

## VARIOUS CONDITIONS IN OREGON COUNTRY

### Political conditions

Oregon City -- formerly the Willamette Falls  
provided the Provisional Capitol and only town  
replaced both Champoege 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 for 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's Puget Sound Agricultural Company controlled best land  
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

### Business conditions

Francis W. Pettygrove arrived on the ship *Fama* at Oregon City -- 1843  
with brother-in-law Philip Foster  
brought a shipment of goods valued at \$1,146.05 for sale  
water falls powered the mills at Oregon City  
ferry connected with roads to Yamhill and Tualatin Valleys

## SERIES OF GREAT EPIDEMICS

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 DISTRICT

Also known as the Pacific Northwest by Americans ranged from 42° north to 54° 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.”**<sup>1</sup>

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 Indies.”**<sup>2</sup>

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

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<sup>1</sup> Oscar Osburn Winther, *The Great Northwest*, P. 120.

<sup>2</sup> Oscar Osburn Winther, *The Great Northwest*, P. 120.

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 soldiers 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)  
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

*Owhyhee* 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

Two heavy wagons led by William Sublette proceed toward the Wind River Rendezvous  
caravan journeyed through South Pass

mountain passes and valleys were green with food for the stock

Traveled into Rocky Mountains to the headwaters of the Wind River

arrived at the Rendezvous without mishap -- July 18, 1830

#### 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)  
in Boston the salmon sold at 10¢ a pound and caused quite a stir among American entrepreneurs  
furs and fish brought an additional \$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

#### SMITH, JACKSON & SUBLETTE SOLD

With a comfortable profit to show for their four-year operation  
partnership of Smith, Jackson & Sublette agreed among themselves  
to withdraw from the fur trade -- thus ending their company 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

Townspople 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.”**<sup>3</sup>  
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 EPIDEMICS 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”**

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<sup>3</sup> Robert M. Utle, *A Life Wild and Perilous*, P. 98.

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.”**<sup>4</sup>

#### 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

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<sup>4</sup> Washington Irving. *Adventures of Captain Bonneville*.

Hall Jackson Kelley had formed this organization (1829)

in anticipation that three thousand emigrants would join him journeying West

Kelley, writing about the Pacific Northwest Country while in Boston, penned -- 1831

*A General Circular to All Persons of Good Character, Who Wish to Emigrate to the Oregon Territory*

this was another 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."**<sup>5</sup>

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

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<sup>5</sup> William Denison Lyman, *The Columbia River*, P. 162.

## 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

## AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR ENCOURAGING THE SETTLEMENT OF OREGON TERRITORY FAILED

Captain Nathaniel Wyeth quickly became impatient 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 Blackfeet (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 FISH PROCESSING

American brig *Owyhee* commanded by Captain John Dominis  
returned to Boston from the Columbia River after three year's absence -- April 15, 1831  
brought East a shipment of pickled Columbia River salmon worth \$96,000  
Fish was sold in Boston, but President Jackson's treasury department  
made the importer pay duty on it as it was identified as **"foreign-caught fish"**

#### 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  
Smith, Jackson, and Billy 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, David E. Jackson and Captain William Sublette  
faced the difficult of prospect of running the company without Jedediah Smith  
Jackson and Billy 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.”**<sup>6</sup>

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. LOUIS

On the headwaters of the Missouri the Indian delegates met more Nez Percés 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”**

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<sup>6</sup> L.B. Palladino, *Indians and Whites in the Northwest*, P. 10.

## 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 Spring

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's Pacific Trading Company  
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 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 SPREADS 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”**<sup>7</sup>  
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

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<sup>7</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. P. 156.

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.”<sup>8</sup>**

#### 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”<sup>9</sup>**

#### 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.”<sup>10</sup>**

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....”**

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<sup>8</sup> William Denison Lyman, *The Columbia River*, P.139-140.

<sup>9</sup> Washington Irvin, *Adventures of Captain Bonneville*.

<sup>10</sup> Washington Irving, *Adventures of Captain Bonneville*.

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.”**<sup>11</sup>

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

#### FORT WALLA WALLA

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<sup>11</sup> Washington Irving, *Adventures of Captain Bonneville*.

Hudson's Bay Company's Pierre Chrysologue Pambrun served as Chief Trader -- 1832  
previously had been a clerk at Stuart Lake (1825)  
gave Catholic religious instruction to Indians at the locales he served  
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 District  
(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 Oregon [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 District  
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.”<sup>12</sup>**

#### 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

located between two mountains perpetually covered with snow

that was called Pierre's Hole

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,

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<sup>12</sup> Dale Lahey, *George Simpson: Blaze of Glory*, P. 135.

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.”**<sup>13</sup>

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

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<sup>13</sup> William Denison Lyman, *The Columbia River*, P.138.

## 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 FRUSTRATED 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 District 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 Blackfeet 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 Blackfeet 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 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 Blackfeet 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 Blackfeet 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 Blackfeet 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 and 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 Blackfeet 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.”**<sup>14</sup>  
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

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<sup>14</sup> Nathaniel Wyeth, *Wyeth's Oregon or a Short History of a Long Journey*, 1833. P. 72.

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.”**<sup>15</sup>

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.”**<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Stanley Vestal, *Jim Bridger Mountain Man*, P. 83.

<sup>16</sup> F.G. Young, editor, *Sources of the History of Oregon*, Vol. 1, P. 160.

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 Blackfeet

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 Blackfeet 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 Blackfeet 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 trapping 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.”**<sup>17</sup>

#### 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

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<sup>17</sup> Washington Irving, *The Adventures of Captain Bonneville*, 1837.

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..."**<sup>18</sup>

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 Blackfeet 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,

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<sup>18</sup> Washington Irving, *The Adventures of Captain Bonneville*, 1837.

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.”**<sup>19</sup> -- 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 UNWRAPING

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

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<sup>19</sup>David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 138-139.

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...."**<sup>20</sup>

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."**<sup>21</sup>

#### U.S. ARMY CAPTAIN BENJAMIN BONNEVILLE CONTACTS THE NATIVES

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<sup>20</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 129

<sup>21</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 130.

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 Blackfeet Indians  
Bonneville also met with small groups of white trappers  
among them Captain Milton Sublette and Joseph B. Gervais

#### NATURALIST DAVID DOUGLAS'S THIRD 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

In order 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 Blackfeet 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 Percés serves as an example of his insight: **"Simply to call these people [Nez Percés] 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.”<sup>22</sup>**

#### *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  
Bonnevillle 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

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<sup>22</sup> Washington Irving, *The Adventures of Captain Bonneville*, 1837, P. 171.

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 his 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

Second missionary effort was established -- this time 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)

#### *CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE AND JOURNAL*

Was a Protestant 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!”<sup>23</sup>**

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.”<sup>24</sup>**

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

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<sup>23</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 139.

<sup>24</sup> Laura B. Downey Bartlett, *Student’s History of the Northwest*. Vol. I, P. 130-131.

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."**<sup>25</sup>

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

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<sup>25</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 140.

## 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 Sequatchew (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.**”<sup>26</sup>

other buildings were added to the post as was a stockade which enclosed them located close to Nisqually River

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 District

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

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<sup>26</sup> Tacoma-Pierce County Civic Arts Commission brochure, 1974.

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 Blackfeet  
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 United 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 Basptiste,  
twelve or thirteen years old, whom Wyeth decided to train as an interpreter

#### REV. SAMUEL PARKER -- CONGREGATIONAL MINISTER

Pastor of a Congregational Church in Ashfield, Massachusetts  
keen observer, fastidious, elderly, critical and somewhat pedantic man  
full of energy, 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  
in a letter to the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Mission  
dated April 10, 1833  
his age, fifty-four, counted strongly against him

#### 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 specimens of the soil .... H[eron] and I on horseback. While thus engaged our three attendants, [John] McKie, [William] Brown & Peter Tah, the islander, felt the earth under them shake violently at least twice. Brown first exclaimed, & 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.”<sup>27</sup>**

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

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<sup>27</sup> Greg Lange, HistoryLink.org Essay 5104, January 23, 2003.

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, Blackfeet, 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 Oregon [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 our Government.”**<sup>28</sup>

## 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

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<sup>28</sup> Robert M. Utley, *A Life Wild and Perilous*, P. 120-121.

- 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

## BONNEVILLE AND WALKER TRAVEL TOGETHER

Captain Bonneville and Joseph Walker reached the Popo Agie River

which was followed to **“the great tar spring”** they had heard about

they collected some as ointment for their horses and themselves

in fact, the substance was oil

Bonneville’s Party reached a spot called Medicine Lodge on the Bighorn River

from there Bonneville took a few men and went into the Wind River Mountains

the best route across the mountains for his party

though awed by the beauty and the view

Bonneville saw there would be no practical way that wouldn't be extremely dangerous

he decided to go further south around the Wind River Mountains

Meeting Shoshone Indians, Bonneville carefully recorded for the Army

native’s habits, customs, and territories

this had become a well established pattern by now

Bonneville then traveled south with Walker and about a hundred men

to the Great Salt Lake

## 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.”**<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Hiram Martin Chittenden, *History of The American Fur Trade of the Far West*, P. 407.

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 EXPANDS

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 COMPANY REJECTS 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 dispute 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 outfitted in 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 PREPARE 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 from 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 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 Blackfeet 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 accidentally 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  
she was 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].”<sup>30</sup>**

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 Percés, 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....**

**“No white 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.”<sup>31</sup>**

#### 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

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<sup>30</sup> Washington Irving. *Adventures of Captain Bonneville*.

<sup>31</sup> Washington Irving. *Adventures of Captain Bonneville*

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 Percés -- 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  
American Fur 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.”<sup>32</sup>**

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

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<sup>32</sup> L.B. Palladino, *Indians and Whites in Northwest*, P. 21.

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

implored 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

Forays 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 the 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 Blackfeet 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.”**<sup>33</sup>

#### 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

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<sup>33</sup> Oscar Osburn Winther, *The Great Northwest*, P. 103.

of red- and yellow-edged blankets, red-handled butcher knives, vermilion, 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.”**<sup>34</sup>

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**

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<sup>34</sup> Duncan, Dayton. *Miles from Nowhere: Tales from America’s Contemporary Frontier*, P. 139-140.

**their wages, and perhaps run knee-deep in debt, were ready for another hard campaign in the wilderness.**<sup>35</sup>

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

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<sup>35</sup> Duncan, Dayton. *Miles from Nowhere: Tales from America's Contemporary Frontier*, P. 139-140.

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.”<sup>36</sup>**

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

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<sup>36</sup> Robert M. Utley, *A Life Wild and Perilous*, P. 146.

according to Alvin Josephy, Bonneville noted the way in which  
Christian traditions were: **“grafted onto ancestral beliefs and practices”**<sup>37</sup>  
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

He 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 results 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 becomes violently seasick -- 1834  
was eventually 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 Monterey, California into 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

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<sup>37</sup> [www.oregonhistoricaltrailsfund.org](http://www.oregonhistoricaltrailsfund.org)

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."**<sup>38</sup>

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."**<sup>39</sup>

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

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<sup>38</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 161.

<sup>39</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 161.

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.”<sup>40</sup>**

in further celebration they **“saluted it with damaged powder, and wet it in villainous alcohol.”<sup>41</sup>**  
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

#### COWLITZ PRAIRIE BECOME HOME FOR HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY HERD

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

#### HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY REJECTS DIVERSIFICATION

Governor George Simpson eventually forwarded to the Hudson's Bay Company London Directors  
a copy of Dr. John McLoughlin's prospectus for **“The Oregon (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,

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<sup>40</sup> Cecil Dryden, *History of Washington*, Portland, Oregon, 1968, P. 84.

<sup>41</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 161.

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]....”<sup>42</sup>**

#### NATHANIEL WYETH IN OREGON

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<sup>42</sup> Washington Irving, *Adventures of Captain Bonneville*.

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."**<sup>43</sup>

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 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

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<sup>43</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 161.

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"<sup>44</sup>

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

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<sup>44</sup> Laura B. Downey Bartlett, *Student's History of the Northwest*. Vol. I, P. 133.

A dozen whitemen 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.”**<sup>45</sup>

#### 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**

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<sup>45</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 147.

**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.**"<sup>46</sup>

#### 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 Fort 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 Began his work when 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

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<sup>46</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 133.

## 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...."**<sup>47</sup>

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 than to any economic necessity of McLoughlin's

Wyeth assigned several of his men to newly constructed Fort William 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

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<sup>47</sup> Washington Irving, *Adventures of Captain Bonneville*.

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 -- -- fall 1834  
that had been constructed by the retired French-Canadian employees of Hudson' Bay

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.”<sup>48</sup>**

First missionaries to take up residence in Willamette River Valley were led by Rev. Jason Lee in addition were Rev. Daniel Lee

Courtney M. Walker -- trapper and missionary worker

Cyrus Shepard -- lay assistant

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 CHAMPOEG MISSION CONSTRUCTION

Even as Ewing Young stubbornly planted himself in the Chehalem Valley,

Jason and Daniel Lee began constructing the log buildings of the Methodist mission supplies were brought from Fort Vancouver to the missionaries

Rev. Jason Lee and his missionaries

lived in tents as buildings were erected at Champoeg -- November 1, 1834

saw mill was built on Mill Creek and immediately began preparing materials for a house

Cabin was quickly built at Mission Bottom

when rains of winter set in, the Methodist 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.”<sup>49</sup>**

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<sup>48</sup> Lancaster Pollard, *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, P. 117.

<sup>49</sup> Cornelius J. Brosnan, *Jason Lee, prophet of New Oregon*, P. 72.

Other improvements were made

rails were split for a corral, oxen were broken to the plow, and (in spring) land tilled  
Webley Hauxhurst erected a grist mill at Mission Bottom that served needs of Champoeg

#### METHODIST EFFORT BEGINS AT CHAMPOEG (MISSION BOTTOM)

Rev. Jason Lee led the mission work in the Willamette Valley at Champoeg -- 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

it was decided to bring them to live with the missionaries at the headquarters

Jason Lee opened his mission school to all children

here Indians learned English, Christianity, and the customs of civilization

besides formal education and Christianity,

missionaries also tried to teach the Indians farming, industrial arts and homemaking

no school was established in outlying stations

Jason Lee continued to minister 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

## MISSIONARY 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

## METHODISTS ENJOYED LITTLE SUCCESS

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 District -- 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 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 DISTRICT)

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

#### MANIFEST DESTINY

This was America’s justification for expanding across the North American continent  
Pacific Northwest became the target of this growth

Term was created by John L. O’Sullivan

editor of a New York newspaper: *United States Magazine and Democratic Review*

he 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.”** (July–August 1845, P. 5)

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

Importance of the Pacific Coast’s rivers and potential harbors to Manifest Destiny and the United States foreign and domestic policies tend to be overshadowed by the by the role of upcoming westward movement of pioneering emigrants in reality, the favorable anchorages played a very significant role in political events of the day

#### FIRST INDIAN MISSION SCHOOL IS OPENED BY THE METHODIST MINISTERS

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 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

Record book refers to daily instructions to as many as twenty students -- November states that “**several of the children are making laudable improvement**”<sup>50</sup> 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 Champoeg (Mission Bottom) location

they opened 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

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<sup>50</sup> Oscar Osburn Winther, *The Great Northwest*, P. 208.

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 mobile 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 NATHANIEL 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 OPERATIONS

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 FOR FOREIGN 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

Rev. Parker of Middlefield, Massachusetts offered his services to the American Board  
preacher and scholar had, among other things, once served as the headmaster

of a girls' boarding school  
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  
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 Whitman who 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

#### REV. SAMUEL PARKER DESCRIBED

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.”**<sup>51</sup>  
Mountain Man Joe Meek regarded him less primly as **“pious humbug”**

#### 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 Jediah 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

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<sup>51</sup> Robert M. Utley, *A Life Wild and Perilous*, P. 159.

William J. Bailey had been born and educated in England where he studied 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-May 1835  
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. 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, 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.”**<sup>52</sup>

#### 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.”**<sup>53</sup>

#### 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

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<sup>52</sup> Robert M. Utley, *A Life Wild and Perilous*, P. 163.

<sup>53</sup> Robert M Utley, *A Life Wild and Perilous*, P. 162-163

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**"<sup>54</sup>

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

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

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<sup>54</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 169.

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."**<sup>55</sup>

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...."**<sup>56</sup>

## CAPTAIN NATHANIEL 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

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<sup>55</sup> Oscar Osburn Winther, *The Great Northwest*, P. 105.

<sup>56</sup> Oscar Osburn Winther, *The Great Northwest*, P. 104-105.

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  
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)  
Parker to enjoy Dr. John McLoughlin's hospitality at 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!**”<sup>57</sup>

#### 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

#### AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS ORGANIZES

Three national church denominations united into one financial organization to fund missionaries:

- Presbyterian
- Congregational
- Dutch Reform

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (also known as the “**American Board**”)  
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

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<sup>57</sup> William Denison Lyman, *The Columbia River*, P. 147.

**“as sweet and musical as the chime of bells”<sup>58</sup>**

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

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<sup>58</sup> Federal Writers Project, *Washington: A Guide to the Evergreen State*, The Washington State Historical Society, P. 135.

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  
(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 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 settlers, 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.”**<sup>59</sup>

#### 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)

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<sup>59</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 144-145.

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 his 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 known as 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 District  
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 DISTRICT

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 NORTHWEST

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.”**<sup>60</sup>

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].”**<sup>61</sup>

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 Colvile

Archibald McDonald, his hospitality was famous, was in charge of the fort (1836 to 1843)

From Fort Colvile 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

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<sup>60</sup> Joseph Schafer, PhD., *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, P. 120.

<sup>61</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 142.

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 NORTHWEST

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.**"<sup>62</sup>

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

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<sup>62</sup> L.E. Bragg, *More Than Petticoats*, P. 12.

## 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) 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.”**<sup>63</sup>

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,

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<sup>63</sup> Robert M Utley, *A Life Wild and Perilous*, P. 165.

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

July 5, 1835

#### 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 Sauvies) 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 empanelled 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

#### 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.**"<sup>64</sup>

Three days later an axletree on the light wagon was broken -- July 28, 1836

Narcissa rejoiced, thinking that now the vehicle would be abandoned

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<sup>64</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 176.

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.”<sup>65</sup>

#### STEAMER *BEAVER* ARRIVES AT FORT VANCOJEVER 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 (in 1834)  
he abruptly ordered her to turn around and go home

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<sup>65</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 176.

and when he heard of the original plans for a steamship to serve the Northwest,  
he objected vigorously

#### STEAMER *BEAVER* PUT TO NEW USE

According to Chief Factor John McLoughlin,

*Beaver* soon proved to draw too much water to serve as a river boat  
therefore, she was sent to Fort Nisqually to serve as a guard ship

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, 1836

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.”**<sup>66</sup>

Both Church of England minister and wife were strongly anti-Catholic

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<sup>66</sup> Thomas Jessett, ed., *Reports and Letters of Herbert Beaver*, xix, 1959.

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.”<sup>67</sup>**

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 sniffing 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 families  
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”**

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<sup>67</sup> Thomas Jessett, ed., *Reports and Letters of Herbert Beaver*, xix, 1959.

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 FRIENDSHIPS 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.”**<sup>68</sup>

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 in 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 NORTHWEST

Special Agent of the State Department used a round-about approach to get to the Northwest  
he journeyed first to Mexico  
next to Sandwich (Hawaiian) Islands  
in Honolulu, he learned of the British domination of 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**

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<sup>68</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 179.

**the commonest wants or supplies could be procured; at the same time, to have a shelter under the flag of my country.”<sup>69</sup>**

#### 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  
Even at that, he successfully reentered the ice business with his old partner Frederic Tudor he paid off his debts and made a handsome living (until his death [in 1856])  
in a trade that the two men spread almost around the globe  
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 VANCOUVER

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

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<sup>69</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 145.

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 were 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 its 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....”**<sup>70</sup>

#### REV. HENRY SPALDING, ELIZA AND NARCISSA LEAVE FORT VANCOUVER

Dr. McLoughlin was troubled by the decision to travel to the mission sites

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<sup>70</sup> L.E. Bragg, *More Than Petticoats*, P. 15.

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 STATION OPENED

**"Place of the Butterflies"** was begun in Nez Perce Country by American Board missionaries

where Lapwai Creek joins Clearwater River 120 miles East of Waiilatpu (near today's Lewiston)

Rev. and Eliza Spalding and William H. Gray opened Lapwai

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

#### 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."**<sup>71</sup> 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...."**<sup>72</sup>

#### 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

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<sup>71</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 179.

<sup>72</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 179-180.

## FIRST REINFORCEMENT OF METHODIST MISSIONARIES

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 to the Pacific Northwest

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 a ship to the Pacific Northwest

## WAILATPU STATION IS READY TO BE OCCUPIED

Station had been constructed by Dr. Marcus Whitman, Rev. Henry Spalding and William Gray for the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions

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

House was completed -- November 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 WAILLATPU

Marcus Whitman finally came to Fort Walla Walla to take Narcissa to her new home

Waiilatpu Mission was located 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

#### LAPWAI STATION OPENED

**“Place of the Butterflies”** the second missionary station

was built for the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions

Rev. and Mrs. Spalding and William H. Gray opened Lapwai Mission

in Nez Perce Country where Lapwai Creek joins Clearwater River (near today's Lewiston)

this was the first white home in what is (now Idaho)

These Indians were more interested than the Cayuse at Waiilatpu

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, 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

#### 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

Special agent for the State Department sailed on the chartered American brig *Loriot* from Honolulu arrived at Fort George -- December 23, 1836

she carried almost no cargo

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 the man 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 EMBARRASSING 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 the 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 agent's projected 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 States 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 settlers

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."**<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 185-186.

## 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 Colvile, 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.”**<sup>74</sup>

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

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<sup>74</sup> Oscar Osburn Winther, *The Old Oregon Country A history of frontier trade, transportation and travel*, P. 67

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"**<sup>75</sup>

#### 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

Good pasture was to be found for the sheep 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

Good farmland was located on the Cowlitz Plains -- an extension of the Willamette Valley

here a settlement to rival the Willamette Valley was planned by McLoughlin

first settler was Simon Plomodon and his very pretty Indian wife

Plomodon retired after sixteen years' service for the company -- 1837

was quipped by McLoughlin with seed, livestock, tools, and given 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

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<sup>75</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 191.

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

#### FIRST SETTLER AT COWLITZ LANDING

Simon Plomodon retired from Hudson's Bay Company  
after sixteen years' service with the company -- 1837  
he and his singularly pretty Indian wife settled at Cowlitz Landing  
(where Interstate-5 crosses the Cowlitz River today)  
Chief Factor Dr. John McLaughlin grandly equipped the couple  
with seed, livestock, tools, and promises of protection

#### 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

## NATHANIEL WYETH RETURNS HOME TO CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

Wyeth arrived in Cambridge just as the depression of the mid-1830s  
was beginning to paralyze 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 mechanical devices still used in the ice business  
are direct descendants of inventions by Nathaniel Wyeth

## 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  
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.**”<sup>76</sup>

(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

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<sup>76</sup> Robert M Utley, *A Life Wild and Perilous*, P. 168.

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 ad spent ten years serving as a Catholic priest to the Native Americans in the East  
now was assigned for three years to served 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  
they had also met Jacob Lease, a sheepman whom they persuaded  
to drive his flock north to sell to Rev. Jason Lee's missionaries  
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

#### WAILLATPU 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 Wailatpu 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 woollens, 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."**<sup>77</sup>

**"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 McCoys on the river Umpqua; and last year chief trader McLeod took up to the American [Green River] rendezvous a large supply of British manufactures."**<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 145-146.

<sup>78</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 147.

“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,...<sup>79</sup> 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!...”<sup>80</sup>

“...The next American vessel that entered the river after the *Owyhee* was the brig *May Dacre* of Boston. She arrived in (1835) 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 chief 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.”<sup>81</sup>

“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....

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<sup>79</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 148.

<sup>80</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 148-149.

<sup>81</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 149.

**“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 than 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.”<sup>82</sup>**

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.”<sup>83</sup>**

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 49° 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

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<sup>82</sup> W. Storrs Lee. *Washington State*, P. 150.

<sup>83</sup> Joseph Schafer, PhD., *History of the Pacific Northwest*, P. 128.

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

demanding 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 DISTRICT

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 district

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 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.’”<sup>84</sup>**

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 EXTENDED 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

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<sup>84</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 191.

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 and 1837)

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 RECRUIT MISSIONARIES

At this time the American Board was recruiting the only reinforcements it was to send to Oregon

William H. and Mary 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 Island

#### 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 District (Pacific Northwest)

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.”**<sup>85</sup>

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

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<sup>85</sup> Joseph Schafer, PhD., *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, P. 134.

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.”**<sup>86</sup>

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 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....”**<sup>87</sup>

#### 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

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<sup>86</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 179.

<sup>87</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 179-180.

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 District  
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 weeks,  
he passed the time by visiting his counterparts at Waiilatpu and Lapwai

#### REV. JASON LEE VISITS WAILLATPU

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.”<sup>88</sup>**

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].”<sup>89</sup>**

#### REV. JASON LEE MEETS WITH DR MARCUS WHITMAN

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”<sup>90</sup>**

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, Margarett and Henrietta, bordered at the Whitman’s mission

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<sup>88</sup> Jerome Peltier, *Madame Dorion*, P. 29.

<sup>89</sup> Jerome Peltier, *Madame Dorion*, P. 29.

<sup>90</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 194.

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 DISTRICT REMAINS ALIVE

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 ARE APPOINTED TO THE COLUMBIA DISTRICT

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 District 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

#### FATHER FRANCIS NORBERT BLANCHET -- CATHOLIC MISSIONARY

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 District  
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

Voyagers 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”**<sup>91</sup>  
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 District operations  
he was so dark complected that men occasionally called him after a famous Scottish namesake,  
**“the Black Douglas”**

#### POWER OF HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY KEEPS ORDER IN THE COLUMBIA DISTRICT

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**

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<sup>91</sup> Fuller. *A History of the Pacific Northwest*. P. 92.

**the American adventurers, one by one, to withdraw [Wyeth and Dominis, for example] and are now pressing the Russian Fur Company.”<sup>92</sup>**

#### 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 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.”<sup>93</sup>**

Rev. Asa Smith complained

but these faults paled beside an utter incompatibility among themselves

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<sup>92</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 191.

<sup>93</sup> Robert M Utley, *A Life Wild and Perilous*, P. 169.

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.”**<sup>94</sup>

#### 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 do 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)

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<sup>94</sup> Robert M Utley, *A Life Wild and Perilous*, P. 169

## 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 worshipping their own master,’ clucked Myra Eells.”<sup>95</sup>**

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**

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<sup>95</sup> Robert M Utley, *A Life Wild and Perilous*, P. 169.

**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.”<sup>96</sup>**

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 Colvile, 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

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<sup>96</sup> Robert M Utley, *A Life Wild and Perilous*, P. 178-179.

## 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 Oregon 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, tanners, 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.”<sup>97</sup>**

#### 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.”<sup>98</sup>**

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

#### AGRICULTURE BEGINS AT HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY’S COWLITZ FARM

While Chief Factor McLoughlin was on furlough,

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<sup>97</sup> Thomas E. Jessett, ed., *Reports and Letters of Herbert Beaver, 1836-38*. P. 81-82.

<sup>98</sup> R. Johnson Wellwood, *Legend of Langley*. P. 9.

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 Tuamotu 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”**<sup>99</sup>  
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....”**<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Joseph Schafer, PhD., *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, P. 135.

<sup>100</sup> Joseph Schafer, PhD., *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, P. 136.

(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 Smith and Mrs. Sara 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)

## WAILLATPU 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’.”<sup>101</sup>**

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

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<sup>101</sup> James A. Crutchfield, *It Happened in Washington*, P. 38.

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 WAILATPU 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 Colvile

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 Colvile  
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 DISTRICT

Father Francis Norbert Blanchet and Father Modeste Demers  
traveled with the Hudson's Bay Company's Columbia Express  
news of their arrival reached Fort Colvile 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 mission was to spread the Catholic faith  
among the Indians and settlers of the Columbia District -- an area of almost 400,000 square miles  
that extended from Northern California to Alaska,  
and from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean

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 United 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....”<sup>102</sup>

“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....”<sup>103</sup>

#### 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

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<sup>102</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 153-154.

<sup>103</sup> W. Storrs Lee, *Washington State*, P. 155.

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 Oregon 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  
this idea for the "**Puget Sound Agricultural Company**" was approved  
£200,000 (roughly one million dollars) was invested in the effort

#### PUGET SOUND AGRICULTURAL COMPANY PROPOSAL

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 District 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 District

#### 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 removed and 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 Catholic religious activities in the Columbia District

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 DISTRICT

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"**<sup>104</sup>

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."**<sup>105</sup>  
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

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<sup>104</sup> Oscar Osburn Winther, *The Great Northwest*, P. 141.

<sup>105</sup> David Lavender, *Land of Giants*, P. 197.

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 District -- 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 54°-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)

#### 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

Governing agents would be composed of:

- Sir John Henry Pelly -- Governor of Hudson's Bay Company stationed in London
- Sir Andrew Colvile Deputy Governor of Hudson's Bay Company stationed in London
- Sir George Simpson -- Hudson's Bay Company Governor-in-Chief

stockholders of Hudson's Bay Company would become stockholders of this new organization

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

#### 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 Colvile, Fort Okanogan and Fort Walla Walla

#### 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 strangle 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 Colvile

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 of Foreign Missions third mission  
after Whitman's Waiilatpu and Spalding's Lapwai

Tshimakain Mission meaning the **"Place of the Spring"** served the Spokane 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 Colvile

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."**<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Joseph Williams, Narrative of a tour from the state of Indiana to the Oregon territory in the years 1841-2, P. 57.

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

#### NISQUALLY METHODIST MISSION IS CONSTRUCTED

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 WAILATPU 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**”<sup>107</sup> 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 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])

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<sup>107</sup> Herbert O Lang and George Henry Himes, *History of the Willamette Valley, being a description...*, P. 215.

he died three days later leaving a widow and child)<sup>108</sup>  
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 WAILLATPU

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  
only one of whom had any military experience, could rally the Americans living in Oregon,

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<sup>108</sup> Stephenie Flora, *Emigrants to Oregon in 1839*, oregonpioneers.com

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”**<sup>109</sup>

#### 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<sup>110</sup>

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

May 1839

#### LIEUTENANT CHARLES WIKES HAS DIFFICULTY KEEPING HIS SQUADRON TOGETHER

Store ship *Relief* proved to be intolerably slow

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<sup>109</sup> Stephenie Flora, *Emigrants to Oregon*, <http://www.oregonpioneers.com/1846>, 1995.

<sup>110</sup> Stephenie Flora, *Emigrants to Oregon*, <http://www.oregonpioneers.com/1846>, 1995.

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 officers 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.”**<sup>111</sup>

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.”**<sup>112</sup>

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 DRAGOONS 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

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<sup>111</sup> Thomas J. Farnham Journal

<sup>112</sup> Thomas J. Farnham Journal

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 had pledged 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 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."**<sup>113</sup>

#### 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 Bay Company brigade under packer Francis Ermatinger  
left the Rendezvous and headed for Fort Hall -- July 9

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<sup>113</sup> Robert M Utley, *A Life Wild and Perilous*, P. 175.

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."**<sup>114</sup>

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."**<sup>115</sup>

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

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<sup>114</sup> Stephenie Flora, *Journey of the Peoria Party*, [www.oregonpioneers.com/peoria](http://www.oregonpioneers.com/peoria).

<sup>115</sup> Thomas J. Farnham *Journal*

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 District -- 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

#### WAILLATPU 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 build 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<sup>116</sup>

#### 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 Vermillion 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

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 Thomas 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

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<sup>116</sup> James Loewen, *Lies My Teacher Told Me*, P. 100.

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**”<sup>117</sup>

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

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<sup>117</sup> Randol B. Fletcher, *Oregon or the Grave, A fresh perspective on the aftermath of the Lewis & Clark Expedition*, Oregon Magazine, 2003.

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.”**<sup>118</sup>

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,

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<sup>118</sup> Robert M. Utley, *A Life Wild and Perilous*. P. 212.

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."**<sup>119</sup>

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."**<sup>120</sup>

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,

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<sup>119</sup> Robert M. Utley, *A Life Wild and Perilous*, P. 207.

<sup>120</sup> Robert M. Utley, *A Life Wild and Perilous*, P. 207.

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 Wailatpu

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”**<sup>121</sup>

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”**<sup>122</sup>

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,

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<sup>121</sup> Thomas J. Farnham *Journal*

<sup>122</sup> Thomas J. Farnham *Journal*

- 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 PREPARES 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

#### GREAT REINFORCEMENT TRAVELS WEST BY SHIP

Forty-six volunteer members of the “**Great Reinforcement**” were led by Rev. Jason Lee  
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

Great Reinforcement members had a great impact on events in Oregon -- they included:  
ministers in addition to Rev. Jason Lee and his second wife Anna Marie (Pittman) Lee:

- Rev. Gustavus Hines and wife Lydia Elvira (Wheelock) Hines,
- Rev. Lewis Hubbell Judson, wife Almira (Roberts) Judson,
- Rev. Josiah Lamberson Parrish and wife Elizabeth (Winn) Parrish,
- Rev. James Olley and wife Odelia (Judson) Olley,
- Rev. G.P. Richards, his wife and their three children,
- Rev. Alvan F. Waller and wife Elepha (White) Waller

lay workers:

- George Abernathy his wife Ann (Pope) Abernathy,
- Thomas Adams – Chinook Indian traveling companion of Rev. Jason Lee,
- Dr. Ira L. Babcock, wife Ann (Abell) Babcock and their son,
- Henry B. Brewer and wife,

- Hamilton “Cow” Campbell, wife Harriet (Biddle) Hamilton one child, Mary C. Campbell,
- Joseph Frost, his wife and son,
- Dr. John H. Richmond and wife America and their four children,
- Alvin Thompson Smith (later married Abigail Raymond who traveled overland),
- William Wakeman Raymond (later married Elmira Phillips)

single women were enthusiastically received in Oregon:

- Miss Chloe Aurelia Clarke (later married William Holden Willson),
- Miss Nancy Hawkins,
- Miss Orpha Lankton (later married McKinney),
- Miss Almira Phelps (married Joseph Holman),
- Miss Elmira Phillips (married William Wakeman Raymond),
- Miss Elizabeth Winn (married Rev. Josiah L. Parrish)

widow:

- Mrs. C.N. Perry who was the sister of Lydia Elvira Hines

#### 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 WAILLATPU BRINGING THE RAMAGE PRINTING PRESS

Printer Edwin O. Hall and his wife very pregnant Sarah moved from Lapwai to Wailatpu  
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

## PUGET SOUND AGRICULTURAL COMPANY PROVED TO BE SUCCESSFUL

Nisqually Farm continued the effort at animal husbandry in Columbia District  
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 Sauvier -- 1839  
who was in charge of the principal herd for the Company -- up to one hundred cows  
Puget Sound Agricultural Company provided settlers with work oxen  
Dr. William Tolmie not only raised and distributed livestock and agricultural products  
within the Columbia District 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 District  
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  
for the Puget Sound Agricultural Company  
farming at the new establishment was already well underway  
when Chief Factor McLoughlin returned to the Columbia District 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

#### PUGET SOUND AGRICULTURAL COMPANY WOOL PRODUCTION

One goal of the Puget Sound Agricultural 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 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 on the Puget Sound Agricultural Company 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

Puget Sound Agricultural Company's Nisqually and Cowlitz Farms

provided for a large exporting business

two sawmills at Fort Vancouver established a profitable lumber trade with Sandwich Islands

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

## HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY SEEKS NEW RECRUITS TO COLUMBIA DISTRICT

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 District

(two years would pass before any emigrants would leave the Red River region)

## SHORTESS AND SILVERTRY SPEND THE WINTER AT WAILATPU 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 WAILATPU MISSION

Indications of the 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.”**<sup>123</sup>

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 (of Missouri) introduced a series of resolutions in the Senate 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

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<sup>123</sup> Randol B. Fletcher, *Oregon Magazine: Oregon or the Grave*, 2003.

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 the 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