and now he had to regroup with the rest of his party at the Portneuf River

he set out empty handed with his three men retracing his original route -- March 6, 1834

Bonneville was discouraged by the Hudson’s Bay Company rejection at Fort Walla Walla

but he was persistent, too

he had seen enough to know that American fur trading in Oregon could be successful

On their return trip they passed by many of the same villages they had previously visited

and were greeted warmly as the Nez Perce provided him guides

Once past the Blue Mountains, their Nez Perce guides left them to return home

deciding the difficult part was over

Bonneville followed the Snake River through basalt lava cliffs encountering American Falls

they traveled past many plains and canyons and other odd rock formations

WILLIAM SUBLETTE PLANS TO ELIMINATE A RIVAL

He expected the Rocky Mountain Fur Company to collapse financially within the year

by virtue of the agreement he had made with Tom Fitzpatrick after the [1832] Rendezvous

Sublette held all of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company’s debts

which he believed the 1834 proceeds could not possibly cover

Holding the Rocky Mountain Fur Company’s debts

Sublette also held the power to destroy the company whenever he chose

William Sublette fully intended to go up the Missouri River

and help Robert Campbell close out the rival partnership’s operation

ST. LOUIS MISSOURI FUR COMPANY SOLD

William Sublette and Robert Campbell sold all of their assets

to their rival -- Astor’s American Fur Company

St. Louis Missouri Fur Company posts were abandoned -- spring 1834

as part of the buyout agreement between the American Fur Company

and the St. Louis Fur Company,

William Sublette had assured the American Fur Company that the Rocky Mountain Fur Company

would go out of business

(however, the partnership of Sublette and Campbell would continue on

but as a shipping company rather than a trapping operation)

AMERICAN FUR COMPANY SOLD

Having purchased William Sublette’s and Robert Campbell’s St. Louis Missouri Fur Company

John Jacob Astor retired from the fur industry to enter real estate and retire in Europe

AmericanFur Company Northern Department which centered on the Great Lakes trade

was sold to Ramsay Crooks who became president of the company

he was joined by Caleb Wilkins, Mountain Man, and pioneer farmer

who had come West with Captain Bonneville and Wyeth (]1832]-1834

(trapped with American Fur Company in Rocky Mountains 1834-[1840]

this business was also known as the American Fur Company

Western Department of the American Fur Company

was purchased by Bernard Pratte and Pierre Chouteau

although the official name of the company was Pratte, Chouteau and Company

it and its successors also would be known as the American Fur Company

WILLIAM SUBLETTE CHANGES HIS STRATEGY

In St. Louis William Sublette accidentally became aware of surprising news

when a letter addressed to his brother Milton was erroneously delivered to William

This letter outlined a secret deal between the Rocky Mountain Fur Company and Nathaniel Wyeth

(which had been worked out the previous autumn on the Yellowstone River)

Milton Sublette and Tom Fitzpatrick had arranged with Nathaniel Wyeth

to supply the Rocky Mountain Fur Company in 1834

for half of the cost charged by the shipping firm of (William) Sublette and Campbell

Wyeth could do this because he planned to take the furs on to Oregon

and ship them to market by water aboard his ship the *May Dacre*

William Sublette’s contract with the Rocky Mountain Fur Company

allowed either party to default by paying a penalty of five hundred dollars to the other firm

Billy Sublette was suddenly confronted with the unwelcome prospect

that the Rocky Mountain Fur Company might not go under after all

if the Rocky Mountain Fur Company was re-supplied by Wyeth

Captain William Sublette abruptly changed plans

there would be a race to the mountain between rival pack trains

to re-supply the Rocky Mountain Fur Company

Billy Sublette put his younger brother, Solomon Sublette, to work with Robert Campbell

purchasing supplies in St. Louis

William Sublette hurriedly made up a supply caravan in St. Louis in the name Sublette and Campbell

he was determined to force the Rocky Mountain Fur Company into liquidation

NATHANIEL WYETH OVERLAND PARTY

Arrived in St. Louis from Boston -- March 1834

Rev. Jason Lee and his nephew Rev. Daniel Lee were in St. Louis with Nathaniel Wyeth -- 1834

they were accompanied by lay members of the Methodist Mission Society

Cyrus Shepard, Philip L. Edwards,

and Courtney M. Walker -- a hired man served who joined in the Christian effort

William Sublette, in an effort to stop Wyeth from supplying the 1834 Rendezvous,

forced Wyeth to pay a high price for 130 horses and forty mules

Wyeth also had to make heavy advances in wages to hire employees

METHODIST CHURCH MISSIONARIES IN THE WEST

Captain Nathaniel Wyeth, along with Rev. Jason and Daniel Lee and three traveling companions,

arrived at Independence, Missouri from St. Louis -- April 24, 1834

Independence served as the general frontier starting point

FLATHEAD INDIANS RECEIVE NEWS OF THE COMING OF MISSIONARIES

Overjoyed natives sent emissaries to meet the Methodist missionary party -- 1834

Indians were sorely disappointed to find these missionaries

did not meet the description of Black Robes given them by the Iroquois

**“The missionaries spoken of by the Iroquois wore long black gowns, carried a crucifix with them, prayed the great prayer** [the Mass] **and did not marry. But the newcomers wore no black gowns and, upon inquiry, had no cross to show, prayed not the great prayer, and besides, they married. They surely could not be the teachers they had sent for.”[[247]](#footnote-247)**

Flatheads refused to accept these ministers

COLUMBIA RIVER FISHING AND TRADING COMPANY

Trading portion of Wyeth’s Columbia River Fishing and Trading Company

left Independence, Missouri -- April 25, 1834

carrying goods ordered the year before by the Rocky Mountain Fur Company

to supply trappers at their Ham’s Fork 1834 Rendezvous before going on to Oregon

Wyeth was racing against time to get to the rendezvous ahead of his chief rival, William Sublette

Expedition was composed of some seventy-five men

about twenty employees of Wyeth along with traders, hunters, and trappers

this number would include Milton Sublette, Osborne Russell, Calvin T. Briggs

five Methodist missionaries: Rev. Jason Lee and Rev. Daniel Lee

and their three lay companions: Cyrus Shepard, Philip L. Edwards, Courtney M. Walker

two famous Philadelphia scientists:

Thomas Nuttall -- botanist and ornithologist

shy, frugal, self-educated curator of Harvard University’s Botanical Garden

Dr. John Kirk Townsend -- Nuttall’s twenty-five-year-old protégé

a Philadelphia surgeon-naturalist and ornithologist

drafted by American Philosophical Society to make a study of Western ornithology

he collected specimens of birds for two years

and sold many of these to his friend John J. Audubon

Nathaniel Wyeth took two hundred fifty horses and a number of wagons from Independence

traveled along rivers and into Rocky Mountains toward the rendezvous site

racing against time to get to the rendezvous ahead of his chief rival, William Sublette

OTHER PACK TRAINS SET OUT FOR THE 1834 RENDEZVOUS

William Sublette’s party consisted of thirty-seven men and ninety-five horses

left Independence, Missouri ten days after Nathaniel Wyeth -- May 5, 1834

Also leaving Independence that spring would be two additional pack trains:

•led by Michael S. Cerre with supplies for Captain Benjamin Bonneville

•and Andrew Drips and Lucien Fontenelle with supplies for the American Fur Company

These supply caravans would take the familiar route

up the North Platte River to the Sweetwater River and over South Pass

WILLIAM SUBLETTE TRAVELS THE FASTEST

With his great experience in packing supplies into the Rocky Mountains

William Sublette’s Sublette and Campbell pack train

easily overtook and passed Nathaniel Wyeth -- May 12, 1834

who was slowed by the missionaries and two naturalists traveling with him

Wyeth sent a letter ahead to Thomas Fitzpatrick at the rendezvous site

imploring him not to trade with William Sublette

promising the Rocky Mountain Fur Company partner that Wyeth’s train

would be at the rendezvous no later than [July 1, 1834]

CAPTAIN BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE ATTEMPTS TO REUNITE HIS PARTIES

After passing American Falls, Bonneville and his three men continued on

In an effort to link up with the men under Joseph Walker

who, as had been previously arranged, had visited the Great Salt Lake region

Bonneville reached his headquarters on the Portneuf River -- May 12, 1834

but he and his companions were so late in arriving the Salt Lake party was gone

Bonneville’s situation was dire because he desperately needed provisions

they cached what they had on an island in the Portneuf River and went hunting for several days

Forys were conducted to American Falls, Blackfoot River, and Bear Lake areas

these occupied Bonneville's time through the (early summer) of 1834

HALL JACKSON KELLEY GOES WEST

Boston schoolteacher ventured from New York City to New Orleans

on his way to the Pacific Northwest

he took with him high ambitions:

**•**to develop trade in fish and lumber in the Pacific Northwest and in Mexico;

**•**to create an American colony to drive the British Hudson’s Bay Company out of Oregon;

**•**to raise the cultural and moral level of the natives

Small party of American recruits journeyed south and west by sea to New Orleans to join with him

after meeting Kelley in New Orleans, instead of joining him, they robbed and deserted him

Now alone, Hall Jackson Kelley crossed into Mexico, walking part of the way

he proceeded North by land and water to San Diego

HALL JACKSON KELLEY FINDS MORE RECRUITS

At Puebla (near San Diego) Kelley met a group of Americans led by Ewing Young -- May 1834

Young was a man of great natural abilities and some education

Kelley, as he usually did, launched into his now standard sales pitch about Oregon

for some reason Mountain Man Ewing Young listened to the tenderfoot

Kelley fell in with the far-ranging Mountain Man and his followers

former schoolteacher spent a month in California surveying and making maps

although the Spanish government refused to grant him permission to do so

Kelley persuaded Young to accompany him to the Pacific Northwest

EWING YOUNG -- FUR TRAPPER

Had been one of the first to trap out of the Taos, (New) Mexico

he had ranged the Uinta Basin and the Gila River and its tributaries,

and had blazed trails from (New) Mexico to California

He had trapped California’s Central Valley and its bordering mountains,

and had even tried his hand at hunting sea otter out of (San Francisco)

BONNEVILLE REUNITED HIS MEN

While on a hunting foray, Captain Bonneville found a few of his men

who also were out hunting

At this time he learned the rest of his party was camped on the Blackfoot River

another tributary of the Snake River

Captain Bonneville organized the few men with him

and they immediately set out from Bonneville’s base encampment (Idaho)

on a journey to the Ham's Fork Rendezvous on the Green River (Wyoming)

and to find the remainder of his men

throughout the trip they had to be vigilant in guarding against hostile Blackfoot Indians

WILLIAM SUBLETTE ORDERS FORT WILLIAM BUILT

On reaching the confluence of the Laramie and North Platte rivers,

William Sublette directed a number of his men from his Sublette and Campbell supply train

to remain at this location and commence construction of Fort William -- May 30, 1834

to trade with the Indians

(later the fort’s name will be changed to Fort Laramie)

Sublette would then continue on with the remainder of his party and supplies for the rendezvous

CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE’S JOURNEY TOWARD THE 1834 RENDEZVOUS

Bonneville and his men arrived at Little Snake Lake (Little Lake) -- June 13, 1834

on the Bear River (Southern Idaho) as had been arranged (at the [1833] Rendezvous)

this area was explored by the party for several days

A short distance away Bonneville met his other group under Joe Walker

which Bonneville had dispatched to study the Great Salt Lake the year before

Walker reported on the results of their experiences

GREAT SALT LAKE EXPEDITION’S REPORT TO CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE

Small group led by Joseph Walker

had been assigned by Captain Bonneville to visit Salt Lake

Walker had led his small group around part of the Great Salt Lake

and determined there wasn't much of interest there

They decided to trap along Ogden's River

(named for Hudson’s Bay Company Chief Trader Peter Skein Ogden)

they had to be watchful of the Digger Indians, who constantly stole their equipment

they probably traveled through Yosemite and followed the Merced River into California

They continued exploring on across California to the Pacific coast and down to Monterey

they also saw the Baja peninsula, where sugar cane and indigo grew

Walker’s party returned by way of Walker's Pass -- 1834

(tracing the future emigrant route to California)

he reported that California was a land of abundance, and sketched important maps

Bonneville was very disappointed that the Great Salt Lake was not explored

and that his trade goods had all been wasted at Monterey

WILLIAM SUBLETTE REACHED THE RENDEZVOUS SITE

On Ham’s Fork of the Green River two days in advance of Nathaniel Wyeth

this was time enough to confront Tom Fitzpatrick with Rocky Mountain Fur Company’s debt Billy Sublette forced the exchange of Sublette and Campbell’s supplies

for Rocky Mountain beaver -- June 15, 1834

before Nathaniel Wyeth had even arrived at the Rendezvous

NATHANIEL WYETH COULD NOT FIND THE RENDEZVOUS

Wyeth arrived at the confluence of the Sandy and Green rivers with the supplies he was carrying

to find no one there -- June 18, 1834

although this location had been agreed upon as the rendezvous site

HAM’S FORK RENDEZVOUS

Was strung out this year along the sun-blasted wastes of Ham’s Fork River (Wyoming)

a tributary of the Green River then in Mexican territory -- June 19 to [July 2], 1834

Six hundred or more whites cavorted in fantastic fur caps and greasy black buckskins

through the year’s great holiday partaking of raw alcohol, compliant squaws, fights,

shooting matches, horse races, and hair-raising hunts

one grizzly bear and one buffalo were even chased through the camp itself

NATHANIEL WYETH AT THE RENDEZVOUS

Captain Wyeth arrived at the actual Ham’s Fork Rendezvous site with the supplies he was carrying

two days after William Sublette -- June 19, 1834

Wyeth found a scene of wild disorder as noted by his traveling companion

scientist John K. Townsend: mounted Indians dashed to and from **“yelling like fiends** [and the] **barking and baying of savage wolf-dogs, and the incessant cracking of rifles and carbines, render our camp a perfect bedlam.”[[248]](#footnote-248)**

NATHANIEL WYETH HAD FAILED TO BEAT WILLIAM SUBLETTE TO THE RENDEZVOUS

Traveling upstream from the rendezvous site,

Wyeth found the encampment of Thomas Fitzpatrick and William Sublette

To Wyeth’s disappointment, William Sublette had already collected on the promissory note Fitzpatrick owed him

it is likely that William Sublette was able to accomplish this broken contract

by calling in the debts owed by the partners of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company

thus forcing it into insolvency

Rocky Mountain Fur Company broke its contact with Wyeth

and refused to purchase his trading goods

There Wyeth sat amidst the revelry with more than a hundred rejected horse loads

of red- and yellow-edged blankets, red-handled butcher knives, vermillion, looking glasses, lead, powder, coffee, bales of tobacco, and metal canisters of alcohol

Nathaniel Wyeth, with this surplus of goods on his hands and no prospects to sell them,

had no option but to carry these trade goods, in addition to his own supplies, further West

in an attempt to supply independent American trappers in the Rocky Mountains

ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR COMPANY CEASED TO EXIST

Because of the financial pressure applied by Billy Sublette

Thomas “Broken Hand” Fitzpatrick ended his Rocky Mountain Fur Company -- June 20, 1834

as had been plotted by William Sublette

Fitzpatrick combined his party with the Sublette and Campbell expedition

thus uniting with his former adversary

REV. JASON AND REV. DANIEL LEE AT THE RENDEZVOUS

Accompanied by their lay assistants Cyrus Shepard, Philip L. Edwards and Courtney M. Walker,

they traveled under the protection of Nathaniel Wyeth’s train -- 1834

At the rendezvous on Ham’s Fork, they met Nez Perce and Flathead Indians

who welcomed them with their customary courtesy

Lees also met Tom Fitzpatrick who, at the moment was distracted

by the need to default on his supply contract with Wyeth

and was otherwise occupied presiding over the collapse of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company

U.S. ARMY CAPTAIN BEN BONNEVILLE AT RENDEZVOUS

Bonneville arrived at the rendezvous site

although supplies he had ordered from the American Fur Company were several days away

Bonneville failed to deliver on his $3,000 contract with the Rocky Mountain Fur Company

to bring in trade goods from the West

he did, however, describe the activities seen at the rendezvous: **“There were contests of skill at running, jumping, wrestling, shooting with the rifle, and running horses. And then their [were] rough hunters’ feastings and carousels. They drank together, they sang, they laughed, they whooped; they tried to out-brag and out-lie each other in stories of their adventures and achievements.... The presence of the Shoshonie** [sic] **tribe contributed occasionally to cause temporary jealousies and feuds. The Shoshonie beauties became objects of rivalries among some of the amorous mountaineers.”[[249]](#footnote-249)**

The arrival of supplies from the East made things even more wild: **“Every freak of prodigality was indulged to its fullest extent, and in a little while most of the trappers, having squandered away all their wages, and perhaps run knee-deep in debt, were ready for another hard campaign in the wilderness.”[[250]](#footnote-250)**

Bonneville also was concerned about his status with the U.S. Army

he wrote the first of a volley of letters to the Secretary of War, Lewis Cass,

this was received in Washington, D.C. about [September 26, 1834]

JIM BRIDGER ARRIVED AT THE RENDEZVOUS

After spending the [spring] season trapping in Northwest (Colorado)

he made his entrance carrying only fifty-five packs of beaver pelts -- June 25, 1834

but it was more than the others had achieved

WILLIAM SUBLETTE MOVES HIS CAMP

Having broken the Rocky Mountain Fur Company,

Bill Sublette and his Sublette and Campbell supply train along with Tom Fitzpatrick

moved upstream a few miles seeking better pasture – June 28, 1834

NATHANIEL WYETH MOVED HIS CAMP

Captain Wyeth and his traveling companions moved about ten miles upstream -- June 28, 1834

several of Wyeth’s men were hired away from him by rival trapping operations

OTHER PACK TRAINS ARRIVE AT THE RENDEZVOUS

In addition to William Sublette’s and Nathaniel Wyeth’s caravans,

two other pack trains arrived at the Rendezvous

Although the date of their arrival is not recorded American Fur Company supply trains

•Andrew Drips and Lucien Fontenelle camped at the mouth of Ham’s Fork

• Michael S. Cerre bringing supplies for Captain Benjamin Bonneville

Thus there were three camps along Ham’s Fork spreading over about fourteen miles

William Sublette, Nathaniel Wyeth,

American Fur Company: Andrew Drips and Lucien Fontenelle, and Michael S. Cerre

Both Nathaniel Wyeth and Lucien Fontenelle were successful in recruiting trappers

who formerly were associated with the now defunct Rocky Mountain Fur Company

NATHANIEL WYETH TRAVELS ON TO OREGON

Wyeth, after trading as much of his goods for beaver pelts as possible, left Ham’s Fork Rendezvous

with a caravan loaded with $3,000 worth of supplies and merchandise -- July 2, 1834

which had been refused by the Rocky Mountain Fur Company at the rendezvous

Wyeth, according to Joe Meek, made an ominous vow to the Rocky Mountain Fur Company partners:

**“Gentlemen, I will roll a stone into your garden that you will never be able to get out.”[[251]](#footnote-251)**

Wyeth’s caravan proceeded accompanied by five Methodist missionaries

and in the company of Thomas McKay of the Hudson’s Bay Company

and traveling with a small band of Nez Perces and Flatheads,

and an English sportsman, Sir William Stewart

who was so absorbed with mountain life that for years he stayed in the woods

CAPTAIN BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE PLOTS TO APPROACH OREGON AGAIN

After being re-outfitted at the rendezvous with supplies

Bonneville decided to make a second attempt to trade in the Pacific Northwest -- Summer 1834

and to acquire supplies from Hudson’s Bay Company

he also resolved to explore the Columbia and Multnomah rivers

He would lead twenty-three men on this expedition back across the Blue Mountains

primarily to enter the fur trade and compete with Hudson’s Bay Company

His idea was to pass the year on the Columbia River

he hoped this time to establish trading relationships along the way

with the Nez Perce and Cayuse natives

he was again determined to try trading with the Hudson’s Bay Company

at Fort Walla Walla and at Fort Vancouver

he also proposed to stay the winter in the vicinity of the Multnomah River

to trade with the local Indians

and return across the mountains in time for the rendezvous [in July 1835]

CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE DEPLOYS HIS FORCES

He sent a trapping brigade to the Crow country (of Wyoming)

and a second brigade traveled to St. Louis with the few pelts he had obtained

Bonneville, himself, and a group of twenty-three men would revisit Oregon

CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE SETS OUT FOR OREGON

With his men on a hot day -- July 3, 1834

they proceeded down the Portneuf River then to the Snake River

This time, Bonneville followed an easier course into the Nez Perces' country

through the Blue Mountains,

Bonneville was impressed by the Cayuse and Nez Perce horse herds

and their Christian perspectives

according to Alvin Josephy, Bonneville noted the way in which

Christian traditions were: **“grafted onto ancestral beliefs and practices”[[252]](#footnote-252)**

this demonstrated the changing culture introduced by Hudson’s Bay Company

Bonneville’s party was unmolested by Indians and hunts were good along the Snake River

FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET -- CATHOLIC MISSIONARY

Father De Smet had spent a year in Europe as a fund raiser for his American Catholic mission

everywhere he journeyed he managed to secure some funding for his mission effort

nine months of fund-raising resulted in $60,000

he acquired a complete library for the university of St. Louis

in France he bought a complete laboratory and an important mineral collection

he also convinced five recruits to join the efforts of Catholic missionaries in Missouri

On his return journey to American, Father De Smet became violently seasick -- 1834

was eventually was forced to return to his home in Belgium

because he felt he was a failure, he submitted his resignation

to his superior in Missouri -- Father Pierre Verhaegen

however, De Smet carried on fund raising for the mission on the frontier

AMERICANS TRAVEL OUT OF SAN DIEGO

Hall Jackson Kelley persuaded Ewing Young to accompany him to the Pacific Northwest

Kelley, the visionary champion of an American colony in Oregon, needed someone to guide him on his only visit during his long career as the Oregon publicist

Ewing Young agreed to guide Kelley northward from Monterrey, California to the Willamette Valley as the trapper had been busy gathering a herd of horses to drive to Oregon to sell

although he received no cooperation from Spanish Governor Jose Figueroa

Hall Jackson Kelley set out for Oregon with Ewing Young and his men -- July 8, 1834

Young’s twelve-man party was a reckless and mixed entourage

ranging from well-educated and energetic Joseph Gale and steady Wesley Hauxhurst

all the way down to irresponsible louts and horse thieves

Young and men were driving a herd of about one hundred head of California horses and mules

seventy-seven of these belonged to Ewing Young -- the others possessed no bill of sale

they followed an old trail used by Hudson’s Bay Company trader Peter Skene Ogden

who was guided by Indians over Siskiyou Summit [1827] to Fort Vancouver

RENDEZVOUS COMES TO AN END

William Sublette set out for St. Louis with a caravan load of furs -- July 10, 1834

thus effectively ending the rendezvous

NATURALIST DAVID DOUGLAS IS KILLED

While in Hawaii Douglas stumbled and fell to his death in a Hawaiian bull pit (trap) -- July 11, 1834

During his lifetime he collected hundreds of specimens that others would continue to study

however, due to his lack of formal education, many of his classifications proved to be incorrect these were later corrected by trained botanists

he introduced Pacific Northwest botanical specimens that were new to the scientific world

including more than fifty species of trees previously unknown

such as Douglas Fir tree named in his honor (which he misidentified)

and the Sugar Pine tree (which he identified correctly)

he also introduced more than one hundred species of shrubs, ferns, and other plants

David Douglas was the first to apply the name Cascade Mountains or Cascade Range of Mountains

Lewis and Clark had called this range the “Western Mountains”

Coastal Indians gave him the name “Grass Man”

because of his insatiable interest in botanical specimens

(After his death many species of plants were named in his honor

as was a county in Washington State)

FITZPATRICK, (MILTON) SUBLETTE AND BRIDGER COMPANY

This short-lived enterprise was organized

American Fur Company had promised William Sublette

when the company of Sublette and Campbell was purchased

to stay out of the Northern Rocky Mountains [in 1835]

Sublette and Campbell had further agreed to sell Fort William to Fontenelle and Fitzpatrick

Those still at the encampment -- July 12, 1834

then moved upstream an additional fifteen or twenty miles

NATHANIEL WYETH CONTINUES WEST

When they reached the confluence of the Snake and Portneuf rivers (near today’s Pocatello)

Wyeth was forced to stop and to cache his $3,000 worth of unsold goods -- July 18, 1834

about 1/2 acre of ground was cleared near the mouth of the Portneuf River

Wyeth, with the help of his men, began trading with the local natives

soon several hundred Bannock and Shoshone Indians camped nearby with their families

seemingly this was a good omen for the future of the venture

FITZPATRICK, (MILTON) SUBLETTE AND BRIDGER COMPANY ABANDONED

After only a few days, the newly formed company dissolved -- August 3, 1834

a new company, Fontenelle and Fitzpatrick was quickly formed

partners included Lucien Fontenelle, Tom Fitzpatrick, Milton Sublette, James Bridger,

and Andrew Drips

NATHANIEL WYETH BUILDS FORT HALL

Whether or not Nathaniel Wyeth actually stated, as reported by Joe Meek,

that he would roll a stone into the Rocky Mountain Fur Company’s garden that is what he did along the Snake River -- summer of 1834

Wyeth began constructing his post to cache his supplies on a grassy meadow

near the confluence of the Portneuf and the Snake rivers in what is now southeastern Idaho

an eighty feet square stockade was completed on ½ -acre of ground -- August 4, 1834

built of Cottonwood trees set on end sunk 2-½ feet in the ground

and standing about fifteen feet high

two two-story blockhouse eight feet square were constructed at the opposite angles

dwellings, stores, barns were placed inside the walls

here Wyeth placed the excess trade goods

TIME SPENT AT FORT HALL

Time spent at Fort Hall was an idle time for the missionaries,

broken by Tom McKay’s unexpected request, one hot Sunday,

that Jason Lee conduct religious services

Though feeling unwell, the gaunt Methodist minister

walked with about thirty whites and as many Indians to a shady spot under rustling cottonwoods

**“The Indians,”** Dr. John Townsend wrote**, “sat upon the ground like statues. Although not one of them could understand a word that was said, they nevertheless maintained a most strict and decorous silence, kneeling when the preacher kneeled, and rising h\when he rose, evidently with a view of paying him and us a suitable respect.”[[253]](#footnote-253)**

After the service there was horse racing

one of McKay’s French-Canadians was mortally hurt in a violent collision -- that night he died

**“Service for him.”** Wyeth noted in his journal with customary lack of punctuation, **“was performed by the Canadians in the Catholic form by Mr. Lee in the Protestant form and by the Indians in their form...he at least was well buried.”[[254]](#footnote-254)**

McKay started west the next day accompanied by Jason and Daniel Lee and Sir William Stewart

CAPTAIN WYETH STAYED AT HIS POST FOR ANOTHER WEEK

To complete construction of his post which he christened Fort Hall

in honor of Henry Hall, the oldest member of the New England Company financing his enterprise

'Stars and Stripes' were unfurled to the breeze over the American trading post

in the heart of the savage and uncivilized country -- sunrise, August 5

**“We manufactured a magnificent flag from some** [unbleached] **sheeting and a little red flannel, and a few blue patches -- and after all, it makes, I do assure you, a very respectable appearance amid the dry and desolate region of central America.”[[255]](#footnote-255)**

in further celebration they **“saluted it with damaged powder, and wet it in villainous alcohol.”[[256]](#footnote-256)**

Here trade would be conducted with the Pawnee, Shoshone, Nez Perce and Flathead Indians

both beaver pelts and buffalo robes were acquired from the natives

FONTENELLE AND FITZPATRICK LEAVE THE RENDEZVOUS

One primary problem faced by the new company

was their dependency on the American Fur Company for supplies

Tom Fitzpatrick traveled with American Fur Company’s Andrew Drips and Lucien Fontenelle

to make arrangements to supply the [1835] rendezvous

set out for St. Louis – August 7, 1834

CAPTAIN NATHANIEL WYETH LEAVES FORT HALL

Nathaniel Wyeth left one man, Robert Evans, in charge of Fort Hall to conduct trade

Wyeth’s expedition continued its journey on to Oregon

hurrying to Fort Vancouver to drive Hudson’s Bay Company out of business

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY ACCEPTS DIVERSIFICATION

Governor George Simpson eventually forwarded to the Hudson’s Bay Company London Directors

a copy of Dr. John McLoughlin’s prospectus for “The Oragon (sic) Beef and Tallow Company”

with a recommendation that Company embark on such an undertaking -- summer 1834

rather than Company employees engaged in a private enterprise as McLoughlin proposed

With the urging of Simpson, who believed cattle could become a profitable trade for the Company,

Governor and Committee now authorized £300 for McLoughlin to buy cattle for the Company

but did not direct that the purchase be made immediately

Chief Factor McLoughlin saw no merit in pursuing his ideas for the benefit of the Company

therefore, he did not aggressively search for new stock

EWING YOUNG’S CATTLE DRIVE TO OREGON

Driving nearly one hundred horses,

Ewing Young and Hall Jackson Kelley got seriously under way -- August 1834

with seven men including the well-educated and energetic Joseph Gale

and steady Wesley Hauxhurst

As Young and his herd moved north up the Sacramento Valley

they were joined by another seven men driving more than fifty horses of their own

however, they were not burdened by any bill of sale

These irresponsible louts, were called by Kelley “the marauders” -- and such they were

as they repeatedly killed, plundered, and raped the Indians, friendly or hostile,

who crossed their path

Ewing Young made excuses to Kelley for the outrages of the marauders

aside from his attitude toward Indians, Ewing Young was an honest, principled man

he had fairly purchased the horses he drove over the mountains to the Willamette

doubtless he suspected the marauders had stolen their stock, but he did not question them closely

they had chosen to travel with him, and he was reluctant to turn them away,

even had it been possible

for this attitude Ewing Young would pay a severe penalty

WILLIAM SUBLETTE RETURNS TO ST. LOUIS

Furs he carried into St. Louis from the Rendezvous -- late August

were valued at $12,250

but not all of these belonged to the, now defunct, Rocky Mountain Fur Company

those were valued at less than $10,000

not enough money to cover the debt owed to William Sublette

remainder of the furs belonged to William Sublette’s new shipping company:

Fitzpatrick, (William) Sublette and Bridger -- which had been formed during the Rendezvous

CAPTAIN BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE MAKES CAMP

Traveling with his twenty-three men Bonneville reached the Powder River

they traced this river until, fortunately, they found an old Indian trail

that led them to the headwaters of Grande Ronde River -- August 26, 1834

where he witnessed a enormous prairie fire that obscured their vision,

burned their lungs, and blurred the horizon

Traveling down the Grande Ronde Valley, Bonneville decided to make camp

while scouts looked for a way to the Willamette or Multnomah rivers but the huge fire made much exploration useless

Captain Bonneville was very much impressed

by the breadth and scope of modern farming practices used by Indians

in the Grande Ronde Valley

he believed the efforts demonstrated the impact of the British on the natives

CAPTAIN NATHANIEL WYETH AND CAPTAIN BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE MEET

Nathaniel Wyeth during this second visit to the Pacific Northwest

met Bonneville and perhaps discussed the beginning of a joint trading effort

Correspondence indicates they were negotiating with the Nez Perces and Cayuse

both men planned to meet Chief Apash Wyakaikt on the Asotin River,

but Bonneville needed food and supplies first

Eventually both parties of Americans moved along parallel routes to the Columbia River

CAPTAIN BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE REJECTED BY HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY

After several more days in camp, Bonneville traced the Walla Walla River

and reached a position about thirty miles above Fort Walla Walla

Bonneville sent ahead a small party to the fort seeking provisions

they were courteously treated by Hudson's Bay Company

When Bonneville again approached Chief Trader Pierre Pambrun at Fort Walla Walla

he found the same warm welcome he had received the year before

but Pambrun again refused his request for supplies

also refused to help Bonneville establish American trading posts

Bonneville was no more successful than he had been on his first effort

Without food or supplies, Bonneville's position became more desperate

rather than go back to Fort Bonneville (Idaho), he turned down the Columbia River

hoping to get to Fort Vancouver and the Willamette Valley

**“Notwithstanding the unkind reception of the traders, I continued down the Columbia, subsisting on horses, dogs, roots, and occasionally a salmon, until I reached the vicinity of Mounts Hood and Baker** [Adams]**....”[[257]](#footnote-257)**

NATHANIEL WYETH IN OREGON

Wyeth’s Columbia River Fishing and Trading Company

arrived at Fort Walla Walla on the Columbia River -- September 1, 1834

Wyeth found the missionaries camped in their white tents just outside the post’s stockade

**“But Mr. McKay,”** he wrote in puzzlement in his journal, **“for some reason remained in the mountains.”[[258]](#footnote-258)**

Reason for Tom McKay’s absence soon became clear

near one of the twin mouths of the Boise River in a decaying horse pen

where first John Reed of the Astorians and later Donald McKenzie of the Nor’ Westers

had tried to establish posts, McKay built a hut of crooked cottonwood poles

next he set about undermining Fort Hall’s trade,

(and did it so well that soon his ramshackle hut was replaced, on a slightly different site,

with a more imposing adobe structure to be called Fort Boise)

At Fort Walla Walla the Methodist missionaries learned the Flathead tribe was a small one

but they showed a genuine interest in the white’s religion

Jason and Daniel Lee handed over to Chief Trader Pierre Pambrun at the fort

their ten horses, four mules, and three cows in exchange for other livestock and goods

to be picked up at Fort Vancouver

WYETH AND HIS COMPANIONS LEAVE FORT WALLA WALLA

Columbia River Fishing and Trading Company and the missionaries

hired a Hudson’s Bay Company flatboat and took passage down the Columbia River

Wyeth’s trappers following in three canoes (two of which were smashed)

they ran through buffeting head winds and drenching rain

to a hearty welcome by John McLoughlin

BONNEVILLE JOURNEYS DOWN THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Bonneville proceeded down the Columbia River fifty miles below Fort Walla Walla

he hoped to conduct trade with the Chinook Indians but found them hesitant

they were unwilling to leave Hudson’s Bay Company for an unknown company

they were under the influence of the Dr. McLoughlin

and the natives respected Hudson’s Bay Company’s wishes

Bonneville was no more successful than he had been on his first effort

COLUMBIA RIVER FISHING AND TRADING COMPANY ARRIVE AT FORT VANCOUVER

Nathaniel Wyeth and his party of Americans reached Dr. McLoughlin’s gates -- September 14, 1834

this was Wyeth’s second appearance at the Hudson’s Bay Company post

since he had been motivated by Hall Jackson Kelley’s proselytizing nearly four years earlier

Newly arrived Americans **“we were most hospitably received by Dr. John McLoughlin, and that night slept in a bed under a roof, for the first time for one hundred and fifty-two nights”[[259]](#footnote-259)**

Outward bound journey had been valuable to Rev. Jason Lee

it showed he could get along with rough and uneducated men

it had demonstrated the physical strength of his party of missionaries

DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN WELCOMES THE METHODIST MISSIONARIES

Rev. Jason Lee accompanied by his nephew Rev. Daniel Lee

were well received by Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin -- September 15, 1834

who greeted the missionaries with the utmost interest and cordiality

as were assistants Cyrus Shepard, Philip L. Edwards and Courtney M. Walker

Rev. Jason Lee stated he intended to locate among the Nez Perce and Flathead Indians

these were the same natives who had sent representatives to St. Louis looking for “Black Robes”

CAPTAIN NAHANIEL WYETH’S SHIP *MAY DACRE* ARRIVED

After an extremely rough crossing,

salmon salting ship reached Fort Vancouver -- September 15, 1834

Ship was to have arrived much earlier but had been hit by lightning in the Society Islands

this delayed their arrival for three months

which meant Nathaniel Wyeth could not start the seasonal salmon packing

it was too late for the fishing season -- too late for the salmon run

*May Dacre* carried newly arrived Hudson’s Bay Company employees on board

twenty Sandwich Islanders, two coopers, two smiths, and a clerk debarked

*May Dacre* also carried Boston newspapers

from these Dr. McLoughlin learned of Hall Jackson Kelley’s exhortations

regarding the Hudson’s Bay Company

and of his plans to drive the British out of the Pacific Northwest by colonizing the country

When *May Dacre* arrived with their supplies,

missionaries began to explore in earnest for a suitable site for their mission

DR. McLOUGHLIN ENCOURAGES REV. JASON LEE TO ABANDON EASTERN WASHINGTON

At the urging of the Chief Factor, Jason Lee traveled up the Willamette River

into the Willamette Valley for a visit

Dr. McLoughlin provided them with horses and guides to explore the Willamette Valley

there were already white settlers, retired French-Canadians there

A dozen white men already occupied little farms scattered along the Willamette River

they lived in log cabins with their Indian wives and families

most were former employees of Hudson’s Bay Company

Dr. McLoughlin furnished them stock and provisions

Advantages of settling in this locale were obvious:

•water navigation to the sea was within easy reach,

•they would be within easy distance of salt water commerce,

•they were near enough to Fort Vancouver for safety, accessibility to the mails and supplies,

•valley demonstrated extraordinarily scenic charm and pleasant climate,

•natives appeared peaceful and open to whites

DR. McLOUGHLIN RECEIVED AN ADDITIONAL WARNING

California Governor Jose Figueroa informed the chief factor

by way of Company ship then at Monterey

in his letter the governor stated one “Joachim” Young and certain adventurers had **“committed the crime of robbing upwards of two hundred head of horses belonging to various Mexican citizens…and I doubt not but that you will in case there marauders should make their appearance in you quarter take such measures as will be efficient to apprehend them and either chastise them or despoil them of the booty.”[[260]](#footnote-260)**

SMALLPOX EPIDEMIC

Was sweeping through several Indian villages

Disease was rampant

there was great fear among natives that Wyeth’s Fort William was the source

NATURALISTS IN OREGON

Thomas Nuttall and John K. Townsend had been traveling with Nathaniel Wyeth

arrived at Fort Vancouver two days after the main party -- September 16, 1834

Dr. Townsend not able to entirely cast off his role as physician

he was persuaded to pinch hit for several months as resident doctor

at makeshift hospital Hudson’s Bay Company opened at Fort Vancouver

**“The** [Indian] **depopulation here has been truly fearful. A gentleman told me that only four years ago as he wandered near what had formerly been a thickly peopled village, he counted no less than sixteen dead men and women, lying unburied and festering in the sun in front of their habitations. Within the houses all were sick; not one had escaped the contagion; upwards of a hundred individuals, men, women and children, were writhing in agony on the floors of the houses, with no one to render them any assistance. Some were in the dying struggles; and clenching with the convulsive grasps of death, their disease-worn companions shrieked and howled in the last sharp agony.”[[261]](#footnote-261)**

BONNEVILLE REACHED THE JOHN DAY RIVER

As the U.S. Army Captain neared the junction of the John Day and Columbia rivers

he realized that his meeting with the British would probably be unsuccessful

Chief Factor John McLoughlin would likely greet him

in the same manner as Chief Trader Pierre Pambrun at For Nez Perce with the same futile result

CAPTAIN BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE AT FORT VANCOUVER

Running out of supplies, Bonneville arrived at Fort Vancouver -- 1834

could not make any advance against Hudson's Bay Company

because he was dependent on them for provisions

Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Walla Walla and Fort Vancouver

and their Indian allies refused to trade with them

Desperate straits made them turn back to the Blue Mountains

where there would be game

REV. JASON LEE DECIDED ON SERVING THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

After spending nine days in prayer and reflection

Jason Lee changed his mind

about working among the Flatheads and Nez Perce -- September 23, 1834

Lee concluded that his mission headquarters should be in the Willamette Valley

not on the plateau country or in the mountains

he never recorded the reason for his decision

however he was probably persuaded by Dr. McLoughlin

REV. JASON LEE RETURNED TO FORT VANCOUVER

After his visit to French Prairie Rev. Lee began his work

he preached two sermons at the fort-- Sunday, September 28, 1834

these were the first sermons to be heard in (today’s Washington)

worshipers were Roman Catholic French-Canadians enhanced by a gathering

of French-Canadian trappers and settlers of the Willamette Valley region,

English and Irish attendees, and half-caste listeners

CAPTAIN BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE’S PARTY RETURNS EASTWARD

Bonneville noted: “**I now discovered that if I advanced much farther, the snow that was then falling in the mountains would soon prevent my retreat from this impoverished country and that in the spring I would not have a horse left, as it became indispensably necessary to slaughter them for subsistence. I consequently took a south course and entered the mountains of John Day's river, gradually turning my course towards the mountains of the upper country….”[[262]](#footnote-262)**

Reluctantly, Bonneville and his men turned back toward the Snake River region

they arrived at the Blue Mountains -- October 1, 1834

huge fires had been put out by September rains

He and his twenty-three trappers were back on the Snake River -- (end of October)

FORT WILLIAM FOUNDED ON WAPPATOO (NOW SAUVIES) ISLAND

Nathaniel Wyeth built his second post (after Fort Hall)

this one on Wappatoo Island in the Columbia River near mouth of the Willamette River

storehouses, blacksmith shop, dwellings, and cooper shops completed -- October 6, 1834

Became the western home of Wyeth’s Columbia River Fishing and Trading Company -- 1834- [1836]

this outpost was a direct challenge to British traders

CAPTAIN NATHANIEL WYETH DISPERSES HIS MEN

Wyeth himself reached a mutual agreement with Dr. McLoughlin not to compete with each other

this was more a tribute to their mutual friendship that to any economic necessity of McLoughlin’s

Wyeth assigned several of his men to newly constructed Fort William on Wappatoo (Sauvies) Island

in the Columbia River where trade was attempted

Other Wyeth men were put to work on a farm on French Prairie

Twenty Kanakas (Hawaiians) recently arrived aboard the *May Dacre*

were used mainly to work at Fort Hall far up the Snake River

one group of thirteen Kanakas quickly deserted the fort

taking horses and trade goods with them

Captain Wyeth arranged for Courtney M. Walker to take charge of Fort William

Walker was briefly employed as the keeper of the fort

Wyeth, himself, spent the winter trapping south of the Columbia River

principally on the Des Chutes River

EWING YOUNG ARRIVED IN OREGON

In the company of Hall Jackson Kelley and fourteen drovers who tended the horse herd

He was captivated by the rich pasturage and fertile soil of the Willamette Valley

South from the Tualatin Plain across a low ridge of mountains

lay a lush meadow watered by Chehalem Creek

Ewing Young and his trappers were the first American mountain men

to settle permanently on the Willamette

Young left his men and horses in the Chehalem Valley

and went to Fort Vancouver accompanied by Hall Jackson Kelley

to make their acquaintance with Dr. McLoughlin

YOUNG AND KELLEY ARRIVED AT FORT VANCOUVER

Ewing Young, traveling with Hall Jackson Kelley who was sick and penniless,

arrived at Fort Vancouver -- October 27, 1834

There they encountered the awesome power of the Hudson’s Bay Company

governor of California had reported Young as a horse thief

which placed him beyond the benevolent support

with which Dr. McLoughlin greeted all other newcomers

Ewing Young could expect nothing, in purchase, trade, loan, or charity,

from the farms and stores of Fort Vancouver

Hall Jackson Kelley was ravaged by malaria and was coldly received by a Dr. McLoughlin

who was aware of Kelley’s writing regarding the Hudson’s Bay Company

Kelley, while irritably moping about the fort, was surprised to see Captain Nathaniel Wyeth

Both Americans were closely observed by Chief Factor John McLoughlin

McLoughlin then added to the insult by blanketing the neighborhood with warnings to people

to have nothing to do with the newcomers

this built up in Ewing Young a fury that in time would play its own odd part in Northwest history

Still, Chief Factor John McLoughlin made sure they received food and clothing

but he did not accept them as social equals

in fact, they were welcomed as horse thieves by Dr. McLoughlin

REV. JASON LEE SELECTS A SITE FOR HIS MISSION IN THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY

Methodists ascended the Willamette River to a point near a group of farms

that had been constructed by the retired French-Canadian employees of Hudson’ Bay Company

sixty miles to the south of [Fort Vancouver](https://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/fort_vancouver/) where a a large assortment of goods was available

a horseback trip or canoe paddle down the [Willamette River](https://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/willamette_river/) -- fall 1834

Rev. Jason Lee chose an area near a small but thriving settlement that he named “Mission Bottom”

near the farm of Hudson’s Bay Company’s Thomas McKay

son of Alexander McKay who had been killed on the *Tonquin*

and stepson of Dr. John McLoughlin

and near the home of French-Canadian Joseph Gervais on the Champoeg Plain

(by today’s Willamette Mission State Park)

MISSION SOCIETY OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

First permanent American settlement in the Willamette Valley was planted by Methodist missionaries

French-Canadians already settled on French Prairie helped to build the Methodist Mission with supplies provided by both Nathaniel Wyeth and Dr. John McLoughlin

**“On** **the east side of the** [Willamette] **river, and sixty miles from its mouth, a location was chosen to begin a mission. Here was a broad, rich bottom, many miles in length, well watered and supplied with timber, oak, fir, cottonwood, white maple, and white oak, scattered along its grassy plains.”[[263]](#footnote-263)**

First missionaries to take up residence in Willamette River Valley were led by Rev. Jason Lee:

•Rev. Daniel Lee -- Jason Lee’s nephew,

•Courtney M. Walker -- trapper and missionary worker,

•Cyrus Shepard -- lay assistant and third teacher at Fort Vancouver 1834-[1835]

(later left his teaching position -- moved to join Rev. Jason Lee at Champoeg)

(later still, started a school which became primarily an orphanage for sick children)

•Philip L. Edwards -- lay assistant, missionary teacher and writer

Rev. Jason Lee’s mission had no title to the land where the mission was located

yet their rights were recognized and respected by other early settlers

METHODIST MISSION BOTTOM CONSTRUCTION

Even as Ewing Young stubbornly planted himself in the Chehalem Valley,

Rev. Jason and Daniel Lee began constructing the log buildings of the Methodist mission

on the fringe of French Prairie

supplies were brought from Fort Vancouver to the missionaries

Rev. Jason Lee and his missionaries lived in tents -- November 1, 1834

cabin was quickly built at Mission Bottom adjacent to the [Willamette River](https://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/willamette_river/)

(north of present-day Salem)

when rains of winter set in, the Methodists had a respectable shelter

at the same time land was fenced for cropping, and a barn was built

Jason Lee later wrote in a letter: **“We landed where we now are in October 1834 and pitched out tents, unloaded out canoes, and commenced building a house. The rainy season was approaching, and I did not like the idea of living in an Indian hut. We labored under disadvantages, for we were not carpenters. We however went into the woods and cut the timber. We took the green trees and split them, and hewed out boards for our floors.”[[264]](#footnote-264)**

Other improvements were made

rails were split for a corral, oxen were broken to the plow, and [in spring] land tilled

Webley Hauxhurst constructed a grist mill at Mission Bottom

that served needs of the Willamette Valley

METHODIST EFFORT BEGINS AT MISSION BOTTOM (CHAMPOEG)

Rev. Jason Lee led the mission work in the Willamette Valley at Mission Bottom -- 1834

they set to work at once with zeal, patience, and intelligence

Missionaries visited Indian lodges

Indians, though few in number received devoted attention at Mission Bottom

possibility of having a missionary live with the Indians was rejected

because the natives were mobile

and because they would more slowly learn civilized practices in that way

Jason Lee ministered to the Catholic families on French Prairie praying and preaching, even baptizing

and the missionaries served the few American families

MISSIONARIES COULD CAUSE PROBLEMS FOR HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY

Traders feared the missionaries would persuade the Indians

to abandon the fur trade to become farmers

and that they would report to the British public that the Company’s employees

were introducing vice to the native Americans

NATIVE RESPONSE TO THE GOSPEL

Indians had religious beliefs: creation, afterlife, spirits -- before the missionaries arrived

missionaries believed these to be the first steps to Christianity

Indians, at least at first, were receptive to the missionaries and their message

But problems quickly arose

Indians wanted Christianity for the same purposes as their own religion

to gain a more successful mastery over nature and to increase their wealth

unlike Christianity, their faith was not focused upon attainment of the next world

MISSIONARIES FACED MANY PROBLEMS

Missionary’s tasks were much more difficult than other white immigrants

like all of the others, they had to make a living from the country

face loneliness, accident, and death

but they also had to reckon with the salvation of souls -- an intangible product

Things began to go wrong from the beginning

it was the Methodist goal to convert the Indians to Christianity

and then to provide the vestiges of American civilization

At the time their efforts to “improve the lives of the natives” seemed to be rewarded

then pestilence would attack the Indians

followed by native suspicion and excitement -- all gains would be lost

Working among the whites and their half-breed families was more encouraging

missionaries focused their efforts on the social institutions among whites

CAPTAIN BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE’S EXPEDITION IN WINTER CAMP

Ended up going all the way back to the Portneuf River -- November 15, 1834

before they found enough buffalo and game to meet their needs

Once out of the Oregon, Bonneville and his men stayed the winter with the Shoshone Indians

in the familiar game-rich haunts of the upper Bear River (eastern Wyoming) -- Winter 1834-1835

He had not succeeded in carrying out his plan

to visit the lower Columbia and return by way of California

this failure was due primarily to lack of effort

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY MAINTAINS ITS GRIP

Hudson’s Bay Company handled 405,472 beaver pelts worth $2.50 to $4.00 each -- 1834-[1837]

Hudson’s Bay Company retirees and missionaries alike were dependent on the company

any aid too openly extended to Ewing Young

would cast the dark cloud of McLoughlin’s displeasure over their communities

Rival company trading and trapping efforts had ceased in Columbia Department -- 1834

Dr. McLoughlin ruled supreme in the Pacific Northwest

retired employees settled the land

FORT BOISE CONSTRUCTED

Hudson's Bay Company also was working in the Big Bend area of the Snake River

Tom McKay’s rude post was greatly expanded by order of Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin

“Old” Fort Boise was moved a few miles from the mouth of the Boise River -- Fall 1834

very near to Fort Hall -- in a good location to compete

Hudson’s Bay Company’s plan was to drive Nathaniel Wyeth out of business

(they eventually succeeded by overbidding Wyeth for the purchase of furs

and underbidding him in the sale of goods to the Indians)

Tom McKay (Dr. McLoughlin’s rambunctious stepson) operated Fort Boise

which absorbed the trade that might have come from the west

McKay was prepared to trade with Americans or Indians as well as to trap,

and he carried with him a full complement of goods

Nathaniel Wyeth’s scheme to sell trade goods out of Fort Hall fell through:

•at Fort Hall in Idaho several of his men deserted

•Blackfeet stole horses and equipment, and killed various trappers

•an irresponsible clerk squandered trade goods in drunken mismanagement

(Wyeth later sold Fort Hall to the Hudson’s Bay Company,

which indeed made it a heavy [British] stone in the garden of American trappers

Fort Hall became the chief refuge for trappers and travelers

and, even later, became an important stop on the Oregon Trail)

DOMINATION OF OREGON (COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT)

Struggle for possession of the Pacific Northwest between the United States and Great Britain

was carried on in three places:

•in the Pacific Northwest itself where the struggle began;

•in the capitals of the two nations where diplomats met to discuss the question;

•in the American nation where people were motivated to most West

U.S. and British claims were balanced and off-setting:

•Captain Gray vs. Captain Vancouver

•Lewis and Clark vs. David Thompson

•John Jacob Astor vs. North West Fur Company

War of 1812 added to the confusion as did the Treaty of Ghent

FIRST INDIAN MISSION SCHOOL IS OPENED BY THE METHODIST MINISTERS

It was decided to bring Indian children to live with the missionaries at the headquarters

Rev. Jason Lee began the first church school in the Pacific Northwest for Indians at Mission Bottom

on the east side of the Willamette River

First student body consisted of three Calapoosa Indian boys -- winter 1834-1835

here Indians learned English, Christianity, and the customs of civilization

additional Indian children joined the school and some made fair progress

orphans were adopted into the mission family from time to time

but additional enrollments were few

Besides formal education and Christianity, missionaries also tried to teach the Indians farming, industrial arts and homemaking

Record book refers to daily instructions to as many as twenty students -- November

states that “several of the children are making laudable improvement”[[265]](#footnote-265)

missionaries were more successful with their neighbors than with natives

Although the Indian Mission School was not a boarding school as such, historical records suggest

that during the mission school’s brief existence students lived there and worked on the farm

METHODIST ACCOMPLISHMENTS WERE SLOW

At the Mission Bottom (Champoeg ) location

missionaries operated a school and maintained religious services

however, their school’s religious services were not gathering results

they organized a temperance society to tout the evils of alcohol

aimed primarily at Ewing Young and his still

Lees were joined by many of the white men thanks in large part to Dr. McLoughlin’s effort

Champoeg Mission turned its attention mainly to agriculture

Methodists were dependent on the grain, cattle, and tools

which Chief Factor John McLoughlin supplied them -- often without cost

he would only ask them to help others as he had helped them

REV. JASON LEE ASKS THE METHODIST MISSION SOCIETY FOR MORE MISSIONARIES

Methodist Missionaries worked more among white settlers than among the natives

it was wise to send unmarried men to be missionaries

they could move easily through Indian Country following mobiles tribesmen

Rev. Jason changed his original plan and requested

Mission Society of the Methodist Church send families as additional helpers

Methodist Mission Society quickly complied

AMERICAN OUTCASTS SETTLE IN

Hall Jackson Kelley passed the winter recuperating in a cabin outside Fort Vancouver -- 1834-1835

after he recovered his health, he spent some time surveying property on the Columbia River

Ewing Young moved south, across a low ridge of mountains from the Tualatin Plain,

to a lush meadow in the Chehalem Valley watered by Chehalem Creek

away from Fort Vancouver and Dr. McLoughlin,

where he took up a great tract of land and devoted himself to raising his livestock

NATHANIEL WYETH’S BRIG *MAY DACRE*

Wyeth cut some lumber on Wappatoo (Sauvies) Island for export

by the Columbia River Fishing and Trading Company -- 1834-1835

*May Dacre* spent the winter hauling an unprofitable load of lumber and salmon to Hawaii

CAPTAIN NATAHNIEL WYETH’S BRIG *MAY DACRE* RETURNS TO THE COLUMBIA RIVER

After carrying an unprofitable cargo of lumber to the Hawaii

for his Columbia River Fishing and Trading Company

but he had not fully planned how to develop a market

return cargo included a few dairy cattle brought from the Sandwich Islands

COLUMBIA RIVER FISHING AND TRADING COMPANY

At Fort William, Nathaniel Wyeth grazed the small herd of dairy cattle on Wappatoo (Sauvies) Island

recently arrived from the Hawaiian Islands

Wyeth installed salmon processing machinery and engaged in a fish packing enterprise

he now discovered the salmon-catching and processing equipment she carried

was inadequate for the job

and the Fall’s salmon run was small

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY EXPANDS ITS MARITIME OPERAIONS

Diversification had become the order of the day for the Company

three years after the Fort Simpson opened along the Nass River it was relocated

to the north end of the Tsimpsean Peninsula (near today’s Prince Rupert) -- 1834

John Work sailed north on the Hudson’s Bay Company brig Lama

(during the next ten months supervised the construction of Fort Simpson

which operated for several years a very profitable trading post)

Peter Skene Ogden was promoted to the position of Chief Factor

this was the highest field rank in the company service

he was assigned to Fort St. James on Stuart Lake where he worked [until 1844]

John Work replaced Peter Skene Ogden as Marine Department supervisory officer -- 1834

working from Fort Simpson

he traded along the north coast of New Caledonia (British Columbia),

northern Vancouver Island and among the Queen Charlotte Islands

always with keen competition from American coastal traders [until his transfer 1846]

SMALLPOX EPIDEMIC

Again swept through several Indian villages

Disease was rampant

there was great fear among natives that Wyeth’s Fort William was the source

ACQUIRING MORE LAND

Early settlers were infected with the “Spirit of Democracy”

many successes they achieved were spectacular

they felt compelled to extend the area of freedom for the good of all American people

they believed the democratic form of government had been tested and found whole

As Americans ventured west acquiring more land, self defense became a problem

Indians were a perpetual concern as were both the Mexican and British government

Further expansion, driving our enemies before us, appeared the solution

in fact, if expansion was completed across the continent

protection of the American population would be relatively simple

U.S. would be securely surrounded by water “natural boundaries”

Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, Pacific Ocean, Arctic Ocean

BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE WAS IN WINTER CAMP

On the upper Bear River (Southern Idaho) -- February 1835

where Bonneville’s party had joined with Bonneville’s partner Joe Walker and his men

Michael Cerre came up from St. Louis with the supply caravan

Cerre had been dispatched by Bonneville [July 1833] to Washington City

carrying Bonneville’s report and a request for an extension of his leave of absence Cerre told Bonneville of journeying to Washington City

and laying Bonneville’s report before General Macomb himself,

who, Cerre said, read it in Cerre’s presence and expressed satisfaction

what Cerre left vague in talking with Bonneville, however,

was the status of Bonneville’s leave of absence from the army

HALL JACKSON KELLEY GAVE UP

Still strongly anti-Hudson’s Bay Company and delusional

suffering from a persecution complex he argued with Dr. McLoughlin

Kelley found it was easier to receive from the company than to give

he accepted from Chief Factor McLoughlin a gift of seven pounds

and passage to the Sandwich Hawaiian Islands -- March 15, 1835

CAPTAIN BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE AND HIS MEN

Set out on a return expedition to the Green River -- April 1, 1835

where they had spent the [spring before] working their way east

over the Wind River Range (Wyoming) toward Missouri

Bonneville and Joe Walker now split their command to better investigate the region

SECOND INDIAN DELEGATION GOES TO ST. LOUIS

Four volunteers, two Flathead and two Nez Perce natives had been gone for four years

they still had not returned from St. Louis

Indian missionary Ignace La Mousse (Old Ignace) himself along with his two sons

decided to take the hazardous journey themselves in search General William Clark in St. Louis

Perhaps the original volunteers could not adequately communicate their desires for a priest

since he spoke French, maybe Old Ignace would have more success

AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FORFOREIGN MISSIONS

Organization composed of three national church denominations:

•Presbyterian

•Congregational

•Dutch Reform

They were active in (Hawaii) and desired to enter the mission field of the Northwest

American Board organization followed very closely the efforts of the Methodists

REV. SAMUEL PARKER -- AMERICAN BOARD MISSIONARY

Although fifty-six years old, he was finally accepted as a missionary

by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions

He was dispatched from Boston to travel to St. Louis to make a survey of the field -- spring 1835

he was to join the annual trade caravan bound for the Jackson Hole Rendezvous

but he arrived in St. Louis too late to travel West with the fur caravan

Rev. Parker hastened back to Boston to receive new instructions

REV. SAMUEL PARKER INTRODUCED TO DR. MARCUS WHITMAN

On his trip from St. Louis back to Boston -- 1835

Rev. Parker stopped at a meeting in Prattsburg in upstate New York

to campaign there for church support

Rev. Parker was approached by a weather-beaten country doctor

named Marcus Whitmanwho was currently practicing in Wheeler, New York

Dr. Marcus Whitman was very devout -- an elder in the Presbyterian Church

he was looking for an opportunity to serve as a missionary

although he had been turned down several times before -- due to poor health

at the time, he was engaged to be married to a spirited choir leader -- Narcissa Prentiss

Although very committed, Narcissa did not seem quite like missionary material

she was full-bodied, with a lovely, disturbing voice, copper glints in her blond hair,

and possessed wide eyes with sparkling vivacity

REV. SAMUEL PARKER RECRUITED DR. MARCUS WHITMAN

Congregationalist minister enlisted Dr. Marcus Whitman in his mission effort -- 1835

Rev. Parker requested Dr. Whitman and Narcissa Prentiss postpone their marriage

Parker proposed to take Dr. Whitman along with him when he returned to St. Louis

Whitman would serve as mule skinner, campfire cook, and handyman on the journey

Dr. Whitman accepted the offer

and, although she did not lack admirers, Narcissa remained unmarried

DR. MARCUS WHITMAN DESCRIBED

Thirty-two years old -- [born September 4, 1802]

Had been raised in Rushville, New York

pious physician had practiced medicine in Canada

had returned home to Rushville, New York where he ran a sawmill with his brother

Tall, spare man with deep blue eyes, wide mouth, iron-grey hair

he possessed enormous physical strength and endurance with an iron constitution

he was energetic, athletic and capable of surviving any degree of fatigue

Dr. Whitman was man of fine mind and appealing character, sincere, and honest

he always wished to believe best in everyone

he cherished no grudge -- he heeded no warning

he successfully accommodated himself to any circumstance

He was above all tenacious in pursuing any purpose he set for himself

he remained flexible and even variable until his mind was made up

at that point he possessed an inflexible resolution and was very set in his stance

he was decisive but impatient -- a man of single purpose

he was determined others should accept his view

Whitman was no less godly than others of his calling

he displayed none of the narrow prejudices

that cramped other men’s minds and offended the more worldly

but he was no less dedicated to the religious and cultural transformation of races

who had been denied the blessings of Christianity

Whitman was always ready to offer his professional or other services to those in need

ADDITIONAL EMIGRANTS TRAVEL FROM CALIFORNIA TOWARD OREGON

Down in California John Turner was talking about Oregon to a handful of dissatisfied trappers

to join him in an adventure traveling from California to Oregon

Turner had lived an epic life

after surviving the massacre of Jedediah Smith’s party on the Umpqua River,

he had joined the Hudson’s Bay Company as the guide for their southern brigades

in this capacity he met various Americans -- spring 1835

some of whom had been associated with Ewing Young before he went of Oregon

seven men, including a ship-jumping young English doctor named William J. Bailey,

decided to ride north with the trapper to see the fine new land

William J. Bailey had been born and educated in England where he studies medicine

he was brought to America by his mother

after several years, he shipped to the West coast and deserted his vessel in San Francisco

he joined John Turner’s fur trapping party journeying to the Pacific Northwest -- 1835

EWING YOUNG REMAINS INDEPENDENT

Although Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin put out some tentative peace feelers,

Ewing Young angrily rejected them

In contrast to all other Oregon residents,

Young would stand up to the Hudson’s Bay Company

as the years passed, he heaped abuse on McLoughlin to all who would listen

At the same time, Young and his men did well enough to survive

they tended their horses, hunted game, fished the streams and ponds,

and trapped the Coast mountain range for beaver

Because Chief factor John McLoughlin refused to trade with them

they traded their furs to the masters of American vessels on the Columbia River

Nathaniel Wyeth also took out a load of Young’s furs

At the same time, the Methodists and the French Canadians relaxed enough

to have occasional dealings with him

SCHOOLS AT FRENCH PRAIRIE

Solomon H. Smith having left his teaching position at Fort Vancouver

he moved to the Willamette Valley

there he opened school at French Prairie in the home of Joseph Gervais

this was the first non-mission school (in today’s Oregon)

there he taught the half-breed children of Joseph Gervais -- 1835-[1837]

Philip L. Edwards -- lay assistant to Rev. Jason Lee

taught at the mission station school on French Prairie -- 1835-[1836]

he kept a diary of his life -- (which became a very important historic record)

FORT WILLIAM (FORT LARAMIE) CHANGES HANDS

Tom “Broken Hand” Fitzpatrick had taken possession of Fort William -- April 1835

log trading post which had been erected by William Sublette and Robert Campbell

on the Laramie River just above its confluence with the North Platte [in 1834]

(later Fort William was renamed Fort Laramie, Wyoming)

PRATTE, CHOUTEAU & COMPANY SUPPLY TRAIN

Pierre Chouteau, Jr. resigned from John Jacob Astor’s American Fur Company [1834] and formed a combine with partner Bernard Pratte

Pierre Chouteau, Jr. prepared a caravan captained by Lucien Fontenelle -- 1835

which was going to Fort William

FIRST STEAMBOAT IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST -- *BEAVER 112*

Hudson’s Bay Company’s hundred-foot-long steamship *Beaver*

was launched at Blackwall Yard in London, England -- May 9, 1835

to be delivered to Dr. John McLoughlin at Fort Vancouver

*Beaver* had been rigged as a three-masted schooner for sailing to America

*Beaver* was built for service rather than for looks

snub-nosed with no figurehead, square-sterned, black-hulled

she could brag of only one ornament: the shield of the Hudson’s Bay Company

she had four brass cannons mounted on her deck

with muskets, cutlasses, and hand grenades within easy reach

REV. PARKER AND DR. WHITMAN SET OUT FOR THE WEST

Rev. Samuel Parker and Dr. Marcus Whitman together left for the wilderness

from Liberty, Missouri -- mid-May1835

joined Lucien Fontenelle and the Pratte, Chouteau & Company westbound supply caravan

going to Fort William (Fort Laramie)

only mountain men had the knowledge, skill, and experience

to get them safely across the continent

Fontenelle and his men resented the missionaries Pierre Chouteau had inflicted on them

mountain men hurled insults, catcalls and even rotten eggs at the missionaries

they wanted no purveyors of gloom and doom spoiling their fun

or sending back to the eastern newspapers protests about their dealings with the Indians

Parker, remembering how desperately he had worked to raise money,

refused to part with enough cash to buy adequate equipment

what livestock he did purchase the two greenhorns could scarcely handle

nearly every day, the mountain men shouted in delight

as the tenderfeet’s ill-balanced loads either fell off the mules or were bucked off

Retreating deep into the ivory tower of his superior age and education,

Rev. Parker transferred more and more of the camp chores and responsibilities to Whitman

then the minister shuddered fastidiously when the overworked doctor

cooked their meals while reeking of mule sweat and ate his ill-prepared food with his knife

REV. SAMUEL PARKER WAS NOT ACCEPTED BY FELLOW TRAVELERS

He adapted less readily to western travel than did Dr. Whitman

Rev. Parker continually made carping complaints

noting the lack of comforts and refinements he had left behind

He openly disdained the ungodly -- even those he was attempting to save

he was described by another missionary as **“inclined to self-applause, requiring his full share of ministerial approbation or respect.”[[266]](#footnote-266)**

Mountain Man Joe Meek regarded him less primly as “pious humbug”

REV. PARKER AND DR. WHITMAN EN ROUTE TO THE RENDEZVOUS

Danger greater than angry mountain men soon appeared

at Bellevue, Nebraska, before the caravan was even well started, a cholera epidemic broke out

that brought the pack train to a dead stop

As men began to fall sick Lucien Fontanelle, the Pratte, Chouteau & Company wagon master, sent a frantic call for help to the tent where Whitman and Parker

were camped all by themselves -- beyond the unfriendly abuse of their detractors

Although the doctor was in misery from a chronic ache in his side,

he crawled out of bed to see what he could do

Dr. Whitman ministered heroically to the stricken -- including Lucien Fontenelle himself

his common-sense nursing alleviated the crisis and improved morale

he moved the stricken men onto high, clean ground, kept them warm and fed and encouraged

Whitman’s effective medical practice kept the caravan intact

after twelve exhausting days of work he had the caravan back on the trail

From that day on, the missionaries were spared hostile jeering and cat-call

(until they arrived at the frantic, alcohol-sodden rendezvous at Fort Bonneville)

MOUNTAIN MEN SHOW THEIR GRATITUDE

Rev. Samuel Parker and Dr. Marcus Whitman left their wagons at Blackhills Fort

out of appreciation of Dr. Whitman’s service,

Lucien Fontanelle of Pratte, Chouteau & Company would accept no payment

for their safe keeping

U.S. ARMY CAPTAIN BEN BONNEVILLE AND JOE WALKER MEET

At the mouth of Popoasia Creek on the Bighorn River (Montana) -- June 10, 1835

traveling together they returned to the Wind River (Wyoming) -- June 22

It was decided that Walker should spend another year trapping with fifty-nine men

before returning to Missouri

Benjamin Bonneville would return to the United States

collecting those men who wished to return home, Bonneville led the party back to Missouri

PRATTE, CHOUTEAU & COMPANY SUPPLY CARAVAN REACHED FORT WILLIAM

At Fort William (Fort Laramie), Lucien Fontenelle turned over the wagon train

to his partner Tom Fitzpatrick

Fontenelle stayed to manage the American Fur Company fort

With the groundwork well laid, Tom “Broken Hand” Fitzpatrick and Whitman took up

where Lucien Fontenelle and Whitman had left off

like most mountain men, “Broken Hand” Fitzpatrick

did not approve of missionaries tampering with Indian lives

When the caravan reached the rendezvous at Fort Bonneville on the Green River at Horse Creek

(also known as Fort Nonsense or Bonneville’s Folly)

much of the hostility had dissolved thanks to Whitman -- if not Rev. Parker

Fitzpatrick and Marcus Whitman cemented a friendship

(that would prove important to the work of Dr. Whitman

U.S. ARMY CAPTAIN BENJAMIN L.E. BONNEVILLE RETURNS TO CIVILIZATION

Bonneville had been gone from the military for three years and four months and five days

he was secretly investigating fur trade locations and possibilities:

•had ranged far and wide and he is credited with mapping major areas of the West

•was acknowledged by a number of reputable historians

to have been the first white to see the Wallowa Valley

•his easy way and generosity with the Indians made their encounters positive ones

•in addition to his own explorations, Bonneville sent emissaries

into California and Utah -- [1832-1834]

However, as a commercial enterprise, the expedition was a complete failure

IGNACE LA MOUSSE AND HIS SONS ARRIVE IN ST. LOUIS

Having arrived safely, they were presented to Bishop Joseph Rosati

Old Ignace was able to easily communicate the desires of the Flathead and Nez Perce people

Ignace’s two sons were baptized and all received the Sacraments of Penance and Communion

They received a promise that priests would be sent at the first opportunity

encouraged, the three Indians hurried back to the Flathead people (in Montana)

Sadly, however, the Jesuits in St. Louis were poor and few in number -- no priests could be spared

Indians’ wait for the arrival of Black Robes would be long

JACKSON HOLE RENDEZVOUS -- 1835

Was held on the Green River & Horse Creek (Fort Bonneville, Wyoming) -- August 12 to 21

Supplies from the east were brought in for the Pratte, Chouteau & Company -- August 12, 1835

by Tom “Broken Hand” Fitzpatrick

This rendezvous was much like those which preceded and followed it

several hundred thirsty whites and thousands of lively and unpredictable Indians

gyrated about on the fragrant sagebrush prairie in their colorful and showy finery

Utes were there, Snakes, and large bands of handsome Nez Perces and Flatheads

Joseph Chouinard, a French-Canadian bully,

challenged a man of any race or nationality to fight him

tiring of the bombast, the young, slightly-built Kit Carson answered his challenge

mounted on horseback, the two charged each other

both fired their pistols at the same instant

Chouinard’s pistol ball went wild,

while Carson’s smashed his opponent’s hand, wrist, and arm

according to a disgusted Rev. Samuel Parker,

this duel characterized a people and a place where **“human nature is not oppressed by the tyranny of religion, and pleasure is not awed by the frown of virtue.”[[267]](#footnote-267)**

RESPECT FOR DR. WHITMAN EXPANDS

Word of the missionaries’ coming had preceded the arrival of the caravan

Whitman positively impressed many people at the Rendezvous

word of his medical feat treating cases of cholera on the trail during the outbreak

positively impressed the mountain men

In another incident, Jim Bridger still carried a three inch, iron Blackfoot arrow embedded in his back

he had been shot three years earlier and asked Dr. Whitman to remove it

as a crowd of Indians watched and marveled, surgery as described by Rev. Parker was performed: **“It was a difficult operation, because the arrow was hooked at the point by striking a large bone and a cartilaginous substance had grown around it. The Doctor pursued the operation with great self possession and perseverance; and his patient manifested equal firmness. The Indians looked on meanwhile, with countenances indicating wonder, and in their own peculiar manner expressed great astonishment when it was extracted.”[[268]](#footnote-268)**

NATIVE AMERICAN VIEW OF RELIGION

Unlike Protestants and Catholics, Indians prayed for triumph today -- not salvation tomorrow

“Medicine” was power, to be wooed by incantations

and such charms as feathers, hair balls, magic stones,

or whatever else struck the individual’s fancy

to the Indian mind it was quite clear that the white man’s guns, knives, cloth, burning glasses,

and talking paper were the product of extra powerful medicine

DR. WHITMAN AND REV. PARKER CONFER WITH THE INDIANS

Several Columbia River tribes were waiting at the rendezvous site

Dr. Whitman found Nez Perce Indians who were especially eager to be taught

but all of the natives seemed anxious to receive the missionaries

Rev. Parker established contact with individual Indian tribes

he learned Rev. Jason and Rev. Daniel Lee had bypassed the Flathead people

After a conference with the Flathead and Nez Perce Indians at the Rendezvous

Rev. Parker and Dr. Whitman became convinced

these people were eager to accept Christian doctrine

Rev. Parker and Dr. Whitman conferred and agreed to serve the Nez Perce and Flatheads that accomplished, there was no reason for both men to continue on to Oregon

They decided to separate

Parker would resume his explorations of the Pacific Northwest with an Indian escort

Whitman should return with Fitzpatrick’s pack train to St. Louis

Whitman would report to the American of Commissioners of Foreign Missions

organize a mission party to come out west in the next year [1836]

and thus save a year in preparing to serve the natives

REV. SAMUEL PARKER LEFT THE RENDEZVOUS

Parker also took the pack mules -- August 22, 1835

leaving Dr. Marcus Whitman only five dollars to buy an emaciated horse

that Whitman wrote to the American Board, **“was a disgrace to any man to pack on account of his extreme sore back”[[269]](#footnote-269)**

For a week Parker traveled with Jim Bridger’s trappers

with a small group of Nez Perce Indians

and French-Canadian trapper Charles Compo who was hired as interpreter

and his Nez Perce wife

They journeyed in a Northerly direction past the towering Teton Mountains

and over the wondrous pass that lead out of Pierre’s Hole

Trappers set up trap lines in that region leaving Rev. Parker to continue his way west

in the company of his Indians and his inadequate interpreter

DR. WHITMAN LEFT THE JACKSON HOLE RENDEZVOUS TO RETURN TO NEW YOR

Dr. Marcus Whitman left the Rendezvous to return to his home in Rushville New Yor

he departed with two traveling companions, Nez Perce boys Richard and John -- August 27, 1835

they had learned enough English to serve as interpreters and also served as guides

perhaps Whitman also contemplated using them as the Lees used Wyeth’s Indians,

in appeals for support

CAPTAIN BENJAMIN L.E. BONNEVILLE REACHES CIVILIZATION

When Bonneville arrived in Independence, Missouri -- August 29, 1835

he learned Michael Cerre, in fact, had failed to deliver his [July 1833] letter to General Macomb

requesting an extension of his leave of absence

in fact, Bonneville had been ordered to return to Fort Gibson [in October 1833]

Captain Bonneville had overstayed his leave of absence from the Army

he had been Absent Without Leave (AWOL) for almost two years

he also discovered to his chagrin that his commission had been revoked

he had been dropped from the army rolls and had been given up for dead

Protesting mightily and demanding reinstatement,

Bonneville stirred a bureaucratic storm in the War Department

he ultimately won the support of the commanding general and the Secretary of War

President Andrew Jackson recognized his contributions to American geographical knowledge

Captain Bonneville was he taken back into the military service

REV. SAMUEL PARKER TRAVELS WELL

Continuing on with French-Canadian Charles Compo and his Nez Perce wife

accompanied by a small group of Nez Perce natives

Parker was not shy about having his needs met

He hinted broadly for special food and special treatment

which he received from his attentive Nez Perce

he would later boast that he was never forced to eat horse or dog

although, at times, his companions were

When new bands of Indians were encountered,

the entire group would line up single file to shake his hand in excited welcome

chiefs first and on down to the littlest children

they bolstered the minister’s vanity by building shady temporary shelters for him to preach in

then touched him deeply by listening with utter fascination

to his explanations of original sin, salvation, resurrection, and judgment

COLUMBIA RIVER FISHING AND TRADING COMPANY

Wyeth also found the Indians (as McLoughlin had surmised they would)

went right past his ship and past Fort William on Wappatoo Island

to trade their fish at Hudson’s Bay Company’s more familiar depot

also the Indians did not understand the salmon had to be fresh

in fact, they did not want to be professional fishermen

Captain Wyeth spent most of the autumn at Fort William -- 1835

he also explored up the Deschutes River into the interior

JOHN TURNER’S ADVENTURERS ATTACKED

Traveling north from California bound for Oregon, they arrived just beyond Mount Shasta

Rogue River Indians attacked and killed half of the party

survivors, including John Turner, groped their way northward living on roots

they were hideously injured -- William Bailey in particular

Bailey’s half-severed face was tied together with a handkerchief

with the others, Bailey made his way to the Methodist Mission on the Willamette River

where he was cared for before being sent on to Fort Vancouver

his face would heal scarred and repulsively distorted so that no one seeing him later

(after he had become one of Oregon’s leading citizens)

would ever doubt the price he had paid to reach the territory

BAD LUCK CONTINUED TO PLAGUE CAPTAIN NATHANIEL WYETH

Rains and colds brought chills that disabled several of the men including Wyeth himself

Wyeth wrote to his wife in a letter dated -- September 22, 1835

**“I have been very sick but have got well, and shall be on my way to the mountains, to winter at Fort Hall, in about six days. I expect to be home about the first of November [1836] … We have lost by drowning, disease, and warfare seventeen persons up to this date, and fourteen are now sick.”[[270]](#footnote-270)**

Actually, Dr. McLoughlin was behind much of Wyeth’s bad luck,

as the chief factor wrote his home office: **“… I prevented his [Wyeth’s] Interfering with Us in Any place where we had no previous opposition and I did this without Actually giving up any thing as though we did not raise the price of Salmon We opposed him as much as was Necessary. …We may be certain Wyeths Losses are Great….”[[271]](#footnote-271)**

CAPTAIN NATAHNIEL WYETH LEAVES FORT WILLIAM ON WAPPATOO ISLAND

Broken in spirit and health, defeated at every turn, Nathaniel Wyeth made a retreat

Wyeth put Courtney M. Walker in charge of Fort William on Wappatoo Island

(Walker was one of the lay assistants who came to Oregon with Jason Lee [1834])

Walker was instructed to lease or sell Fort William on the best terms possible,

but because the place lay so close to the overwhelming presence of Fort Vancouver

no takers appeared at any price

Bits and pieces of Fort William’s equipment were sold away to the Willamette settlers

either by Wyeth himself or by Walker

one significant component was a large copper kettle used originally for pickling salmon

which went to Ewing Young (and became part of a far-reaching chain of events)

Young, still suffering under Dr. McLoughlin’s banishment,

planned to use the kettle as a whiskey still

this could result in undermining Hudson’s Bay Company’s control of the local economy

His debts were paid with a moderate number of pelts

Wyeth set out for his post at Fort Hall (Idaho)

behind him at Fort William he left several ex-employees who would become permanent settlers,

they would be vocal Americans in a wilderness dominated by a British trade empire

REV. SAMUEL PARKER CONTINUED WEST

Until he reached Fort Walla Walla -- October 6, 1835

where he was warmly received by Hudson’s Bay Company Chief Trader Pierre Pambrun

Parker continued down the Columbia River -- October 1835

Escorted by three half-naked Walla Walla Indians

REV. SAMUEL PARKER MEETS CAPTAIN NATHANIEL J. WYETH

Approximately seven weeks after leaving the Pierre’s Hole rendezvous

Parker was cautiously working his way along the stony portages

where the Columbia River burst through the Dalles

at the foot of the compressed torrent he met Nathaniel Wyeth journeying toward Fort Hall

to rescue what he could from the crash of his hopes

Entrepreneur and minister paused long enough for Wyeth to write out for Parker

a basic vocabulary of the Chinook language

during the process they most certainly talked

Rev. Parker was by nature garrulous, curious and alert

and Wyeth had a genius for drawing men out

Parker also gave Wyeth a letter addressed to Dr. Marcus Whitman

offering advice on the route to be taken to Fort Vancouver

and locations for possible mission stations

Chinook vocabulary copied, the two men parted

Wyeth to spend the winter at his Fort Hall (Idaho)

Rev. Samuel Parker to Fort Vancouver

REV. SAMUEL PARKER ARRIVED AT FORT VANCOUVER

He was greeted by Hudson’s Bay Company Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin -- October 16

minister drew on Hudson’s Bay Company’s good will

for clothing and goods to pay his Indian guides and provisions for the men

Dr. McLoughlin would take no pay for these supplies

Rev. Parker spent the winter at Fort Vancouver

he noted the comforts of the post and good cheer

mildness of the climate was conducive to good health

waters provided plentiful fish and game was easy to obtain

animals could forage on their own in winter

in striking contrast with grinding and perilous life of settlers in the Middle West

Rev. Parker also visited Astoria and the Lees’ Methodist Mission in Willamette Valley

although plagued by bad weather, inexperience, and ill-health, he found much to admire

pioneer missionaries had in little more than a year

•build a secure house and barn close to the riverbank,

•cultivated thirty acres of virgin soil, and

•established a school where frail Cyrus Shepard, who had come with Jason Lee

was teaching reading and salvation to nineteen listless Chinook children

NATHANIEL WYETH REACHED FORT HALL (IDAHO)

Having left Courtney M. Walker in charge of his Fort William post,

Wyeth spent the winter at his other venture: Fort Hall -- 1835-1836

where he discovered his trader had drunk up the profits

DR. MARCUS WHITMAN RETURNS EAST

Arrived at Angelica, New York -- fall 1835

in an effort to gather assistants and supplies

accompanied by two Nez Perce boys: Richard and John

who had learned enough English to serve as interpreters

Whitman gave a positive report to American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions regarding establishment of missions among the Columbia River Indians

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions authorized a mission

appointed Dr. Whitman to superintend the effort

DR. MARCUS WHITMAN HAD DIFFICULTY FINDING HELPERS

He continued traveling throughout the East in his search for support of his missionary effort

he arrived at Rushville, New York -- early winter 1835

Arriving home late on a Saturday night he stopped first at his brother’s house

no one else knew he had returned

Dr. Whitman made his public appearance in the Presbyterian Church the next day

his usually staid and proper mother who was attending Sunday church service

lost her emotions entirely

she leaped to her feet shouting, **“Why, there is Marcus!”[[272]](#footnote-272)**

REV. JASON LEE BEGINS A TEMPERANCE SOCIETY IN OREGON

To his other good works Methodist Rev. Jason Lee added a temperance society

he persuaded three of the Willamette settlers to sign the pledge -- February 11, 1836

This attack on trade-disrupting alcohol so impressed Chief Factor John McLoughlin

that he sent to the mission, which he had already aided with loans of livestock and tools,

a contribution of twenty-six English Pounds that had been raised

among the “principal gentlemen” of Fort Vancouver

DR. WHITMAN SEEKS REINFORCEMENTS TO WORK IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Dr Whitman approached the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions

(also known as the “American Board”)

they were impressed with Dr. Whitman’s [1835] experience in the wilderness

he was selected as superintendent to lead a missionary effort to the Pacific Northwest

this was the second missionary group to the West

(after the Methodists’ Jason and Daniel Lee)

DR. AND NARCISSA WHITMAN ARE MARRIED

Dr. Marcus Whitman was desperate to find assistants

his marriage to Narcissa Prentice took place in Angelica, New York -- February 18, 1836

she was the beautiful and accomplished daughter of Stephen and Clarissa Prentiss

and she wanted to become a missionary

This couple hardly knew each other when they exchanged vows

but their common interest in mission work forged a strong bond between them

Their departure for Oregon was set for the end of the same month

but only if one more husband-and-wife teams could be found

to travel with he and Narcissa as fellow workers

NARCISSA PRENTISS WHITMAN WAS A VERY INTENSE WOMAN

At twenty-one years old, somehow Narcissa did not seem like missionary material

she was a woman of liberal education for her times

she was admired for her clear lovely, disturbing, soprano voice

**“as sweet and musical as the chime of bells”[[273]](#footnote-273)**

Narcissa was full-bodied, very lady-like, refined and attractive

her beautiful long blond hair shown copper glints

her wide blue eyes sparkled with liveliness

observant, sometimes vivacious and company-loving

she possessed a cheerful disposition and fine spirit

dignified, devout and somewhat reserved, she could be intense and emotional

but also sharp-tongued, lonely and foreboding, she lacked an understanding of others

DR. WHITMAN ADDS RECRUITS FOR THE JOURNEY WEST

Dr. Marcus Whitman learned Rev. Henry and Eliza (Hart) Spalding

had just departed to establish a mission among the Osage Indians in Missouri

their child had been still born so they were therefore free to travel to Oregon

Dr. Whitman rode out overtake them

after two day’s riding Whitman he found them and changed their destination

Henry Spalding and his wife Eliza agreed give up his own mission to go with the Whitmans

REV. HENRY HARMON SPALDING WAS A DRIVEN MAN

Was an illegitimate child obsessed with shame

he had an intense desire to right himself by righting the world

nervous and crotchety, he was remarkably industrious

Henry had been a schoolmate of Narcissa Prentiss and was an early suitor

some years before he had proposed and she had rejected him

he was jealous of Marcus Whitman and his great physical energy

Rev. Spalding was talented, hard-working, dedicated, versatile, non-dogmatic and a skilled teacher

he taught Indians agriculture, home economics and thoughtful living

he was eager to accomplish a task, but he could only work alone

He had intense likes and dislikes which he never failed to express

tall and dour, he was a difficult man with whom to get along

the Presbyterian minister was thin-skinned and critical of others

sometimes he seemed unbalanced of mind

ELIZA HART SPALDING WAS VERY EASY-GOING

Rev. Henry Spalding had married Eliza Hart [October 13, 1833]

Eliza was as dark and scrawny as Narcissa Prentiss was golden and buxom

plain looking and tall, Eliza possessed rather coarse features

Spalding had offered himself and his bride to the American Board for missionary work

although in fragile health, Eliza was dedicated to the missionary effort,

she was frail, reserved, modest and gentle by nature

although an invalid, she was keen for the enterprise of journeying West and teaching

Eliza was better educated than her husband and a skillful teacher, understanding, agreeable, hardworking, tolerant, wise, pleasant and long-suffering

her fearlessness was admired, and even loved, by the Indians

She was much less fastidious and reserved than Mrs. Whitman

WILLIAM H. GRAY -- LAY ASSISTANT TO THE AMERICAN BOARD MISSIONARIES

William H. Gray, a young, fine-looking, daring and athletic man

who had trained as a cabinet maker

he was very skillful in making and handling boats, teams and wagons

he was appointed by the American Board to serve as a lay-assistant (not ordained)

as a mechanic and farmer

for some reason he apparently was not required to marry

Gray was so positive, and even violent, in his views that he alienated many

his headstrong and antagonistic acts were a disturbing element -- he had a chip on his shoulder

he was personally ambitious and exalted his own position

he harbored an intense hatred of Hudson’s Bay Company and Roman Catholics alike

William Gray kept a record of his journey to the West

which was later included in his book *The History of Oregon*

AMERICAN BOARD MISSIONARIES COMPLETE THEIR PREPARATIONS

Building on Dr. Whitman’s experience of the previous year,

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions spent upwards of $3,200

to provide their missionaries with cattle, mules, horses, Indian trade goods,

camp equipment, medicine and two wagons

one of the wagons the women loaded, against Whitman’s cautions,

with what seemed to them to be a bare minimum of household goods

their other wagon was a small, springless dearborn wagon

(light two-horse wagon) with yellow wheels

originally Rev. Spalding had intended it for his Osage mission

now it was dedicated to carrying the women

actually Narcissa preferred horseback riding even on an insecure sidesaddle

Eliza suffering from the loss of their infant,

never quite mastered the art of the sidesaddle

she insisted on staying in the jolting dearborn wagon

WHITMAN PARTY SET OUT FOR ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

Dedicated missionaries left New York for St. Louis, Missouri -- February 19, 1836

with a heavy farm wagon and a light two-horse wagon

and additional saddle and pack horses

In addition to Dr. Marcus and Narcissa Whitman, Rev. Henry and Eliza Spalding and William Gray

were two Nez Perce boys, Richard and John, who had accompanied Whitman to the East

from the Jackson Hole [1835] Rendezvous the year before

At first the Whitman Party traveled in the relative comfort of boats

from Pennsylvania they cruised down the Ohio, Mississippi and Missouri rivers

Their plan was to meet the American Fur Company caravan at Council Bluff

and travel with the several hundred men and their six hundred animals to the Northwest

American Fur Company packers, learning that women would be traveling with them,

moved out earlier than planned to avoid the encounter

HALL JACKSON KELLEY RETURNED TO THE EAST COAST

After a year in the Hawaii the “Prophet of Oregon” returned to the Atlantic coast by ship

never to see the Northwest again -- 1836

once home Kelley petitioned Congress for reimbursement of his expenses while visiting Oregon

but was unsuccessful

Kelley’s knowledge of the west was extensive

he published a *Geographical Memoir of Oregon* [Boston, 1830]

accompanied by the first map of Oregon that was ever published

He resumed his agitation for American settlement of the Pacific Northwest

for thirty-eight more years he continued writing of American ownership of the region:

**•**he provided his readers with much useful information about the Pacific Northwest;

**•**he published his book, *Narrative* [1852];

**•**he published a manual of the Oregon expedition from California and Oregon

for the guidance of emigrants;

**•**his final effort was *A History of the Settlement of Oregon and of the Interior of Upper California, and of Persecutions and Afflictions of Forty Years' Continuance endured by the Author*

(Springfield, Massachusetts, [1868])

Finally the former Boston schoolteacher spent the last three years of his life as a hermit

at Three Rivers, Massachusetts [1871-1874]

doing occasional engineering work but mainly living on the charity of neighbors

Hall Jackson Kelley died [on January 20, 1874] blind and poverty-stricken

although he had failed personally, his writings had helped change American attitudes

toward Oregon by causing many to regard the region as a good place to settle

EDUCATION IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Teacher Cyrus Shepard continued his educational work at Fort Vancouver -- 1836

taught Indians, half-breeds, and an occasional child of white immigrants

Rev. Jason Lee believed in improving the Calapooya Indians at Mission Bottom

through the development of a manual training school

GOVERNMENT INTEREST IN OREGON

U.S. government printed important documents for both the Congress and the American public

that described the exploits of several American traders

written by General William H. Ashley, Major Joshua L. Pilcher, and Lewis Cass, William Clark, and the partners of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company

they gave their observations of possible wagon routes over the Rocky Mountains

on orders from the Secretary of State John Forsyth State Department official Robert Greenhow

drafted a brief supporting the United States’ claim he titled:

*Memoir, Historical and Political, on the Northwest Coast of North America*

in addition to fur dealers,

Yankee traders, trappers, would-be setters, naturalists, ship captains, and missionaries

each gave their own version of events and activities happening there

wrote of their impressions and exploits

all of these views were intensely personal

this information, frequently reprinted, created great interest in the West

However, President Andrew Jackson needed a more dispassionate estimate of the situation

PRESIDENT ANDREW JACKSON NEEDS GUIDANCE

He wanted an analysis from a competent, experienced, unprejudiced investigator

to inspect conditions in the West

President Jackson also was anxious to buy Northern California from Mexico

to secure the fine harbor of San Francisco

and to receive a report on settlement in the Pacific Northwest

He asked his Secretary of State, John Forsyth, to send a man to the Columbia River

who would serve as a Special Agent of the State Department

Naval Lieutenant William A. Slacum was selected

he was instructed to gather information on British inhabitants in the Pacific Northwest:

•to secure precise firsthand information regarding conditions on Pacific coast;

•to visit all white settlements on and near the Columbia River and take a census;

•to assess what Americans in the Pacific Northwest thought about their rights;

•to note the sentiments of whites toward the United States;

•to visit all Indian villages to make a census of Indians and whites;

•to collect geographical data

U.S. Navy Lieutenant Slacum’s orders were from the Secretary of State: **“Upon your arrival on the northwest coast of America you will embrace the earliest opportunity to proceed to and up the river Oregon** [sic] **and ascertain the sentiments entertained by all in respect to the United States… and generally endeavor to obtain all such information, political, physical, statistical and geographical, as may prove useful or interesting to the Government.”[[274]](#footnote-274)**

UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Mexican government was not strong during this period

question of America annexing Texas into the Union was perpetual

eventually an assembly of Texans met at Washington-on-the-Brazos -- March 1, 1836

•declared Texas to be an independent nation: The Lone Star Republic

•adopted a constitution which legalized slavery

•set up an interim government

both the U.S. and Mexico expressed feelings of uneasiness

President Jackson also pressed the British government to reopen negotiations on the boundary

England was not prepared -- and was not willing to prepare

BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE RETURNS TO THE U.S. ARMY

Bonneville had been absent from the army for three years and four months and five days

secretly investigating fur trade locations and possibilities

Through the support of President Andrew Jackson

Bonneville was reinstated in the army -- spring 1836

his fortunate resignation from his regiment averted the need to disturb the seniority list

Bonneville found himself once again a captain in the Seventh Infantry

with duty station at Fort Gibson, Oklahoma -- Spring of 1836

(Cantonment Gibson was renamed -- [1832])

Bonneville had a long and distinguished career in the army

served in the Mexican War [May 11, 1846-February 2, 1848]

was stationed, as a colonel, at the Columbia Barracks

adjacent to old Fort Vancouver, (which became a U.S. Army post in [1849])

he retired in [1861] but reentered the army during the American Civil War

was promoted in [1865] to the rank of brigadier general

he retired again in [1866]

No report was ever made by Captain Bonneville to the War Department

although he had made many interesting and valuable observations

on the Salmon, Clearwater, Snake, Portneuf, and Columbia rivers

Bonneville’s principal achievement had a great influence on Americans and America

he brought wagons through South Pass for the first time

as far as Green River in Southern Wyoming

showed that an overland trek to the Pacific Northwest was possible for settlers

as a leader, Bonneville was a great success

but as an explorer, he showed a greater interest in the fur trade

Several western landscape features were either named by Bonneville himself

or in honor of Bonneville's efforts

Lake Bonneville (prehistoric) and Bonneville Salt Flats (in Utah),

Bonneville Power Administration and the Bonneville Dam are named in his honor

CAPTAIN BENJAMIN L.E. BONNEVILLE’S ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Bonneville never did reach the Pacific coast or the Willamette Valley as he had set out to do

he journeyed west only as far as Fort Vancouver

this was due primarily to a lack of effort on his part

Later in his career Ben Bonneville served in the Mexican War [May 11, 1846-February 2, 1848]

Still later he was stationed, as a colonel, at the Columbia Barracks

adjacent to old Fort Vancouver, (which became a U.S. Army post [in 1849]

Colonel Bonneville retired in [1861] but reentered the army during the American Civil War

was promoted in [1865] to the rank of brigadier general

he retired again in [1866]

Bonneville’s principal achievements had a great influence on Americans and America

he brought wagons through South Pass for the first time

as far as the Green River (in Southern Wyoming)

he showed that an overland trek to the Pacific Northwest was possible for settlers

his camps were popular with free trappers because of his hospitality

his easy way and generosity with the Indians made their encounters positive ones

he had ranged far and wide and he is credited with mapping major areas of the West

he is acknowledged by a number of reputable historians

to have been the first white to see the Wallowa Valley

in addition to his own explorations, Bonneville sent emissaries

into California and Utah -- [1832-1834]

As a commercial enterprise, the Bonneville Expedition was a complete failure

he could do nothing without purchasing supplies from Hudson’s Bay Company

which could hardly be expected to furnish a rival

As a leader, Bonneville was a great success

to is credit he had not lost a man under his personal command

but as an explorer, he showed a greater interest in the fur trade

OLD IGNACE RETURNS HOME FROM ST. LOUIS

Iroquois Christian leader Ignace La Mousse and his two companions

returned to the Flathead and Nez Perce people after seeking Catholic missionaries in St. Louis

arriving to deliver the sad news the wait for Black Robes must continue -- spring 1836

CAPTAIN NATHANIEL WYETH ABANDONED HIS POSTS

At Fort William on Wappatoo Island, desertions occurred and some trade goods were stolen

business manager Courtney M. Walker abandoned Fort William

Wyeth sold both Fort William on Wappatoo Island and Fort Hall (Idaho) their goods and equipment

to Hudson’s Bay Company for a paltry $8179.94 for both posts

even after the sale of Fort Hall and such other assets as he could scrape together,

Wyeth ended with a net loss of twenty thousand dollars

for his five-year effort to invade the Northwest

Dr. McLoughlin took over Wappatoo Island

NEW ENGLISH EMPLOYEES ARRIVE AT FORT VANCOUVER

Hudson’s Bay Company ship *Columbia* (Captain Dandy)

arrived at the Pacific Northwest headquarters -- March 1836

carried William and Elizabeth (Wright) Capendale

William Capendale was to manage the agricultural operation at Fort Vancouver

Elizabeth Capendale, Oregon’s only white woman, was to operate the dairy

Dr. John McLoughlin gave the couple a chilly reception

he apparently resented their interference in his operation of farming at the fort

he perceived an implied insult

he delayed assigning them living quarters

finally he moved them to Wappatoo Island where the dairy was established

Mr. and Mrs. Capendale did not stay long on the island as they moved to Fort Vancouver

(Jean Batiste Sauvie successfully took over the duties and lived there so long

that today the spot is knows Sauvie’s (or Sauvie) Island)

CAPTAIN NATHANIEL WYETH STARTED EAST FROM FORT HALL

Bound for his New England home, Cambridge, Massachusetts in his last futile effort

to raise money from Eastern financial backers

he traveled with the Hudson’s Bay Company Brigade

captained by Thomas McKay and John McLeod

en route to the 1836 rendezvous at Fort Bonneville

FORT ST. JAMES IS A KEY LINK IN HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY TRADE

As chief post in Hudson’s Bay Company’s New Caledonia District (British Columbia)

Fort St. James was the transshipment center for the furs and trade goods

exchanged at all the company posts in the territory

Furs traded at Fort St. James were sent by company schooner and pack train

to steamers on the Skeena River and Pacific Coast

for trans-shipping to the fur markets of the world

Isolation, severe winters, hard work, and a monotonous diet of smoked dried salmon earned Fort St. James the name “the Siberia of the fur trade”

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY FORT UMPQUA PROTECTS SOUTHERN OREGON

Chief Factor John McLoughlin maintained another small post, Fort Umpqua

on the Umpqua River near the coast of central Oregon

as a deterrent to anyone attempting to trap or trade to the north of northern California

“THE LOG CHURCH” IS BUILT IN THE HOPE OF ATTRACTING A CATHOLIC MISSIONARY

Small Catholic French-Canadian community existed along the Willamette River -- 1836

retired Catholic Hudson’s Bay Company employees who settled the area

hoped priests might be enticed west from Canada

they had repeatedly requested the services of a priest from Father Joseph Provencher,

Bishop of Juliopolis, head of the Roman Catholic missions east of the Rockies,

located at the Red River settlement in what is now Canada

Retired trappers built a crude log chapel on French Prairie -- the first church in Columbia Department

along the Willamette River at a place where the river could be crossed in the [summer]

this structure, first known as “the Log Church” was soon referred to

as “Mission Du Walamette” although it was unoccupied

CALL FOR CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES

Retired Astorian, Nor’Wester, and Hudson’s Bay Company trapper Etienne Lucier

was busily raising his eight children (the product of two marriages)

at Champoeg at French Prairie

farming pigs and hogs, cattle, peaches, and wheat over 80 acres enclosed by a split rail fence

his farm was adjacent to French-Canadian Pierre Belleque’s farm

Etienne Lucier, Pierre Belleque and fourteen other French-Canadian settlers

representing seventy-seven settlers and their children signed a petition -- March 22, 1836

requesting a priest for the settlement from Joseph Provencher

Catholic bishop at Red River Settlement (Manitoba)

none were sent and Mission Du Walamette remained unoccupied

CALL FOR METHODIST MISSIONARIES

Rev. Jason Lee wrote to Wesleyan University President Dr. Wilbur Fisk

telling of the need for tradesmen and farmers -- March 1836

he complained that there was little time for the business of religion

Rev. Jason Lee and W.H. Qillson

chose the site for a second Methodist effort at Wascopam Mission on the South bank of the Columbia River at Celilo Falls

CHURCH OF ENGLAND MISSIONARY TO COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT

While Hudson’s Bay Company French Canadian employees were Catholic

board of directors of the company were members of the Church of England

Enacting a rampant instance of insensitivity, Hudson’s Bay Company directors

sent Church of England minister Rev. Herbert Beaver and his wife Jane to serve as

“chaplain and missionary for the education and religious instruction of the Indians”

oddly, they had been selected by Hudson’s Bay Company Governor George Simpson

WHITMAN PARTY REACHED ST. LOUIS

Whitmans, Spaldings, William H. Gray and Nez Perce boys Richard and John arrived in St. Louis -- March 31, 1836

there they completed arrangements with representatives

of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions

Moses “Black” Harris helped guide the Whitman-Spalding Party to Oregon

Confusions, delays and trickery had kept the party

from leaving for the frontier with the American Fur Company’s annual caravan

when mountain men learned missionaries and women would be traveling with them,

they set out for the Rendezvous earlier than planned to avoid the encounter

REV. SAMUEL PARKER’S TOUR OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWES

Great areas where still more missions might be located remained to be explored

when winter relaxed its grip -- mid-April 1836

Parker left Fort Vancouver and resolutely set out for the upper country

journeyed back up the Columbia River with a Hudson’s Bay brigade to Fort Walla Walla

At Fort Walla Walla Rev. Parker stopped and preached to a multitude of Indians there

Dr. Parker selected Fort Walla Walla as a desirable place for a mission

about twenty miles from the Columbia River he observed **“a delightful situation for a missionary establishment.... A mission located on this fertile field would draw around an interesting settlement, who would fix down to cultivate the soil and to be instructed. How easily might the plough go through these valleys, and what rich and abundant harvests might be gathered by the hand of industry.”[[275]](#footnote-275)**

At Fort Walla Walla he secured horses and an Indian guide for a trip up the Walla Walla River Valley

REV. SAMEUL PARKER CONTINUED HIS TOUR OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Missionary left Fort Walla Walla and traveled up the Snake River

then struck off Northeast exploring the Spokane River Valley

Rev. Parker was looking for possible mission locations

he was accompanied by Nez Perce and Flatheads who had requested a missionary

together they journeyed to the natives’ homeland to select a building site

Spokane Garry interpreted Rev. Samuel Parker’s sermons to the Spokanes near Loon Lake

again the Indians appeared anxious for religious instruction

Dr. Parker noted the state of the vanishing savage in his report:

**“Since the year 1829 probably seven-eights -- if not, as Dr. McLoughlin believes, nine-tenths -- have been swept away by disease, principally by fever and ague** [smallpox]**.”[[276]](#footnote-276)**

Dr. Parker became lost for some time and wandered through the Inland Empire area

he rode hundreds of rolling miles before he was set right by a friendly Spokane Indian

and arrived at the ruins of Spokane House

this experience very nearly led to his death in the wilderness

He swung northward and westward as he journeyed on to Fort Colville

Archibald McDonald, his hospitality was famous, was in charge of the fort 1836 to 1843]

From Fort Colville to Fort Okanogan, Dr. Parker had two French voyageurs with him

who paddle down Columbia River threading their way through the vast, hushed Grand Coulee and back to Fort Walla Walla

AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS

Refused to give Rev. Samuel Parker a permanent assignment as a missionary

because he was fifty-seven years old and in poor health

Later he left his contribution to history: *Travels Beyond the Rocky Mountains*

after Lewis and Clark, his journey had been the one across the continent

that produced a book of high standard

PUBLICITY ABOUT THE PACIFIC NORTHWES

John Jacob Astor in his retirement wanted to secure a place in history

he offered many of the original journals of the Astorians to well-known author

Washington Irving who produced a two-volume work which was a wild success:

*Astoria; or Anecdotes of an Enterprise beyond the Rocky Mountains* -- 1836

*Astoria* contained a map of the routes of Wilson Price Hunt and Robert Stuart

based on information collected from Benjamin Bonneville

map was poorly done perpetuating the image of the Rocky Mountains

as narrow and easily crossed on foot or by wagon

even showing one branch of the Missouri River crossing the Continental Divide

*Astoria* was so popular that many settlers thinking of coming to Oregon

would have a poor perception of the magnitude of the actual journey ahead of them

FONTENELLE, FITZPATRICK & COMPANY WAGON TRAIN

Tom “Broken Hand” Fitzpatrick once again led a supply caravan to the Rendezvous

this one to be held on the upper Green River at the mouth of Horse Creek -- 1836

he was to transport his goods by wagon as far as Fort William (Fort Laramie)

but there he would repack onto mules

WHITMAN PARTY DEPARTURE FOR THE WEST

American Board missionaries Dr. Marcus and Narcissa Whitman, Rev. Henry and Eliza Spalding,

William Gray and the two Nez Perce Indians, Richard and John made final preparations

for the pioneering journey which had never before been attempted

both women, Narcissa Whitman and Eliza Spalding, kept journals of the trip

After a few adjustments and improvements to equipment and supplies

missionary party left St. Louis bound for Independence, Missouri -- May 1836

they traveled by horse and mule, the yellow-wheeled dearborn carried Eliza Spalding

heavy farm wagon was laden with baggage

laden with baggage and trailing four milk cows and two calves

In Independence, Dr. Whitman hired two teen-age youths to attend to the chores

livestock was to be handled by the Nez Perce boys Richard and John

and by a third Nez Perce unaccountably picked up on the frontier

but the responsibilities, the decisions, and soothing of perpetually ruffled tempers

were Whitman’s

WHITMAN PARTY CATCHES TOM FITZPATRICK’S SUPPLY TRAIN

After a month of traveling alone

Whitman Party caught up with Tom “Broken Hand” Fitzpatrick at Liberty, Missouri

Fontenelle, Fitzpatrick & Company supply train was going to the Green River Rendezvous

Whitman and his companions joined the westbound caravan

that would provide the only protection available as the supply packers

proceeded toward the Rocky Mountains and Fort Bonneville

Narcissa Whitman wrote to her family, **“Our manner of living is far preferable to any in the States. I never was so contented and happy before. Neither have I enjoyed such health for years.”[[277]](#footnote-277)**

This idyllic journey became less idyllic when Henry Spalding was dragged from a ferryboat by a cow

shortly thereafter he was further chilled by an icy rainstorm that blew down his and Eliza’s tent

he contracted a cold that clung so persistently

that the bulk of the work fell, once again, on Marcus Whitman

AMERICA WAS EXPANDING

Three states West of the Mississippi River had entered the Union

Louisiana [April 30, 1812], Missouri [March 2, 1821], and Arkansas -- June 15, 1836

Americans were farmers -- as many as 20,000 new farms were begun each year

prosperity was reflected in land ownership

land was regarded as a source of happiness

this belief grew with the feeling of Manifest Destiny

many farms were a long distance from population centers

There was a great need in transportation facilities to ship corn, wheat, and meat

speculators invested heavily in anticipation of prosperity

hundreds of miles of canals were dug and railroad construction was begun

to provide East-West transportation link with the Mississippi River

METHODIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY SENDS ASSISTANTS

Although Hudson’s Bay Company partners in London knew,

Dr. John McLoughlin as yet was not aware of a disturbing fact

eight more earnest souls had sailed from New York via the Horn and the Hawaiian Islands

to reinforce Rev. Jason Lee’s mission in the Willamette Valley -- June 1836

two married men with their wives and children, one bachelor, and three unwed women

MISSIONARIES AND PACKERS ARRIVED AT FORT WILLIAM (FORT LARAMIE)

Originally known as Fort William when built in [1834]

by fur traders William Sublette and Robert Campbell

at the junction of the Laramie and North Platte rivers

Fontenelle, Fitzpatrick, & Company wagon train under Tom Fitzpatrick

reached their destination of Fort William

here the trade goods were unloaded and repacked on to mules

for the journey to the 1836 Rendezvous

FORT WILLIAM (FORT LARAMIE) IS LEFT BEHIND

Dr. Whitman left the heavy farm wagon at the fort

deciding to drive Rev. Henry Spalding’s light two-horse wagon as far as possible

Pack train and Whitman missionaries set out for the 1836 Rendezvous

REV. SAMUEL PARKER CHANGES HIS PLANS

Originally he had intended to travel from Fort Walla Walla to the Green River rendezvous

with migrating Nez Perce Indians, who he thought would follow the direct trail

across the Blue Mountains stopping at Fort Boise and Fort Hall

At Fort Walla Walla, however, he learned that the Indians wanted to hunt buffalo en route

and so they had decided to strike directly across the uninhabited wastes of central Idaho

On hearing this, Parker’s took pause

he had just finished a grueling ride,

and the path of the wandering buffalo hunters would add unknown hundreds of miles

to the journey that lay ahead

In addition trappers told him that deep snow in the mountains would mean long delays

perhaps so long that he could not reach the rendezvous in time to meet Marcus Whitman

Nor could he forget that during his outward journey he had nearly died

in the very mountains the Indians now proposed to re-cross

How much easier it would be to float down the Columbia River to Fort Vancouver,

sail on a Hudson’s Bay Company ship to the Sandwich Islands,

and there board a vessel bound for the United States

Rev. Parker’s return to Fort Vancouver was made by canoe

he had thoroughly investigated the Snake, Clearwater, and Columbia rivers

and made a detailed record of his observations

together with a thoughtful identification of mission fields and sites

REV. SAMUEL PARKER RETURNS TO FORT VANCOUVER

He had accomplished both of his goals:

•proved the interior could safely be penetrated;

•proved the favorable disposition of the natives

At the Hudson’s Bay Company headquarters Parker was met by a harbinger of the future

steamer *Beaver --* new hundred-foot-long, stubby-bowed, square-sterned, black-hulled steamship

she had arrived on the river having come from England around the Horn during the winter

Rev. Parker took an excursion on the Columbia River on the steamer *Beaver*

REV. SAMUEL PARKER LEAVES OREGON

Without waiting for Dr. Whitman’s arrival

Rev. Parker took a ship from Fort Vancouver to the Sandwich (Hawaiian) Islands

returned to New York via Cape Horn

MISSIONARY WOMEN EXPERIENCE THE WEST

Narcissa Whitman and Eliza Spalding received their first jarring introduction into mountain life

after crossing South Pass and turning to the Big Sandy River

With the setting sun bathing the Wind River Mountains

over a hilltop galloped a dozen or more shrieking horsemen,

who charged full tilt at the pack caravan and loosed a volley of rifle balls overhead

Tom Fitzpatrick, pointing to a white cloth tied to a rifle barrel, identified them as friends,

as indeed they were

Joe Meek and a few companions with a contingent of Nez Perce

had come to welcome the supply train in the traditional way

That night the missionaries spread an oilcloth on the grass

they invited two of their Nez Perce visitors to dine on venison and buffalo roast

**“seasoned with a little salt, with ample sand and dirt.”[[278]](#footnote-278)**  one of the Indians was a noted chief, Rotten Belly

other was a young man who, under the name of Lawyer,

(was destined to play a pivotal role in the relations of his tribe with the white people)

A SIGHT UNSEEN BEFORE

Hundreds of trappers and Indians gathered at Fort Bonneville on Horse Creek in early celebration

suddenly commanding their astonished attention was a unit of Tom Fitzpatrick’s caravan

containing Whitman’s Oregon-bound missionary party -- July 1, 1836

Narcissa, blue-eyed, of fair skin and complexion, large framed yet attractive,

cheerful and outgoing, often impetuous

Eliza Spalding dark and coarse-featured, frail and sickly, withdrawn, serious,

yet of stubborn fortitude and steely resolve

Indians, especially the women, found instant rapport with Eliza

who immediately began to learn their language

missionaries’ wagon and cows, too, captivated the Indians at the rendezvous

Narcissa and Eliza created a sensation among the trappers, also

who discovered a sudden interest in religion,

as they attended the daily services conducted by the missionaries

and eagerly accepted the Bibles Narcissa handed out

THOMAS JEFFERSON HUBBARD GETS AWAY WITH MURDER

Although no laws existed in the Pacific Northwest

and therefore, murder was not a legal violation

a murder trial held at Wyeth’s Fort William on Wappatoo (now Sauvie) Island -- July 5, 1835

Thomas Jefferson Hubbard, a sailor, had jumped ship Yerba Buena (San Francisco) the year before

was employed by Nathaniel Wyeth as a gunsmith at Fort William

He was accused of shooting and killing the tailor, Mr. Thornburgh, in a quarrel over an Indian girl

Hubbard was held on Sauvies Island until a determination of guilt could be rendered

Thomas Hubbard’s trial was the first in the early Pacific Northwest

ornithologist John Townsend acted as magistrate although he had no authority in law

jury was empaneled and heard the evidence

verdict exonerated the accused “justifiable homicide” was determined

Thomas Hubbard married the girl, Mary Sommata, on [April 3, 1837]

Rev. Jason Lee performed the ceremony

(Hubbard would later distinguish himself as a political leader in the colony )

CARAVAN ARRIVES AT THE 1836 RENDEZVOUS

Rendezvous was held at the conjunction of the Green River and Horse Creek -- July 6- July 18, 1836

at the site of Fort Bonneville (Bonneville’s Folly and Fort Nonsense in today’s Wyoming)

Hundreds of trappers and Indians gathered at Horse Creek -- July 1836

commanding their astonished attention was a unit of Fitzpatrick’s caravan -- July 1

containing Whitman’s Oregon-bound missionary party

Narcissa blue-eyed, of fair skin and complexion, large framed yet attractive,

cheerful and outgoing, often impetuous

Eliza Spalding dark and coarse-featured, frail and sickly, withdrawn, serious,

yet of stubborn fortitude and steely resolve

Indians, especially the women, found instant rapport with Eliza

who had begun to learn their language even before leaving the rendezvous

missionaries’ wagon and cows, too, captivated the Indians at the rendezvous

Narcissa and Eliza created a sensation among the trappers, also

who discovered a sudden interest in religion,

attended the daily services of the missionaries

and eagerly accepted the Bibles Narcissa handed out

NEZ PERCE INDIANS OFFERED TO GUIDE THE MISSIONARIES

Nez Perce expected the missionary party to accompany them to their mountain homeland

this was a northern route over steep mountains

longer and more tiring than the more familiar route down the Snake River

and across the Blue Mountains

Spalding’s light wagon and the stock would have to be left behind

there was concern this journey would be so slow

missionaries would not reach Fort Walla Walla before winter

As the issue of selecting a route festered, a brigade of

Hudson’s Bay Company brigade led by John McLeod and Thomas McKay

arrived from Fort Vancouver

also with them was Nathaniel Wyeth on his way home to Cambridge

Wyeth brought a letter from Rev. Samuel Parker urging the Whitmans and Spaldings to continue the journey with McLeod and McKay

Hudson’s Bay Company men offered to lead the Whitman Party

on the shorter, more familiar route through the desert

this offer was accepted rather than accompanying the Nez Perce

(Whitman, Spaldings and William H. Gray eventually reached Fort Walla Walla

where Narcissa Whitman remained while their missions were constructed)

NATHANIEL WYETH ARRIVES AT THE RENDEZVOUS

As the issue of selecting a route festered for the missionaries,

a Hudson’s Bay Company brigade led by Thomas McKay and John McLeod

journeying from Fort Vancouver via Fort Hall arrived at the 1836 Rendezvous

they had crossed through the withering heat of June and July

before reaching the barren valley of the Green River

also with them was Nathaniel Wyeth on his way home to Cambridge

Captain Nathaniel Wyeth saw proof that despite his own bankruptcy his countrymen would succeed

there in the midst of the turmoil of the rendezvous sat a hard-used wagon

beside the wagon stood a tent housing something utterly new to the interior West

two white women: the wives of Marcus Whitman and a fellow missionary, Henry Spalding

Wyeth brought a letter from Rev. Samuel Parker urging the Whitmans to continue the journey west with McLeod and McKay

Hudson’s Bay Company men offered to lead the Whitman Party

on the shorter, more familiar route back west through the desert

this offer was accepted rather than accompanying the Nez Perce

WHITMAN PARTY LEAVES TOM FITZPATRICK

Missionaries and the young natives hired hand moved from Tom “Broken Hand” Fitzpatrick’s camp

and joined the Hudson’s Bay Company camp -- July 14, 1836

Both Dr. Whitman and Rev. Spalding

acknowledged their debt to Fitzpatrick in seeing them safely to the rendezvous

Whitman asked Fitzpatrick for his bill to cover the services furnished

in reply, Fitzpatrick asked for Dr. Whitman’s bill for medical services

Whitman said there was no bill

Fitzpatrick answered that likewise he had no bill

WHITMAN PARTY LEFT THE RENDEZVOUS

Whitmans, Spaldings, William H. Gray and the Nez Perce boys Richard and John

set out on the trail to Fort Hall (Idaho) -- July 24, 1836

under the guidance of Hudson’s Bay Company packers Thomas McKay and John McLeod

There was no small amount of irony in the sight of Hudson’s Bay Company escorting to the West

the first protestant missionaries to establish missions north of the Columbia River

several Nez Perce Indians also accompanied the missionaries on their trek

DR. WHITMAN STRUGGLED TO KEEP THE LIGHT WAGON MOVING WEST

This effort worried Narcissa, **“Husband has had a tedious time with the waggon** [sic] **today. Got set in the creek this morning while crossing, was obliged to wade considerably in getting it out. After that in going between two mountains, on the side of one so steep that it was difficult for horse to pass the wagon upset twice…. It is not very grateful to my feelings to see him wear out with such excessive fatigue and I am obliged too. He not as fleshy as he was last winter. All the most difficult part of the way he has walked in his laborious attempt to take the wagon over.”[[279]](#footnote-279)**

Three days later an axletree on the light wagon was broken -- July 28, 1836

Narcissa rejoiced, thinking that now the vehicle would be abandoned

but no -- **“they are making a cart of the hind wheels this afternoon and lashing the forward wheels to it, intending to take it through in some shape or another.”[[280]](#footnote-280)**

STEAMER *BEAVER* ARRIVES AT FORT VANCOJUVER FROM ENGLAND

*Beaver* first appeared at the mouth of the Columbia River -- spring 1836

upon arrival at Fort Vancouver from London, England, the steamer *Beaver* was refitted

her three-masted schooner rigging was taken down and was replaced with brick furnaces,

a low-pressure iron boiler, and side-lever engines to drive the side-wheels

Captain William McNeill, formerly of the *Llama,* took over as the Beaver’s captain

(he remained in that position until [1851])

However, she soon proved to draw too much water to service as a river boat

*Beaver* was sent to Fort Nisqually to serve as a guard ship

Most of her life was spent on Puget Sound

where she greatly facilitated the maintenance of order among the coastal Indians

doing exploratory work in and out of hundreds of Northwest coast inlets

this faithful little steamship proved indispensable

she returned to Fort Vancouver only occasionally

“Old Streamer *Beaver,*” as pioneers fondly came to call her, had a long and varied life

fur and a countless variety of supplies were hauled by her crew

CHIEF FACTOR McLOUGHLIN WAS CONCERNED ABOUT A CHANGE IN COMPANY POLICY

Dr. John McLoughlin did not share in the revelry surrounding the arrival of the steamer *Beaver*

this steamship represented a denial of his policies

he believed the fur trade could be better conducted from trading posts

commanding the routes used to bring pelts in from the interior

as the trade goods flowed back to the outposts

he had directed the construction of a chain of forts

from the Umpqua River in southern Oregon to Russian Alaska in the north

these posts, he felt, were cheaper to operate than ships:

•they needed no insurance;

•they were more easily manned because they needed no trained crews;

•they exerted stronger and more lasting influence over the Indians

because they stayed permanently among the fickle natives

Trading ships were the wrong direction to go, Dr. McLoughlin believed

indeed, when the company had sent him an extra trading ship [n 1834]

he abruptly ordered her to turn around and go home

and when he heard of the original plans for a steamship to serve the Northwest,

he objected vigorously

STEAMER *BEAVER* PUT TO NEW USE

Most of her life was spent on Puget Sound doing exploratory work

in and out of hundreds of Northwest coast inlets

returning to Fort Vancouver only occasionally

for this work the faithful little steamship proved indispensable

“Old Streamer *Beaver*” as pioneers fondly came to call her, had a long and varied life

cargoes of furs and a countless variety of supplies were hauled by her crew

WHITMAN PARTY ARRIVED AT FORT HALL

Hudson’s Bay Company men, for all their courtesy, began chafing at the delays it caused

keeping the wagons was becoming extremely difficult

one of the hired hands quit because of difficulties with the light two-horse wagon

No road existed in the desert beyond Fort Hall

Rev. Henry Spalding’s light yellow-wheeled dearborn wagon had served them well

it had carried Mrs. Spalding due to her feeble health

but at Fort Hall the dearborn was abandoned

Missionaries decided not to attempt further repairs on the heavy wagon

to lighten the strain on the precious running gear Whitman converted it into a two-wheel cart

At Fort Hall the Nez Perce Indians turned north along their preferred route

WHITMAN PARTY SET OUT FROM FORT HALL

Whitmans, Spaldings, William H. Gray and the two Nez Perce Indians Richard and John

traveled west toward Fort Vancouver -- August 1836

with Hudson’s Bay Company trappers Thomas McKay and John McLeod

WHITMAN PARTY ARRIVED AT SNAKE FORT (FORT BOISE)

Whitmans, Spaldings, William H. Gray and two Nez Perce Indians Richard and John

traveling with the Hudson’s Bay Company brigade arrived at Fort Boise -- August 19, 1836

two-wheeled cart was the first vehicle to travel so far West

At Fort Boise the traders assured the stubborn doctor that the Blue Mountains, lying ahead,

were utterly impassable to wheels

Narcissa persisted in pressuring the doctor

exhausted and racked by rheumatism, Whitman finally agreed to leave the cart

with the intention of coming back to get it the next year

WHITMAN PARTY SET OUT FOR FORT WALLA WALLA

Hudson’s Bay Company man Thomas McKay remained at Snake Fort

Foot-sore cattle could no longer keep pace

with the impatient escort of Hudson’s Bay Company employees

thus Spaldings, accompanied by a guard of Nez Perce Indians,

were delegated to drop behind with the animals

In the meantime, the others were to hurry ahead with the trappers to Fort Vancouver

in an effort to catch Samuel Parker before his departure for the Sandwich Islands

Dr. and Mrs. Whitman, William H. Gray and two Nez Perce Indians Richard and John

set out from Snake Fort (Boise) in an effort to reach Fort Walla Walla

guided by Hudson’s Bay Company’s John McLeod

hardships of the journey were recorded by both Mrs. Whitman and Mrs. Spalding

Whitman Party arrived at Fort Walla Walla -- September 1, 1836

brought out the first milk cows to the Northwest from America

It was discovered the overloaded bateaux that was to take the furs

from Fort Walla Walla to Fort Vancouver could not accommodate the missionaries

they had to wait for another boat to be made ready

during the delay the Spaldings arrived with the cattle

REVEREND HERBERT BEAVER ARRIVES AT FORT VANCOUVER

Church of England minister and his wife Jane arrived at Fort Vancouver -- September 3, 183

on the company ship *Nereide* under Captain Royal

He had been dispatched from London by the Hudson’s Bay Company directors

to care for the spiritual needs of the fort’s several hundred Catholic French-Canadians

a worse choice could hardly have been made

Herbert Beaver was thirty-six years old when he arrived at Fort Vancouver

he was a small, relatively short man with light brown hair, light complexion and a feminine voice

he was **“a product of early nineteenth century English aristocratic tradition, where the squire and the parson ruled the social order, directed the education of the children, and the relief of the poor.”[[281]](#footnote-281)**

Both Church of England minister and wife were strongly anti-Catholic

Rev. Beaver also felt his clerical dignity was affronted by the men of Fort Vancouver because of their interracial marital unions

Jane Beaver, too, was appalled at the domestic conditions of Fort Vancouver

especially the intermarrying

she continually held herself aloof from the rest of the population

REV. AND MRS. BEAVER NOT A GOOD FIT FOR FORT VANCOUVER

From the perspective of the fort’s first resident missionary,

Chief Factor McLoughlin had provided anything but a cordial welcome

no church building existed

adequate housing was not available for the Protestant minister

Herbert Beaver and his wife Jane at once offended Dr. McLoughlin

by demanding better housing than he could provide

**“They were assigned to part of a house, separated by only a thin partition from the noisy inhabitants of the other section, and were obliged to allow men of the Fort access to the attic. They were required to assemble their own crude furniture ... one can imagine the couple resolving to secure redress for their humiliation.”[[282]](#footnote-282)**

Almost immediately after their arrival at Fort Vancouver

Rev. Beaver began to feud with the French-Canadians and Dr. McLoughlin

noting Dr. John McLoughlin and others lived in sin

as their marriages to Indian women had no religious sanctions

never mind that no clergy had been available to perform such services

McLoughlin’s quarrel intensified when the Beavers plied evening visitors

with more wine and brandy than the tee totaling factor thought was fitting,

and finally reached white heat when the clergyman began sniffling about morals

Rev. Beaver asked that several “half-breed women” be moved out of his way

so that he and his wife Jane could pass in safety

one of the women to which he referred was Dr. John McLoughlin’s wife

REV. BEAVER ASSIGNED TO TEACH AT THE FORT VANCOUVER SHOOL

Rev. Beaver served as Fort Vancouver’s chaplain from 1836 to [1838]

he also served as teacher to fifty-one boys and girls attending school inside the fort

located in a twenty-by-twenty-foot room with a large stove in the middle of the floor

children who faced their hostile new teacher were from French-Canadian family Dismayed at the lack of religious influence in the school,

Rev. Beaver believed he had an opportunity to change what he called the school's “defectiveness”

he reportedly checked with the fathers of the Catholic children

attained their consent (with one exception) to provide religious instruction in the school

Dr. McLoughlin, himself Catholic, feared the consequences of Rev. Beaver’s attitude

when he learned that Beaver was not only distributing Bibles and the *Book of Common Prayer*

but also was teaching the catechism of the Church of England,

he instructed some of the children to come to his residence during the evening

for instruction in the Roman Catholic faith

After one week, Chief Factor McLoughlin ordered the minister to leave the classroom

but allowed him to continue to conduct the services of the church

WHITMAN PARTY LEFT FORT WALLA WALLA

After a few day’s rest and with resumed constraint the reunited the entire Whitman party

left Fort Walla Walla bound for Fort Vancouver -- their final destination

Dr. and Mrs. Whitman enjoyed their time together

and reported the difficulties of the trail with noticeable light hearts

although William Gray was always there to dampen the mood

Narcissa also informed her husband she was pregnant

They proceeded down the Columbia River in a Hudson’s Bay Company bateau

pressures of the journey and unrestrained forces of bold personalities

led to confrontive conversations followed by combative challenges

somewhere along this trip the incompatible Whitmans and Spaldings

agreed that one mission station could not house both families

DR. WHITMAN’S PARTY REACHED FORT VANCOUVER

Missionaries approached Hudson’s Bay Company’s Chief Factor -- September 12, 1836

Dr. McLoughlin’s reception was most cordial and dignified

he was as enchanted by the white women as the trappers at the rendezvous had been

he treated the missionaries with the company’s accustomed hospitality

and even helped them get established

Narcissa Whitman and Eliza Spalding were the first women travel over what became the Oregon Trail

NEW FREINDSHIPS ARE FORMED AT FORT VANCOUVER

To the two American brides the Fort Vancouver was a haven of luxury

to the other two white women recently arrived by different ships from England Fort Vancouver was considerably less desirable

Narcissa Whitman had heard of Mrs. Elizabeth Capendale as far away as Green River Rendezvous

she was the wife of William Capendale, Hudson’s Bay Company farming supervisor

she had been brought in to run the dairy at Fort Vancouver

Whitman Party had brought out the first milk cows overland to the Northwest

Both women had met as anticipated on Mrs. Whitman’s arrival at the fort

they never spoke again as when Mrs. Capendale was not mingling she sulked in her quarters,

badgered her husband, and finally drove him back to England (on the autumn fur ship)

as Dr. McLoughlin dryly reported the affair,

**“Things** [were] **different to what she expected.”[[283]](#footnote-283)**

Narcissa was delighted to meet Jane Beaver -- Rev. Herbert Beaver’s wife

Mrs. Beaver maintained her husband’s feud with the Chief Factor

POSSIBLE MISSION SITES

Rev. Samuel Parker had suggested two possible mission sites

one located among the Cayuse Indians twenty-five miles East of Fort Walla Walla

other was located among the Nez Perce on the Clearwater River six days from Fort Walla Walla

Dr. Marcus Whitman and Rev. Henry Spalding were in competition

Spalding was jealous of Whitman’s ambition, energy, and constant effort

Whitman’s demanding a dominate role as leader also was an irritant

Spalding’s early interest I n Narcissa and his inability to work as a team member

increased the rivalry

Dr. McLoughlin advised against both mission stations recommending they stay west of the mountains

but Dr. Whitman stubbornly followed Rev. Parker’s advice

Missionaries spent ten busy days gathering necessary supplies and information

from a very obliging Dr. John McLoughlin

U.S. NAVY LIEUTENANT WILLIAM A. SLACUM TRAVELS TO THE PACIFIC NORTHWES Special Agent of the State Department used a round-about approach to get to the Northwest

he journeyed first to Mexico and next to Sandwich (Hawaiian) Islands

in Honolulu, he learned of the British domination of the Pacific Northwest Slacum decided not to depend on English Hudson’s Bay Company for transportation

he chartered, at his own expense, American brig *Loriot:* **“I considered it necessary to have a vessel under my entire control in order to be independent of the Hudson’s Bay Company, who have absolute authority over the inhabitants on either side of the Columbia River, and from whom alone the commonest wants or supplies could be procured; at the same time, to have a shelter under the flag of my country.”[[284]](#footnote-284)**

CAPTAIN NATHANIEL WYETH IN CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

Wyeth arrived home just as the economic depression of the late 1830s

was beginning to paralyze business and trade

his financial backers refused to listen to his pleas for more money

Reentering the ice business with Frederick Tudor, Wyeth paid off his debts

and made a handsome living for himself in a business the two entrepreneurs

spread almost around the globe

shipping ice packed in free sawdust from local sawmills discarded as waste

many of the mechanical devices used in today’s ice business

are direct descendants of inventions by Nathaniel Wyeth;

even so, it is probable that his “failure” in the Northwest turned out, in the long run,

to be of greater worth to his country than his inventions were

DR. WHITMAN AND REV. SPALDING RETURN UP RIVER

Men of the mission party, Dr. Whitman and Rev. Spalding with grumpy William Gray

retraced their way from Fort Vancouver by Hudson’s Bay Company bateau

back up the Columbia River to Fort Walla Walla -- September 21, 1836

to visit the two mission sites identified by Dr. Samuel Parker

it was their intention to work together only until they would return for their wives

In fact, Whitman and Spalding could not work together at all

they bickered and reconciled several times -- a relationship that would continue on

MRS. NARCISSA WHITMAN AND MRS. ELIZA SPALDING REMAIN AT FORT VANCOUVE Where they were under the protection of Hudson’s Bay Company’s Dr. McLoughlin

until their husbands could construct a mission shelter

Eliza cheerfully took on the tutorship of Dr. McLoughlin’s daughter

Narcissa in particular soon became a favorite

of the half-breed wives of John McLoughlin and James Douglas, his second in command,

and of the fort’s children, whom she taught to sing

At least once a week they rode horseback around the region,

marveling at the orchards and vineyards, the rolling grain fields and the dairy, the sawmills,

and the grist mill

Narcissa and Eliza also visited a company sailing ship

Weeks passed pleasantly for the American women

they relished the lavish hospitality provided by Hudson’s Bay Company

there were comfortable quarters to sleep in, good things to eat

they were lionized

to the two American brides the fort was a haven of luxuriousness

REV. HENRY SPALDING RETURNS TO FORT VANCOUVER

Less than a month after the two husbands had gone upriver in the company of William Gray

in search of mission sites

Rev. Henry Spalding returned to Fort Vancouver

with the Westbound Montreal Express -- October 18, 1836

bringing news that two locations for mission work had been selected

Whitman and Gray we already building a house at Waiilatpu “Place of the Rye Grass”

that would be located among the Cayuse Indians in the broad valley of the Walla Walla River

Waiilatpu Mission would be run by the Whitmans

Spalding’s own site lay a hundred and twenty-five miles farther east,

at Lapwai or “Place of the Butterflies”

where a small stream broke through the tall brown hills into the Clearwater River Valley

ten miles above its junction with the Snake

as soon as the building at Waiilatpu was finished, William Gray would go to Lapwai

to build a house there

NARCISSA WHITMAN REFLECTED ON HER JOURNEY THUS FAR

Now three months pregnant, wrote to Rev. Samuel Parker -- October 24, 1836

**“…**[Y]**ou ask whether I regret coming by land? I answer No! by no means. If I were at home now, I could choose to come this way in preference to a seven month voyage. Nothing can equal the purity of the mountain air; and it exhilarating effect on the system; together with the healthful exercise of a horseback ride. Never have I slept more sweetly, than after a day thus spent. How unlike the close atmosphere of stages, boats, and disturbed rest of a crowded cabin, together with such an appetite as one has in this traveling. I found so much pleasure, mixed with the little suffering and fatigue endured; that the fatigue is entirely forgotten. I once could not believe such a journey could be made with so little inconvenience, to a lady, as I have experienced. I believe I was prepared for the worst, but happily have been disappointed. True! I have had some hindrances, and been hungry at times, because we had nothing but buffalo meat dried in the sun by the Indians to eat….”[[285]](#footnote-285)**

REV. HENRY SPALDING, ELIZA AND NARCISSA LEAVE FORT VANCOUVER

Dr. McLoughlin was troubled by the decision to travel to the mission sites

winter, he felt, was no time for untrained white women to risk the interior

he urged them to stay at the fort

Reluctantly Dr. McLoughlin sold them clothing, household furniture, provisions and farming supplies

he felt winter was no time for untrained white women to risk traveling in the interior

he urged them to stay at the fort

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions Missionaries insisted on leaving

Dr. Marcus Whitman was already at Waiilatpu constructing the buildings of the station

Narcissa wanted her baby (due in March) to be born in her new home

Rev. Henry and Eliza Spalding were very anxious to begin their work among the natives

Both missionary families loaded their goods into two boats

Dr. John McLoughlin had loaned to them -- November 3, 1836

and they were rowed by his crews to Fort Walla Walla

WILLIAM ASHLEY SERVES IN POLITICAL OFFICE

William Ashley was elected to Congress from Missouri as a Whig

for a two-year term -- November 1836

he was known as an able advocate of measures favorable to western development

MISSIONARIES AT FORT WALLA WALLA

Almost immediately after reaching the Hudson’s Bay Company post, the Spalding left for Lapwai,

but Narcissa stayed at Walla Walla until her home at Waiilatpu was more nearly suitable

LAPWAI MISSION OPENED

“Place of the Butterflies” was begun in Nez Perce Country where Lapwai Creek

joins Clearwater River (near today’s Lewiston)

for the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions

Rev. and Eliza Spalding and William H. Gray opened Lapwai [November 29, 1836]

first white home in what is (now Idaho)

These Nez Perce Indians were more interested than were the natives at Whitman’s station

they participated in the first year’s farming operations with enthusiasm

farms were plowed and sown with the aid of sixty or seventy Indian families

gardens were planted and apple trees set out

Church, flour mill, sawmill, blacksmith shop, and a loom all were constructed

school was constructed for young and old Indian’s religious training

AMERICAN BOARD MISSIONARIES WERE DEDICATED TO THEIR TASKS

Working in the central and eastern portion of the Pacific Northwest

All of the men and women were devoted to Indian welfare:

•preached as regularly as possible

•gathered children and the tribal elders in the schools

•translated portions of the Bible into Indian languages

•helped Indians build permanent homes for themselves

•showed them how to till and irrigate fields for crops

•constructed mills to cut lumber, grind corn and wheat

Much of the work was repetitive and routine

sometimes marked by tedium and angry clashes of personality

Yet a great deal was attempted and many things accomplished

DR. McLOUGHLIN’S FEUD WITH REV. HERBERT AND JANE BEAVER INTENSIFIES

Rev. and Mrs. Beaver provided visitors to the fort with more wine and brandy in the evening

than the tee-totaling Chief Factor thought was fitting

Finally violence resulted when the Church of England clergyman began sniffing about morals

somehow the minister had learned that John McLoughlin and his wife Marguerite

had begun living together -- even before her first husband, Alexander McKay’s, death

in a letter to Hudson’s Bay Company Governor Simpson and the committee in London

Beaver referred to the woman, to whom McLoughlin was devoted as **“a female of notoriously loose character…the kept Mistress of the highest personage in your service at this station.”[[286]](#footnote-286)**

Beaver’s slur came back to Chief Factor McLoughlin

furiously he descended on Rev. Beaver as the minister was walking toward his house,

where his wife was standing in the doorway

as the clergyman reported the event: **“…this monster in human shape…came behind me, kicked me several times, and struck me repeatedly with his fists on the back of the neck. Unable to cope with him for the immense disparity of our relative size and strength, I could not prevent him from wrenching out of my hand a stout stick with which I was walking, and with which he…inflicted several severe blows on my shoulders. He then seized me from behind, round my waist, attempted to dash me on the ground exclaiming ‘you scoundrel, I will have your life.’ In the meantime, the stick had fallen to the ground; my wife on impulse…picked it up; he took it very viciously out of her hands and again struck me with it severely. We were then separated by the intervention of other persons….”[[287]](#footnote-287)**

FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET -- CATHOLIC MISSIONARY

De Smet continued to improve in health

he longed to return to his Jesuit province in Missouri -- 1836

he requested to be readmitted to the Jesuit Order

On this attempt to cross the Atlantic he was accompanied by four missionary recruits

before they could set sail, De Smet acquired a high fever that forced him to stay in Paris

his four young recruits set out to cross the ocean without him

De Smet made a last effort to fulfill his dream and join his destiny

off the coast of France he asked the skipper of a small boat

to try to catch up with the large sailing vessel

De Smet’s good luck held -- his health improved every day of the ocean crossing

Three weeks after arriving in New York City

Pierre-Jean De Smet reentered the small village of St. Ferdinand de Florissant

Father De Smet was once more admitted to the Jesuit Order

by the Provincial of Missouri, Father Pierre Verhaegen -- November 29, 1836

FIRST REINFORCEMENT OF METHODIST MISSIONARIES ARE SELECTED

In answer to Rev. Jason Lee’s request for skilled mission assistants

Methodist Mission Society in Utica, New York sent three men and five women and five children

including the first white women to live in the Willamette Valley

New Methodist missionary contingent was composed of:

leader was Dr. Elijah White and his wife Sarepta, their son and adopted teenage son

he was slim with exuberant blue eyes and possessed a quick step

he also had a glib tongue and was overbearing

accompanied by his fourteen-year-old adopted son George, and an infant son, Jason

also blacksmith Alanson Beers, his wife Rachel (Beardsley) and three children

he was a Revolutionary War trained blacksmith

skilled ship’s carpenter William Holden Willson

who studied medicine under Dr. Elijah White en route

Miss Anna Maria Pittman -- born and educated as a teacher in New York

Methodist Mission Society hoped she would be a compatible wife for Jason Lee

Miss Susan Downing -- teacher

small, attractive and well liked, she possessed a keen sense of humor

Miss Elvira Johnson -- teacher

Mr. J. L. Whitcomb -- teacher

Missionaries sailed aboard the Hamilton leaving Boston -- late 1836

bound for Hawaiian Islands where they would await the ship Diana to take them

to the Pacific Northwest

WAIILATPU MISSIONIS READY TO BE OCCUPIED

Waiilatpu Mission had been constructed by Dr. Marcus Whitman

for the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions

120 miles West of Lapwai Mission

Waiilatpu Mission was located near Hudson’s Bay Company’s post of Fort Walla Walla

to minister to the Cayuse Indians

Chief Umtippe provided Whitman some of his land to build a mission

missionaries lived at first in buffalo-skin lodges

Marcus and Narcissa’s home was completed -- October 16,1836

since wood was scarce, the house was built of adobe

clay bricks twenty inches long, ten inches wide, and four inches thick baked in the sun

ST. LOUIS HAD CHANGED WHILE FATHER DE SMET WAS AWAY

During Father Pierre-Jean De Smet’s four-year absence St. Louis has grown considerably

number of inhabitants has doubled (to 15,000)

French and Spanish colonists are no longer in the majority

6,000 German immigrants made themselves new homes

in and around the ever-expanding city

University of St. Louis has become is a great success

Belgian financial aid, much of raised by Father De Smet,

gave the parishes of Florissant and St. Charles much needed assistance

DR. MARCUS AND NARCISSA WHITMAN MOVE INTO WAIILATPU

Marcus Whitman finally came to Fort Walla Walla to take Narcissa to her new home

Waiilatpu Mission waslocated among the Cayuse Indians -- December 10, 1836

Chief Umtippe provided Whitman some of his land to build a mission

missionaries lived at first in buffalo-skin lodges

Dr. Whitman was as driven as usual

sawmill was constructed in the Blue Mountains twenty miles away

Sunday School was provided to offer religious instruction for Indian children

Dr. Whitman was better fitted to be a captain among pioneers

than a missionary among natives

he had a great capacity for hardships and stubbornness in the face of difficulties

his firmness on issues was renown

and he was heedless of the possible consequences of that firmness

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HARDSHIPS FOR AMERICAN BOARD MISSIONARIES

Narcissa Whitman’s and Eliza Spalding’s hardships did not end with the journey’s completion

they had already been separated from their homes and families in the East

of necessity these two women had become friends on the trail and at Fort Vancouver

now they found themselves also separated from each other by 120 miles

and from all of the other acquaintances they had made on the journey west

Although at separate mission stations, Narcissa and Eliza by previous agreement,

communed with each other every morning at nine o’clock

by silently thinking of each other and praying for the welfare of their households

NAVAL LIEUTENANT WILLIAM A. SLACUM REACHES OREGON

*Loriot* carried almost no cargo when she arrived at Astoria -- December 23, 1836

her sole passenger was an inquisitive American with alert eyes and active pen

Purser in the United States Navy and Special agent for the State Department,

Naval Lieutenant William A. Slacum

Lieutenant Slacum spent several days investigating the area at the mouth of the Columbia River

LIEUTENANT WILLIAM A. SLACUM REACHES FORT VANCOUVER

Lieutenant Slacum, President Andrew Jackson’s representative,

was commissioned to report on affairs as he found them in Oregon

he sailed aboard the brig *Loriot* from Astoria to Fort Vancouver

where he arrived -- January 2, 1837

Disembarking, Slacum presented himself to Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin

as a private merchant bent on gaining commercial information

Dr. John McLoughlin pretended to believe him

Slacum was courteously received by Dr. McLoughlin

privately, however, he identified Williams Slacum for exactly what he was

a secret agent of the United States government whose task was to strengthen U.S. claims

Chief Factor blandly answered the American’s questions

although perhaps not always with complete truthfulness

McLOUGHLIN ENLISTS SLACUM’S HELP IN SOLVING AN EMBARASSING PROBLEM

Chief Factor told Lieutenant Slacum that two and a half years before, American Ewing Young

had led into the district a small party of men driving a herd of horses

reputedly stolen in California

acting impulsively, Dr. McLoughlin had ordered the French-Canadian farmers in the Willamette

to have no dealings with Young

McLoughlin himself refused to accept, in exchange for needed supplies,

some furs Young had sent to Fort Vancouver with Nathaniel Wyeth

since then McLoughlin had come to the conclusion that perhaps he had acted hastily,

and that probably Young was not a horse thief

In the meantime, however, the American and a partner, Lawrence Carmichael,

remained infuriated by their treatment at the hand of Dr. McLoughlin,

they decided to turn the wheat of their Chehalem Valley farm (near today’s Newberg)

into a product whose marketing would not be dependent

on the Hudson’s Bay Company -- alcohol

they were brewing their liquor in a salmon pickling kettle once owned by Nathaniel Wyeth

unless they were stopped there was no telling what kind of havoc they might wreak

METHODIST MISSIONARIES BECAME ALARMED ABOUT EWING YOUNG’S STILL

Missionaries convened the first meeting of the Oregon Temperance Society -- January 1837

which adopted a formal resolution asking Young to scrap the alcohol-producing venture

and offering to reimburse him for his investment

As intended by the Methodists, the Hudson’s Bay Company also took alarm

Young’s whiskey would find a market among the French Canadians

and eventually debauch the Indians on whom the company’s trade depended

Missionaries’ social reform effort was joined by many of the mountain men

thanks, in large part, to Dr. McLoughlin’s efforts

Missionaries found that working among the whites and their half-breed families

was more encouraging than dealing with Indians

LIEUTENANT WILLIAM SLACUM JOURNEYS UP THE WILLAMETTE RIVER

Six *voyageurs* rowed Slacum’s canoe for twenty-two unbroken hours

they cheerfully bucked the Willamette River’s current, portaged around the waterfalls

above the cataract they swung west for twenty miles along the great curve of the river

their destination was an ancient Indian camp ground called Champoeg

an open, sandy peninsula on the south side of the river

Lieutenant William Slacum noted Fort Vancouver offered the only source of supplies for Americans

he also noted the large surplus of wheat, as well as great quantities of oats, peas, and potatoes

but Slacum also saw a great need for American cattle in the Pacific Northwest

SLACUM’S *VOYAGEURS* DEPOSIT HIM AT CHAMPOEG

Stepping ashore at Champoeg, Lieutenant William Slacum met tall, bearded Rev. Jason Lee

who somehow had learned of the secret agent’s visit

and had ridden from the Methodist mission, eighteen miles farther upstream, to meet him

WILLIAM SLACUM GOES TO MISSION BOTTOM

Next morning the two men, in all probability accompanied by the residents of the vicinity,

rode horseback to Lee’s station at Mission Bottom to visit the Americans

Several more people were waiting there ready to pour out their troubles

to the first official of the United Sates who had ever bothered to come their way

Most of their complaints had to do with the Hudson’s Bay Company

yes, John McLoughlin was kind

he had willingly loaned tools and seed, horses and cows to everyone who needed them

but he would not sell them animals under any circumstances

and demanded that all offspring be turned back to the company

Chief Factor McLoughlin would not allow American farmers to become stockmen

he said his reason was that he needed to build up Fort Vancouver’s jealously nurtured herd

but in the opinion of the settlers he was trying to keep the entire Willamette Valley,

its newcomers as well as retired Canadians, in economic subservience

proof rested in how the system worked:

•a man could not have a cow except on McLaughlin’s terms

cattle could be borrowed for work and milk, but all calves had to be returned;

•there was no place to sell wheat or furs but at the company warehouse;

•there was no place to buy goods except at the company store;

•even a broken tool could not be repaired without taking it to the company forge

if the Pacific Northwest, as everyone seemed to believe,

was going to fall under United States sovereignty, help from Congress was necessary

Lieutenant Slacum’s only advice was that the settlers draw up a petition stating their case

and send it to Washington City, the nation’s capital

however, Slacum’s interest in the Pacific Northwest was encouraging to the Americans

his presence generated new discussions about the future of Oregon

his being there was to them evidence the U.S. Government

was interested in Americans in the Pacific Northwest

it even appeared possible that Congress might respond to an appeal for help

NEXT LIEUTENANT WILLIAM SLACUM TURNED TO THE MATTER OF EWING YOUNG

Concern about Ewing Young’s and Lawrence Carmichael’s disruptive whiskey also was still an issue

missionaries and settlers were as disturbed about the sale of alcohol

as Chief Factor McLoughlin was -- especially regarding the Indians

Navy Lieutenant Slacum carried with him an apology and an offer from the Chief Factor

and assurances from Duncan Finlayson acting for an absent Dr. John McLoughlin

if Young would abandon his whiskey project

he would not only be allowed to trade at the Hudson’s Bay Company store

he would be granted a loan for purchasing whatever he needed

But what would Young and Carmichael do for a living?

Lieutenant William Slacum saw great need for American cattle in the Pacific Northwest

this would provide impetus to loosen the chains binding people to Hudson’s Bay Company

while negotiating an end to the whiskey threat,

Young and Slacum talked of the need for cattle owned by the settlers rather than the company

Ewing Young said that California contained plenty of cheap Spanish cattle

that could be driven over the mountains to the Willamette just as his horses had [in 1834]

At this point either Slacum or Young or both of them together had a dazzling inspiration

Ewing Young’s reputation would be cleared

if he agreed to drive another herd north from California

since he had developed the trail from the South and was familiar with it

Young would assume the leadership of the venture if enough Willamette setters

would chip in money to buy a herd in California and go along to help drive it to Oregon

in fact, Young would put in a thousand dollars himself to start things rolling

Lieutenant Slacum offered the use of his chartered brig, *Loriot,* anchored on the Columbia River

WILLAMETTE CATTLE COMPANY IS FORMED

Ewing Young and Lawrence Carmichael bowed to popular opinion

they agreed to drop their alcohol production “for the present”

if enough Willamette settlers would chip in to buy a herd and go along to drive to Oregon

Plan to bring cattle north from California gave birth to the Willamette Cattle Company

U.S. Naval Lieutenant William A. Slacum and Rev. Jason Lee drew up the papers

an association was formed by the Methodist missionary group -- January 13, 1837

to buy cattle in California and drive them overland to the Pacific Northwest

Ewing Young would assume leadership of the venture

MONEY IS RAISED FOR THE WILLAMETTE CATTLE COMPANY

Nine Americans including Ewing Young, Lieutenant Slacum and Methodist Missionaries,

and two French-Canadians settlers on French Prairie scrapped together about $2,000

partly in cash and partly in credit due them for wheat delivered to Hudson’s Bay

if they could collect the money from the company

Ewing Young put in $1000 himself going (he eventually contributed a total of $1119.27½)

Lieutenant William Slacum, U.S. Navy advanced $100 or so on his own account

Slacum loaned Jason Lee enough money so the missionary was able to invest $624

on behalf of the Methodist Mission

When the adventurers reached Fort Vancouver and timidly asked Chief Factor McLoughlin

to pay what was due to them to everyone’s surprise he not only obliged

but added $558 in his own name

and $300 in the names of two of his lieutenants for stock certificates worth $2,500

Hudson’s Bay Company also needed cattle

Willamette Cattle Company was capitalized at almost $9,000

it planned to buy a herd of wild but inexpensive slim-flanked Spanish cattle

in California and drive them overland to the Willamette Valley

along the route followed by Ewing Young and Hall J. Kelley [1834]

LIEUTENANT WILLIAM A. SLACUM SAILS TO CALIFORNIA

Eleven American men and three hired Indian hands to serve as drovers

along with Willamette Cattle Company Manager and Purchasing Agent Ewing Young

sailed out of the Columbia River on the American brig *Loriot* -- January 22, 1837

they were destined to take part in the West’s first great cattle drive

From beginning to end it was miserable voyage

at the storm-tortured mouth of the Columbia River

a gale snapped the *Loriot’s* anchor cables and drove the brig ashore

only a valiant effort by Hudson’s Bay Company men saved the day

one man dropped out and went home

It was three rain-drenched weeks before the *Loriot* at last crossed Columbia’s bar

in his report to the U.S. government, Slacum noted: **“I beg leave to call your attention to ‘Puggits’ sound’ and urge, in the most earnest manner, that it should never be abandoned.”[[288]](#footnote-288)**

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY DIVERSIFIES

Fort Vancouver became a market for local farm goods raised at French Prairie

newly arrived settlers received credit until they could raise a wheat crop

accounts were settled from the surplus harvest

At Fort Colville, farm production soon outgrew consumption -- 1837

Archibald McDonald, one of the men in charge of the fort, described the farm -- 1837

as being then **“on an extensive scale…upwards of 5000 bushels of grain…3000 of wheat, 1000 of corn and more than 1200 of other grain.”[[289]](#footnote-289)**

surplus commodities were made available for export to other posts

Hudson’s Bay Company had established a large surplus -- 1837

of wheat, oats, peas, and potatoes

wheat was ground into flour at two mills at Vancouver

grain and flour were regularly shipped to the Russians in Alaska and also shipped to Hawaii

Besides shipping grains and flour salmon caught in lower Columbia River also was sold abroad

Hudson’s Bay Company also shipped goods from Montreal and London

to their store at Fort Vancouver and their branch store at Willamette Falls

FORT VANCOUVER BECAME A MARKET

For local farm goods raised at French Prairie

newly arrived settlers received credit until they could raise a wheat crop

accounts were settled from the sale of the surplus harvest to Hudson’s Bay Company

Fort Vancouver became a market for local farm goods raised at French Prairie

newly arrived settlers received credit until they could raise a wheat crop

accounts were settled from the surplus harvest

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTS SHIPPED BY HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY

Company quickly established a large surplus of wheat, oats, peas, and potatoes -- 1837

wheat was ground into flour at two mills at Vancouver

grain and flour were regularly shipped to the Russians in Alaska and also shipped to Hawaii

Besides shipping grains and flour

salmon caught in lower Columbia River also was sold abroad

Hudson’s Bay Company shipped goods from Montreal and London

to their store at Fort Vancouver and their branch store at Willamette Falls

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY DECIDES TO RENEW ITS LICENSE TO OPERATE EARLY

Although the Hudson's Bay Company's exclusive license for English trade west of the Rockies

was not due to expire [until 1842]

Board of Directors in London needed to justify themselves to the British government

at the time, Company arrangement with the government was under fire in Parliament

particularly since fur-trading was not seen as compatible with colonization

Governor of Rupert’s Land George Simpson and the Hudson’s Bay Company directors in London

decided to attempt to secure license renewal, before a change in government

could adversely affect the Company's monopoly -- 1837

To bolster its license request, Hudson’s Bay Company

stressed its intention to promote settlement and to develop export trade

through expansion of its agricultural efforts

it was noted this would increase British interests and influence in the Pacific Northwest

and reinforce its possession and control of the region under dispute with the United States

Hudson’s Bay Company Governor George Simpson

wrote a letter to his associate Governor John Henry Pelly in London -- February 1837

Simpson noted the company hoped to strengthen England’s claim north of the Columbia River

**“by forming the nucleus of a colony through the establishment of farms”[[290]](#footnote-290)**

BRITISH EXPANSION INTO THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY SEEMS INADVISABLE

That region, south of the Columbia River, could go to the United States

therefore, Chief Factor John McLoughlin turned his attention northward

Cowlitz portage was the end point of river travel on the Columbia,

and the embarkation staging area for the overland route north to Puget Sound

A large prairie was located about a mile from the landing, and from the mid-1830s on

cattle from Fort Vancouver were driven to the site to graze

COWLITZ PRAIRIE RECEIVES ITS FIRST FARMER

Good pasture was to be found at the southern end of Puget Sound,

where Fort Nisqually had been built as a fur trading post less than half a dozen years before

Dr. McLoughlin envisioned a settlement to rival the Willamette Valley on the good farmland

Simon Plomodon and his very pretty Indian wife became the first settler on the Cowlitz Plains

when he retired after sixteen years’ service for the company -- 1837

Dr. McLoughlin provided them with seed, livestock, tools, and promises of protection

DR. McLOUGHLIN’S PLAN TO MOVE WILLAMETTE FRENCH-CANADIANS

Hudson’s Bay Company believed their retired and former employees

living along the Willamette River on already established farms in the Willamette Valley

could provide one source of pro-British settlers for the lands north of the Columbia River

never mind that these French-Canadians had already put down roots

and had no interest in moving

To encourage other pro-British settlers to join Simon Plomodon,

Chief Factor McLoughlin prevailed on the company to send in Roman Catholic priests

something the Willamette Valley did not have

Father Joseph Provencher, Bishop of Juliopolis, asked the Company to assist the overland passage

of two Roman Catholic priests to the Columbia region -- 1837

Company agreed to do so if the priests would persuade the Willamette settlers to relocate

to the new farm areas north of the Columbia

Conditions of the agreement were mutually accepted

(however, it later turned out the Willamette settlers had no interest

in leaving their established and freely-owned farms and budding communities)

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY BOUGHT FORT HALL

Cottonwood stockade built by Nathaniel Wyeth [1834]

was the chief refuge for trappers and travelers in a great region of Indians and sagebrush

Fort covered half an acre of ground

dwellings, stores, and barns were overshadowed by a two-story block-house

Final change of ownership was transacted -- 1837

DAVID THOMPSON COMES OUT OF RETIREMENT

He had spent his retired life in farming and purchasing poor investments

he failed to collect debts he was owed and was forced back to work -- 1837

At age 67 Thompson surveyed the Muskoka region of southern Ontario

to find an alternate shipping route to avoid the Great Lakes

he trekked from Georgian Bay to the Ottawa River in a cedar canoe

REV. SAMUEL PARKER WRITES A BOOK ABOUT HIS ADVENTURES

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions

refused to give Rev. Samuel Parker a permanent assignment on the mission field

because he was fifty-seven years old and in poor health

Rev. Samuel Parker began work on his written contribution to history:

Travels Beyond the Rocky Mountains

after Lewis and Clark, his journey had been the one across the continent

that produced a book of high standards

TEXAS INDEPENDENCE WAS IMPORTANT TO THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

United States had acquired Texas from Mexico -- [1836]

Americans had set up an independent Government -- the Lone Star Republic

which was recognized by the United States

on President Andrew Jackson’s last day in Office -- March 3, 1837

There was a national desire to also acquire the Pacific Northwest,

where land was rich and the climate healthful and pleasant

AMERICA WAS EXPANDING

Three states West of the Mississippi River had entered the Union

Louisiana [April 30, 1812], Missouri [March 2, 1821], and Arkansas [June 15, 1836]

Americans were farmers -- as many as 20,000 new farms were begun each year

prosperity was reflected in land ownership -- land was regarded as a source of happiness

many farms were a long distance from population centers

There was a great need in transportation facilities to ship corn, wheat, and meat

speculators invested heavily in anticipation of prosperity

hundreds of miles of canals were dug and railroad construction was begun

to provide East-West transportation link with the Mississippi River

Pioneers had two reasons to travel across the North American continent:

•leaving part of the country which was in deep depression

•going to a place which held the promise of a more prosperous and happy life

Late 1830s [and early 1840s] -- most emigrants come to the Pacific Northwest by vessel

some around The Horn, others across the Isthmus of Panama

taking a ship up the coast to San Francisco

BEN BONNEVILLE BECOMES FAMOUS

Washington Irving, one of America’s most gifted and successful authors of his time,

interviewed Captain Benjamin Bonneville

Irving wrote down the captain’s adventures in engrossing prose

he published two accounts of Bonneville’s efforts

*Adventures of Captain Bonneville: History Made Man* -- 1837

and a two volume version: *The Adventures of Captain Bonneville, U.S.A.,*

*in the Rocky Mountains and the Far West* -- 1837

Irving’s books were an important factor in inspiring public sentiment for continental expansion

became another potent force in turning American’s thoughts toward the west

widely read, it linked graphic portrayals of the western lands and peoples

with the impulse to spread the dominion of the American Republic

over Oregon -- if not California as well

Several western landscape features were either named by Bonneville himself or in honor of his efforts

Lake Bonneville (prehistoric) and Bonneville Salt Flats (in Utah),

Bonneville Power Administration and the Bonneville Dam are all named in his honor

ALICE CLARISSA WHITMAN BORN

Daughter of Dr. Marcus and Narcissa Whitman

Beautiful blond baby girl was the first white child born in the Pacific Northwest

on evening of Narcissa’s twenty-third birthday -- March 14, 1837

Indians were fascinated by the color of her hair

WILLIAM H. GRAY DAMPENS MORALE

Lay mechanic missionary to the Whitmans and Spaldings became restless -- spring, 1837

was an enormously contentious and egotistical man with swollen piety and self-esteem

He was increasingly unhappy with the relationships among the male missionaries

of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions

OLD IGNACE GOES ONCE AGAIN TO ST. LOUIS

Still determined to bring Black Robes to the Flathead and Nez Perce people

Ignace La Mousse set out a second time for St. Louis -- 1837

this time accompanied by a Nez Perce chief and three Flatheads

For safety they joined Lucien Fontenelle’s American Fur Company caravan

went with the white traders down the Missouri River to civilization seeking White Man’s religion

on the North Platte River, near Fort Laramie, Old Ignace and all of his friends

were killed by Sioux Indians

UNITED STATES FINANCIAL PANIC OF 1837

Early indications of an economic downturn surfaced early in the year

and grew in severity as the year progresses

In the United States 618 banks failed

work on the transportation infrastructure stopped

thousands of men were thrown out of work

value of land dropped and prices of farm products declined

prosperity was replaced by financial panic

Whigs blamed Democrats for the Depression

Whig Party appealed to those who did not like the Democratic Party:

•businessmen suffering from the Depression

•citizens who wanted federal money to build roads, canals, and railroads

Beaver trade suffered a heavy blow in the Panic of 1837

market softened and would never again offer the rewards trappers and traders had enjoyed

competition from American companies and with the Hudson’s Bay Company

took a dreadful toll on the beaver population

Economic conditions were especially difficult in the Middle West

Positive, lyrical writings about the Pacific Northwest by enthusiasts

created an even more attractive image as the place to escape poverty

REASONS TO IMMIGRATE TO OREGON

Pioneers had two reasons:

•leaving part of the country which was in deep depression

•going to a place which held the promise of a more prosperous and happy life

Late 1830s [and early 1840s] -- most emigrants come to the Pacific Northwest by ship

some around The Horn, others across the Isthmus of Panama taking a vessel

up the Pacific coast to San Francisco before continuing on to the Columbia River

ALPHONSO WETMORE -- AUTHOR

Produced *Gazetteer Frontier Sketches* -- 1837

geographical dictionary of the west

this text generated a great deal of enthusiasm about the Pacific Northwest

WILLAMETTE CATTLE COMPANY IN CALIFORNIA

*Loriot* safely deposited the Oregon drovers in San Francisco, California

Oregonians found jobs to support themselves

while Ewing Young began the nerve-fraying process

of cajoling Mexican government permission for taking cattle out of the province

Lieutenant William Slacum sailed home to the United States to file his report

FIRST METHODIST MISSIONARY REINFORCEMENTS ARRIVE AT FORT VANCOUVER

New arrivals were led by slim, blue-eyed, intrusive, impertinent Dr. Elijah White

his wife Sarepta, their adopted son George, and an infant son Jason

they were accompanied by Alanson Beers, his wife Rachel (Beardsley) and three children

bachelor William H. Willson, Miss Anna Maria Pittman, Miss Susan Downing

and teacher Miss Elvira Johnson sailed from the Hawaiian Islands on the *Diana*

Dr. White also began a long and heated feud with Jason Lee over leadership of the missionaries

Mr. Alanson Beers his wife Rachael and three children

moved into a house and blacksmith shop at the Champoeg (Mission Bottom) Mission

he took charge of the mission farm and built several houses and mills

William H. Willson, a bachelor ship’s carpenter who had studied medicine under Dr. Elijah White

en route to the Pacific Northwest

Three intensely devout unwed women also arrived with Dr. White

Miss Anna Maria Pittman -- born and educated as a teacher in New York

she had been dispatched by the Methodist Mission Society in Utica, New York

with the understanding that, if matters proved agreeable, she was to wed Rev. Jason Lee

Miss Susan Downing -- teacher

Miss Elvira Johnson -- teacher

REV. JASON LEE NOT UP TO LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

Married or single, Methodist missionaries were not selected with great care

nor were they very skillfully prepared for their task

Jason Lee, although he recognized some of these problems, was not well suited to handle them

he hated to write reports to his superiors

who consequently lacked information on how best to assist the missionaries

he hated controversy and thus tried to iron out disputes

and settle personality conflicts by delay or consensus rather than using his authority

he was not a systematic man; he did not visit mission stations in a regular manner

he did not organize local congregations when the Indians were converted

he was poor with financial accounts

PACIFIC NORTHWEST SETTLERS

Factions living in the Pacific Northwest were suspicious of each other

Methodist missionaries, French-Canadian settlers, Mountain Men and Indians

had little in common

Few permanent American settlers had arrived

primarily thirty to thirty-five Mountain Men who were oriented toward self determination

known for brutality, cruelty, ingenuity, individualism, cockiness, courage, and humor

they usually settled along the Willamette River on the North edge of French Prairie

Control of these semi-civilized Americans fell upon Rev. Jason Lee

of course, more and more Americans who could be expected to arrive

surely good people would not immigrate to a lawless land

No love was lost between the Americans had been competitors with Hudson's Bay Company

and the British company or government

this antagonism was strengthened with growing Yankee patriotism

No longer could the relocated American citizens

depend on Hudson’s Bay Company for protection

NATIVE RESPONSE TO THE GOSPEL

Indians had religious beliefs of their own before missionaries arrived: creation, afterlife, spirits

missionaries believed these to be the first steps to Christianity

Indians, at least at first, were receptive to the missionaries and their message

But problems quickly arose

Indians wanted Christianity for the same purposes as their own religion

to gain a more successful mastery over nature and to increase their wealth

unlike Christianity, their faith was not focused upon attainment of the next world

Missionaries faulted the Indians for various aspects of their culture

some were polygamous

others were suspected of being cannibals

Missionaries thought Indians were vain in adorning themselves with necklaces, paint and headdresses

and perverse in slashing their flesh and flattening their heads

Natives’ economic principles were abhorrent

a clever economic maneuver or necessity to an Indian was theft to a missionary

missionaries found slavery and the treatment of slaves abhorrent

Christians believed that labor assigned to women was outrageous

and their subordinate social position to be repulsive

Indians’ indifference, or often contempt, toward the handicapped

shocked American humanitarian principles

AMERICAN BOARD MISSIONARY PROBLEMS

Discord was often present among the missionaries north of the Columbia River

one problem was that Rev. Spalding was the rejected suitor of Narcissa Whitman

other differences were over matters of principle or status

but these soon elevated into personality conflicts

Lay missionary and mechanic to the Whitmans and Spaldings William H. Gray

became restless and unhappy with the relationships among American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions male missionaries -- summer 1837

Gray was an enormously contentious and egotistical man with swollen piety and self-esteem

he wanted permission to construct a new mission of his own

he hoped to find a wife in the East and return as a fully anointed missionary

when that idea was rejected by Dr. Whitman and Rev. Spalding

Gray insisted on going East to gather reinforcements for the Oregon missions

WILLIAM H. GRAY SETS OUT FOR THE EAST

Restless and dissatisfied with his status among the American Board missionaries

Gray left his superior Dr. Whitman without the approval of anyone

he traveled with Francis Ermatinger’s Hudson’s Bay Company Flathead Brigade

which had started for Montana

Gray was hoping to find a field for a mission station of his own

Along the way, in the snowbound land of the Spokane natives,

Gray re-encountered Rev. Henry Spalding, plowing through the drifts from Lapwai

with some Nez Perce Indians to visit Fort Colville on the Columbia River

while waiting for the trails to open, the reunited missionaries met Spokane Gerry

Gerry fed Gray and Spalding native-grown potatoes,

showed them the log schoolhouse his tribe had built under his tutelage,

and translated when Rev. Spalding delivered a sermon

tremendously impressed, Spalding and Gray

decided that the country of the Spokanes was a propitious spot for Gray’s proposed mission

William Gray and Rev. Henry Spalding further decided

that Gray should go east to present the case to the American Board in person,

taking some Indians along with him to strengthen his arguments

more practically, he would also drive along a herd of cheap Nez Pierce horses

and trade them in Missouri for cattle to bring back with him

Gray left the region for the Missouri River with a a considerable number of horses

and four Nez Perce Indians to serve as drovers

WILLIAM GRAY FINDS A LOCATION FOR HIS MISSION

Traveling with Francis Ermatinger’s Brigade

they crossed the snow-bound land of the Spokane Indians

Gray re-encountered Rev. Henry Spalding, plowing through the drifts from Lapwai

with some Nez Perce Indians on a visit to Fort Colville on the Columbia River

While waiting for the trails to open, the reunited missionaries met Indian missionary Spokan Garry

one of the natives Governor of Rupert’s Land George Simpson had taken across the mountains

to be educated at Red River Colony

Garry fed Gray and Spalding native-grown potatoes

he showed them the log schoolhouse his tribe had built under his leadership

and translated when Spalding delivered a sermon

Tremendously impressed, Spalding and Gray decided that the country of the Spokanes

was a promising location for Gray’s proposed mission station

Spalding and Gray also decided that Gray should continue east

to present the case for a new mission to the American Board in person

Gray would take some Indians along with him to strengthen his arguments

more practically, he would also drive with him a herd of cheap Nez Perce horses

and trade them in Missouri for cattle to bring back with him on his return

THOMAS “BROKEN HAND” FITZPATRICK GOES TO THE 1837 RENDEZVOUS

Now in the employ of Pierre Chouteau & Company,

Fitzpatrick captained the supply train for a third year -- this one to the 1837 Rendezvous

Once more the rendezvous was staged on the upper Green River at Horse Creek

at Fort Nonsense or Bonneville’s Folly

Fitzpatrick escorted no missionaries to the rendezvous this year

1837 RENDEZVOUS

Held for a third year in succession

at the confluence of the Green River and Horse Creek July 5-[July 19], 1837

where a ramshackle remnant of Bonneville’s Fort Nonsense served as the trading store

William H. Gray traveling East with a Hudson’s Bay Company Brigade

appeared at the rendezvous and anxiously waited to continue on his way

he dithered over delays caused by Tom Fitzpatrick

and fretted at the sinful ways of the mountaineers

After spending most of July 1837 at the rendezvous,

Gray decided he could not wait for Fitzpatrick to get the train under way

for the return journey to St. Louis

WILLIAM H. GRAY DEPARTS THE RENDEZVOUS FOR ST. LOUIS

He set out with two white companions

and six Indian youths (four Flatheads, a Nez Perce, and an Iroquois)

destined for schooling in the East

Gray considered these young men and God to be sufficient escort

Jim Bridger tried to set him straight **“Sir.”** he barked, slapping his rifle, **“the grace of God won’t carry a man through these prairies! It takes powder and ball.”[[291]](#footnote-291)**

(none would prevail **--** neither the youths, nor powder and ball, nor God)

FIRST WEDDING IN PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Scarcely two months after Miss Pittman’s arrival the Northwest on the brig *Diana*

first all-white wedding was solemnized in a grove of fir trees

Double wedding performed by Rev. Daniel Lee -- July 16, 1837

Miss Anna Maria Pittman married Rev. Jason Lee

Miss Susan Downing, missionary teacher,

married Rev. Cyrus Shepard the mission’s frail schoolteacher

These two were the first Christian brides in the Pacific Northwest

WILLAMETTE CATTLE COMPANY ATTEMPTS TO GATHER A HERD

For three months Ewing Young shunted back and forth -- from San Francisco to Monterey,

south to Santa Barbara, north again and across the Golden Gate to Sonoma

before finally he was allowed to purchase eight hundred cattle at $3 each -- summer 1837

And such cattle!

because the Mexican officials pocketed Ewing Young’s money, the missions and ranchos

were ordered to furnish the stock naturally palmed off on the foreigners

Young was moving as fast he could

he bought forty riding horses at $12 a head from the Russian settlement on the Russian River

he added his five more footloose Americans to his crew

and began throwing the rebellious cattle together into a trail herd

En route, they had met Jacob Lease, a sheepman, whom they persuaded

to drive his flock north to sell to Rev. Jason Lee’s missionaries

CATHOLIC EFFORT IN THE MID-WEST EXPANDS

Great number of Potawatomi Indians, after being forced to give up their homelands,

were relocated on the banks of the Missouri River

not far from the mouth from the Nebraska (or Platte) River

their principal settlement was near Council Bluffs (opposite modern Omaha)

for some time these Potawatomis had asked for the assistance of a Catholic priest

Jesuits serving in Missouri decide to install a second mission

near the mouth of the Nebraska (or Platte) River -- 1837

FATHER PIERRE JEAN DE SMET IS ASSIGNED A MISSION IN WESTERN IOWA

Father De Smet had spent ten years serving as a Catholic priest to the Native Americans in the East

now was assigned for three years to serve as Catholic missionary in Western Iowa 1837-[1840]

WILLIAM H. GRAY’S EXPEDITION TO ST. LOUIS SUFFERED ATTACK

Crossing the Plains his party was attacked at Ash Hollow on the North Platte River

Sioux Indians jumped the little band of travelers who dashed across the river to escape with warriors in close pursuit, Gray sought safety atop a hill

after an exchange of rifle fire a French Canadian trader with the Sioux met with Gray

and told him the Indians meant to wipe out the defenders

at this point, according to Gray, warriors burst into the defenses

and killed all four of the young Indians and took the horses

although robbed, Gray and two white companions were allowed to depart with their lives

Gray and his two white companions barely escaped, but they continued their journey to St. Louis

WILLAMETTE CATTLE COMPANY DELIVERS ANIMALS TO OREGON

Ewing Young and his tired, bedraggled Americans returned to the Willamette Valley

with no less than 630 head of lean Spanish cattle

some seven hundred miles from their starting point in the Sacramento Valley

and eighteen or nineteen weeks after heading the herd northward

They reached a corral on Young’s Chehalem Valley pasture -- mid-October 1837 about 1/4 of 800 cattle and forty horses were lost on drive to Fort Vancouver

Ewing Young’s acquaintance with California and knowledge of overland route

were important factors toward achieving success

Young had done well considering length of the difficult overland trip

After the herders had been paid in cattle at the rate of twenty dollars a month,

remaining stock was distributed among the investors

Methodist mission received eighty head

Young’s share was 135 head

he had shown the way, and in years to come

many a herd followed the Siskiyou Trail from California to Oregon

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY MONOPOLY ON CATTLE IS BROKEN

Willamette Cattle Company sold cattle to settlers in Oregon

at a higher price than Hudson’s Bay Company

but the owners could keep the calves -- a practice the Hudson’s Bay did not allow

ability to keep calves broke the Company’s beef monopoly

Spanish animals provided the core of the American herd

for the new community of American mountain men

Methodist mission received eighty head

Ewing Young acquired considerable property by this effort

Young’s share was 135 head

he had shown the way, and in years to come

many a herd followed the Siskiyou Trail from California to Oregon

Effect of the animals on public morale was tremendous

until this moment the thirty-odd settlers in the Willamette Valley

had possessed almost nothing they could call their own

titles to their land were clouded, since no sovereignty yet existed

crops had value only if Hudson’s Bay Company chose to buy

now owners could keep the calves -- a practice the Hudson’s Bay did not allow

ability to keep calves broke the Company’s beef monopoly

EWING YOUNG’S FINANCIAL EMPIRE GROWS

Young acquired considerable property through his cattle drive effort

His struggles with the Hudson’s Bay Company behind him,

Young maintained cordial relations established with the Methodists and the French Canadians

His new-found prosperity was grounded in cattle and horses

which thrived because of his ambition, energy and an acute business sense

was the heart of his agricultural and mercantile domain

Ewing Young, mountain man, emerged as the wealthiest citizen of the Willamette Valley

WAIILATPU DIVERSIFICATION

Dr. Whitman returned to Hudson’s Bay Company’s Fort Boise

to retrieve the two-wheeled cart

he drove it to Fort Walla Walla -- September 1, 1837

which opened the Oregon Trail as far as the Hudson’s Bay Company fort

Whitman’s school was opened in the missionary’s kitchen -- 1837-[1838]

during the first year ten to fifteen pupils were taught by Narcissa

school soon moved into a larger room where hired teachers instructed

a growing number of French-Canadian children and a decreasing number of native children

Dr. Whitman fenced 250 acres and cultivated 200 acres with grain

he began an irrigation project at the mission

Indians were impressed with the magic water worked on the land

Dr. Whitman built a small grist mill to provide corn, rye, and wheat meal

At this time a frequently fatal fever swept through the Cayuse villages

near the Waiilatpu Mission in the Walla Walla Valley

SECOND REINFORCEMENT TO THE METHODIST’S CHAMPOEG MISSION

Methodist Mission Society added three more Americans to assist the Lees at Mission Bottom

who arrived at Fort Vancouver directly from Boston aboard the Sumatra -- September 7, 1837

after a two hundred day voyage

Leader Rev. David Leslie and Mary A. (Kinney) Leslie and three children was in charge of the effort

Leslie, along with his siblings, was orphaned as a child when his mother and minister father died

he had become acquainted with Jason Lee during Lee’s fund-raising and recruiting tour

both men were alumni of Wilbraham Academy in Wilbraham, Massachusetts

Bachelor Rev. Henry Kirk W. (or H.K.W.) Perkins and teacher Miss Margaret Smith Jewett

accompanied Rev. Leslie

Margaret Smith Jewett had been recruited as a teacher for the mission

however, when Rev. David Leslie told her that teaching would not be possible

the young woman protested the injustice and noted other faults with the mission operation

she and Rev. Leslie spent most of the voyage locked in a bitter argument

WILLIAM J. BAILEY RETURNS TO THE PRACTICE OF MEDICINE

Dr. Elijah White his wife Sarepta and their two sons were stationed at Jason Lee’s Champoeg Mission

there Dr. White performed perhaps his greatest service to the community

when he discovered the medical background of ship-jumping, repulsively distorted

and scar-faced from an Indian attack William Bailey

Dr. White convinced William Bailey, recently returned from the cattle drive,

to resume his medical studies (and eventually begin his practice)

EXPANSION OF METHODIST MISSIONARY EFFORT

Champoeg Mission at Mission Bottom expanded to include a hospital and granary

this was the foundation of the small American settlement located in the area

Rev. Jason Lee kept a shocking record of death among the natives

he thought of them as a “dying race”

new efforts were made to convert the Indians of the Willamette Valley

Methodist missionaries began to have increased economic control in the community

they gave credit or issued drafts for labor negotiable at mission stores or at Fort Vancouver

mission store competed with Ewing Young -- now the wealthiest American settler

Additional mission sites were elected by Rev. Jason Lee besides The Dalles

Clatsop near the mouth of the Columbia River

Willamette Falls offered the potential of water power

Nisqually Mission on Puget Sound was considered

WILLIAM H. GRAY ARRIVED IN ST. LOUIS

Met with the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions leaders

who probably believed Gray’s version of the loss of the young Indian men

mountain men who later learned of the incident did not

Mountain men never forgave William H. Gray for what they believed

to be a cowardly trade brokered by the French-Canadian negotiator

Indian lives for white

Hudson’s Bay Company itself also censured William Gray

on account of the loss of the Indian young men

Gray also reported his version of the conditions as they existed at Waiilatpu and Lapwai

misrepresented himself to American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions

and created the impression he had been sent East for help

Gray convinced the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions

more missionaries were needed to assist Dr. Whitman and Rev. Spalding

Commissioners decided to enlarge the missionary effort at Waiilatpu and Lapwai

and to entrust Gray to lead the reinforcements West from St. Louis

Gray met and married Mary (Augusta Dix) Gray

Gray, envious of Dr. Marcus Whitman, took a few medical courses

he began to refer himself as Dr. Gray

REV. HENRY SPALDING FOCUSES ON THE NEZ PERCE LANGUAGE

Rev. Spalding was the first missionary to attempt writing a book in the Nez Perce language -- 1837

however, he soon discovered the alphabet he devised was not adequate to the native tongue

his seventy-two-page “primer” was never printed

ANOTHER WEDDING AT REV. JASON LEE’S MISSION

Rev. H.K.W. Perkins married Miss Elvira Johnson -- November 21, 1837

she who had been a member of the first reinforcement effort to the Methodist effort

LUMBER MILL CONSTRUCTED IN THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY

First sawmill in the Willamette Valley was established by Ewing Young -- 1837-1838

on Chehalem Creek where Ewing Young’s distillery had begun to rise two years before

Webley Hauxhurst was builder

mill supplied incoming settlers with lumber for homes at inflated prices

Soon two sawmills with powerful and energy efficient overshot wheels

were operated by Hudson’s Bay Company

both mills in Fort Vancouver area shipped dressed lumber

Profitable export trade in lumber for the Hawaiian Islands developed

lumber sold in Hawaii at $35 to $80 a thousand foot

U.S.NAVAL LIEUTENANT WILLIAM A. SLACUM RETURNED TO WASHINGTON CITY

Slacum provided the United States government a full report -- December 1837

made specific mention of the Hudson’s Bay Company:**“The Hudson’s Bay Company have extended their enterprises over an extent of country almost incalculable…. A large ship arrives annually from London and discharges cargo at Vancouver: chiefly coarse woolens, cloths, baizes, and blankets; hardware, cutlery, calicoes, cottons and cotton handkerchiefs; tea, sugar, coffee and cocoa; tobacco, soap, beads, guns, powder, lead, rum, playing cards, boots, shoes, ready-made clothing, etc., etc., besides every description of sea stores, canvas, cordage, paints, oils, chains and chain cable, anchors, etc. to refit the company’s ships that remain on the coast. These are the ship *Nereide*, the brig *Llama*, the schooner *Cadborough* and sloop *Broughton;* the steamboat *Beaver* of 150 tons, two engines of thirty horsepower each, built in London last year.”[[292]](#footnote-292)**

**“An express, as it is called, goes out in March annually from Vancouver and ascends the Columbia 900 miles in bateau. One of the chief factors, or chief traders, takes charge of the property and conveys to York Factory on Hudson’s Bay the annual returns of the business conducted by the Hudson’s Bay Company west of the Rocky Mountains in the Columbia district. This party likewise conveys to the different forts along the route goods suitable to the Indian trade. Other parties take up supplies, as they may be required, to Walla Walla, 250 miles above Vancouver; to Colville, 600 miles above; to the fort at the junction of Lewis’s River,** [Fort Hall] **700 miles above; to the south to Fort McKoys on the river Umpqua; and last year chief trader McLeod took up to the American** [Green River] **rendezvous a large supply of British manufactures.”[[293]](#footnote-293)**

**“From what I have seen, I feel perfectly satisfied that no individual enterprise can compete with this immense foreign monopoly established in our own waters. For instance, an American vessel, coming from New York or Boston to trade on the Northwest coast or the Columbia, would bring a cargo chiefly of British manufacture on which the duties had been paid,…[[294]](#footnote-294) whereas the Hudson’s Bay Company’s vessels come direct from London, discharge at Vancouver, pay no duty, nor are they subject to the expense and delay of discharging and reloading in a foreign port.”**

**“In [1829] the American brig *Owyhee*, Captain Dominis of New York, entered the Columbia and commenced trading with the Indians for beaver skins and peltries. In the course of nine months Captain Dominis procured a cargo valued at $96,000. It happened that this year the fever that has since desolated the Columbia from the fall to Oak Point appeared, and Dr. McLoughlin, the chief factor of the Hudson’s Bay Company, with all the gravity imaginable, informed me the Indians to this day believe that Dominis, of *the* *Boston ship,* brought the fever to the river. How easy was it the Hudson’s Bay Company’s agents to make the Indians believe this absurdity!…[[295]](#footnote-295)**

**“…The next American vessel that entered the river after the *Owyhee* was the brig *May Dacre* of Boston. She arrived in [835] to procure a cargo of salmon…. The owner and agent [Nathaniel Wyeth] agreed not to purchase furs, provided Dr. McLoughlin would throw no impediment in his way of procuring salmon. This enterprise failed; only 800 or 900 pounds of salmon were obtained.**

**“Stock of the Hudson’s Bay Company is held in shares (100). Chief traders and chief factors who reside in America are called partners… but they are not stockholders in perpetuity, as they cannot sell out to other stockholders, but have only a life estate in the general stock. A council annually assembles at York Factory, where reports from the different districts east and west of the Rocky Mountains are read and recorded, and their proceedings forwarded to London to the Hudson’s Bay House. Chief factors and chef traders hold a seat at this council board, and Governor Simpson presides.**

**“It is here that every new enterprise is canvassed, expense and probable profits carefully inquired into, as each member feels a personal interest in every measure adopted. If it is ascertained that in certain districts the quantity of beaver diminishes, the trappers are immediately ordered to desist for a few years, that the animals may increase, as the wealth of the country consists in its furs. And so strict are the laws among many of the northern Indian tribes to kill a beaver out of season is a crime punishable with death.”[[296]](#footnote-296)**

**“The price of a beaver skin in the Columbia district is ten shillings, or $2 payable in goods at 50 per cent on the invoice cost. Each skin averages one and a half pounds, and is worth in New York or London $5 per pound -- value $7.50. The beaver skin is the circulating medium of the country….**

**“The navigation of the Columbia is absolutely necessary to the Hudson’s Bay Company; without this they have no passage into the heart of their finest possessions in the interior. I know not what political influence they command, but this monopoly is very wealthy, and when the question of our western lines of territory is settled, they will make the most strenuous efforts to retain free navigation of the Columbia -- more important to them that the free navigation of the St. Lawrence is to the people of the United States.**

**“I beg leave to call your attention to the topography of Puget Sound and urge in the most earnest manner that this point should never be abandoned. In a military point of view, it is of the highest importance to the United States. If it were in the hands of any foreign power, especially Great Britain, with the influence she could command through the Hudson’s Bay Company over the Indians at the north on those magnificent straits of Juan de Fuca, a force of 20,000 men could be brought by water in large canoes to the sound in a few days; from thence to the Columbia, the distance is but two days’ march via the Cowlitz.**

**“I am now more convinced than ever of the importance of the Columbia River, even as a place where for eight months in the year our whalers from the coast of Japan might resort for supplies…. A custom house established at the mouth of the Columbia would effectually protect the American trader from the monopoly which the Hudson’s Bay Company enjoy at this time, and a single military post would be sufficient to give effect to the laws of the United States, and protect our citizens in their lawful avocations.”[[297]](#footnote-297)**

Slacum had charted the location of principal Indian villages

had visited Fort Vancouver to learn about the fur trade and other businesses

had gone to the Willamette Valley to the Methodist Missions

and visited nearly every settler’s cabin he passed on the way

he pronounced the Willamette Valley **“the finest grazing country in the world. Here there are no droughts as on the Pampas of Buenos Ayres or the plains of California, whilst the lands abound with richer grasses both winter and summer.”[[298]](#footnote-298)**

In his positive and thorough report to Congress Lieutenant Slacum stated

United States should not settle any northern boundary with Great Britain which lost Puget Sound

rather America should hold out for 49º North

REVOLT AGAINST FEUDALISM IN CANADA

Uprisings took place the winter of 1837-1838

in response to frustrations in political reform and ethnic conflict

Larger and more sustained conflict began in Lower Canada (Quebec) -- November 1837

led by Robert Nelson and Louis-Joseph Papineau

Less involved Upper Canada (Ontario) revolt led by William Lyon Mackenzie

(which began the next month)

probably was inspired by events south of them

Insurrection was put down but it led to several changes, some immediate; some gradual

one immediate result -- great increase in emigration from Canada to the U.S.

individual traders, merchants, industrial and commercial workers

demanded all feudal barriers be removed immediately from Canada

however, when the exclusive license of Hudson’s Bay Company came due -- [1838]

it was once again renewed by the government

LITTLE NATIONAL INTEREST IS SHOWN IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

President Van Buren submitted a report to Congress about the Pacific Northwest -- December 1837

president drew attention to the fact the British were still in control of Fort Astoria

Congress was in no mood to antagonize England

abolitionists in the North were dividing the nation into sections

segregationists in the South were occupied with expanding their area of influence

financial depression was still gripping the nation

caused, in part, by President Jackson’s dismantling the national banks

Texas and California were also problems hampering our relations with Mexico

CATHOLIC INTEREST IN COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT

Indian Catholic converts from East of the Rocky Mountains

for several years had been preaching to the natives of the Inland Empire

Dr. John McLoughlin counted twenty-six families in the French Prairie region

French-Canadians had made preparations for the arrival of priests on French Prairie

FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET ACCEPTS A NEW ASSIGNMENT IN NEBRASKA

Father De Smet wrote a letter to his superior, missionary Pierre Verhaegen -- January 26, 1838

demonstrating his eagerness to be assigned to the new mission among the Potawatomi

not far from the mouth from the Nebraska (or Platte) River

Father Verhaegen gave in to De Smet’s arguments

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY IS GRANTED A NEW LICENSE TO OPERATE

Hudson’s Bay Company board of directors in London

**“needed to justify themselves before Parliament**” -- 1838

**“Governor J.H. Pelly in London reported during the license renewal hearings that the Columbia Department’s thousand employees, twenty-one trading posts, six vessels, and two migratory trading and trapping brigades really produced no great profit but were useful to England in that they ‘compelled the American adventurers, one by one, to withdraw and are now pressing the Russian Fur Company so closely that…**[we] **hope at no very distant period to confine them to the trade of their own proper territory.’”[[299]](#footnote-299)**

Parliament renewed the exclusive license of Hudson’s Bay Company

and, English diplomats stiffened their demands that the Columbia River

and not the forty-ninth parallel be made the international boundary

POWER OF HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY ENTENDED OVER ALL BRITISH SUBJECTS

New Charter of the Hudson’s Bay Company gave it complete governmental power

over all British citizens in jointly occupied Oregon

if that was not sufficient the company’s complete economic power made up the difference

prices were set by the Hudson’s Bay Company

it paid settlers for their crops at whatever rate the Company chose

it fixed prices for goods sold to settlers -- usually doubling the London prices

Americans felt they were at the mercy of the British Company

only respect for Dr. John McLoughlin kept the situation from deteriorating more than it did

in fact, only one or two Americans ever directly challenged the Company

AMERICAN EXPANSION REMAINS A NATIONAL ISSUE

For years, congressional expansionists had agitated the Oregon question

to them the Convention of 1818 was a sellout of American interests,

the Convention of 1828 was an even worse sellout

United States, they argued, held valid title to Oregon

at least as far north as the forty-ninth parallel, if not beyond

If diplomacy could not fix a boundary west of the Continental Divide,

they wanted to abrogate the joint occupation treaty and establish a United States territory on the Columbia River -- even at the risk of war with Great Britain

This issue took on special urgency when, beginning in [1834],

Protestant missionaries founded enclaves of American citizens

in the heart of Hudson’s Bay Company domain

Debates, resolutions, and bills rocked the Congress,

directed at forcing resolution of the boundary dispute, supporting Americans living in Oregon,

and promoting the emigration of settlers to solidify the nation’s hold on that distant realm

BOOKS GENERATE INTEREST IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

After his return to the East Rev. Samuel Parker published a journal of his adventures in the West:

*An Exploring Tour Beyond the Rocky Mountains* -- 1838

Rev. Parker focused on the years [1835, 1836 and1837]

he described the geography, geology, climate,

and the number, manners and customs of the natives

he also included a map of Oregon

this book generated a great deal of popular interest in the Pacific Northwest

Parker also published a journal of his adventures in the West:

*An Exploring Tour Beyond the Rocky Mountains* -- 1838

Zenas Leonard wrote *Narratives* -- 1838

this book stirred enthusiasm in the West

C.A. Murray completed *Travels in North America* -- 1838

these writings popularized the Pacific Northwest

U.S. SENATOR LEWIS F. LINN PROPOSES TO OCCUPY OREGON

Senator Linn was an ardent Oregon booster who had been elected to the U.S. Senate from Missouri

he became an outspoken friend of the Pacific Northwest in the formative years

he believed thoroughly in American rights on the Pacific Coast

Following the report of Lieutenant William Slacum to Congress

Senator Linn proposed to create a Territorial government for the Pacific Northwest

he insisted on taking military possession of the Columbia River

and establishing military protection

he wanted not only military occupation of the Columbia River

but also the construction of an army fort on its bank

Sen. Linn introduced the first Bill to “reoccupy” the Pacific Northwest

presented to the United States Senate -- February 7, 1838

**“authorizing the occupation of the Columbia or Oregon River, establishing a territory north of latitude 42 degrees, and west of the Rocky mountains to be called Oregon Territory; authorizing the establishment of a fort on that river, and the occupation of the country by the military forces of the United States….”**

In this effort, he was backed less noisily but not less effectively

by his Missouri colleague, Senator Thomas Hart Benton

Although not successful on this try, Senator Linn followed up

by presenting memorials from the people of Pacific Northwest

and by submitting numerous resolutions asserting America’s claims

WILLIAM GRAY REACHES BOSTON

Gray was coolly received by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions

after his perilous ride across the continent,

but the trip gained him two positive changes in his life:

•he attended medical college briefly,

•and he married Mary Augusta Dix

AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS SEEKS RECRUITS

At this time the American Board was recruiting the only reinforcements it was to send to Oregon

William H. Gray agreed to lead out to the mission field

three Congregational ministers and their wives who were headed for Oregon:

•serious-minded Rev. Cushing Eells and his invalid, frail-looking wife,

Myra (Fairbanks) Eells

•tall, shy Rev. Elkanah Walker and his cheerful wife, Mary (Richardson) Walker

•fault-finding but intelligent Rev. Asa Bowen Smith

and his frail and sickly wife Sarah (Gilbert) Smith

Gray and his wife joined this group, and the party headed overland for Oregon -- March 1838

(before they reached St. Louis, they were joined by bachelor Cornelius Rodgers, a lay helper)

DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN PLANS TO GO ON FURLOUGH

Long-planned trip to London had been scheduled to begin -- March 22, 1838

Chief Factor was to travel with the annual Company express across Athabasca Pass

When Rev. Jason Lee heard of the opportunity, he asked if he might go along

Dr. McLoughlin uncharacteristically turned down Lee’s request

Dr. McLoughlin also asserted his land claim to the minister including his right to Governor Islan

REV. DANIEL LEE AND REV. H.K.W. PERKINS SEEK A NEW MISSION SITE

Methodist missionaries Rev. Daniel Lee and Rev. H.K.W. Perkins

left the Willamette station by canoe -- March 14, 1838

with a small cargo of supplies to establish a new mission

After their arrival they selected a site about three miles below the Dalles of the Columbia River and about a half a mile from the shore on the south side (at today’s town site)

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY REJECTS AN AMERICAN PROPOSAL

Hudson’s Bay Company provided the only law and order in the Columbia Department

Methodist missionaries suggested two persons be named as magistrates

to administer justice according to American law

this suggestion was rejected by Hudson’s Bay Company’s Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin

WILLAMETTE SETTLERS HOLD A MEETING

Rev. Jason Lee summoned a meeting at the Methodist mission house -- March 16, 1838

it was attended, in addition to the resident missionaries,

by more than a dozen American settlers and by nine French Canadians

purpose of the meeting, as they knew in advance, was to approve a petition

to the Congress of the United States along lines suggested more than a year ago by Naval Lieutenant William Slacum

“OREGON MEMORIAL” IS WRITTEN

Rev. David Leslie and young Philip L. Edwards -- lay-assistant to Rev. Jason Lee

wrote the “Oregon Memorial” to President Martin Van Buren

they asked the president to **“take formal and speedy possession of the Oregon country”**

Memorial asked for American “Law and Order” in the Pacific Northwest

it was a plea for American rights and an extension of the laws of the United States

especially regarding the protection of Americans’ land claims

without access to courts, Americans remained dependent on Hudson's Bay Company

it stated in part: **“We flatter ourselves that we are the germ of a great state.... The country must populate. The Congress of the United States must say by whom. The natural resources of the country, with a well-judged civil code, will invite a good community. But a good community will hardly emigrate to a country which promises no protection to life or property.”[[300]](#footnote-300)**

In addition, the Memorial spoke of the fertility of the Willamette and Umpqua valleys

noted the unsurpassed facilities for stock raising

reported on the mild and pleasant climate of Western Oregon

made special note of the growing trade with the Hawaiian Islands

OREGON MEMORIAL SIGNED

Next the Memorial was circulated in the Willamette Valley by Rev. Jason Lee

of the fifty-one American settlers in the Pacific Northwest twenty-one Americans signed

all ten of the mission members and eleven other American settlers such as

John Turner, who had arrived with Jedediah Smith [1828]

Solomon H. Smith and Calvin Tibbetts, who had come with Wyeth’s first expedition;

and Ewing Young, who more than anyone else had produced the material support

for the advancement of American dreams

also fifteen French-Canadians or others in the Willamette Valley signed

signatures for most were only marks such as former Hudson’s Bay Company employees

John Deportes and Joseph Gervais, who, along with Etienne Lucier,

were the area’s first settlers

Thirty-six residents in all signed the petition

CHIEF FACTOR DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN EXPANDS COMPANY INTERESTS

Inspired by the success of Ewing Young’s cattle drive and by the knowledge

that livestock could be pried loose from the Mexican governors of California, Dr. McLoughlin ordered his brig *Nereide* under Captain William Brotchie

to deliver a cargo of Fort Vancouver produce and timber to Hawaii

and import eight hundred head of sheep from San Francisco -- spring, 1838

DR. McLOUGHLIN ATTACKS REV. HERBERT BEAVER

Somehow Church of England minister Rev. Herbert Beaver

learned that Dr. McLoughlin and his wife Marguerite had begun living together

before Alexander McKay’s death aboard the *Tonquin*

in a letter to the governor and committee in London

Beaver referred to the woman, to whom McLoughlin was devoted, as: **“a female of notoriously loose character…the kept Mistress of the highest personage in your service at this station.”[[301]](#footnote-301)**

This slur came back to Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin

furiously he descended on Rev. Beaver as the latter was walking toward his house, where his wife was standing in the doorway

as the clergyman reported the event of March 19, 1838: **“…this monster in human shape…came behind me, kicked me several times, and struck me repeatedly with his fists on the back of the neck. Unable to cope with him from the immense disparity of our relative size and strength, I could not prevent him from wrenching out of my had a stout stick with which I was walking, and with which he … inflicted several severe blows on my shoulders. He then seized me from behind, round my waist, attempted to dash me on the ground, exclaiming ‘you scoundrel, I will have your life.’ In the meantime, the stick had fallen to the ground; my wife on impulse…picked it up; he took it…very viciously out of her hands and again struck me with it severely. We were then separated by the intervention of other persons….”[[302]](#footnote-302)**

CHIEF FACTOR DR. McLOUGHLIN GOES ON FURLOUGH

Dr. McLoughlin was to travel with the annual express across Athabasca Pass

a trip that had been planned far in advance

When Rev. Jason Lee heard of McLoughlin’s plan to journey East,

he asked if he might go along

McLoughlin, uncharacteristically, turned his request down

Three days after the incident with Rev. Herbert Beaver

Dr. McLoughlin left Fort Vancouver on furlough for England -- March 22, 1838

While McLoughlin was visiting England,

James Douglas was to be placed in command of operations in the Columbia Department

however, Dr. McLoughlin’s vacation was delayed for two months

METHODIST MISSION IS BUILT AT THE DALLES

Rev. Daniel Lee and Rev. H.K.W. Perkins build Wascopam Mission

on the site chosen by Rev. Jason Lee and W.H. Qillson at Celilo Falls

this location was named after Wascopam Indians of the region

Immediately after their arrival at the station, meetings were held with the Indians on Sunday

these meetings were held under the oak and pine trees with scattered stones used as seats

however, most sat on the ground, which the natives preferred

communication was through an interpreter and a mix of Chinook Jargon and native dialects

Construction on a house was started near a natural spring, with a good supply of timber

and an extended view of the Columbia River -- March 22, 1838

While construction progressed, Rev. Henry K. W. Perkins returned by canoe to Willamette station

to bring his wife and family to their new home

When Perkins and his family arrived at the Dalles,

they occupied the new dwelling even before it had a roof

fortunately the climate was dry and rain seldom fell during the summer months

This was the only branch Methodist mission that had any success converting natives

(it also became an important mission station)

WILLIAM HENRY ASHLEY PASSES AWAY

Fur trading businessman William Henry Ashley died in Boonville, Missouri -- March 26, 1838

as per his wishes he was buried at the top of an Indian mound overlooking the Missouri River

near his home in Cooper County, Missouri

even in death, his body remained near the river

on which he pursued so many adventures and found riches

REV. JASON LEE BEGINS A JOURNEY TO THE EAST COAST

Pacific Northwest settlers had two needs which only Congress could meet:

•protection by the laws of the United States

•a guarantee they might keep the lands they had already taken up

although no official claim could be filed as no government existed

Rev. Jason Lee started overland toward New York City -- March 26, 1838

he carried Rev. David Leslie and Philip L. Edwards’ “Oregon Memorial”

to Congress in Washington City

in an effort to stimulate colonization of the Pacific Northwest

for proselytizing purposes he took five native boys with him

two appealingly peak-headed teenage Chinook Indians boys

who had been rechristened William Brooks and Thomas Adams,

after two famed preachers of the day

and an additional three Calapooya teenagers

also traveling with Lee was young Philip L. Edwards

who had come west with the missionary and was now returning to Missouri

Rev. Lee also wanted to approach the Methodist Mission Society

to request additional supplies and further reinforcements for his mission efforts

In Rev. Jason Lee’s absence Rev. David Leslie, co-author of the “Oregon Memorial,”

took on the role of acting superintendent (an assignment that lasted two years)

JASON LEE MAKES STOPS ON THE WAY UP THE COLUMBIA RIVER

On his way up the Columbia River, Rev. Jason Lee paid a leisurely visit

to his nephew Daniel Lee and Rev. H.K.W. Perkins and his wife Margaret

at their new station, Wascopam Mission at Celico Falls

He then moved on to Fort Walla Walla

where he intended to join the annual brigade bound for the rendezvous

but learning that the trappers would not leave for five more week,

he passed the time by visiting his counterparts at Waiilatpu and Lapwai

REV. JASON LEE VISITS WAIILATPU

Rev Jason Lee waiting for the Hudson’s Bay Company supply caravan to form

traveled from Fort Walla Walla to Waiilatpu for a visit with the Whitmans

he wrote April 14, 1838: **“Went to Dr. Whitman’s. The water was high in the streams. Overtook Mrs. Pambrun and daughter, and a very old woman** [Madame Marie Dorion-Toupin] **who crossed the mountains with Mr. Hunt and a grown daughter. We were obliged to cross on small trees, which bent and trembled with us so as to make it difficult to keep the center of gravity. I thought a man who was with us and I should have enough to do to cross all the stuff. I took a little girl in my arms and started across, and to my astonishment was followed by the females with larger loads than I should probably have ventured with, consisting of children, saddles, blankets, saddle bags, dogs, etc., and all came safe over.”[[303]](#footnote-303)**

On the same day, Narcissa Whitman wrote in her diary: **“Saturday** [April 14, 1838] **Mrs. Pambrun came with her three daughters, Maria, Ada and Harriet, also two daughters and a son of an Iowa** [Indian], **the old woman spoken of in Washington Irving’s *Astoria* [**Madame Marie Dorion-Toupin was then about 52].**…She is now the wife of a Frenchman now residing at the Fort** [Walla Walla**].”[[304]](#footnote-304)**

REV. JASON LEE MEETS WITH DR MARCUS WHITMAM

Rev. Jason Lee shared his plans to expand his mission effort with Dr. Whitman and Rev. Spalding

these plans made even William Gray’s scheme look petty

Impressed, and taken back, by the scope of Lee’s ambition,

Whitman addressed an almost frantic letter

to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission

in it, the Presbyterian asked for two hundred and twenty helpers, missionaries, teachers, physicians, laborers, and their wives, plus a flour mill,

bales of hardware and trade goods and **“several tons of iron and steel”[[305]](#footnote-305)**

However, at that very moment though they could not know it,

William Gray was starting back to the Northwest not with two hundred helpers but with eight,

and with no more equipment than could be packed on horseback

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions was stretched to the limit

by the 360 stations it supported throughout the world

in truth, no more equipment than could be packed on a horse

would be dispatched to Oregon

Rev. Jason Lee carried this correspondence east

Jason Lee next stopped at Fort Hall

Lee was to pick up three more traveling companions

Thomas McKay’s half-breed sons who were taken east to be educated

JASON LEE CONTINUES HIS JOURNEY EAST

At Fort Hall, Lee was to pick up three more traveling companions

the half-breed sons of Thomas McKay, John and Alexander, and take them east to be educated

to each young man he revealed, during the long nights of talk,

the expansion he envisioned for Methodism in Oregon

Thomas McKay’s two daughters, Margarette and Henrietta, bordered at the Whitman’s mission

where they attended school

FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET TRAVELS UP THE MISSOURI RIVER

Aboard the steamboat *Howard --* May 2, 1838

he was joined by Father Felix Verreydt and Brother John Mazelli at Fort Leavenworth

*Howard* had technical problems and passengers changed to the *Wilmington*

Steamboat travel was not without danger

Missouri River is a difficult river to navigate

it is full of obstacles, small islands or sandbanks, and its waters can be very shallow

ship could sink in no time when it became impaled on an invisible obstacle

in the shallow and murky waters

Missouri runs at the foot of high cliffs dotted with dark caves

river cuts through thick forests and endless grasslands, called “la prairie” by the French

riverbanks were mostly deserted

Missouri’s current is strong

to make way, boat must have sufficient draught and push its power to the limit

risk of an exploding boiler is real

On the journey Father De Smet visited with the local tribes, such as Iowas, Sauks and Otos,

whenever the boat stopped to refuel

INTEREST IN ACQUIRING CATHOLIC PRIESTS IN COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT REMAINS

Catholic Indian converts from East of the Rocky Mountains

had been preaching to the natives of the Inland Empire

French-Canadians had been preparing for the anticipated arrival of priests on French Prairie

Dr. John McLoughlin counted twenty-six families in the French Prairie district

Mission Du Walamette (later also known as the Log Church or St. Paul’s Catholic Church)

had been built [1836]

and was waiting for the arrival of a Catholic priest to serve the community

NEW HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY WAS GRANTED A NEW BUSINESS LICENSE

British Government granted the Company a new operating license

to run for a twenty-one-year term -- May 1838

a portion of the new agreement committed the Company to agricultural expansion

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY CHANGES ITS POLICY ON RELIGION

Original policy stipulated no missions could be established south of the Columbia River “as the sovereignty of that country is still undecided.”

Now the company changed its policy based on arguments from Dr. McLoughlin

and the fact Rev. Jason Lee and his companions were already active there

Hudson’s Bay Company Governor Simpson sent word the Company no longer objected

to a Catholic Mission located in Willamette Valley

Hudson’s Bay Company even agreed to subsidize the traveling expenses of two Catholic priests

FATHER BLANCHET AND FATHER DEMERS APPOINTED TO THE COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT

Both Catholic priests were under the supervision of the Archbishop of Quebec Joseph Signay

Father Francois Norbert Blanchet of Montreal Diocese was appointed

to serve as Father in the Columbia Department

he was to teach, build and administer the sacraments

with the permission of Hudson’s Bay Company

Father Modeste Demers, a young priest from Red River colony (Winnipeg, Canada)

was named Father Blanchet’s assistant

When their orders were written, they were charged to serve the Indians

as well as the Christians of the area

TWO CATHOLIC PRIESTS ARE APPOINTED TO THE COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT

Francis Norbert Blanchet was born at St. Pierre, Canada [September 3, 1795]

and died [June 18, 1883]

he was the son of a Canadian farmer and attended Catholic seminary in Quebec, Canada

He spent several years gaining experience pastoring the Micmac Indians

in French speaking New Brunswick, Canada

as conditions demanded in that wilderness region,

he traveled by canoe, dog sled, horse and snow shoes

there he had shown his enthusiasm for the natives by learning their language

and learning English so that he could minister to a group of Irishmen living there

Next he was occupied with missionary work in the Montreal District [until 1838]

he won general admiration during a serious plague

when he showed himself fearless in caring for the ill -- despite his own danger of infection

CATHOLIC PRIESTS JOURNEY TO THE NORTHWEST

Father Francis Norbert Blanchet left Montreal, Canada -- May 1838

he and Father Modeste Demers traveled with a large company of settlers and traders

in the Hudson’s Bay Company annual westbound “Columbia Express”

crossing Canada bound for Fort Vancouver

John Rowand was the man designated to bring them safely to their destination

by canoe, boat and barge, as well as on foot and horseback

this trip covered 5,325 miles and took six months to reach the Columbia Department

with stops made at forts Colville, Okanogan, and Walla Walla

Father Blanchet preached all along the way

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY’S COLUMBIA EXPRESS WAS A MOTLY CREW

Voyageurs were very much like sailors with a wife in every port

Hudson’s Bay Company preferred servants without home ties

and was indifferent to their temporary relations with native women

Company employees formed unions which were often permanent

some were even blessed by the Church

While the voyageurs working for Hudson’s Bay Company did not indulge in shameless licentiousness

as did the freemen who work for the Company

the voyageurs did manage to scandalize the Catholic missionaries who traveled with them

Father Blanchet described the brigade

as **“a hideous assemblage of persons of both sexes, stripped of all moral principles”[[306]](#footnote-306)**

yet after working with the boatmen for fifteen days, he baptized forty

he performed thirteen marriages and broke up a number of free unions

DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN LEAVES FORT VANCOUVER ON VACATION

Date of the Chief Factor’s departure was moved [from March 22] to May 1838

Dr. McLoughlin left Fort Vancouver for England

Tall, slim and imperially erect James Douglas was placed in charge of Columbia Department

he was so dark complexioned that men occasionally called him after a famous Scottish namesake,

“the Black Douglas”

POWER OF HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY KEEPS ORDER IN THE COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT

Charter of the Hudson's Bay Company gave it complete governmental power

over all British citizens in jointly occupied Oregon

if that did not suffice, the company’s complete economic power made up the difference

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY’S REPORT TO PARLIAMENT

Governor John Henry Pelly in London told Parliament

during the hearings about the renewal of the company’s license -- 1838

that the Hudson’s Bay Company’s Columbia Department’s thousand employees,

twenty-one trading posts, six vessels, and two migratory trading and trapping brigades

they did not produce a great profit but were valuable to England because

they **“compelled** **the American adventurers, one by one, to withdraw** [Wyeth and Dominis, for example] **and are now** **pressing the Russian Fur Company.”[[307]](#footnote-307)**

PROTESTANT MISSIONARY REINFORCEMENTS ORGANIZED IN ST. LOUIS

As agreed to with American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in St. Louis

William H. and Mary Gray would lead

three Congregational ministers and their wives to the mission field

Rev. and Mrs. Cushing (Myra Fairbanks) Eells who was an invalid

Rev. and Mrs. Elkanah (Mary Richardson) Walker

Rev. Asa Bowen Smith and his wife Sara (Gilbert) Smith who was frail

also traveling West with the expedition was twenty-three-year-old bachelor

Cornelius Rodgers, a lay (not ordained) helper

this was all the assistance the overwhelmed American Board

would ever be able to dispatch to Oregon as they also were responsible

for three hundred and sixty other stations throughout the world

SUPPLY CARAVAN FOR THE 1838 RENDEZVOUS CARRIES PROTESTANT MISSIONARIES

Pierre Chouteau, Jr. & Company caravan was led from St. Louis by Andrew Drips,

as Tom “Broken Hand” Fitzpatrick left the trapping scene for a year

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions Missionary reinforcement

led by William Gray

attached itself to the 1838 supply caravan

once more Mountain Men helped plant Americans in Oregon

four white women and their husbands

and a bachelor lay helper

These reinforcement missionaries left mainly a sour residue on the pages of history

William H. Gray had crossed the continent twice,

but the others did not demonstrate anything like the adaptability

of Jason Lee, Marcus Whitman, or even Samuel Parker

These missionaries complained eternally about the weather, land, food, unceasing labor,

forced desecration of the Sabbath, the sinful mountaineers,

and especially the difficulty of rendering proper homage to God

**“Often I have no time to read the Bible from morning to night.”[[308]](#footnote-308)**

Rev. Asa Smith complained

but these faults paled beside an utter incompatibility among themselves

that produced daily quarrels over mostly trivial matters

as Mary Walker noted: **“We have a strange company of Missionaries. Scarcely one who is not intolerable on some account.”[[309]](#footnote-309)**

FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET MEETS THE POTAWATOMI INDIANS

Region where the Potawatomis were forced to reestablish themselves

was situated in the western portion of Iowa

it was the hunting ground of the Sioux who disliked all intruders

De Smet, Father Felix Verreydt and Brother John Mazelli

disembarked from the *Wilmington* -- June 1, 1838

on the banks of Lake Manawa, a secondary channel of the Missouri River

They were met by 2000 Indians who displayed much indifference

their chief William (Billy) Caldwell, a half-bred of Irish ancestry,

welcomed the missionaries and offered to them three huts

four miles north of his camp,

De Smet and his companions accepted the invitation

previous year one of these huts was occupied by Colonel Stephen Watts Kearny

his task was to protect these relocated tribes from Indiana and Illinois, from their neighbors -- the fierce Sioux Indians

Log hut is built to be used as the mission church -- “St. Joseph church”

ST. JOSEPH MISSION TO THE POTAWATOMIS OPENS

More huts were built next to St. Joseph church

by Father De Smet, Father Felix Verreydt and Brother John Mazelli

(mission stood approximately on the corner of today's Pierce and Union streets

in Council Bluffs)

this was the second Catholic effort in the Mid-West -- after St. Ferdinand de Florissant

(which had been established in Missouri more than fifty years previous)

Hundreds of Indians became sick

they did not have any defense against the most common Europeans diseases

when there is an epidemic the number of victims is enormous

each year the Indian population is again decimated

St. Joseph Mission was surrounded by the “American desert”

(during the winter months the missionaries must use their weapons

to protect themselves from aggressive and famished animals such as bears and wolves)

DEATH OF MRS. ANNA MARIE PITTMAN LEE

While Rev. Jason Lee was away in the East his wife gave birth to a son -- June 23, 1838

this child lived only two days and the following day Anna Pittman Lee died

Immediately the first rider in a chain of messengers was dispatched

to inform Jason Lee of the tragic losses

1838 WIND RIVER RENDEZVOUS

Annual gathering of the Mountain Men and natives was held -- July 5-[12], 1838

this year it was moved east to where the Popo Agie River flows into the Wind River

to create the Bighorn River (near today’s Riverton, Wyoming)

As might be expected, several trappers went to the usual site

at Fort Bonneville on Horse Creek

instead of the fourth successive event, there they only found a large herd of buffalo and a note telling of the new location

At the rendezvous, the missionaries traveling with William and Mary Gray

found solace in Sabbaths undisturbed by the demands of travel

however, the wicked antics of the Mountain Men upset them terribly

**“…when Jim Bridger’s brigade stormed into camp and promptly staged a scalp dance in front of the missionaries’ tents, ‘They looked like the emissaries of the Devil worshiping their own master,’ clucked Myra Eells.”[[310]](#footnote-310)**

But it was more than quarrelsome and sanctimonious behavior

that made these missionaries objectionable to the trappers and traders

Mountain Men knew how William Gray, the year before, had defied everyone’s advice

and led his little party of Indians to their death

no one doubted that he had, in fact, sacrificed their lives to save his own

now here was Gray again at the rendezvous enjoying the protection and hospitality

of the recently reorganized Pierre Chouteau, Jr. & Company fur traders

THREAT TO WILLIAM GRAY’S LIFE

Pious and judgmental William Gray managed to infuriate even the fun-loving Mountain Men

with Independence Day celebrations still rollicking around the trapper camp

Mountain Men’s resentment of William Gray overflowed -- about 1:00 A.M July 5, 1838 Mr. and Mrs. Gray and Rev. and Mrs. Eells awoke to a **“rush of drunken men coming directly towards our tent. Mr. Eells got up immediately and went to the door of the tent in a moment. Four men came swearing and blaspheming, inquiring for Mr. Gray.… They said they wished to settle accounts with Mr. Gray, then they should be off.”[[311]](#footnote-311)**

Cushing Eells stalled while William Gray and Myra Eells fumbled frantically to load a rifle

and slip under the back tent flap

Eventually the Mountain Men withdrew to their camp

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY ARRIVES AT THE RENDEZVOUS

Francis Ermatinger led the arrival of the company brigade into the rendezvous -- July 8, 1838

it was noted by the missionaries as a glorious Sabbath day featuring divine worship services

Ermatinger brought letters from Dr. Marcus Whitman and Rev. Henry Spalding

and stood ready to escort the American Board reinforcements on to the Columbia River

Also with the newcomers was Rev. Jason Lee on his Eastward journey

to organize reinforcements for his own Methodist enterprise

REV. DANIEL LEE DRIVE A HERD OF CATTLE TO THE WILLMAETTE VALLEY

Rev. Daniel Lee took the first cattle across the Cascade Mountains

when he drove fourteen head from the Willamette Valley to Wascopam Mission

over what became known as the Rev. Daniel Lee Trail -- summer 1838

Daniel Lee’s route was difficult and dangerous

and in many places far too narrow to be used by wagons

due to steep cliffs that fell straight into the Columbia River

FATHER BLANCHET CONTINUES WEST

Catholic priest picked up another priest, Father Modeste Demers,

at the Red River settlement -- July 10, 1838

additional stops were made at forts Colville, Okanogan, and Walla Walla

Appearance of Catholic missionaries on their way to Fort Vancouver

caused fresh uneasiness among Protestant missionaries and settlers as they were considered by Americans to be British reinforcements

REV. JASON LEE DEPARTED FROM THE RENDEZVOUS

After leaving the Wind River Rendezvous, Jason Lee arrived at the Missouri border

where he was overtaken by the last of a series of relay riders bearing word

that the Methodist missionary’s wife and first-born son had both died in childbirth

There was no time for grief -- Lee continued on his journey to the East

exchanging horses for canoes, he swept down the Missouri River, into the Mississippi

FLATHEAD AND NEZ PERCE NATIVES LEARN OF THE DEATH OF OLD IGNACE LA MOUSSE

When the sad news arrived two Iroquois, Young Ignace (a.k.a. Francois Xavier) and Pierre Gaucher,

bravely set out to complete the mission begun by Old Ignace six years before

Traveling with a Hudson’s Bay Company brigade, they learned of a Black Robe

who was bringing the Catholic faith to the Pottawatomie Indians

at a little mission in Council Bluffs, Iowa

DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN IN LONDON

Chief Factor took leave of absence from Fort Vancouver [spring] and summer 1838

He met with Governor of Rupert’s Land George Simpson and the Hudson’s Bay Company directors

to discuss expanding agricultural efforts in the Columbia Department

Dr. McLoughlin again proposed his idea of forming “The Oragon Beef and Tallow Company”

To avoid possibly invalidating the Company's charter

(which did not provide for using capital for agricultural purposes)

a subsidiary enterprise, the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, was formed

only stockholders and officers of the Hudson's Bay Company were allowed to purchase stock

in the new enterprise

LIFE AT FORT VANCOUVER

Business was the first consideration -- no idlers were tolerated

farmers, gardeners, and dairymen, blacksmiths, carpenters, tinners, millwrights, coopers, and a baker were all kept occupied

carpenters also built boats for the river trade and even coasting vessels

coopers made barrels for shipping flour and salted salmon

Officers were nearly all well-educated gentlemen

who enjoyed good living, books, and agreeable company

Wives of officers were usually half-caste women

were excellent housekeepers and good mothers

When agriculture and fishing came into full production at Fort Vancouver

standard weekly ration per man was twenty-one pounds of salmon

and a bushel of potatoes

Dining hall served excellent meals, but also provided good conversation

all conducted in perfect propriety and pleasing to the most refined gentleman

officers’ wives and their children did not eat with the men

but at tables in a separate hall

Children spent most of the summer out of doors

engaging in all manner of sports and games

gained special skill in horsemanship

winter -- school was maintained at the fort

Religious services were conducted on Sunday

either by Dr. McLoughlin or by some visiting missionary or priest

Village had its formal dances, regattas, and other amusements

a highlight in June was when the annual brigade arrived with up-river traders

LIVING CONDITIONS AT FORT VANCOUVER

As described by Rev. Herbert Beaver with a cynical eye -- 1838

**“...indecent lodging for all classes...eleven persons in the same room, which is undivided and thirty feet by fifteen in size and in which, with the exception of the man, who takes his meals at the mess, they all eat, wash and dry their clothes, none ever being hung out.”[[312]](#footnote-312)**

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY OUTPOSTS

Fort Langley

became overcrowded so work began on a new fort -- 1838

two miles upriver in part to be closer to the best farmland

dominant concern during Fort Langley’s first two decades was relations with Indians

Governor of Rupert’s Land George Simpson wrote that: **“…the great population of this part of the country and the hostile character they bear, renders it necessary to send a larger force among them than the trade in the first instance justifies. We are only respected by these treacherous savages in proportion to our strength and means of defense.”[[313]](#footnote-313)**

Fort Colville

enclosure was 208 feet square with a fourteen foot high stockade

no elaborate defenses were built -- only one bastion was constructed

some houses were even built outside of the fort

agricultural development led to the construction of a mill and many other buildings

Fort Colville soon appeared to be a thriving farming community

Fort William on Wappatoo Island in the Columbia River was taken over by Chief Factor McLoughlin

who moved Hudson’s Bay Company’s principal dairy herd from Fort Vancouver

this was maintained on Wappatoo Island by Laurent Sauve -- 1838

Sauve lived there so long that today Island is called Sauvie or Sauvie’s Island

CATTLE ARE DELIVERED TO HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY’S COWLITZ FARM

While Chief Factor McLoughlin was on furlough,

James Douglas sent a herd of cattle to the Cowlitz from Fort Vancouver -- summer 1838

with Mr. Ross and eight men with a number of agricultural implements

(Chief Trader John Tod was sent to superintend establishment of the farm [fall of 1838])

SHEEP ARRIVE IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Captain Brotchie eventually purchased sheep from General Vallejo in California

634 of which survived the voyage north, and were landed at Fort Nisqually -- summer 1838

these rough California sheep became the foundation of the Hudson’s Bay Company flock

TRAGEDY ON THE COLUMBIA RIVER

Mrs. Sarepta White, wife of Dr. Elijah White, was traveling by canoe

with her infant son Jason and Rev. David Leslie

as they were returning after a visit with Mrs. Elvira (Johnson) Perkins at Wascopam

Their canoe overturned below Celico Falls on the Columbia River

Rev. David Leslie, by supreme effort, aided the mother in clinging to the overturned boat

tragically, the child was drowned -- August 1838

YOUNG IGNACE LA MOUSSE AND PIERRE GAUCHER CONTACT A CATHOLIC PRIEST

Arriving at the St. Joseph Mission in Council Bluffs mission, the Catholic two Iroquois seekers

met the missionary Belgian priest Father Pierre De Smet

More than a little touched by their story and their request for “Black Robes”

Father De Smet agreed to return to St. Louis with the Indians

and plead their case before his Bishop

UNITED STATES PREPARES ITS OWN AROUND THE WORLD SCIENTIFIC EXPEDEITION

Since [1818] the United States and Great Britain had agreed to jointly occupy Oregon

but for most of that time only the British had maintained a presence in the Far West

through the agency of the Hudson’s Bay Company

however, diplomats from both countries realized that the terms of joint occupancy

could not be extended indefinitely

United States Congress after a great deal of prodding from President John Quincy Adams

decided to send a scientific expedition around the world to promote commerce

and to offer protection to the Pacific whaling and seal hunting industries [1828]

however, because of numerous impediments the act was not passed by Congress until [1836]

because only the United States navy had American ships capable of circumnavigating the world

a naval expedition was authorized out of necessity

Although navy officers and men were trained for fighting ships

other skills would be required for duties assigned to this expedition

in addition to exploration the navy squadron was assigned to conduct extensive surveys

of newly-discovered areas and also those regions previously found but not well charted

an all-civilian scientific corps was to carry out that assignment

which imposed an additional command responsibility on the navy officers

few naval officers had any surveying experience and none knew how to work with scientists

This was to be a four year voyage of exploration -- 1838-[1842]

to investigate South America, tour of Antarctica where they discovered Wilkes Land, Antarctic Ocean, Cape Verde and Tuamoti Islands, New South Wales, The Philippines, Fiji,

and the Hawaiian Island chain ending with a look at the whale fisheries

and a survey the Northwest coast and Columbia River

U.S. SCIENTIFIC EXPLORING EXPEDITION SETS OUT ON AN AROUND THE WORLD TRIP

U.S. Naval Lieutenant Charles Wilkes was in charge of the Depot of Charts and Instruments

in Washington City (now known as the Naval Observatory)

Wilkes had been chosen to lead the United States Exploring Expedition

(also known as the “U.S. Ex .Ex.” or the “Wilkes Expedition”)

over all of the other forty lieutenants assigned to the expedition

although they had more sailing time, Wilkes displayed leadership characteristics

he possessed vision, intelligence and determination

in fact, several naval lieutenants senior to Wilkes were assigned to serve under him

Congress had sent the Scientific Exploring Expedition on a journey around the world

780-ton *Vincennes* carried a crew of eighty and was the flagship of the fleet

she carried eighteen guns

650-ton *Peacock* under the command of Lieutenant William L. Hudson

was armed with eight long 24-pounders and two long 9-pounders

store ship 46-ton *Relief* carried seven guns

brig: *Porpoise*, a 230-ton gun-brig under Lieutenant Cadwalader Ringgold,

carried an eighty-man crew

she was armed with two nine-pound cannons and twenty-four cannonades

two schooners that served as tenders:

*Sea Gull* 110 tons carrying two guns, attended the *Porpoise*

and *Flying Fish --* ninety-six tons with two guns and a crew of fifteen tender to *Peacock*

*Peacock* accompanied by *Flying Fish* were ordered to conduct surveys

in central and southern Pacific waters and afterward to rendezvous with Wilkes

at the Columbia River

*Relief* and *Seagull* were to sail from the South Seas before meeting Wilkes at the Columbia River

Being a peaceful expedition of discovery, these ships were stripped of heavy armament

and that space was given over to scientific exploration

U.S. NAVAL LIEUTENANT CHARLES WILKES WAS A TEMPERAMENTAL MAN

Wilkes had advanced in his career through a relentless campaign of self-improvement

he largely trained himself in surveying work and reserved for himself and other naval officers

some of the scientific duties -- including all those connected with surveying and cartography

he demanded much of himself and those around him

he enforced harsh discipline, including lashes with the cat-o’-nine-tails

(a whip with nine knotted cords fastened to a handle that left marks like a cat scratch

on the bare backs of disobedient men)

Wilkes possessed a short temper

he developed a reputation as sometimes being arrogant and fickle

his bad habits tended to overshadow his good qualities

Herman Melville relied on details of Wilkes’ *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition*

and borrowed some aspects of his personality and conduct for his characterization

of Captain Ahab in the novel *Moby Dick*

WILKES EXPEDITION SAILS FROM HAMPTON ROADES, VIRGINIA

Six oddly-matched ships sailed from Hampton Roads, Virginia -- August 9, 1838

bound for a scientific investigation under United States Naval Lieutenant Charles Wilkes

Wilkes “United States Exploring Expedition” (or in military language “U.S. Ex. Ex.”)

was composed of eighty-two officers and 342 sailors accompanied by fourteen civilians:

•twelve scientists provided the necessary expertise for the expedition:

-two naturalists, who investigated the workings of nature,

Titian Ramsay Peale of the USS *Peacock* and Dr. Charles Pickering

-two botanists who studies plants,

William Rich of the USS *Relief*

William Dunlop Brackenridge assistant botanist aboard the USS *Vincennes*

-one taxidermist who preserved animal specimens,

John W. W. Dyes of the USS *Vincennes*

-one mineralogist,

James Dwight Dana mineralogist and geologist; on the USS *Peacock*

-one mathematical instrument maker, John G. Brown of USS *Vincennes*

-one philologist who investigated native languages and served as interpreter

Horatio Emmons Hale with the USS *Peacock*

-one interpreter, F. L. Davenport of the USS *Peacock*

-one conchologist Joseph Pitty Couthouy of the USS *Vincennes* who studied shells

-two other scientists of undetermined skills, Henry Wilkes and John Dean

•two artists, Joseph Drayton and Alfred A. Agate, accompanied the expedition

Wilkes Expedition used the trade winds to reach South America

by first crossing the Atlantic Ocean to the Madeira Islands before turning south

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN OREGON ORGANIZES

Presbyterian Church was formally organized at Waiilatpu -- August 18, 1838

Rev. Henry Spalding -- Pastor

Dr. Marcus Whitman -- Ruling Elder

both of their wives also were charter members

two native Hawaiians -- Joseph and Maria Maki

Next day French-Canadian fur trapper Charles Compo was admitted by baptism

after which he legally married a Nez Perce woman

William H. Gray and Cornelius Rogers en route with the reinforcements

joined the church by letter from the East

OREGON PROVISIONAL EMIGRATION SOCIETY BEGINS

Oregon Provisional Emigration Society was organized in Lynn, Massachusetts -- August 1838

while not a missionary society, its leading members were Methodist

goal of the Society was **“to prepare the way for the Christian settlement of Oregon”[[314]](#footnote-314)**

Society leaders proposed to enlist several hundred Christian families, send them overland to Oregon

and encourage them to develop the natural resources for stock raising, commerce, fishing, etc.

Society leaders also were interested in Christianizing and educating the natives

to make them citizens of a new commonwealth where all would share equal rights

Society published monthly magazine: *The Oregonian*

later the phrase “and Indian’s Advocate”was added to the title

*The Oregonian and Indian’s Advocate*

was edited by Rev. Frederick P. Tracy of Lynn, Massachusetts

who also served as secretary to the society

Future possibilities of this great country were eloquently noted by the editor

he called it **“the future home of the power which is to rule the Pacific,...the theater on which mankind are to act out a part not yet performed in the drama of life and government.** [Oregon’s] **far-spreading seas and mighty rivers** [were] to **teem with the commerce of an empire;** [her] **boundless prairies and verdant values** [were] **to feel the steps of civilized millions....”[[315]](#footnote-315)**

**(**Eleven issues were printed -- [October 1838] to [August 1839])

MISSIONARY REINFORCEMENTS ARRIVED NORTH OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER

William H. Gray returned to the Pacific Northwest accompanied by his bride Mary

with three Congregationalist ministers and their wives and a lay helper

Rev. Cushing and Mrs. Myra Eells

Rev. Elkanah and Mrs. Mary Walker

Rev. Asa Bowen and Sara Smith and Mrs. Smith

and lay helper Cornelius Rogers

Expedition arrived at Waiilatpu -- August 29, 1838

while these reinforcements were sincerely appreciated by the Whitmans and Spaldings

by the time William Gray’s bickering group reached Whitman’s station newcomers were so enraged at Gray that not one would inhabit the same district with him

Hudson’s Bay Company greeted the missionaries with ambivalence

hospitable and helpful -- yet edged by concern and suspicion

yet their missions could not take root without the company’s aid

Missionaries combined church work and farming at Waiilatpu

(they provided both a nucleus for colonization and way stations along the trail West)

WAIILATPU MISSIONAIRES ESTABLISH THEIR ROLES

American Board Missionary men, including those recently arrived, held a meeting and decided:

•to instruct Indians in their native language and to teach English as rapidly as possible;

•to accept the offer of a printing press

from the American Board of Commission of Foreign Mission missionaries in Hawaii;

•to build a grist mill and blacksmith shop at Lapwai

Assignments were made at the two current American Board of Commissioners mission stations

Waiilatpu and Lapwai

working with Dr. Whitman and Narcissa at Waiilatpu

were rasp-natured Rev. Asa and Mrs. Sara Smith who spent the winter at Waiilatpu

(before being transferred to Kamiah on the Clearwater River)

Cornelius Rogers also was assigned to Waiilatpu (until he moved to Lapwai Mission)

Whitmans undertook to give schooling to not only Indians

but also to white children -- most of them boarders at the mission

Dr. Whitman wrote: **“It gives me much pleasure to…quietly…work…for the Indians. It does not concern me so much what is to become of any particular set of Indians as to give them the offer of Salvation through the gospel & the opportunity of Civilization and then I am content to do good to all men as ‘I have opportunity’.”[[316]](#footnote-316)**

working with Rev. Henry and Eliza Spalding at Lapwai

was unwanted William Gray, who was the promoter of the expansion, and his wife Mary

Spalding and Gray quarreled throughout the winter

Cornelius Rogers who was not happy with the almost constant bickering

appealed to Dr. Whitman to provide relief

WOMEN’S CLUBS WERE ORGANIZED BY THE AMERICAN BOARD WOMEN

Columbia Maternal Association -- 1838

first woman’s club on the Pacific coast

organized at the Whitman Mission through the efforts of Narcissa Whitman

and Mrs. Cushing Eells

Social Welfare Club, a forerunner of the PTA, was begun -- 1838

Mrs. Eliza Spalding -- President

Mrs. Mary Walker -- Vice President

Mrs. Mary Gray -- Recording Secretary

Mrs. Narcissa Whitman -- Corresponding Secretary

REV. JASON LEE CONTINUES HIS JOURNEY EAST

Traveling down the Mississippi River he somehow learned that Illinois Methodists

were holding a conference at Alton, Illinois on the river’s eastern bank

Stopping at the village, he marched in his buckskin clothes up the street and into the church,

his peak-headed young Chinooks trailing behind

REV. JASON LEE’S SUCCESS

After his successful visit to the Methodist Church in Alton, Illinois

and without consulting with the Methodist Mission Society

Lee accepted invitations to lecture and preach in churches

he spent the early part of the fall stumping Illinois

to raise money for his purposed but still unauthorized mission expansion

REV. JASON LEE SPEAKS IN PEORIA, ILLINOIS

When Lee spoke at Peoria, Illinois’ Main Street Presbyterian Church -- October 1, 1838

he had with him five Native American teenage boys

three from the Calapooya tribe and two flat-headed Chinooks

one of the Chinooks, Thomas Adams, became ill and was left in Peoria

to recuperate under the care of sympathetic townspeople

Rev. Jason Lee continued his journey to the East

he accepted invitations to lecture and preach in churches

lectured in all states though which he passed

aroused a good deal of interest in far-off Pacific Northwest

TOM ADAMS REMAINS IN PEORIA, ILLINOIS

Indian Tom, as he was called, created quite a sensation

convalescing and homesick, he took to hanging around the local wagon shop

where he spun exotic yarns in broken English about the farms and furs

and the great salmon of the Willamette as he described his life in Oregon

Combination of Tom Adams’ stories and Jason Lee’s speech

created the incentive for local attorney Thomas Jefferson Farnham

to form the Oregon Dragoons for an expedition to Oregon

OREGON DRAGOONS ARE FORMED IN PEORIA, ILLINOIS

Peoria, Illinois lawyer Thomas Jefferson Farnham listened to the talks given by Rev. Jason Lee

he became interested in traveling to Oregon to save the region from the British

Sixteen members of the “Peoria Party” included: Thomas Jefferson Farnham, Amos Cook,

James L. Trask, Francis Fletcher, Owen Garrett, Joseph Holman, Quincy Adams Jordan,

Ralph L. Kilbourne, Robert Moore, Obadiah A. Oakley, Thomas Jefferson Pickett, John Prichard,

Sydney Smith, Chauncey Wood, John J. Wood and Charles Yates

Almost all the volunteers were about twenty years old, unmarried

and possessed a romantic sense of adventure

each man had his own horse, a rifle with powder and 120 musket-balls,

a Bowie knife weighing as much as 7-9 pounds and $100-150 for supplies

Thomas J. Farnham was elected Captain of what he named the “Oregon Dragoons”

(they are sometimes called the Peoria Party)

Oregon Dragoons were the first overland expedition with the avowed intention

of permanent settlement in Oregon

(they would spend the winter preparing for their adventure

and enjoying the attention of friends and neighbors less fortunate than themselves)

YOUNG IGNACE AND PIERRE GAUCHER ARRIVE IN ST. LOUIS

They were traveling with Father Pierre De Smet

who in a meeting with his Bishop, Joseph Rosati, offered himself in their service

permission was soon granted for Father De Smet to establish a mission for the Flatheads

Father De Smet decided to wait (until spring) to undertake the journey

in the meantime Young Ignace would stay with him in St. Louis

to begin gathering supplies for their trip to (Montana)

Pierre Gaucher, alone and facing cruel winter weather and extreme hardships,

walked more than 1,600 miles across the Great Plains and the Rocky Mountains

to bring the good news to the waiting Flatheads and Nez Perce

REV. AND MRS. BEAVER RETURN TO LONDON

After twenty-six turbulent months Rev. Herbert and Jane Beaver left Fort Vancouver -- October 1838

returned to London by company ship

In spite of their haughty attitudes they had enjoyed some success

they had performed many baptisms, marriages and burials

despite the fact the population at Fort Vancouver was primarily Catholic

(After their return to London, Rev. Beaver filed charges to have McLoughlin dismissed

but instead was dismissed himself with a small award for damages)

CONDITIONS AT WAIILATPU WERE CROWDED

Mission served as the home of Dr. Marcus and Narcissa Whitman, Rev. Asa and Sara Smith,

Rev. Elkanah and Mary Walker

Crowded living conditions added to the discomfort of the occupants

a second house was under construction for the Smiths,

but construction was not far enough along to enable them move in

Plans were laid to open two new missions to be opened the next spring:

•Tshimakain to serve the Spokane Indians

was to be a new mission established to work among the Spokane Indians

Archibald McDonald Chief Trader of Hudson’s Bay Company’s Fort Colville

suggested the site thirty miles northwest Spokane near present-day Ford, Washington)

and sixty miles from Lapwai

(region became own as Walker’s Prairie)

•Kamiah to serve the Nez Perce Indians

second new mission was to be located fifty miles up the Clearwater River from Lapwai

like Lapwai, this mission station would serve the Nez Perce Indians

all work on this mission was postponed (until spring)

CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON TSHIMAKAIN MISSION

Supplies to build the new American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Mission station

were obtained from Hudson’s Bay Company Fort Colville

With the help of the Spokane Indians and the blessing of their chief,

Elkanah Walker and William Gray raised the walls of the new mission

Tshimakain: “Place of the Spring” -- fall 1838

before returning to Waiilatpu (to spend the winter)

FIRST CATHOLIC PRIESTS REACH HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY’S COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT

Father Francis Norbert Blanchet and Father Modeste Demers

traveled with the Hudson’s Bay Company’s Columbia Express

news of their arrival reached Fort Colville ahead of them

representatives of five Indian tribes waited at Kettle Falls to greet them

Father Blanchet and Father Demers celebrated the first Mass held in what is now (Washington state)

at a point near Kettle Falls on the Columbia River at 3 a.m. in October 1838

they ministered to the natives for three days -- baptizing nineteen people

These two priests promised to return soon and construct a mission

among the people of the Upper Columbia River

REV. JASON STIMULATES INTEREST IN THE NORTHWEST

Rev. Jason Lee appeared in New York -- November 1838

before the Board of Managers of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Church

where he overcame the objections of the more conservative members

and won an unprecedented grant of forty thousand dollars

He launched a six-month lecture tour to help raise the sum

and to recruit volunteers to accompany him back West

(Lee would raise a total of $100,000 in cash contributions)

Philip L. Edwards, lay helper to Rev. Jason Lee who had accompanied him across the continent,

did not return to the Pacific Northwest

but he had played an important role in the development of the Pacific Northwest

he had traveled to California to drive cattle with Ewing Young

and had co-authored the Memorial to Congress carried by Rev. Jason Lee

TWO CATHOLIC PRIESTS ARRIVE AT FORT VANCOUVER

Father Francis Blanchet accompanied by Father Modeste Demers arrived by canoe

from Canada down the Columbia River to Fort Vancouver -- November 24, 1838

after numerous hardships and trials, dangers by land and water including the loss of twelve members of the expedition by drowning in the Columbia River

their hazardous 5,325-mile trip had taken six months

November 24, 1838 became the official date of the Catholic Church’s arrival

in the Pacific Northwest

Father Blanchet’s and Father Demers’s task was to spread the Catholic faith

among the Indians and settlers of the Columbia Department

that extended from Northern California to Alaska,

and from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean

an area of almost 400,000 square miles

Father Blanchet celebrated Holy Mass in Latin for the first time in lower Oregon

at Fort Vancouver -- Sunday, November 25, 1838

this service was conducted for seventy-six Catholics and a host of curious onlookers

Fort Vancouver served as the headquarters for the Catholic Church for the next four years

both priests toiled alone throughout their appointed domain learning Indian languages

and teaching natives the prayers and doctrines of the Catholic Church

Father Demers was actively supported by Hudson’s Bay Company

he visited Indians of the Plateau at forts Okanogan, Omak, Colville, and Walla Walla

he also learned Chinook Jargon in only three weeks

FRENCH PRAIRIE SETTLERS WORRY ABOUT THE STATUS OF THEIR LAND

As British citizens, Hudson’s Bay Company retirees living on French Prairie

looked to Dr. John McLoughlin for law and order -- which he provided

their ties to his authority grew even firmer in 1838

with the appearance of Fathers Francis Blanchet and Modeste Demers

to minister to the spiritual wants of the Catholic French-Canadians

Deeply troubling to their Company allegiance, however, was the fact that everyone believed

sooner or later the land south of the Columbia River would fall to the Untied States

would a new American government honor French-Canadian claims to the land?

U.S. Navy’s Lieutenant William A. Slacum had tried to reassure French-Canadians [in 1837],

but many recognized the wisdom of integrating themselves with the Americans

rather than risk losing all they had in the world

COMPETITION DEVELOPS BETWEEN PROTESTANT AND CATHOLICS MISSIONARIES

Narcissa Whitman noted about the natives around the Waiilatpu Mission: **“They are an exceedingly proud, haughty and insolent people and keep us constantly upon the stretch after patience and forbearance. We feed them far more than any of our associates do their people, yet they will not be satisfied. Notwithstanding all this, there are many redeeming qualities in them…. They are making farms all about us, which to us is a favorable omen….**

**“There has been much sickness among them and several deaths -- some of them were our firmest friends. Their sickness causes us a great deal of perplexity, care and anxiety. They are anxious to take medicine, but they do not feel satisfied with this alone: they must have their jugglers playing over them or they will surely die. We have had two or three instances where some have died without being prayed over. They are such miserable nurses that they die by their own neglect. We have been kept much of the time occupied in visiting and preparing food and medicine for them….”[[317]](#footnote-317)**

**“A most important transaction during one meeting was the formation of a temperance society for the benefit of the Indians. All the chiefs and principal men of the tribe who were here readily agreed to the pledge and gave in their names to become members of the society. I have recently been informed that two of them have been tempted to drink, but have refused and turned their backs upon it, saying they would never drink again. They are truly an interesting people. We love them most sincerely, and long to see them turning unto the Lord….**

**“A Catholic priest has recently been at Walla Walla and held meetings with the Indians and used their influence to draw the people away from us. Some they have forbidden to visit us again, and filled their minds with distractions about truths we teach, and their doctrine -- say we have been talking to them about their bad hearts long enough and too long -- say we ought to have baptized them long ago, etc., etc. The conflict has begun. What trials await us we know not….”[[318]](#footnote-318)**

FIRST WHITE BABY BORN IN OREGON

At Waiilatpu Mission the crowded conditions became even more intense

people living in the only completed mission house

were forced to make room for Elkanah and Mary Walker’s first son

Cyrus Hamlin Walker was born (in today’s Washington) -- December 7, 1838

first white child born in Oregon to live to maturity

Number of people living in the house at Waiilatpu convinced Dr. Whitman

that work on the new mission house had to be speeded up

he was able to hire a skilled carpenter, Ashel Munger

who had come to Oregon as an independent missionary,

but found that was not possible in the vast, unsettled region

he eagerly accepted Whitman’s offer of work

FATHER FRANCIS BLANCHET CELEBRATES MASS IN THE COWLITZ VALLEY

Father Blanchet celebrated the first Catholic Mass in the Cowlitz Valley home

of retired Hudson’s Bay Company employee Simon Bonaparte Plomondon -- December 16, 1838

Father Blanchet and Father Modeste Demers decided St. Francis Xavier Mission would be established

on the Cowlitz Prairie

(this decision is commemorated as the establishment of the fist Catholic mission

in the Pacific Northwest)

Father Blanchet selected 640 acres near the Cowlitz River to build a mission

log church of St. Francis Xavier Mission was constructed

under the direction of Father Modeste Demers near the Cowlitz River

(about three miles north of today’s Toledo, Washington)

Father Demers working mainly with French-Canadians build a cabin and barn

rails for fencing were split and the 640 acres were prepared for cultivation

Father Demers laid out the original Mission Cemetery

Father Blanchet took up residence at St. Frances Xavier Mission

this was the first Catholic mission in the Pacific Northwest,

Father Demers traveled throughout the entire Pacific Northwest providing Catholic services

for Indians and whites alike (in what is now Washington State)

DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN MEETS WITH HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY’S BOARD OF DIRECTORS Fort Vancouver Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin was in London for the winter -- 1838-1839

Dr. McLoughlin proposed that a trading post be constructed on San Francisco Bay

this post would provide several benefits for the company:

•it was facilitate the supplying of Hudson’s Bay Company’s California Brigades, •it would be useful in developing markets for Oregon lumber, wheat and salmon, •it would keep Hudson’s Bay Company supplied with California sheep and cattle

Company Governor of Rupert’s Land George Simpson objected vehemently to the proposal

but the directors agreed with McLoughlin

For several years McLoughlin had proposed to Company Governor George Simpson

and the Board of Directors the creation of “The Oragon Beef and Tallow Company”

this proposal had been ignored

Now McLoughlin in a meeting at Hudson’s Bay House resurfaced the idea in a new form

Hudson’s Bay Company could form a separate enterprise devoted exclusively to agriculture

EFFORTS ARE MADE TO ENTICE FATHER BLANCHET TO MOVE TO CHAMPOEG

“The Log Church” now known as Mission Du Walamette had been constructed

by retired Hudson’s Bay Company employees at French Prairie beside the Willamette River

in the hope of attracting a Catholic priest to serve the small community [1836]

this structure had remained vacant for in the absence of priest to provide services

Hudson’s Bay Company Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin had stated he felt the church

was not “properly located and ordered it to be removedand reassembled on a large prairie”

Mission Du Walamette was moved four miles to French Prairie

by French-Canadian settlers in the hope Father Blanchet would serve the parish

FATHER FRANCIS BLANCHET TRAVELS TO THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY

Father Francis Blanchet set out from St. Francis Xavier Mission along the Cowlitz River

to visit the unoccupied Mission Du Walamette -- January 3, 1839

Father Modeste Demers was placed in charge of St. Francis Xavier Mission near the Cowlitz River

FATHER BLANCHET ARRIVES AT MISSION LANDING ON THE WILLAMETTE RIVER

Father Blancher arrived at Mission Landing -- about 10:00 a.m. January 5, 1839

where he was met by Etienne Lucier and Pierre Beleque

horses were made ready for the four mile ride to Mission Du Walamette

where the priest stopped before continuing on to visit Catholic families in the area

he commended the French-Canadians for building the small chapel

MISSION DU WALAMETTE IS VISITED BY FATHER FRANCIS BLANCHET

Father Blanchet celebrated the first Catholic Mass in Oregon -- Sunday January 6, 1839

Mission Du Walamette was rechristened “St. Paul’s Mission”

at that time Father Blanchet brought with him an eighty pound bell

which was blessed and suspended from an oak tree

beside the church St. Paul’s Pioneer Cemetery was founded

as the final resting place for Catholic pioneers and converted Indians alike

Father Blanchet concentrated his efforts (in today’s Oregon State)

(this mission grew to consist of a church, school, hospital, and orphanage

which were dedicated to working among Indians

and twenty-six French-Canadians families at French Prairie

St. Paul’s became the Catholic center for religious activities in the Columbia Department

it served as the residence of the Father Blanchet

its mission was later united with Catholic missions at The Dalles, Walla Walla, Colville,

Okanogan, Cowlitz, Nisqually and Vancouver Island)

CATHOLICS WERE MORE SUCCESSFUL THAN WERE THE PROTESTANTS

Protestants taught not only religion to the Indians but also confronted the Indians’ way of life

it was constantly pointed out the ways of the white man

were counter to the natives’ ideas and habits

Dr. Whitman was looked upon by the Indians as a leader of the white population

that was spreading over the land and threatening the native’s lifestyle

Catholic priests better knew how to deal with the natives

they held several advantages over the protestant missionaries:

•priests were well educated;

•priests had experience in dealing with the natives before arriving in the Pacific Northwest;

•priests, unburdened by families, could circulate widely among the natives;

•priests exerted influence over French-Canadians who were increasing in population

•priests contented themselves with teaching their religion

Catholic rituals and colorful ceremonies appealed to Indians’ sense of the dramatic

a good ecclesiastical show appealed to Indians

ceremony, symbols, black robes, colorful ornaments, incense and bells impressed them

Catholics were associated with Hudson’s Bay Company in the minds of the Indians

they did not appear to be the forerunner of an ominous wave of settlers

priests converted some 6,000 Indians during the first six years of their work

UNOFFICIAL CENSUS OF THE COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT

Hudson’s Bay Company’s James Douglas, second in command at Fort Vancouver,

took an unofficial census of took a census of the Willamette Valley -- 1839

he and counted fifty-one (non-native) adult males

French- Canadians number twenty-three

American settlers numbered eighteen (presumably the other ten were missionaries

it showed that of the approximately one hundred fifty-one inhabitants

seventy were sympathetic to the American cause

METHODIST MISSION INITIATES A GOVERNMENT

As the only true American organization in the valley, the Methodist mission took the lead

with Rev. Jason Lee absent in the East -- 1839

acting superintendent David Leslie set himself up as justice of the peace

whether duly elected or merely unopposed by the people remains obscure

U.S. SENATOR LEWIS F. LINN OF MISSOURI AGAIN ADVOCATES FOR OREGON

Senator Linn once again took an active role in promoting Oregon -- January 16, 1839

settlers already in Oregon needed to protect their land claims

he asked for American occupation and protection of the region

he also proposed one section of land (640 Acres) be provided to any eligible American male

Sen. Linn spoke about the commercial advantages of America’s claiming the Pacific Northwest

he noted in a speech on the U.S. Senate floor -- January 28, 1839

natural resources provided sufficient **“inducements for the government of the United States to take formal and speedy possession”[[319]](#footnote-319)**

Sen. Linn introduced into the Senate Rev. David Leslie’s and young Philip L. Edwards’s petition

that Rev. Jason Lee had brought from the Willamette settlers

Sen. Linn received widespread publicity and drew attention to the Pacific Northwest

he kept the debate over the Pacific Northwest alive

however, the Senate did not act on the proposal

CONGRESSMAN CALEB CUSHING FOCUSES ATTENTION ON OREGON

U.S. Representative Caleb Cushing from Massachusetts

presented two reports on the Pacific Northwest question to the U.S. House of Representatives:

•Whitman-Spalding route to the Pacific Northwest

•Rev. David Leslie and young Philip L. Edwards’ Oregon Memorial

Cushing asked the U.S. House of Representatives to listen to “Professor Lee” speak on Oregon

although the request was denied, Lee gained approximately the same ends

by writing Cushing a vigorous letter in which he declared, as had the Oregon Memorial,

**“…rely upon it, *there* is the germ of a great State.”[[320]](#footnote-320)**

this letter, together with voluminous material gathered from Slacum, Wyeth, Kelley and others, Congressman Cushing presented to the House early in 1839

Impressed, the national representatives ordered ten thousand copies of the report

printed for distribution throughout the country

10,000 copies of the *Ultimatum Map* drawn by the War Department were included in the report

this map attempted to define the boundaries of Oregon

at the northern boundary of Mexican California (42° north latitude)

and the (present U.S.-Canadian border at 49° north latitude)

an additional 16,000 copies of the map alone were printed

CHANGE IN HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY ADMINISTRATION

George Simpson was promoted from the position of Governor of Rupert’s Land

to the newly-created post of Governor-in-Chief of Hudson’s Bay Company’s

entire American operation -- 1839

he was responsible only to the Governor and Committee in London

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY AND RUSSIAN-AMERICAN COMPANY RELATIONS IMPROVE

For several years the two firms had been engaged in resolving territorial fur trade disputes

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

Governor-in-Chief George Simpson would grab a hand hold to the north

Baron Ferdinand Wrangell of the Russian-American Company had expressed an interest

in obtaining British manufactured trade goods and foodstuffs from Hudson’s Bay Company

Simpson and the Company directors were, a year earlier at least, anticipating an agreement

which would commit Hudson’s Bay Company to supplying the Russians, and not incidentally,

exclude American traders from the region

This changing relationship with the Russian-American Company in (Alaska)

provided additional impetus for expanding Company agricultural efforts in the Pacific Northwest

INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS RESULT IN A BRITISH-RUSSIAN AGREEMENT

Governor-in-Chief George Simpson of Hudson’s Bay Company

and Rear Admiral Baron Ferdinand Wrangell of the Russian-American Fur Company

signed an agreement that seemed to end competition

in Columbia Department -- February 6, 1839

Beginning the next year [1840]

Russians agreed to lease to Hudson’s Bay Company for ten years for trapping purposes

the waters and land from 54º-40’ north to Cape Spencer (today’s South-East Alaska)

in return the British company agreed not to trade in the remaining Russian territory

and agreed further to pay annually to the Russian-American Fur Company

2,000 sea otter skins as rent

further the British Company agreed to sell at specified prices to the Russians

an additional 5,000 skins and quantities of agricultural produce

such as flour, peas, barley, salted beef, butter, and hams

This arrangement stopped the rivalry south of (Alaska)

and also closed the market to American traders

last American trading vessel had already appeared on the Northwest Coast [1837]

FATHER BLANCHET LEARNS OF METHODIST PLANS TO SERVE THE NISQUALLY INDIANS

While visiting St. Francis Xavier Mission near the Cowlitz River Father Blanchet was informed

of Methodist plans to open an establishment among the Indians at Fort Nisqually

Father Demers was immediately dispatched to the Nisquallies

as it was felt it would be easier to gain the attention of the Indians

before they were exposed to protestant teachings

Father Demers spent ten days among the Nisquallies and enjoyed great success

Indians were willing listeners,

several French-Canadian employees of Hudson’s Bay Company resumed their Catholic practices,

Mrs. William Kittson, wife of the Factor of Fort Nisqually, was converted to the Catholic faith

she thereafter acted as interpreter for the priests

Father Demers made arrangements to build a chapel at Fort Nisqually

he then returned to Fort Vancouver to take passage on one of Hudson’s Bay Company’s barges

to visit the Upper Columbia settlements Fort Colville, Fort Okanogan and Fort Walla Walla

PUGET SOUND AGRICULTURAL COMPANY IS PROPOSED

A prospectus for the new business was adopted

by a committee of Hudson's Bay Company officers in London -- February 27, 1839

Under the provisions of the prospectus, the new company

would purchase livestock, tools and other agricultural material from the Hudson's Bay Company

Stockholders of Hudson’s Bay Company would become stockholders of the new organization

governing agents would be composed of:

•Sir John Henry Pelly -- Governor of Hudson’s Bay Company stationed in London

•Sir Andrew Colville Deputy Governor of Hudson’s Bay Company stationed in London

•George Simpson -- Hudson’s Bay Company Governor of Rupert’s Land

(today’s British Columbia)

Puget Sound Agricultural Company’s day-to-day operation would be managed by

Hudson’s Bay Company Chief Factor Dr. McLoughlin at Fort Vancouver

Company officers would not only raise and distribute livestock and agricultural products

within the Columbia Department but would also trade with Alaska, the Sandwich Islands,

and possibly California

Hides, horns, tallow, and wool would be exported to England

on supply ships returning to their home ports from the Columbia Department

Formation of Puget Sound Agricultural Company was approved

£200,000 (roughly one million dollars) was invested in the effort

Puget Sound Agricultural Company’s day-to-day operation would be managed by

Hudson’s Bay Company Chief Factor Dr. McLoughlin at Fort Vancouver

in addition to his duties to the parent company

he also was given a £500 annual raise

DR. WILLIAM J. BAILEY MARRIES MISS MARGARET SMITH JEWETT

Miss Margaret Smith Jewett was a Methodist missionary who had come West [1837]

to join with Rev. Jason Lee’s forces

she had wished to become a teacher but this was denied her by group leader Rev. David Leslie

which led to a running feud all during their voyage to the Pacific coast

Miss Smith held out for three years before she surrendered to Dr. William Bailey’s flattery

she married the badly scarred doctor -- March 1839

It was an unfortunate mistake

within three weeks of the ceremony bristling incompatibility between the pious bride

and the badly-scarred vindictive doctor led him (by her account) to try to strange her

she reported he had a violent temper particularly after drinking

TSHIMAKAIN MISSION OPENS TO SERVE THE SPOKANE INDIANS

Prospect for a new mission to be located at Walker’s Prairie was suggested by Archibald McDonald

who was in charge of Hudson’s Bay Company’s Fort Colville

American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Mission missionaries

Rev. Elkanah and Mary Walker, Rev. Cushing and Myra Eells and William H. and Mary Gray

were to assigned by Dr. Whitman to the new mission station -- Tshimakain Mission

this was the American Board of Commissioners For Foreign Missions third mission

after Whitman’s Waiilatpu and Spalding’s Lapwai

Tshimakain Mission meaning the “Place of the Spring” served theSpokane Indians -- March 1839

twenty-five miles Northwest of (today’s Spokane) and sixty miles from Lapwai

supplies for the new mission were obtained from Fort Colville

Leadership at the new mission causes difficulties

Rev. Elkanah Walker was appointed head of Tshimakain Mission

he was a short tempered man who demonstrated a certain lack of character

his devoted wife Mary, intelligent and well educated, proved to be his greatest asset

Congregationalist Rev. Cushing Eells and Myra (Fairbanks) Eells, an invalid,

were assigned to open a school at the mission -- eighty pupils turned up the first year

Eells found the native children able but not eager to learn

William H. Gray, who was also assigned to the mission,

was disappointed not to be selected head of new Tshimakain Mission

but those who traveled with him made it clear they would not work for him

LIFE AT TSHIMAKAIN MISSION

Missionaries to the Spokane Indians at Tshimakain also established a farm

they were well received by the natives who even tried some farming on their own

the importance of agriculture could not be overestimated as Rev. Elkanah Walker declared: **“We must use the plough as well as the Bible, if we would do anything to benefit the Indians. They must be settled before they can be enlightened.”[[321]](#footnote-321)**

Work of teaching and converting Indians proved a laborious and slow task

missionaries clung tenaciously to the idea of preparing the Indians for the day

when white settlers would pour into the fertile lands of the Far West

Tshimakain missionaries preached to a procession of natives

half of the congregation changed each week

other groups of visitors from neighboring camps stayed a week or two

(by November a permanent audience of two hundred had been established)

Both of the Walkers, but especially Mary Walker, wrote extensively in their diaries

these provide much detail about the physical, psychological and spiritual efforts

of the missionaries during these primitive times

Meanwhile, Mary Walker found time to indulge her natural curiosity and scientific training

by, among other things, teaching herself taxidermy

although her husband was not fond of her new skill

she delighted in preserving specimens of fish, birds, and animals

by stuffing and mounting them

the few travelers to stop at the Tshimakain mission over the years found Mrs. Walker

to be a font of knowledge about the geology, natural history and natives of the area

Elkanah Walker spent much of his time trying to bridge the language barrier

by making a detailed study of Flathead, the language spoken by the Spokane natives

Rev. and Mrs. Walker lived nine years in this remote outpost

Mary Walker delivered five more children in nine years at Tshimakain Mission

she raised six children during these years in a fourteen-square-foot log cabin

with walls chinked with mud, and a dirt floor strewn with pine needles

roof of poles, grass, and dirt leaked mud during rainstorms

cloth served as windows (until glass arrived many months later)

they were perhaps the most successful

of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions missionaries in Oregon

they did not win many lasting converts,

but they maintained good relations with the tribe and many of its elders

CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON METHODIST NISQUALLY MISSION

Rev. David Leslie and carpenter William H. Willson went north to Fort Nisqually on Puget Sound

to meet and confer with many of the Indians living in the area -- April 1839

Willson began construction on an eighteen foot by thirty-two foot log cabin

(ten miles northeast of today’s Olympia)

to be occupied by a Methodist missionary when one became available

after a brief time, the site was left unfinished

SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENTS ARE MADE AT WAIILATPU MISSION

An attractive significant mission house was built of the same materials as the first house

this new, T-shaped building had a wooden frame, walls of adobe bricks,

and a roof of poles, straw and earth

walls were smoothed and whitewashed with a solution made from river mussel shells

later, enough paint was acquired from the Hudson's Bay Company

to paint the doors and window frames green, the interior woodwork gray,

and the pine floors yellow

main section of the house was a story-and-a-half high with three rooms on the ground floor

and space for bedrooms above

from it extended a long, single-story wing which contained a kitchen, another bedroom,

and a classroom

(an out kitchen, storeroom, and other facilities were later added to the wing)

A small, improvised gristmill was built on the south side of the mission grounds

FIRST PRINTING PRESS ARRIVED IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Edwin Oscar Hall, the first Pacific Northwest printer, along with his wife Sarah Lyons Williams Hall

arrived at Fort Vancouver from Honolulu -- April 10, 1839

Hall brought first printing press, a hand-operated Ramage press, from the mission in Hawaii

it was originally donated by American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions

to Missionary Rev. H. Bingham in Honolulu and was sent from Boston to Hawaii [1835]

Hall also brought out a good supply of **“types, furniture, paper, and other things”[[322]](#footnote-322)**

Mrs. Hall suffered from a chronic illness of the spine and was in the early months of pregnancy

to reach various inland destinations she traveled by canoe whenever possible

INDEPENDENT MISSIONARIES GATHER IN ST. LOUIS

Three separate independent missionaries had met in St. Louis hoping to journey to Oregon to serve

Rev. John Smith Griffin had attended Oberlin College

and was ordained a Congregational minister

he had been sponsored by his home church in Litchfield, Connecticut

to work as a missionary among the Indians of the Pacific Northwest

along with his bride of two months Mrs. Desire C. (Smith) Griffin

Asahel Munger, a layman, was a religious zealot who was a carpenter by profession

he and his wife, Sarah Elizabeth Hoisington Munger accompanied her husband to Oregon

(Asahel expecting a miracle from God fastened himself over the flames of his forge [1840]

he died three days later leaving a widow and child)[[323]](#footnote-323)

William Johnson was a layman from Philadelphia and although he was he was well educated

he was not a minister

he was a love-struck young man his fiancé left him to marry another man

he crossed the continent to see his former sweetheart once again

after they met he traveled to Acapulco, Mexico was arrested and jailed for some time

Rev-Dr. William Geiger recently graduated from the Mission School at Quincy, Illinois

prepared to travel west to serve the Indians

he received an appointment from the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions

however, association’s funds ran low and the effort was cancelled

Rev.-Dr. Geiger, unwilling to relinquish his plans, set out for St. Louis on his own

when he arrived he made the acquaintance of the other independent missionaries there

preparing their own expedition west

It was decided to travel from St. Louis to the 1839 rendezvous

SUPPLYING THE 1839 MOUNTAIN MAN RENDEZVOUS

Pierre Chouteau of the American Fur Company decided to take a risk

and send a supply caravan to the mountains under the leadership of Moses “Black” Harris -- 1839

This year’s supply train was very small compared to past efforts

it consisted of twenty-seven people, nine of whom were employed by the fur company

and a party of independent missionaries

remainder were individuals who simply elected to travel with the caravan

supplies and goods were carried in four two-wheeled carts plus fifty-sixty mules or horses

FIRST PRINTING PRESS ARRIVES AT WAIILATPU

Edwin Oscar Hall and his wife Sarah reached Fort Walla Walla

from Fort Vancouver -- April 30, 1839

bringing with them the Ramage press and printing supplies

because of her bad back, Mrs. Hall made the journey in a hammock

OREGON DRAGOONS COMPLETE THEIR PREPARATIONS TO TRAVEL TO OREGON

Attorney Thomas J. Farnham saw himself as a military leader and adventurer

he believed his army of eighteen “Oregon Dragoons” from Peoria, Illinois:

Amos Cook, Francis Fletcher, Owen Garrett, Joseph Holman, Quinn Jordan,

Ralph L. Kilbourne, John Moore, Robert Moore, Obadiah A. Oakley, Thomas Pickett,

John Prichel, Sidney Smith, James Trask, Chauncey Wood, Joseph Wood

and Charles Yates who was the only one to have any military experience

Farnham believed these ,men could rally the Americans living in Oregon,

drive out the British and seize the Pacific Northwest for the United States

by force of arms if necessary

Oregon Dragoons jointly owned

a wagon with a two horse team, a tent large enough for all of the men to sleep in,

provisions to begin the trip and a communal kitty of $100 for contingencies

They would **“raise the American flag and run the Hudson's Bay Company out of the country”[[324]](#footnote-324)**

OREGON DRAGOONS (SOMETIMES THE PEROIA PARTY) SET OUT FOR OREGON

Sixteen armed and mounted Oregon Dragoons led by Thomas Farnham rode up to the courthouse

in the town square of Peoria, Illinois -- May 1,1839

they bowed their heads and pledged themselves never to desert one another

they turned and rode west to the enthusiastic cheers of local citizens

who had turned out to see them off

they carried with them a flag emblazoned with the motto: “Oregon or the Grave”

which was a gift from Mrs. Farnham[[325]](#footnote-325)

Oregon Dragoons started each morning with bugle calls and marching orders

several members of the expedition kept daily journals

and in later years some wrote reminiscences

Farnham carried his journal strapped to his back

and he sat down each night to record the day’s happenings

most consistent theme found in the accounts were:

•severe weather encountered,

•constant disagreements that wore away at the resolve of the members of the party, •hunger endured for days at a time when meat became scarce

INDEPENDENT MISSIONARIES BEGIN THEIR JOURNEY TO OREGON

Rev. John Smith Griffin and his bride Desire, Asahel Munger and his wife Sarah,

love-struck William Johnson and Rev-Dr. William Geiger

accompanied the American Fur Company caravan led by Moses “Black” Harris

who offered to guide and protect them for a terribly high price

Together they began their journey west -- May 4, 1839

LIEUTENANT CHARLES WIKES HAS DIFFICULTY KEEPING HIS SQUADRON TOGETHER

Store ship *Relief* proved to be intolerably slow

Lieutenant Wilkes ordered the ship to skip Madeira and head directly for the Cape Verde Islands

and then on to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil to await the arrival of the remainder of the squadron

After sailing for three months and visiting the Cape Verde Islands

U.S. Ex. Ex. arrived at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil -- *Relief* did not arrive until six days later

Sailing from Rio de Janeiro USS *Sea Gull*, her two offices and fifteen men

were lost during a coastal storm -- May 1839

When the expedition arrived at any port the routine of the expedition was generally the same

an astronomical station was set up, and as complete a survey as possible was accomplished;

while the scientists went ashore and investigated the country’s geology, botany, etc.

a general description of the place was made with particular reference to the history,

type of government, manners and customs of the natives and the general subject of commerce

castaways and shipwrecked sailors were often encountered and received on board

at times Wilkes and the members of his expedition were called on to handle legal cases

where members of whaling ships or other vessels had been murdered by natives

if the native chiefs failed to take proper action,

Wilkes usually took the matter into his own hands and meted out punishment

Wilkes United States Exploring Expedition continued on to Australia

before proceeding to the Antarctic Ocean where they reported the discovery of a continent

(that was later named “Wilkes Land”)

They traveled to New Zealand, visited Cape Verde and investigated some 300 Pacific islands

including Schmitt Islands, New South Wales, The Philippines and Hawaii

before traveling to North America [1841]

KAMIAH MISSION OPENS AMONG THE NEZ PERCE INDIANS

American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Mission missionaries set to work among the Nez Perce

this was the fourth American Board mission after Waiilatpu, Lapwai and Tshimakain

Congregationalist Rev. Asa Smith and his ailing wife Sarah had spent the [winter] at Waiilatpu

before they would lead the missionary effort at Kamiah Mission along the Clearwater River Smiths arrived at the new mission site -- May 10, 1839

accompanied by Rev. Cushing and Myra Eells and Cornelius Rogers

Like Lapwai, this mission station was to serve the Nez Perce Indians

each spring [and winter] daily religious classes were held

Nez Perce Chief Lawyer, an important leader, was also an important scholar

After establishing the mission at Kamiah, Rev. Asa Smith plunged into his work

he took a census of the Nez Perce and using his skills as a linguist studied their language

he wrote the first Nez Perce dictionary and grammar,

unknowingly taking the first steps to save the Nez Perce language

Rev. Smith also translated the *Gospel of Matthew* into Nez Perce

Rev. Smith at first was tolerated by Indians,

but then was asked by the natives to pay for everything

RAMAGE PRINTING PRESS IS SET UP AT LAPWAI MISSION

Printer Edwin O. Hall, his wife Sarah and the Ramage printing press

were given passage by Hudson’s Bay Company up the Columbia River

to Rev. Henry Spalding’s Lapwai Mission -- May 13, 1839

Edwin Hall completed setting up operation of the press -- May 16

WORK AT LAPWAI INCLUDES PRINTING PORTIONS OF THE BIBLE

Rev. Henry Spalding was having greater success among the Nez Perce

and was able to convert several important Indian leaders

When he obtained the Ramage printing press from the American Board mission in Hawaii

Spalding began an effort to print parts of the Bible in the Nez Perce language

native language did not translate well into English phonics

but on the second attempt, he captured many of the sounds of the Nez Perce tongue

FIRST BOOK IN THE NORTHWEST PRINTED AT LAPWAI STATION

Rev. and Mrs. Asa Bowen Smith and Cornelius Rogers arrived at Lapwai from Kamiah Mission

*Gospel of Matthew* in the Nez Perce language produced by Henry Spalding and Asa Smith

used an adaption of the alphabet employed in (Hawaii)

this was the first book published in the Northwest -- an eight page grammar and lexicon

historic significance of this achievement was not lessened

because this book had only eight pages

Eight days after Edwin O. Hall set up the Ramage press at Lapwai

Henry and Eliza Spalding and Cornelius Rogers proudly produced

*Nez Perces First Book*, imprint: Clear Water; Mission Press, May 24, 1839

TWO FLATHEAD INDIANS SEEK THE SERVICES OF CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES

Two young Flathead Indians (Northern Idaho and Western Montana)

Young Ignace La Mousse (son of Old Ignace La Mousse)

Peter Gaucher who had previously accompanied Old Ignace to St. Louis [1831]

decided to travel to St. Louis to find “Black Robes” for their people

to bring back to their people the knowledge possessed by the whites

They arrived at St. Joseph Mission in Council Bluffs, Iowa and met with Father Pierre-Jean De Smet

the priest immediately volunteered to carry the Christian message to the Flathead people

he entrusted the Indians with a letter for his superior, Father Pierre Verhaegen, in St. Louis

OREGON DRAGOONS REACH INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI

After leaving Peoria, Illinois the Dragoons arrived at Independence, Missouri -- May 21, 1839

concluding twenty days of constant bickering and in-fighting

In Independence they bought more supplies including an additional 200 pounds of flour

they traded their wagon for pack mules

Oregon Dragoons were reorganized, but Thomas Farnham again was elected captain

Chauncey Wood was named his lieutenant

remaining men were divided into four companies of four men each

Oregon Dragoons now consisted of two officers and fourteen men

they agreed to bury their differences and start out fresh

Andrew Sublette, mountain man and fur trader, was in Independence at that time he advised the Dragoons to go southwest on the more heavily traveled Santa Fe Trail Thomas Farnham as leader decided to follow the Santa Fe route across Kansas

Oregon Dragoons would then continue west (across what is now Colorado),

before turning north to Brown’s Hole (Utah),

and pick up what would later become the Oregon Trail

between Brown’s Hole and Fort Hall (Idaho)

four of the dragoons quit and returned to Peoria

Owen Garrett, John Moore, Thomas Pickett and James Trask

OREGON DRAGOONS SET OUT FROM INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI

Oregon Dragoons departed Independence -- May 30, 1839

dragoons were joined by former schoolteacher Robert Shortess

Thomas Farnham’s decision regarding their proposed route to followed the Santa Fe Trail

added at least a month to the trip across the continent

([winter] became a looming concern as the party proceeded west)

OREGON DRAGOONS ENCOUNTERS INDIANS

Thomas Farnham’s Dragoons had their first encounter with Native Americans -- June 10, 1839

Farnham’s journal describes one of the Indians: **“He had no clothing, save a blanket tied over the left shoulder and drawn under the right arm. His head was shaven entirely bare, with the exception of a tuft of hair, about two inches in width, extending from the center occipital over the middle of the forehead. It was short and course and stood erect.... His figure was the perfection of physical beauty. He was five feet nine or ten inches in height, and looked the Indian in everything.”[[326]](#footnote-326)**

they gave this Indian some powder and flint and they parted peacefully

OREGON DRAGOONS EXPERIENCE FAMINE AND FEASTING

Rain fell continuously and the going was very difficult

Thomas Farnham noted in his journal: **“I was so much reduced when I dismounted from my horse on the evening of the fifteenth** [of June]**, that I was unable to loosen my saddle or spread my blanket for repose.”[[327]](#footnote-327)**

Arguments again broke out among the dragoons -- June 15, 1839

Farnham had made a critical error by counting on game to sustain his Oregon Dragoons

all the way to Oregon -- they brought with them just flour, salt and a little bacon

these men were so inexperienced that after the first week on the trail they were low on food

they were not skilled marksmen and failed to kill anything with their flintlock rifles

It was more than a month before they encountered the herds of buffalo they expected

instead of the buffalo they had counted on, the dragoon’s first meal of wild game was turtle soup

made from a twenty pound turtle shot by Sydney Smith

next meals were catfish and antelope

Food rationing became necessary and each man was limited to a daily food allotment

of one quarter cup of flour mixed with water and fried in bacon fat

They were wet and hungry and their physical condition and morale was generally miserable

OREGON DRAGOOS UNITE WITH A PACK TRAIN

Oregon Dragoons on the way to Santa Fe crossed the Arkansas River

this was the “American Nile” according to Thomas Farnham

Dragoons overtook the Alvarez-Walworth pack train headed for Bent’s Fort (Colorado)

two groups traveled in close proximity for mutual protection from hostile Indians -- June 18, 1839

ACCIDENT LEADS TO MORE DISSENTION AMONG THE OREGON DRAGOONS

Captain Thomas Farnham was absent from camp as the men packed to proceed

another petty bickering bout broke out among the Oregon Dragoons -- June 21, 1839

this argument culminated when Sydney Smith the turtle slayer

and one of the hottest tempered men in the group

rushed to the tent and pulled out his rifle by the barrel

his weapon discharged and Smith was shot and seriously wounded in the side

Smith insisted that someone had shot him

until he was shown the smoking barrel of his own rifle

Captain Farnham had brought no medical supplies of any kind so a rider was dispatched

to catch the Alvarez-Walworth supply train and bring back a wagon and a “doctor”

When the wagon arrived, Smith was placed inside

and the Oregon Dragoons headed southwest for Bent’s Fort (Colorado)

in the dust of the supply train which had gone on ahead

Before Smith’s injury, the party was able to cover twenty to thirty miles in a day

after his accident they were fortunate to make fifteen miles per day

Following Sydney Smith’s accident Captain Thomas Farnham lost all authority

dragoons dissolved into chaos

those who hadpledged never to desert one another

argued over whether to leave the injured Sydney Smith behind

ALICE CLARISSA WHITMAN IS TRAGICALLY DROWNED

Little Alice playfully went to the Walla Walla River to get some water in two tin cups after 2:30 p.m.

while the evening meal was being prepared -- June 23, 1839

soon after her departure a search ensued

when two tin cups were found floating in the river, hope faded

rescuers waded into the river hoping of finding the baby alive

an old Indian man dove under the water

found Alice’s body caught on a tree root which extended into the river

he brought her lifeless little body to the surface

Alice Clarissa Whitman, age two years three months and nine days, had drowned

Whitmans did not ever recover -- Narcissa grieved incessantly and her health began to fail

(later the Whitmans attempted to compensate by adopting orphans from the Oregon Trail)

ADDITIONAL BOOKS ARE PRINTED ON THE RAMAGE PRESS

Rev. Elkanah Walker collected his work on the Flathead language

he a wrote a small primer in that language: *Spokane dialect primer*

(a Spokane-English Dictionary)

400 copies were printed six weeks after the arrival of the printing press at the Lapwai mission

this is believed to be the only book ever published in the Flathead tongue

it was the one locally printed book not in the Nez Perce language

it was also the most elaborate effort -- a sixteen-page primer

copies were stitched, pressed and bound by his wife Mary

Other books printed on the Ramage press included:

•book of simple laws

•book of scripture

•a hymn book

In addition Henry Spalding authored two additional works:

•*The Old Mill on the Withrose,*

•*Held in the Everglades*

THREE OREGON DRAGOONS QUIT THE EXPEDITION

At the Arkansas River (in Kansas) the dragoons and Alvarez-Walworth supply train

headed in separate directions

dragoons Quincy A. Jordan, Chauncey Wood and John Prichel

chose to remain with the supply train -- June 27, 1839

fifty-year-old William Blair, one of the packers, joined the dragoons

Although food was no longer an immediate concern, disagreements continued among the dragoons

it seemed the further the dragoons traveled the more quarrelsome they became

a very heated meeting was held on the trail to Bent’s Fort

Thomas Farnham, Smith and Obadiah Oakley were nearly expelled

but they were allowed to remain with the group until they reached Bent’s Fort

SUPPLYING THE 1839 RENDEZVOUS

There was confusion about the location of the rendezvous

because the previous year no decision had been made to even hold another event

Moses “Black” Harris was eventually informed by Andrew Drips and Joseph Walker

that the trappers were gathering once again at Fort Bonneville

Moses “Black” Harris’s American Fur Company supply train reached the rendezvous -- July 5, 1839

with only four cart-loads of supplies from Missouri -- a sad contrast to the height of the fur trade

A party of fourteen Hudson’s Bay Company men from Fort Hall

under the leadership of packer Francis Ermatinger also arrived at the rendezvous

as the British company continued to apply commercial pressure

to the American Fur Company

ERA OF THE RENDEZVOUS IS COMING TO AN END

Gathering of American mountain men, this time hosted by the American Fur Company,

was held once again -- July 5 -[July 9], 1839

on the upper Green River and Horse Creek at old Fort Bonneville (Wyoming)

Hudson’s Bay Company from the west and the American Fur Company from the east

met with independent trappers

Final years of the great annual event were sad

bleak mood created a hushed atmosphere with little drinking and no gambling

This year’s Rendezvous brought together a diversified group of people:

•company trappers such as Andrew Drips, Henry Fraeb, Kit Carson, Caleb Wilkens, William Craig and Jim Bridger,

•settlers bound for Oregon or California,

•independent fur trappers, such as William Johnson, Joe Meek, Robert “Doc” Newell, Louis Vasquez and William Sublette,

•independent missionaries seeking the mission field of Oregon

as noted by a German visitor: **“The days of their glory seem to be past. Only with reluctance does a trapper abandon this dangerous craft and a sort of serious home-sickness seizes him when he retires from his mountain life to civilization.”[[328]](#footnote-328)**

OREGON DRAGOONS ARRIVE AT BENT’S FORT

Traveling with the Alvarez-Walworth supply train the remaining Oregon Dragoons

reached Bent’s Fort the trading post on the Arkansas River -- July 6, 1839

several miles above the mouth of the Purgatoire River

(near present-day Animasin in Southeast Colorado)

At the fort, Sydney Smith’s wound was treated and he began a long road to recovery,

although the borrowed Alvarez-Walworth wagon had to be returned to the traders

and Smith was forced to ride horseback the rest of the trip

Thomas Farnham, accused of incompetence and waste of party funds, was removed as captain

Robert Shortess was elected Captain in Farnham’s place

Farnham and Shortess both published accounts of their trip

in which they traded the insults that reflected the bitterness of the rivalry

whatever Thomas Farnham’s shortcomings as a leader, he saved Sydney Smith’s life

Farnham cleaned and dressed Smith’s wound daily

and personally drove the wagon in which Smith was transported

Remaining Oregon Dragoons remained at Bent’s Fort for five days

while there Thomas Farnham, Sydney Smith and Obadiah Oakley

were officially voted out of the Oregon Dragoons

William Blair and Joseph Wood chose to go with them

common property was divided among the member of the dragoons as previous arranged

VERY TAME RENDEZVOUS IS OVER

Gathering split into various parties that headed westward or eastward at different times

main westward caravan, the Hudson’s Bay Company brigade under packer Francis Ermatinger

left the Rendezvous and headed for Fort Hall -- July 9

Ermatinger was accompanied by:

•fifteen independent trappers,

•two parties of California-bound settlers,

•independent missionaries Rev. John Smith Griffin and his wife Desire, Rev.-Dr. William Geiger

and Mr. Asahel Munger and his wife Sarah Elizabeth

OREGON DRAGOONS SPLINTER

Three expelled men, Thomas Farnham, Obadiah Oakley and the wounded Sydney Smith

along with Joseph Wood and William Blair who had chosen to go with them

left Bent’s Fort early in the morning -- July 11, 1839

Obadiah Oakley noted **“Farnham, Smith, Wood, Blair and myself being determined to travel no farther with Shortess and Moore, deeming them persons in whom no confidence could be placed.”[[329]](#footnote-329)**

Farnham described the scene: **“…three sound and good men, one wounded and one bad one, mounted our animals and took trail for the mountains and Oregon territory.”[[330]](#footnote-330)**

Captain Robert Shortess and his Oregon Dragoons composed of Amos Cook, Francis Fletcher,

Joseph Holman, Ralph L. Kilbourne, Robert Moore, James Trask and Charles Yates

made plans for their trek to Oregon

they would follow the Arkansas River about sixty miles,

then move north to the South Platte River then follow upriver to Fort St. Vrain

located at the confluence of Saint Vrain Creek and the South Platte River,

about twenty miles east of the Rocky Mountain (near today’s Platteville, Colorado)

like Bent’s Fort, Fort St. Vrain was a Bent brothers’ trading post

this was a more northern route than the one Farnham intended to pursue

GEORGE WOOD EBBERT BUILDS A HOME AT MISSION BOTTOM

Mountain Man George Ebbert was the first white settler in the Champoeg area -- 1839

previously he had worked as a Hudson’s Bay Company trapper

and as a blacksmith for the Champoeg Mission

Ebbert moved away from Mission Bottom three years later [1842]

CHAMPOEG EXPANDS INTO A COLONY

Hudson’s Bay Company set up a trading post, granary and warehouse at the site

these, in effect, were the seed that produced the town of Champoeg

Agriculture slowly replaced trapping as major economic activity in the valley

gradually permanent homes were established on the north edge of French Prairie

beginning the natural process of forming a colony along the Willamette River

enough farmers became neighbors that Champoeg grew into a small trapper’s settlement

Champoeg became a colony along the Willamette River

there were about fifty families living at French Prairie in the area around Champoeg

most were French-Canadians with Calapooia or Nez Perce wives and children

Americans Protestants, especially Methodists also settled the region

local Indians were at first confounded and then threatened

by the ever-increasing number of invaders

simultaneously the Indian population rapidly decreased in numbers due to disease

Champoeg grew from small trapper’s settlement to a thriving American community

as the area grew into a town surrounded by homes and farms

served by a post office, stores, mills, warehouses and a blacksmith shop

variety of itinerant sailors, explorers, adventurers, tourists, and seasonal businessmen

also passed through the region -- a few settled down

(later the area later grew into a town and developed a post office, stores, mills, warehouses,

and a blacksmith shop -- all surrounded by homes and farms)

AMERICAN CONCERNS ARE HEIGHTENED BY A BRITISH DIGNITARY

United States and British relations were not good

British naval squadron under Captain Sir Edward Belcher

arrived in the Columbia Department -- July 1839

he conducted a survey of the Columbia River’s bars, channels and inner anchorages

American settlers believed the British were about to seize the Pacific Northwest

United States and Great Britain both had poor relations with the Russian government

plots of international intrigue raised concern among the settlers and missionaries

SHORTESS AND HIS PORTION OF THE OREGON DRAGOONS ARRIVE AT FORT ST. VRAIN

Captain Robert Shortess and his seven Oregon Dragoons reached Fort St. Vrain

they spent some six weeks at the fort (near today’s Platteville, Colorado)

waiting to join the Green River supply train which was en route

they spent their time hunting buffalo and gathering berries

Francis Fletcher and Quinn Jordan brought down the first buffalo

by then, the supplies of flour and salt were exhausted

men lived the rest of the trip on “meat straight”

as described in Joseph Holman’s account of the journey

they also lost seven of their pack animals to a Sioux raiding party

When it was time to leave Fort St. Vrain, Robert Moore and Charles Yates chose to stay behind

Robert Moore spent the winter at the fort but eventually reached Oregon

Yates headed for Santa Fe

Journeying together to Brown’s Hole on the Green River were the six remaining Oregon Dragoons

Amos Cook, Francis Fletcher, Joseph Holman, Ralph L. Kilbourne, Robert Shortess

and James Trask

Soon the party was surrounded by buffalo herds so immense they couldn’t pass through them

they would shoot up to a dozen of the bison at one time

often taking just the tongue and leaving the remainder behind

occasionally they would dry the meat on scaffolds hung over a fire creating buffalo jerky

WAIILATPU RECEIVES VISITORS

Rev.-Dr. William M. Geiger and William Johnson

traveling slightly ahead of the other independent protestant missionaries

reached Waiilatpu Mission -- early August 1839

Francis Ermatinger’s Hudson’s Bay Company brigade arrived soon after

bringing fifteen independent trappers and the formerly California-bound immigrants

CAPTAIN JOHN SUTTER SETTLES IN CALIFORNIA

Captain Sutter, a dashing adventurer, was formerly of the Swiss Army

he had made his way with a band of trappers across the Great Plains to the Pacific Northwest

and thence on to the Hawaiian Islands

Hoping to make his fortune, John Sutter bought an abandoned ship in Honolulu

he sailed it across the Pacific Ocean with several traveling companions

and eight Kanaka (Hawaiian) men and two women

who were placed under contract to him -- 1839

they landed at Yerba Buena (San Francisco)

three followers and the Kanaka oarsmen rowed up the Sacramento River in small boats

Sutter established a huge land claim of 97,640 acres -- August 1839

and established the colony of “New Helvetia”

(at what is now the California state capitol, Sacramento)

With permission of the Mexican authorities, Sutter recruited Native Americans

to raise a wheat crop, operate his distillery, a hat factory and a blanket company

he also built a fort

Procuring uniforms from Russian traders and with the help of several officers from Europe

Sutter organized a two hundred-man Indian army clothed in czarist uniforms

commanded by a German[[331]](#footnote-331)

FATHER DE SMET SERVES THE POTAWATOMI INDIANS

Potawatomis living in the vicinity of St. Joseph Mission in Council Bluffs, Iowa

were threatened by other Indians: Otos, Pawnees and Sioux collected their scalps

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet visited their worst enemy -- the Yankton Sioux

he journeyed to the mouth of the Vermilion River on the packet ship *St. Peter*

which belonged to the American Fur Company

after a successful negotiation, Father De Smet returned to St. Joseph Mission

to learn that more than one hundred murders had been committed

on the Potawatomi community

cause of this disaster was the cursed “firewater”

De Smet lost heart and considered closing the mission -- August 1839

THOMAS FARNHAM ON THE TRAIL TO BROWN’S HOLE

Thomas Farnham and his four companions Sydney Smith, Obadiah Oakley, Joseph Wood

and William Blair encountered a group of fur trappers

Farnham hired a Kentucky trapper named Kelly to serve as guide

Mr. Kelly had been employed by the American Fur Company

Kelly, serving as guide, led the five Oregon Dragoons to Brown’s Hole on the Green River

which was reached -- August 13, 1839

When Farnham and his men arrived most trappers assigned to Fort Davy Crockett were absent

some were trapping and others hunting as the post was then short of provisions

Farnham’s party bought meat for two meals from a Snake Indian

then purchased three dogs for food to be used later if necessary

BROWN’S HOLE AND FORT DAVY CORCKETT HAD FEW CONVENIENCES

Brown’s Hole was an isolated valley thirty-five miles long and five to six miles wide bounded on the south by Diamond Mountain and the north by Cold Spring Mountain

this valley was located where Vermillion Creek merges with the Green River

in the extreme northeastern Utah, northwestern Colorado and south-central Wyoming

Fort Davy Crockett [built in 1836] was the post serving the Brown’s Hole region

this was a favorite wintering place for mountain men and Indians alike

because of the mild winters and abundant forage for game animals

after news of the death of Davy Crockett at the Alamo reached the mountains

the post was named in honor of the American hero

although mountain men usually referred to it as “Fort Misery”

because of the deplorable conditions

a hollow square, the post was built of logs with a dirt roof and floor that in bad weather

quickly turned to mud

Fort Davy Crockett had a reputation for being the “meanest fort in the West”

but still served as the social center of the Rocky Mountains

FARNHAM AND HIS MEN AT FORT DAVY CROCKETT

Paul Richardson, a mountain man described as “an old Yankee woodsman,”

arrived at Fort Davy Crockett -- August 17, 1839

on his way from Fort Hall headed east to Missouri

Richardson gave a discouraging account of Oregon

his bleak description noted that **“rain falls incessantly five months of the year”[[332]](#footnote-332)** he persuaded dragoons Obadiah Oakley and Joseph Wood,

both of whom had already seen enough rain on their trip,

to join him and head back to Missouri

Farnham’s traveling companions were reduced to two:

William Blair and the still ailing Sydney Smith

At Fort Davy Crockett, Mr. Kelly’s services as guide were ended

Thomas Farnham hired a Native American known as Jim

to guide the three Oregon Dragoons 200 miles from Brown’s Hole west to Fort Hall (Idaho)

three Oregon Dragoons started out in the morning -- August 19, 1839

FARNHAM AND HIS TWO COMPANIONS MEET JOE MEEK

Thomas Farnham, William Blair and Sydney Smith encountered a buckskin-clad man

riding a large white horse -- August 29, 1828

he turned out to be Joe Meek, the mountain man known far and wide as the “bear killer,” after his legendary battle with a Grizzly bear

Meek was on his way alone between Fort Hall and Fort Crockett

Meek spent some time advising Farnham about the country that lay ahead

and, as they traveled their separate ways, occasionally reestablished contact with Farnham’s party

FARNHAM’S PARTY REACHES FORT HALL

Their Indian guide, Jim, led Thomas Farnham, Sydney Smith and William Blair

to Fort Hall arriving there four months from the day they left Peoria, Illinois -- September 1, 1839

at the fort they were treated with the utmost politeness

by trapper and missionary Courtney M. Walker

After two days rest, the Farnham trio hired a new Native American guide, Carbo

and headed for Fort Boise -- September 3

this trip was particularly rough on the horses because the terrain was mostly volcanic rock

SHORTESS AND HIS PORTION OF THE OREGON DRAGOONS ARRIVE AT BROWN’S HOLE

Robert Shortess and his dragoons, Francis Fletcher, Amos Cook, Joseph Holman,

James L. Fash-Trask and Ralph Kilbourne arrived at Brown’s Hole from Fort St. Vrain

they reached Fort Davy Crockett just as winter was setting in -- early September

it was reported that over three feet of snow fell in less than 24 hours

Captain Shortess and his men enjoyed the comforts of Fort Davy Crockett for almost a month

THOMAS FARNHAM AND HIS TWO COMPANIONS REACH FORT BOISE (IDAHO)

With Carbo as their guide, Thomas Farnham, Sydney Smith and William Blair

traveled from Fort Hall to Fort Boise in ten days -- September 13, 1839

After resting for two days, the men resumed their westward way

departing from Fort Boise -- September 15

FARNHAM’S AND HIS PORTION OF THE OREGON DRAGOONS MAKE THEIR FINAL SPLIT

On the trail from Fort Boise

Thomas Farnham and the hot-headed Sydney Smith (almost fully recovered from his injuries)

quarreled over aspects of a scheme they had concocted to get rich shipping salmon to the East

Farnham, Smith and William Blair met a group of Cayuse Indians

who were on their way to the Whitman Mission at Waiilatpu

Farnham decided to go to accompany the Cayuse to Waiilatpu,

so he separated from Smith and Blair who went, instead, to the Lapwai Mission

all three of the former Oregon Dragoons were glad to part company

William Blair spent the winter at Lapwai but Sydney Smith traveled on

he became the first member of the original Oregon Dragoons to reach Fort Vancouver

where he obtained employment in the Willamette Valley from Ewing Young

MISSIONARY CYRUS SHEPARD BECOMES ILL

Frail, devoted schoolteacher had become ill after contracting an infection of the leg -- autumn 1839

he did not respond to treatment by Dr. Elijah White, but continually worsened

concern for his life spread through the missionaries and small group of settlers

INDEPENDENT MISSIONARY PARTY DIVIDES UP

Acting without American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions funding

the missionary party reached Fort Hall where it was decided to split up:

•Rev. J.S. Griffin and his bride Desire Smith Griffin wintered at Lapwai with the Spaldings

•Rev.-Dr. William Geiger who had known Narcissa Whitman in New York

stopped at Whitman Mission for the winter where he taught school

Rev.-Dr. Geiger was accompanied by love-struck William Johnson

and religious zealot Asahel Munger

YOUNG IGNACE AND PETER GAUCHER REACH ST. LOUIS

Young Ignace La Mousse and Peter Gaucher delivered the letter from Father Pierre-Jean De Smet

to the priest’s superior Father Pierre Verhaegen in St. Louis

Father Verhaegen met with Catholic Bishop Joseph Rosati

who promised to send a missionary to the Flatheads

Peter Gaucher hastened home to the Rockies -- September 1839

to announce the glad tidings to the Flathead Indians

Young Ignace La Mousse spent the rest of the winter at the Kickapoo mission in Kansas

waiting for the arrival of the promised missionary to his tribe

CONDITIONS AT KAMAIH MISSION IMPROVE

After spending six months in a “mere hovel,” Rev. Asa Smith finished a comfortable home

and started a garden of several acres -- September 1839

EWING YOUNG WAS A BUSINESS SUCCESS

Ewing Young’s domain had become the economic center of the Willamette 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.”[[333]](#footnote-333)**

But Young’s health had begun to fail

(he could not know that in death he would make a final contribution

to the welfare of his community)

ROBERT SHORTESS AND HIS DRAGOONS REMAIN AT BROWN’S HOLE

Shortess encountered Joe Meek and Robert “Doc” Newell, who were also at Brown’s Hole

preparing to travel to Fort Hall to sell their furs and lay in a supply of goods for the winter trade

Shortess, driven by his excessive competition with fellow Oregon Dragoon Thomas Farnham,

obtained Meek’s and Newell’s permission to accompany them

although the Peoria man was advised to spend the [winter] at Fort Davy Crockett

JOSEPH “JOE” MEEK AND ROBERT “DOC” NEWELL DESCRIBED

Joe Meek was a mountain man had joined with William Sublette [1830]

and had trapped with Jim Bridger and Jedediah Smith

he was described as a tall, imposing and bronzed man with a commanding voice

fun-loving, he was a lover of practical jokes, Jacksonian democracy and Indian women

he was an acclaimed story teller -- stories about his early years included:

•a hand-to-claw encounter with a Grizzly bear,

•a narrow escape from a Blackfoot warrior,

•the death of his first Indian wife in an attack by a Bannock raiding party,

•his second marriage to the daughter of a Nez Perce chief

he named his beautiful second wife Virginia in honor of his home state

it was noted: **“Meek was a droll creature a tall man, of fine appearance -- a most genial, kind, and brave spirit. He had in his composition no malice, no envy, and no hatred.”[[334]](#footnote-334)**

Mountain Man Joe Meek had a life-long friendship with his brother-in-law Robert “Doc” Newell

Robert “Doc” Newell also was a mountain man, trapper and friend of the Indians

Newell was no man like Joe Meek

Doc was less flamboyant, less given to hyperbole and better educated

he also possessed a steadier temperament and superior judgment

Newell possessed basic medical skills in surgery and healing -- but he had no medical training

but he became known as “Doc” Newell anyway

his Indian wife “Kitty” was the sister of Joe Meek’s second wife, Virginia

**“Newell, recalled an Oregon friend, was of medium height, stout frame, and fine face. He was full of humanity, good-will, genial feeling, and frankness.”[[335]](#footnote-335)**

Joe Meek and “Doc” Newell 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

MEEK, NEWELL AND SHORTESS LEAVE FORT DAVY CROCKETT

Joe Meek and Robert “Doc” Newell set out for Fort Hall -- September 26, 1839

accompanied by a single Oregon Dragoon, Robert Shortess,

as the other five dragoons who were by now the closest of friends

remained at Fort Davy Crockett

THOMAS FARNHAM REACHES WASCOPAM MISSION AT CELICO FALLS

Farnham traveling with a group of Cayuse Indians arrived at Waiilatpu

he reported a “pleasant stay” with Dr. Marcus and Narcissa Whitman

before continuing on to Fort Walla Walla -- October 1, 1839

Farnham was guided by Indians from Fort Walla Walla to the Dalles (Oregon)

where he visited Wascopam Mission operated by Rev. Daniel Lee

Farnham spent a week at Wascopam **“eating salmon and growing fat”[[336]](#footnote-336)**

it was while at Daniel Lee’s Mission that Farnham had an unpleasant encounter

some Chinook tribesmen took Farnham’s saddle from Lee’s workshop

Lee and Farnham decided to go after the saddle

as they approached the Chinook camp, some thirty Indians surrounded them Farnham pointed his rifle at the Chief’s chest,

who, unflustered, pointed a pistol directly at Farnham’s chest

they faced off for nearly an hour,

**“undaunted except for an unpleasant knocking of my knees”[[337]](#footnote-337)**

finally, the saddle was returned and the episode ended without bloodshed

with the saddle recovered, Lee and Farnham returned to Wascopam Mission

SHORTESS, NEWELL AND MEEK ARRIVE AT FORT HALL

Eleven days from the time they started from Fort Davy Crockett

the three travelers reached Fort Hall -- October 7, 1839

Having delivered Robert Shortess to Fort Hall Joe Meek set out on a hunting trip

Joe Meek traveled alone through freezing temperatures on his way to Fort Davy Crockett

(he reached Brown’s Hole -- end of October)

FORT HALL SAW SEVERAL VISITORS THAT OCTOBER

Francis Ermatinger leading his Hudson’s Bay Company caravan

arrived at Fort Hall -- October 7, 1839

Ermatinger was accompanied by:

•fifteen independent trappers,

•four independent missionaries,

•Oregon Dragoon leader Robert Shortess with none of his dragoons,

•two parties of California-bound settlers

there was no guide available to lead the pioneers on to California

so two of the party members turned back to the United States

other California-bound travelers decided to go through to Oregon

ROBERT SHORTESS SET OUT FROM FORT HALL

Robert Shortess in his eagerness to beat his rival Thomas Farnham to Oregon

agreed to an arrangement by Francis Ermatinger to have Shortess guided to Fort Walla Walla

by a French-Canadian named Sylvertry

after resting one day Robert Shortess set out for Oregon -- October 8, 1839

accompanied by Mr. Sylvertry and two natives

these four men encountered blizzards so severe that the Native Americans turned back, leaving Shortess and Sylvertry to travel together through deep, drifting snow

AT FORT HALL THE INDEPENDENT MISSIONARIES AGREE TO SPLIT UP

Company of independent missionaries divided themselves between to missions

Rev.-Dr. Geiger along with Asahel and Sarah Elizabeth Munger went to Waiilatpu Mission

to spend the winter with the Whitmans

(Mr. Munger later became deranged and in a fit of religious fanaticism

fastened himself over the flames of his forge expecting God to work a miracle

he died three days later leaving a widow and daughter, Mary Jane Munger)

Rev. John and Desire Griffin wintered at Lapwai with the Spaldings

ROBERT “DOC” NEWELL LEADS A PARTY BACK TO FORT DAVY CROCKETT

While Joe Meek was on a hunting trip, his partner Robert “Doc” Newell

led his wife Kitty M. Newell, his son Francis Ermatinger Newell age 4½

and infant William from Fort Hall back to Fort Davy Crockett

along with Joe Meek’s wife Virginia (so named by Meek in honor of his home state)

and Meek’s children:

•newborn son Courtney Walker Meek

•Helen Mar Meek -- Joe’s two-year-old daughter by his first wife who had deserted him

Mrs. Newell and Mrs. Meek were sisters making Robert and Joe brothers-in-law

also traveling with Newell were well over a dozen additional trappers

REV. JASON LEE PRPARES TO RETURN TO OREGON

Rev. Jason Lee traveled by ship on his return to Oregon after completing a successful fundraising trip with him was his second wife (the former Lucy Thompson) -- they married [July 28, 1839]

Lee’s first wife, Anna Marie Pittman and their son, had died during a tragic childbirth

also with Lee was the surviving Chinook native young man who travel with him, Thomas Adams

Rev. Jason Lee raised over $100,000 in the East

he received the largest financial grant ever made to a single mission

in the history of the Methodist Mission Society -- $42,000

this money was used to charter the *Lausanne,* a ship of 400-ton burden

under command of Captain Josiah Spalding

Rev. Lee also received an additional United States government grant of $5,000

*LAUSANNE* SETS SAIL FROM NEW YORK BOUND FOR OREGON

Rev. Jason Lee, his bride and Indian traveling companion, Thomas Adams, boarded the ship

that had been chartered by Rev. Lee

Also aboard ship were forty-six volunteers recruited by the Methodist Mission Society

they paid $250 per adult, $125 for each servant and $16.66 for each child up to age fifteen

this group became known as the “Great Reinforcement”

other important members of the Great Reinforcement were the new Mrs. Jason Lee

and Chinook native Thomas Adams

*Lausanne* set sail -- October 9, 1839

THOMAS FARNHAM TRAVELS WITH REV. DANIEL LEE TO FORT VANCOUVER

Two men traveled with Indian paddlers from Wascopam Mission down the Columbia River

they arrived at Fort Vancouver -- October 16, 1839

They were met by Dr. John McLoughlin who had just returned to Fort Vancouver

from his trip to Hudson’s Bay Company headquarters in London

his return journey had taken him across Canada with a Hudson’s Bay Company Express

Rev. Daniel Lee introduced his new friend Thomas Farnham to Dr. McLoughlin

who invited the pair to be the guests of Hudson’s Bay Company in the McLoughlin home

Chief Factor gave Farnham a set of clothes to replace his trail-weary buckskins

Farnham he did not ask Hudson’s Bay Company to leave the Pacific Northwest

as he had promised the citizens of Peoria, Illinois he would do

rather he was glad to accept the Company’s aid when it was offered by Dr. McLoughlin

Farnham rested at Fort Vancouver before undertaking a tour of the Willamette Valley

THOMAS FARNHAM VISITS THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY

Farnham visited the Methodist missions and American settlements of the Willamette Valley

there he gathered considerable information about the Pacific Northwest

Farnham gathered signatures on a second Memorial to Congress that he probably wrote himself

asking the United States government to take possession of Oregon

and implement American laws to provide legal protection

Thomas Farnham’s petition was signed by seventy of the American settlers

which probably was all of the Americans in the Pacific Northwest

ROBERT SHORTESS REACHES FORT BOISE ON THE SNAKE RIVER

Robert Shortness arrived at Fort Boise two weeks after leaving Fort Hall -- October 22, 1839

he had traveled in the company of the French-Canadian trapper Mr. Sylvertry

After a stay of several weeks at Fort Boise on the Snake River, Robert Shortess and Sylvertry

continued their journey until they arrived at Fort Walla Walla

EDWIN O. HALL MOVED TO WAIILATPU BRINGING THE RAMAGE PRINTING PRESS

Printer Edwin O. Hall and his wife very pregnant Sarah moved from Lapwai to Waiilatpu

it was decided to also move the Ramage printing press

during the journey the pack horse which carried press and print fell down a cliff

Cornelius Rogers traveling with the Halls salvaged the outfit two days later

he took the press back to Lapwai although some of the type was missing

Rogers managed to hand-cut several replacement “Ws”

giving the printed page a unique appearance

Mrs. Sarah Hall gave birth to a daughter at Lapwai -- November 5, 1839

THE WINTER AT FORT DAVY CROCKETT

Robert “Doc” Newell delivered his family and that of his brother-in-law Joe Meek

as well as more than a dozen trappers to Fort Davy Crockett

where the families would spend the winter

Newell hoped the goods he brought from Fort Hall, purchased with his furs,

would allow him to set up as an Indian trader in the Brown’s Hole region

Joe Meek eventually arrived once again back Fort Davy Crockett

where he joined Newell, his family and several other wintering trappers

John Larison and his Native American wife, William Craig, and his Native American wife

Michael Cere, and Caleb Wilkins

in addition, several Oregon Dragoons also were there

Amos Cook, Francis Fletcher, Joseph Holman, Ralph Kilbourne, James I. Trask

had built a cabin to remain for the [winter]

they built and prepared for the next leg of their journey [in the spring]

Homan passed the time making rifle stocks and saddles

these were better than money on the frontier

they were traded for a horse, supplies, buckskin clothing and beaver skins

FORT NISQUALLY RAISES ANIMALS FOR HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY

Nisqually Farm continued the effort at animal husbandry in Columbia Department

Hudson’s Bay Company brig *Llama* unloaded seven head of merino sheep

and cattle imported from England

long-horned Spanish cattle which had been driven up from California

were bred with stock from England to improve the strain

animal herd developed to over 1,000 head of cattle, hogs, horses, oxen and hundreds of sheep

dairy herd was maintained for Hudson’s Bay Company by Laurent Sauvies -- 1839

who was in charge of the principal herd for the Company -- up to one hundred cows

Hudson’s Bay Company provided settlers with work oxen

Dr. William Tolmie not only raised and distributed livestock and agricultural products

within the Columbia Department but also developed a large export business

in farm products

dairy products, cheese, butter, meat and flour ground in two grist mills at Fort Vancouver

were shipped to the Russians in Alaska

hides, horns, tallow and wool were exported to England

on supply ships returning to their home ports from the Columbia Department

Soil at Cowlitz Farm was rich, and far better suited for crop production than Nisqually Farm

(over the years, the Cowlitz farm became the chief grain producer)

farming at the new establishment was already well underway

when Chief Factor McLoughlin returned to the Columbia Department from England -- 1839

with instructions to begin intensive farming operations at the Cowlitz,

which the Hudson's Bay Company sold to the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company

when Chief Factor Dr. John McLoughlin arrived on site -- November 1839

he discovered that Chief Trader Tod had sown 275 bushels of wheat

he had 200 acres of new land plowed and an additional 135 acres broken up

he had rails cut and carted to fence these fields

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY INCREASES ITS HERD OF SHEEP

One goal of the Hudson’s Bay Company was to produce wool for the English market

sheep in large numbers were imported from California

most of these were situated at Fort Nisqually

Eventually two Scottish shepherds were sent by Hudson’s Bay Company directors in London

to improve wool production

purebred rams and ewes were shipped from England in an attempt to improve the local stock

livestock production at Fort Nisqually farm increased steadily

Fort Vancouver sent to London 2,435 pounds of wool --1839

(followed in successive years by wool produced primarily at Nisqually Farm)

these products were not a great commercial success

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY DIVERSIFIES THEIR TRADE BEYOND TRADING FOR PELTS

Trading ships delivered supplies and trade goods to Fort Vancouver

and took up cargoes of furs, lumber and salmon

to be sold in California, Hawaii, or South America on the return trip to England

Several trading posts were operating on the Columbia River

Astoria, Vancouver, Walla Walla, Okanogan and Colville

Fort Nisqually’s cattle and sheep and Cowlitz Farm’s crops increased exports to other posts

two sawmills at Fort Vancouver established a profitable lumber trade with Sandwich Islands

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY SEEKS NEW RECRUITS TO COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT

A series of resolutions had been introduced to the United States Senate [1838 and 1839]

calling for assertion of American title to the “Territory of Oregon”

(in addition, there were indications that a large number of Americans

would be migrating to the Oregon in [1840])

In an attempt to reinforce Hudson’s Bay Company claims north of the Columbia River

Governor-in-Chief Simpson switched recruiting efforts -- November 15, 1839

from London to it troublesome Red River colony in Ruper’s Land

(Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada)

he ordered an agent in Red River to encourage small families of French-Canadians

to migrate overland to the Columbia Department

(two years would pass before any emigrants would leave the Red River region)

SHORTESS AND SILVERTRY SPEND THE WINTER AT WAIILATPU MISSION

Leaving Fort Walla Walla, Robert Shortess and French-Canadian guide Mr. Silvertry

continued on to Dr. Whitman’s Waiilatpu Mission where they arrived -- early December

Robert Shortess learned from Dr. Whitman that his rival, Thomas Farnham

had visited there more than two months before

Shortess must have been shocked

to learn he was so far behind what he believed to be an incompetent leader

Even worse, it was impossible to attempt to cross the Cascade Mountains that late in the year

Robert Shortess spent the winter as a guest of the Whitmans

LIFE AT WAIILATPU MISSION

Indications of increasing American migration were becoming more plentiful at Whitman’s mission

as it was on the main overland route from the East

one such sign was the increasing number of white children arriving at the station

where they were boarded and attended school

A small, improvised gristmill (flour mill) was built on the south side of the mission grounds

a second, more efficient mill soon replaced it

with the mill, Dr. Whitman was able to produce enough flour to supply the other stations

Cayuse Indians began to bring their grain to the mill for grinding

THOMAS FARNHAM RETURNS TO THE EAST COAST

After touring the Willamette Valley, Thomas Farnham, one time leader of the Oregon Dragoons,

decided to leave Oregon taking with him his petition to congress -- early December

He boarded the sailing ship *Vancouver*, headed for California

where he was instrumental in procuring the release

of a large number of American and English citizens

who had been imprisoned by the Mexican government

he continued on to the Sandwich Island (Hawaii) and eventually to the United States

(Thomas Farnham authored several books:

*Travels in Oregon Territory* [1842]

was published and widely circulated in both America and Britain

*Travels in California, and Scenes in the Pacific* [1845]

*A Memoir of the Northwest Boundary Line* [1845]

*Mexico, its Geography, People, and Institutions* [1846]

he concludes his journal: **“For beauty of scenery and salubrity of climate, Oregon is not surpassed. It is peculiarly adapted for an agricultural and pastoral people, and no portion of the world beyond the tropics can be found that will yield so readily with moderate labor to the wants of man.”[[338]](#footnote-338)**

these reports did a great deal to create interest and stimulate immigration to the Oregon

SENATOR LEWIS F. LINN AGAIN PROPOSES TO OCCUPY OREGON

U.S. Senator Linn (Missouri) introduced a series of resolutions to annex Oregon

these were referred to a select Committee for consideration -- December 18, 1839

this committee would issue a report the next year [1840]

BOOKS GENERATE INTEREST IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Nine books were printed by the Pacific Northwest protestant missionaries

between 1839 and [1845]

all but one was in the Nez Perce language -- all of these are very rare

(only a single copy of the *Nez Perce Laws* written by Indian Agent

Dr. Elijah White [1842]) is known to exist today

In addition to the writings of missionaries:

•Zenas Leonard wrote *Narratives* which stirred enthusiasm in the West-- 1839

this was an account of an expedition to Utah, Nevada, and California,

led by John Reddeford Walker for Captain Benjamin Eulalie de Bonneville

Leonard, a fur trapper, had joined [in 1833] as the official clerk

first published in serial form in the *Clearfield Republican*,

this work remains an important source of information about the expedition,

the life of trappers and people of Spanish California and the Upper Missouri

•Sir Charles Augustus Murray completed *Travels in North America* -- 1839

this was a report on life among the Native Americas in the Middle West

Murray’s writings popularized the Pacific Northwest

•Rev. Samuel Parker published a journal of his adventures in the West:

*An Exploring Tour Beyond the Rocky Mountains* -- 1840

it created a great deal of interest in the Pacific Northwest

1840-1849

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 WAIILATPU 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.”[[339]](#footnote-339)**

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

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 -10º

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 River

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”[[340]](#footnote-340)**

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

Flathead Indians living in (Northern Idaho and Western Montana) requested Catholic missionaries

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 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 Waiillatpu -- 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 the 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

PREPARTATIONS 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],

James Douglas 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 CHIF 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.”[[341]](#footnote-341)**

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.”[[342]](#footnote-342)**

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

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

arrivd 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. travelingwith 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 belonging to the Methodist mission

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 Chyenne 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)

MISSION BOTTOM IS A POOR LOCATION FOR MISSIONARY WORK

Rev. Jason Lee had built the original Methodist station

at Mission Bottom on the Champoeg 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

Serious flooding and an unhealthy climate at Mission Bottom site

made it apparent that Rev. Jason Lee had chosen a location

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

Missionaries at Mission Bottom held a general meeting -- June 13, 1840

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)

an agreement to establish several branch missions was reached

Rev. Gustavus Hines was assigned to the original station at Mission Bottom

MEMBERS OF THE GREAT REINFORCEMENT RECEIVE THEIR ASSIGNMENTS

Rev. Jason Lee and his bride Lucy led development of a new headquarters mission at Chemeketa

construction was begun on a mission house

(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”

Rev. Jason Lee assigned Methodist missionaries to serve others mission stations:

•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;

•Willamette Falls and vicinity (today’s Oregon City) was assigned to Rev. Alvin F. Waller

Rev. Waller proposed to build his mission house out of lumber

that had been milled by Dr. John McLoughlin for establishing his own claim to the site;

•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);

•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;

•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;

•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

for all practical purposes the Indian Mission Manual Labor Training School died

with Cyrus Shepherd as no successor was able to even approach his result

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 McLoughlon’s furlough to London ([838-1839]

these timbers where 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

hevisited 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 it very sorry shadow of its former magnificence)

Andrew Drips was accompanied by divergent groups of emiugrants

•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.”[[343]](#footnote-343)**

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.”[[344]](#footnote-344)**

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

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.”[[345]](#footnote-345)**

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 *Lausannne*

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

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….”[[346]](#footnote-346)**

DR. BABCOCK REPORTS THE TRADEGY FACING THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY INDIANS

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.”[[347]](#footnote-347)**

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, 1940

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

William H. 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

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.”[[348]](#footnote-348)**

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

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 Pierre-Jean 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

Father De Smet 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 trial 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 shear 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.”[[349]](#footnote-349)**

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.”[[350]](#footnote-350)**

JOEL WALKER FAMILY LEAVES FORT HALL

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

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 WAIILATPU 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 WAIILATPU 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 WEDDINGON 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. Willsonmoved 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.”[[351]](#footnote-351)**

SALEM EVANGELCAL UNITED BRETHERN CHURCH BEGINS

Rev. Jason Lee’s new Methodist mission at Chemeketa

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.”[[352]](#footnote-352)**

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

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

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.”[[353]](#footnote-353)**

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)

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 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 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 WAIILATPU

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.”[[354]](#footnote-354)**

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’.”[[355]](#footnote-355)**

**(**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 WAIILATPU

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 WAIILATPU

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 homesteaded 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.”[[356]](#footnote-356)**

FATHER PIERRE-JEAN DE SMET LEAVES ST. JOSEPH’SMSISION

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)

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

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.”[[357]](#footnote-357)**

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 Nichols 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

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 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 Manual Labor Training School was located at the old William Wallace House -- 1841

construction was begun on a new building to house the Indian Manual 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/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[[358]](#footnote-358) 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

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 Champoeg 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 goodsdeveloped

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.”[[359]](#footnote-359)**

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.”[[360]](#footnote-360)**

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

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 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 for another meeting to hear the report of the Committee of Arrangement were made

at Methodist missionary Rev. David Leslie’s house on French Prairie near Champoeg

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

thee 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 Champoeg 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 a effort the 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 Christianity

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 that 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

Dr. White 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 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 for 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.”[[361]](#footnote-361)**

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

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 a 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 Sequalitchew (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 Sequalitchew (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.”[[362]](#footnote-362)**

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.”[[363]](#footnote-363)**

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

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 Ann in 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 WAIILATPU

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 RELATONS WITH THE INDIANS

Numerous Pacific Northwest Indians were encountered by the Wilkes Expedition

among these were the Sequalitchew 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

MEDTHODIST 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

Oregon (Columbia District) was still jointly occupied by the United States and Great Britain

but Wilkes decided his orders gave him complete authority to do whatever exploration he wished

At 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”)

Wilkes also named Pitt Island, Day Island, McNeil Island, HarstineIsland, 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;

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

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 hunded and seventy-two feet by seventy-two wide, which was found to contain many crude images.”[[364]](#footnote-364)**

In the course of their investigation of Puget Sound, 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

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 materialsat 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.”[[365]](#footnote-365)**

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.”[[366]](#footnote-366)**

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 Mountainsfollowing a clear path -- May 21, 1841

camp was made that night at the junction of the Puyallup and Upthascap (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

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, 184

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 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 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 was 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 CONTIUE 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 LIEUTENENANT 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 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.”[[367]](#footnote-367)**

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

They also said they wished to travel **“to the ports of California for the purpose** [still another one!] **of hunting Sea Otter”[[368]](#footnote-368)**

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] C**ompany, Canadians, who settled here; they all** [appeared] **very comfortable and thriving.”[[369]](#footnote-369)**

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.”[[370]](#footnote-370)**

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.”[[371]](#footnote-371)**

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.”[[372]](#footnote-372)**

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

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 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.”[[373]](#footnote-373)**

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,

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….”[[374]](#footnote-374)**

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

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.”[[375]](#footnote-375)**

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 Spootsylth (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-Julys, 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.”[[376]](#footnote-376)**

Rev. Richmond noted that the whole of the Pacific Northwest would be peopled

by **“our enterprising countrymen”**

Wilkes purchased an ox for barbequing 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 to honor

important representatives of the Expedition, missionaries and Hudson’s Bay Company

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.”[[377]](#footnote-377)**

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”[[378]](#footnote-378)**

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.”[[379]](#footnote-379)**

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.”[[380]](#footnote-380)**   
 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

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”[[381]](#footnote-381)**

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.”[[382]](#footnote-382)**

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

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….[[383]](#footnote-383)**

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 *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

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

ADGUSTMENTS 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 *Vincenne*s

to chart the Oregon and northern California coastlines

*Vincenne*s 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 PROCEEDES 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](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/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](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walker_River) and ascended over the [Sierra Nevadas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sierra_Nevada_(U.S.))

in the same region crossed by [Jedediah Smith](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/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 Lieutenant [William L. Hudson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Pickering_(naturalist))

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….”[[384]](#footnote-384)**

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

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 54º 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)

Natives had found a good location in a valley of the Bitterroot Mountains

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….[[385]](#footnote-385)**

**“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….”[[386]](#footnote-386)**

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.”[[387]](#footnote-387)**

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

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-N-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.”[[388]](#footnote-388)**

**“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…”[[389]](#footnote-389)**

**“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.”[[390]](#footnote-390)**

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

this would 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

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

Emmons 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

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 by 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….”[[391]](#footnote-391)**

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.”[[392]](#footnote-392)**

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 WAIILATPU 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

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 been 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 diving 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 54º 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.”*[[393]](#footnote-393)**

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”[[394]](#footnote-394)**

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

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

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 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/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 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 SISKYOU MOUNTAINS

Naval Lieutenant Emmons led his expedition into the Siskyou 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.”[[395]](#footnote-395)**)

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-robes 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 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.’”[[396]](#footnote-396)**

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 Titan 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 mountains

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 severl 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 their prospects

McLoughlin’s proposal did not allow for them to purchase of land -- but only to lease the land

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 it 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.”[[397]](#footnote-397)**

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

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])

THRITEEN 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Titian_Peale)

botanist [William Brackenridge](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Dunlop_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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Titian_Peale) spotted the largest grizzly track

he had seen during the entire trip -- October 22, 1841

Mineralogist [James Dwight Dana](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/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 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.”[[398]](#footnote-398)**

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

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”** [[399]](#footnote-399)

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

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.”[[400]](#footnote-400)**

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

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, Farther 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/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)

FEDERALGOVERNMENT 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/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 gamboling

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 gamboling 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 49º 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 RECIEVES 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!”[[401]](#footnote-401)**

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

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

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 WAIILATPU 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.”[[402]](#footnote-402)**

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 49th 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

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 TRADEGY

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 49º 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 49º 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.”[[403]](#footnote-403)**

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 be 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

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’.”[[404]](#footnote-404)**

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

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 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

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 in 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 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/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.”[[405]](#footnote-405)**

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)

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

WAIILATPU 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.”[[406]](#footnote-406)**

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

CONSTRUCTIONRESUMES ON THE TINY SCHOONER *STAR OF OREGON*

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-marital

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 49th 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 49º 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 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.”[[407]](#footnote-407)**

To counteract its impact, the Catholic Ladder was adopted and adapted by Protestant missionaries

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 42º and 54º-40’ north latitude

he noted that settling the boundary at 49º 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.”[[408]](#footnote-408)**

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 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

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.”[[409]](#footnote-409)**  -- 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

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 in a 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 49th 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 WAIILATPU 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]

This letter 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

ADDIITIONAL 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 Waiilatpu 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 WAIILATPU 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…”[[410]](#footnote-410)**

LIEUTENANT JOHN C. FREMONT RETURNS TO ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

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.”[[411]](#footnote-411)**

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….”[[412]](#footnote-412)**

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

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 WAIILATPU

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.”[[413]](#footnote-413)**

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 IS 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

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.”[[414]](#footnote-414)**

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

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 opened a mission

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 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 AENT 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 (6th)

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.”[[415]](#footnote-415)**

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

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.”[[416]](#footnote-416)**

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

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 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 fee 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

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 were 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”[[417]](#footnote-417)**

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”[[418]](#footnote-418)**

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.”**

**S**ettlers by a large majoritystill 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

Whitman urged a chain a 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

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.”[[419]](#footnote-419)**

Shortess Memorial asked the Polk Administration for naval yards, mail service, land grants,

military protection and territorial status

thispetition 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)

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 the 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”

made 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 skinners (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”[[420]](#footnote-420) --** 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 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

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!”[[421]](#footnote-421)**

William H. Gray shouted, **“I second the motion!”[[422]](#footnote-422)**

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

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.”[[423]](#footnote-423)**

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 5th day of July next”[[424]](#footnote-424)**

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 enlistmen to form companies of mounted riflemen

Two additional positions were created when it was moved and carried

that anadditional magistrate and constable be chosen

Charles Campo was chosenas an additional magistrate,

Francois X, Matthieu was chosen as an additionalconstable

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.”[[425]](#footnote-425)**

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

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 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) Shivley 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 APPLEGATE 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Campbell_Island_(British_Columbia)) ([British Columbia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_Columbia))

Fort Nisqually was put once again under leadership of Dr. Tolmie

Dr. Tolmie saw Fort Nisqually moved to a new location on Sequalitchew 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 interested 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.”[[426]](#footnote-426)**

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.”[[427]](#footnote-427)**

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.”**

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.”[[428]](#footnote-428)**

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])

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 River

while Fremont ventured south to the Arkansas River

Fremont met Christopher “Kit” Carson at the Arkansas River

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 experiences 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?”[[429]](#footnote-429)**

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

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 serpentined 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.”[[430]](#footnote-430)**

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

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 3rd 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 3rd 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=William_Overton_%28Portland_founder%29&action=edit) saw great commercial potential for “the clearing” --[1843](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/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](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/tcrr/sfeature/sf_interview.html) 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.”[[431]](#footnote-431)**

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE OF NINE PASSES THE 1843 ORGANIC LAWS OF OREGON

Nine member Legislative Committee chaired by Robert Moore convened its final meeting

at the Champoeg 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/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](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Executive_Committee_of_Oregon&action=edit&redlink=1)**: “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* was composed of a nine member unicameral (single chamber)body

whose members were to be elected annually by district

in proportion to the population excluding Indians

Legislative Committee was to meet twice a year ([une and December]

sessions of the Council should not exceed six days

[Judiciary](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Oregon_judges#Provisional_Government) 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treasurer_of_Oregon)

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 (42º 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 (42º 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 (42º 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 APPLEGATE 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 APPLEGATE 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.”[[432]](#footnote-432)**

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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cow_dung) 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 APPLEGATE

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.”[[433]](#footnote-433)**

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

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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Windlass_Hill)”

where the steep twenty-five-degree downward angle ran for about 300 feet

wagons were roped to trees and a windlass (wench) 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 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 guided by Stephen Meek

they met Captain Joe Walker and others driving two thousand head of cattle from California

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 with such a large number of animals

broke the Hudson’s Bay Company cattle monopoly

Stephen Meek guided the remaining travelers to Sutter’s Fort in California -- 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

Meek 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 42º and 54º-40’ north latitude

that is, 42º north would separate Oregon from Mexico

and 54º-40’ north would separate Oregon from Russian-America

they asserted the line established to separate the United States from Russia (54º40’)

was the rightful boundary

accepting this boundary would have meant

Great Britain was shut out of the Northwest altogether

Convention adopted a resolution calling for 54º40’ 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 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....”[[434]](#footnote-434)**

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

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...”[[435]](#footnote-435)**

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

conducted by local and visiting ministers and “exhorters”

heartfelt and ardent demonstrations came from listeners on whom the Spirit fell

who encouraged participation

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 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.”[[436]](#footnote-436)**

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.”[[437]](#footnote-437)**

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

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”[[438]](#footnote-438) -- 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portneuf_River_(Idaho)) 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

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 on 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glenns_Ferry,_Idaho), 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.”[[439]](#footnote-439)**

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

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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French-Canadian) [Francois Payette](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/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

continued along the Snake River to Farewell Bend where they left the Snake River behind

they entered (what would become the state of Oregon)

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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La_Grande,_Oregon), 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 WAIILATPU 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 United States -- October 9, 1843

From Fort Hall trailing about two weeks behind the Great Migration wagon train

the route held few uncertainties to Fort Vancouver

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 Lincton 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 20º. 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….”[[440]](#footnote-440)**

FREMONT’S SECOND EXPEDITION REACHES AT WAIILATPU 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….”[[441]](#footnote-441)**

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.”[[442]](#footnote-442)**

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 Snake River’s mouth

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.”[[443]](#footnote-443)**

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.”[[444]](#footnote-444)**

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 WAIILATPU MISSION DESCRIBES THE GREAT MIGRATION

Jesse Looney, a recent Pacific Northwest arrival, wrote a letter from Waiilatpu 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 on the road…and there were some eight or ten births. Upon the whole we fared better than we expected.”[[445]](#footnote-445)**

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,

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

they were 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 place 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 APPLEGATE 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.”[[446]](#footnote-446)**

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

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 WAIILATPU

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 Champoeg 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 or 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 named the Great Basin (of Nevada and Utah)

the wisdom of not following the Oregon Train 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Newspaper_editor) of the [New-York Tribune](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/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.”[[447]](#footnote-447)**

(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 SUCCES

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.”[[448]](#footnote-448)**

JESSE APPLEGATE 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 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!”[[449]](#footnote-449)**

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’ Foreign Secretary

the Earl of Aberdeen

Everett presented the E Earl of Aberdeen the terms considered by the President John Tyler

America’s old offer of a boundary along the 49th 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

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.”[[450]](#footnote-450)**

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 49th 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

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 THRONGED 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

Loyola Duquenne (Superior), Marie-Cornelia Neujean, Marie Catherine Cabareaux,

Marie-Aloysia Neujean, Norbertine Verreux and Marie-Albine Gobert

they 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, 1943

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 Voc 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

camps 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: Loyola Duquenne (Superior), Marie-Cornelia Neujean,

Marie Catherine Cabareaux, Marie-Aloysia Neujean, Norbertine Verreux

and Marie-Albine Gobert

*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:

•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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/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 Buenaventura 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.”[[451]](#footnote-451)**

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

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.”[[452]](#footnote-452)**

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.[[453]](#footnote-453) --** 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

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 AMERCIA 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”[[454]](#footnote-454)**

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 VENGENCE FOR THE BREAKING OF HIS CONTRACT

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-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**.”[[455]](#footnote-455)

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 explanationfrom 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

SETTLERS IN OREGON CITY CREATE A MILITIA

Because of the Comstock incident a meeting was held in Champoeg

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. Pickette 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

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 MISSIOURI 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 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 Legislative Council Speaker

Peter H. Burnett, Twality District,

Matthew Gilmore, Twality District,

David Hill, Twality District,

Asa L. Lovejoy, Clackamas District,

Thomas D. Deizer, 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 regarding a constitution and code of law [1841]

Osborne Russell replaced Joseph Gale

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 WAIILATPU 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 demanded 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 --spring1844: **“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.”[[456]](#footnote-456)**

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,

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”** latitude

become the northern boundary of Oregon

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…”[[457]](#footnote-457)**

was inserted into the Democratic platform

Democratic delegated 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, OREEGON 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=William_Overton_%28Portland_founder%29&action=edit) struck a bargain with his partner [Asa Lovejoy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asa_Lovejoy) from [Boston, Massachusetts](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boston%2C_Massachusetts)

for [25¢](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quarter_%28U.S._coin%29) 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis_W._Pettygrove) of [Portland, Maine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portland%2C_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 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

during Rev. Jason Lee’s absence

Rev. Gary was misinformed about the mission effort

he arrived with strong preconceived notions

his 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus_Whitman) [1847]

although his death in the [Whitman Massacre](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/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 pursed, 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.”[[458]](#footnote-458)**

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

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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/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 CHANGESPROVISIONAL 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.”[[459]](#footnote-459)** 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.”[[460]](#footnote-460)**

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

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....”[[461]](#footnote-461)**

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

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.”[[462]](#footnote-462)**

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

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 Abernethy 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.”[[463]](#footnote-463)**

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

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 TAIN 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 n led a second company

Captain William Shaw led the third company

this party included Henry Sager, his pregnant wife Naomi and their six children

METODIST 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.”[[465]](#footnote-465)**

Dr. McLoughlin was outraged by this extortion

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 Vercruysse and lay brother Francis Huybrechts

and six nuns of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur from Belgium:

Loyola Duquenne (Superior), Marie-Cornelia Neujean, Marie Catherine Cabareaux,

Marie-Aloysia Neujean, Norbertine Verreux and Marie-Albine Gobert

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 Mollerchanged 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

Chef Factor Dr. John McLoughlin immediately sent a messenger to Saint Paul Mission

located along the Willamette River at Champoeg

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 reminder of the long journey”[[466]](#footnote-466)**

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 49º 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

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.”[[467]](#footnote-467)**

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

Father De Smet had not yet fully recovered from his long voyage

when he was taken down by a severe attach 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 Vercruysse, Brother Francis Huybrechts

and six Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur: Loyola Duquenne (Superior), Marie-Cornelia Neujean,

Marie Catherine Cabareaux, Marie-Aloysia Neujean, Norbertine Verreux

and Marie-Albine Gobert -- 11:00 AM August 17, 1844

Sister Loyola Duquenne described the church, “**as lowly as the stable in Bethlehem**”[[468]](#footnote-468)

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

Jesuit priests accepted Father Blanchet’s gracious hospitality for the next week

SIX SISTERS OF NORTE DAME ARRIVE AT THEIR NEW CONVENT

Six Sisters 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](http://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/french_prairie/)

(between the Willamette and Pudding Rivers north of Salem)

Six Sisters of Notre Dame: Loyola Duquenne (Superior), Marie-Cornelia Neujean,

Marie Catherine Cabareaux, Marie-Aloysia Neujean, Norbertine Verreux

and Marie-Albine Gobert 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.”[[469]](#footnote-469)**

GENERAL CORNILIUS GRAHAM’S WAGON TRAIN SPLITS AGAIN

Before reaching Fort Bridger on Black 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!”[[470]](#footnote-470)**

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 destitute of whiskers and eyebrows, and his face was blackened beyond recognition. Such were the incidents and dangerous and humorous features of the journey.”[[471]](#footnote-471)**

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 Canadian mechanic Peter Biledot

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 HESITATIT TO ENGAGE BRITAIN IN NEGOTIATINS

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.”[[472]](#footnote-472)**

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

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 **o**f 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 WAIILATPU

Catherine Sager (Mrs. Clark Pringle) described the Sager children’s trip to Waiilatpu: **“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.”[[473]](#footnote-473)**

CATHERINE SAGER DECRIBES THE ARRIVAL OF THE CHILDREN AT WAIILATPU

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 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.”[[474]](#footnote-474)**

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** [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 least 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.”[[475]](#footnote-475)**

WAIILATPU 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

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 Waiilatpu 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 reproved 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 adepted 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.”[[476]](#footnote-476)**

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 Alberni 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,

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 Champoeg 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 the 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 setters

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 tinners 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.”[[477]](#footnote-477)**

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)

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-JeanDe 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

Simmons’ entire 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, 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.”[[478]](#footnote-478)**

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.”**

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 Champoeg (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 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 Micheltorena 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

MICAHEL 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. INGATIUS 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 Micheltorena

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 Verecuysee 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 notorganized 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 tinners

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, 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, scratchy homespun from coarse wool.

and canvas from discarded tents and wagon covers

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 setters 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 setters 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.”[[479]](#footnote-479)**

Provisional Government continued in the hands of American settlers

who were willing to cooperate with Hudson’s Bay Company

DISLOYALITY 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

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.”[[480]](#footnote-480)**

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.”[[481]](#footnote-481)**

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.”[[482]](#footnote-482)**

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

he asserted title America’s rights to the whole of Oregon Country (42º north to 54º 40’ north)

in his words, ownership of **“the whole of Oregon was clear and unquestionable”[[483]](#footnote-483)**

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.”[[484]](#footnote-484)**

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.”[[485]](#footnote-485)**

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 49º 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.”[[486]](#footnote-486)**

*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….”[[487]](#footnote-487)**

*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’.”[[488]](#footnote-488)**

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 (WASHINGON)

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

HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY CLAIMS JURISDICTION NORTH OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER 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”[[489]](#footnote-489)**

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

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 opportunity

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 PUBLSHED

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

damage 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.”[[490]](#footnote-490)**

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.”[[491]](#footnote-491)**

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

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](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Adrian_Hoeck&action=edit&redlink=1) at the mission of Saint Ignatius

among the [Kalispel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bitterroot_River) [in western [Montana](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Montana)] where he remained until the mission

was temporarily abandoned on account of the hostile [Blackfoot Indians](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/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.”[[492]](#footnote-492)**

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 statins therein and conveying troops thither”[[493]](#footnote-493)**

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 Jedediah 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

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. Freemont 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 miles 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 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 that 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.”[[494]](#footnote-494)**

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

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.”[[495]](#footnote-495)**

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

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 assent 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:

•continue along the mountain trail and descend the Bear River northwest past Soda Springs

directly to Fort Hall

•or 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)

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 the 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 184]; •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 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

William and Lucinda (McWilliams) Wilson

traveled with Mathias Cooley, a seven-year old orphan

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[[496]](#footnote-496)*

•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

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.”[[497]](#footnote-497)**

DELAWARE INDIAN TOM HILL HAS AN INFLUENCE ON INDIANS AROUND WAIILATPU

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 Waiilatpu 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

**“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.”[[498]](#footnote-498)**

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]

Captain Brown led thirty-eight wagons and approximately 1,000 head of loose cattle

out of Independence

(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

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 Champoeg 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.”[[499]](#footnote-499)**

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 OPRGANIZE

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 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

**“to draft a memorial to the Congress of the United States, setting forth the condition, situation, relation and wants of the country.”[[500]](#footnote-500)**

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 APPLEGATE 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

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 they 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 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]

BRITISH TAKE UP GUNBOAT DIPLOMACY

In 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. 1st 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 Sana 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 Sioux, the Cheyenne and the Arapaho Indians

ESTHER PARISEAU BECOMES SISTER JOSEPH (LATER MOTHER JOSEPH)

(Esther Pariseau was born to Joseph and Francoise 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

Oregon Country’s people, 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 Vercruysse [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 42nd 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.”[[501]](#footnote-501)**

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

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?”[[502]](#footnote-502)**

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.”[[503]](#footnote-503)**

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

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”[[504]](#footnote-504)**

secondwas 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

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 River 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 KNOWS 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 wagons 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 CARVAN SET OUT GUIDED BY SEPHEN 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-wisewith the trail,

dust was so thick the next wagon ahead in line could not been 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]**” [[505]](#footnote-505)**

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 again and thare turned to the rite 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 whare wee crossed the first time is verry good; it then is quite broken and rough to whare wee struck it the last time; it then is verry good. Weather fine to day.”[[506]](#footnote-506)**

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.”[[507]](#footnote-507)**

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

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 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 MeekCut-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 Rockis 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 traveledabout 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.”[[508]](#footnote-508)**

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 wrote -- 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 rockey 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

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 rockey. 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 anew 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.”[[509]](#footnote-509)**

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

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 drean** (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’caravancovered 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 andtheMeek-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 was later said by members of the train that Meek’s intention

was to take them to the head of the Willamette River to find a place

along The Cascades Rapids which would allow passage of wagons

and if not found they would continue down the Deschutes River to the Columbia)

GUIDE STEPHEN MEEK PUT UP A BRAVE FRONT

Stephen Meek told the Meek-Ownbeyparty traveling with him

**“I have brought you here and will take you off.”**

An Indian led the Meek-Ownbeytrainto the forks of the (most likely) Malheur Sough

(Meek believed they had reached the John Day River)

experience of the Meek-Ownbeytravelers was documented by Eli Cooley -- September 5, 1845

**“The road to day has been first rate and level. Weather fine. Crossed the drean** (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)

CONFUSTION 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 of 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-Ownbeypioneers 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 Piautes 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 Waiilatpu 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.”[[510]](#footnote-510)**

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 rockey 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 exealent** (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 oxen was tied up all night; others left out. Those that was left out went back to the spring from whare wee camped last nite. To the spring is about 5 miles. From the spring to whare 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 himif 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 wee 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 thrugh 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 to 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….”[[511]](#footnote-511))**

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 onlyfour 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

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 Wagontire 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.”[[512]](#footnote-512)**

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 Ownbeytrainwho 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

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-thirdofOwnbey 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 OwnbeyCompany

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 trainreturned 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 use, 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 wasquickly 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’smixed 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’swagon trainset 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 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-MEEKCARAVAN CONTINUES ON TOWARD THE DESCHUTES RIVER

Good weather made travel easier on this day -- September 16, 1845

sadly Emaline McNamee, baby daughter of Job and Hannah McNamee, died

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 thare 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 wee first started for about 3 miles further. The corse this far is about South west** (he meant northwest)**. Then wee turned to the rite and traveled about a North corse 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-Meekcaravan 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 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-MEEKWAGON 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 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-MEEKWAGON 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 some departed monument to 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 Barlowaccompanied 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 TRAINBECOMES 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 whare it runs into the same creek wee 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 corse. About 3 miles from whare** (where) **wee 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 seder** (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:

**“Beried 4 persons heare.”** -- September 23, 1845

they were camped just beyond Willow Creek, northwest of Lytle Creek

for the first time fever had 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 TRAINPRESSES 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 they way northward

Tetherow-Meek had pursued a more Westerly course than the others

TETHEROW-MEEK CARAVANCONTINUES 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 rockey places. Weather fine. This morning wee 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 rockey. 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 rockey. 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.”[[513]](#footnote-513)**

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

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

he 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.”[[514]](#footnote-514)**

**(**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**....”[[515]](#footnote-515)

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.”[[516]](#footnote-516)**

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.”[[517]](#footnote-517)**

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

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 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

Packing had to be well organized -- when everything was put away, preparations for moving began

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.”[[518]](#footnote-518)**

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.”[[519]](#footnote-519)**

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,

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

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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eagle_Creek,_Oregon), Oregon)

and continued on to Philip Foster’s farm near present-day [Clackamas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clackamas,_Oregon))

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 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 INCREAING 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.”[[520]](#footnote-520)**

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

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 19840 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.”[[521]](#footnote-521)**

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

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.”[[522]](#footnote-522)**

BARLOW ROAD IS AUTHORIZED BY THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

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[[523]](#footnote-523)

PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT ADDS ANOTHER NEW COUNTY IN OREGON COUNTRY

Polk County named in honor of Pesident 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

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….”[[524]](#footnote-524)**

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.”[[525]](#footnote-525)**

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

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 49º 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

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

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 28th 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.”[[526]](#footnote-526)**

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

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 show 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

there De Smet learned the Flathead Indians had gone to war with the Crow Indians

Father Jean-Pierre De Smet set out for St. Mary’s Mission on the Bitterroot River (Idaho)

he and Father Nicholas Point pursued the Flatheads

but were unable to overtake them until after a 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.”[[527]](#footnote-527)**

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

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 boarder was moved much further north to the 49th 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 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 49º 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 54º40’ north

this proposal was 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 49º

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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clackamas,_Oregon) 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 WAIILATPU

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 Waiilatpu 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.”[[528]](#footnote-528)**

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 49º 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

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. Larkinm 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

SAM BARLOW BEGINS CONSTRUCTION ON A TOLL ROAD

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)

JOE MEEK BECOMES A MEMBER OF THE PROVISIONAL HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sheriff Joe Meek collectedtaxes, 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 49º 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 54º40’ north

**Article I: Extend boundary from Rocky Mountains along 49o 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 ambiguous regaring 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 54º40’ 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 54º 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 49th 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 of 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 Freemont’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 serves 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 Sates 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

in revenge for the deaths of two Americans -- June 28, 1846

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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francisco_de_Haro) the first Alcade (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 1st 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 cavalrymen and artillerymen

a third regiment, the 1st 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frigate) [Savannah](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Savannah_(1842)) *--* July 1, 1846

*Savannah* joined two sloops, [USS Cyane](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Cyane_(1837)) and [USS Levant](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Levant_(1837))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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Mervine) of the [Cyane](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Cyane_(1837)) 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 *Portmouth* 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.”[[529]](#footnote-529)**

Lieutenant Neil M. Howison could report only that the United States Pacific squadron

was assembling farther to the south

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 SQUARDRON 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 shipwas 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 13th 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.”[[530]](#footnote-530)** 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.”[[531]](#footnote-531)**

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

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 PUBLO 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 Gill3pie

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.”[[532]](#footnote-532) --** 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

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.”[[533]](#footnote-533)**

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;

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

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

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….”[[534]](#footnote-534)**

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

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.”[[535]](#footnote-535)**

Tabitha Moffat Brown, or “Grandma” as she became affectionately known,

arrived by wagon train in Oregon Country at age sixty-six -- 1846

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 Oregon City’s *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”[[536]](#footnote-536)**

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 not to build 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!)”[[537]](#footnote-537)**

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

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 49º north latitude

thus giving up the hope of 54º40’ 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, penetrated 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.”[[538]](#footnote-538)**

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

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 KEARNY JOIN FORCES AT SAN DIEGO

Commodore David Stockton and General Stephen Kearny 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/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....”[[539]](#footnote-539)**

PEOPLE LIVING AT THE WAIILATPU 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.”[[540]](#footnote-540)**

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 Flore

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 Angles (and today’s southern California)

LOS ANGELES FALLS TO THE AMERICANS

Stockton, Kearny and Fremont pursued General Flore’s Californio militia from the San Gabriel River

west toward the Los Angeles River where they defeated Flore’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 Flore’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”[[541]](#footnote-541)**

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

1st REGIMENT OF NEW YORK VOLUNTEERS ARRIVES IN CALIFORNIA

Colonel Jonathan D. Stevenson had raised ten companies of seventy-seven men each

to form the 1st 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

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.”[[542]](#footnote-542)**

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

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 Abernethy 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 Abernethy and two for Lovejoy, changing the result

Provisional Governor Abernethy retained his office by a margin of sixteen votes

GENERAL STEPHEN KEARNY TAKES COMMAND IN CALIFORNIA

After the arrival of the 1st 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])

1st 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 WAIILATPU

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 PIDEMICS 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 ARE 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.”[[543]](#footnote-543)**

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

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 Rock*i*es

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[[544]](#footnote-544)

(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 Casmir 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

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 WAIILATPU 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 WAIILATPU 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 WAIILATPU

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.”[[545]](#footnote-545)**

REV. HENRY SPALDING ARRIVES AT WAIILATPU MISSION

Rev. Henry Spalding brought his daughter, ten-year-old Eliza to attend school at Waiilatpu 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.”[[546]](#footnote-546)**

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 Waiilatpu

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 Waiilatpu

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 war 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.”[[547]](#footnote-547)**

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

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.”[[548]](#footnote-548)**

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’.”[[549]](#footnote-549)**

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 WAIILATPU

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 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.”[[550]](#footnote-550)**

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.”[[551]](#footnote-551)**

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 WAIILATPU 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.**

**“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.”[[552]](#footnote-552)**

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 WAIILATPU 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.”[[553]](#footnote-553)**

MASSACRE BEGINS AT WAIILATPU 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

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.”[[554]](#footnote-554)**

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’.”[[555]](#footnote-555)**

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 WAIILATPU 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 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.”[[556]](#footnote-556)**

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’.”[[557]](#footnote-557)**

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.”[[558]](#footnote-558)**

WAIILATPU MISSION HOUSE BECOMES A SCENE OF TERROR

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. Clasping 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.’[[559]](#footnote-559)**

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.”[[560]](#footnote-560)**

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 hands, professed sorrow and] **said that they were going to burn the house, and that we must leave it.”[[561]](#footnote-561)**

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.”[[562]](#footnote-562)**

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….”[[563]](#footnote-563)**

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.”[[564]](#footnote-564)**

**“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 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 pushedout 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.”[[565]](#footnote-565)**

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.”[[566]](#footnote-566)**

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 WAIILATPU

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 WAIILATPU 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 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.[[567]](#footnote-567)**

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.”[[568]](#footnote-568)**

November 29, 1847

RESULT OF THE MASSACRE AT WAIILATPU 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.”[[569]](#footnote-569)**

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

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] **Kinmball** [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.”[[570]](#footnote-570)**

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

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.”[[571]](#footnote-571)**

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.”[[572]](#footnote-572)**

Josiah Osborn his wife and three children hid from the Indians throughout the day

they had traveled only three miles from Waiilatpu 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 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.”[[573]](#footnote-573)**

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

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 WAIILATPU 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.”[[574]](#footnote-574)**

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.”[[575]](#footnote-575)**

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

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.[[576]](#footnote-576)**

FATHER BROUILLET REACHES WAIILATPU 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.”[[577]](#footnote-577)**

JoeStanfield 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 horseman pass and repass as I lay concealed in the willows. Have since learned that it was Mr.** [Henry] **Spalding.”[[578]](#footnote-578)**

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.**

**“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.”[[579]](#footnote-579)**

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 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.”[[580]](#footnote-580)**

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.” [[581]](#footnote-581)**

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] **….”[[582]](#footnote-582)**

JOSIAH OSBORN RECEIVES LITTLE HELP

Josiah Osborn concluded his harrowing narrative: **“Next da**y [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]**,** **the chief, came in one day and took the cap from his head and gave it to me, and a handkerchief to my child.”[[583]](#footnote-583)**

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.”[[584]](#footnote-584)**

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 WAIILATPU MISSION

Catherine Sager stated **“On** [Sunday] **the 5th of December my little sister** [Hannah Louise]**, six years old, died** [of measles]**.”[[585]](#footnote-585)**

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.”[[586]](#footnote-586)**

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 WAIILATPU

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 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.”[[587]](#footnote-587)**

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.”[[588]](#footnote-588)**

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 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.”[[589]](#footnote-589)**

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. 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’!”[[590]](#footnote-590)**

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 melancholy tidings of the murder of Dr. and Mrs. Whitman and twelve Americans, with the entire destruction of Waiilatpu Mission….”[[591]](#footnote-591)**

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 WAIILATPU

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

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 WAIILATPU MISSION

Catherine Sager reported that **“Helen** [Mar Meek] **died”** [of measles][[592]](#footnote-592) -- 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 Abernethy 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 Abernethy and the legislature met to discuss the situation

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

they immediately began the frustrating task of preparing prepare 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

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

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.”[[593]](#footnote-593)**

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

they immediately began the frustrating task of preparing prepare 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

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

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 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]

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”[[594]](#footnote-594)**

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”[[595]](#footnote-595)**

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

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

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 Waiilatpu 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 WAIILATPU 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….”[[596]](#footnote-596)**

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

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.”[[597]](#footnote-597)**

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….”[[598]](#footnote-598)**

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.”[[599]](#footnote-599)**

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.”[[600]](#footnote-600)**

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

TWO NEW CATHOLIC PRIESTS ARE ORDAINED IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST[[601]](#footnote-601)

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

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.”[[602]](#footnote-602)**

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.”[[603]](#footnote-603)**

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

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. ElkanahWalker

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. ElkanahWalker 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 AOUT THIS VUNERABLE 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 CONTINES 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 38th 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.”[[604]](#footnote-604)**

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, seven Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur: Sister Laurence,

Sister Alphonse Marie, Sister Renilde, Sister Odelie, Sister Francisca, Sister Aldegonde,

and Sister 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

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 APPLEGATE 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 pain 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 preceded

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

COLONAL GILLIAM ADVANCES TOWARD WAIILATPU 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 APPLEGATE 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 WAIILATPU 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.”[[605]](#footnote-605)**

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

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 HOLLOWS 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 WAIILATPU 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.”[[606]](#footnote-606)**

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 WAIILATPU

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 CORNELUS GILLIAM GROWS IMPATIENT

Colonel Gilliam believed himself to be handicapped by the presence of the peace commissioners

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 WAIILATPU 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 Wallas, 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 (WAIILATPU)

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 (WAIILATPU)

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 WAIILATPU 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](http://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/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 BATTLES 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 trial 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 CONENLIUS 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 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 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.”[[607]](#footnote-607)**

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 educated 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

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 quickly 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 of 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 IS 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 Tiloukaikat’s herd to Red Wolf Crossing on the Snake River accompanying the herd were two Nez Perce Indians who declared thatTiloukaikt 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.”[[608]](#footnote-608)** 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

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 Abernethy;

•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”[[609]](#footnote-609)**

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

(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 49th 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/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 Lownsdale, 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”

throngs, 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

Oneimportant 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

and 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 be 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](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oregon_Territory) -- Kintzing Prichette (outsider),

he is mentioned very little in media reports of his day so little is known about him

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 42º 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 2nd 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 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 TERRTIORY 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-completed 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 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 Burien 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 Burien, 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

SUCCESFUL 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](http://www.fortwiki.com/Fort_Langley)

(just upriver from present day Vancouver, British Columbia)

supplies were then shipped from [Fort Langley](http://www.fortwiki.com/Fort_Langley) upriver to Fort Hope

for distribution to inland posts like [Fort Kamloops](http://www.fortwiki.com/Fort_Kamloops)

OREGON TERRITORY ASSOCIATE JUSTICE ORVILE 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

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 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

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 barrelfuls 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

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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/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

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* wascrowded 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clackamas_County%2C_Oregon)

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](http://americanhistory.si.edu/coins/glossary.cfm?printable=true#Denomination) 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:

**“May14th 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]**….”[[610]](#footnote-610)**

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.”[[611]](#footnote-611)**

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

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 farmed 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 a 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 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, 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 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 6th 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 Brevit-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 provisional land laws that 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 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 United States 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/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 Septembr 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 Champoeg 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yamhill_County%2C_Oregon) 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_W._Nesmith) and [Asahel Bush](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asahel_Bush) for the first time

these three would become influential leaders of the [Oregon Territory](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oregon_Territory) Democratic Party

CANTONMENT LORING (NEW FORT HALL, IDAHO) IS CONSTRUCTED

Brevit-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

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 49th 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 ...”[[612]](#footnote-612)**

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 2nd 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

at a cost of about $3,000

on a meadow near Puget Sound 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

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 LAWS OF OREGON TERRITIORY 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

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

Gains 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Edward_D._Hamilton&action=edit&redlink=1) 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](http://americanhistory.si.edu/coins/glossary.cfm?printable=true#Die) 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beaver_Coins)

were worth about eight percent more than United States coins as they contained more gold

most of the Oregon [Beaver Coins](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/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 Orgon 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 were a question of life and death in Oregon

and of money to the territorial government

Territorial Delegate Thurston 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 and 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 placed 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 loss 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

gaveled 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, Brevit-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 Brevit-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 Quallalwowt 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 prairie of land

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

Brevit-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 Brevit status)

and named him Commandant of the 11th 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 TAYLOR NAMES JOHN P. GAINS OREGON TERRITORIAL GOVERNOR

With the refusal of Abraham Lincoln to serve as Governor of Oregon Territory

President Zachary 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 has 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/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)

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# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

I was born in Western Washington and raised in a small village on the shore of the Salish Sea. My professional life was dedicated to teaching primarily Washington State History and United States History at the junior high school level. Of course, I coached for several years. I was active in my local education association serving as president, treasurer and negotiator representing teachers. I also was active in local and state politics. After retiring from teaching I was elected Washington State Senate Sergeant-at-Arms for two four-year terms.  
  
I began *Searchable Pacific Northwest History* as a lecture series to supplement the Washington State History textbooks available for junior high student use. I discovered that an understanding of the present is predicated on an understanding of our past.

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69. Fort Henry at the head of Henry’s Fork of the Snake River on Henry’s Lake (Idaho) is not to be confused with the abandoned Henry’s Fort at the Three Forks of the Missouri River (Montana) [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
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72. It is confusing that Athabasca Pass lies at the headwaters of the Whirlpool River and not at the headwaters of the Athabasca River. This is because early travelers considered what we now refer to as the Whirlpool to be the main branch of the Athabasca. Athabasca Pass became so significant historically the original name remained in use. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
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